

American and Canadian Catholic Novelists.

As no little curiosity has been expressed from time to time in regard to the personal appearance of certain well-known Catholic writers, we take great pleasure in reproducing here the features of the representative novelists. First, in alphabetical order, is ELEANOR O. DONNELLY, of Philadelphia. Though essentially a poet her stories reveal great ingenuity of plot, clever delineation of character, and strong descriptive power. She has often been called the Adelaide Proctor of America, but competent judges declare that the Philadelphia lady surpasses her English sister in the buoyancy of her hopes and the cheerfulness of her muse. It is even claimed that her "Vision of the Monk Gabriel" furnished Longfellow with the theme of his "Legend Beautiful," written eight years later. Certain it is that the closing lines of Miss Donnelly's "Vision" are reproduced almost verbatim in the opening couplet of Longfellow's "Legend."

ANNA HANSON DORSEY, now in her eighty second year, is one of the pioneers of Catholic light literature in this country. When her first story, "The Student of Blenheim Forest," appeared, our Catholic writers of fiction could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. There were Dr. Charles Constantino Pico and Charles James Cannon, born Catholics; John D. Bryant and Dr. J. V. Huntington, converts—names almost forgotten—and, maybe, one or two others. These men, with Mrs. Dorsey, wrote as Catholics for the sake of Catholicity, with certainly no hope of gain. With them it was a mission of love and devotion to principles, for, as Dr. Brownson said of one, his Catholic readers were necessarily few, and Protestants would not read an author so avowedly Catholic. Of these earlier writers Mrs. Dorsey alone remains to charm us with her words. She has been the recipient of high honors, the University of Notre Dame having presented her with the Laetare Medal, which is given only to some Catholic who has rendered "eminent" service whether to the Church or the American public.

ELLA LORAN DORSEY, the gifted daughter of the lady just mentioned, is one of the most versatile writers, Catholic or Protestant, before the public. Her first three stories appeared almost at the same time, "Knickerbocker Ghost," and "The Tear's Horse," in "The Catholic World," and "Book from the Frozen Pole," in Harper's Magazine. "The Tear's Horse" was at first attributed to Archibald Forbes, the famous war correspondent, and has been reprinted in England and Australia. Miss Dorsey is one of the very best writers of boys' stories in the country. Her "Midshipman Bob" went through several editions here and in England, and has been translated into Italian.

MAURICE FRANCIS ROAN is too well known to our readers to need any introduction. He is a poet, essayist, novelist, journalist, and all-round literary man. He was at one time editor of McGe's Weekly, then assistant editor of The Catholic Review, and afterwards associate editor of The Freeman's Journal. Later, he was professor of English Literature at Notre Dame University, and now fills a similar position in the Catholic University, Washington.

REV. FRANCIS J. FINN, S.J., when he began to write for boys was unknown and was working against great odds. Catholic stories were dull; they dealt, as a rule, with persons and places foreign to us, and our children longed for glimpses of their own time and country. Father Finn made his appearance, and the boys at once "took" to him and his books. They liked him because he understood them, and his boys were real live American boys, with all their virtues and their faults. He has been writing now for about eleven years, and his stories have lost nothing of their original charm and freshness.

WALTER LECKY's name, though unknown five years ago, is to-day familiar to all readers of Catholic periodicals. Just turned thirty, he has seen more of the world than most men of sixty, and the various and varied subjects with which his note-books are stocked afford ample themes for his pen. Living at present in the wide world of the Airtrucks his most recent work is a bright and interesting sketch of that romantic region, and of the honest, if rough, people who inhabit it. The author's love of nature is seen in his accurate description of the mountain scenery, the woods, the waters, the creatures—human and otherwise—of his rural home. His writings are full of ideas expressed in terse, strong English.

CHRISTIAN REID is the pen-name of Mrs. Francis O. Tierman, who is undoubtedly the most important of American Catholic novelists. The daughter of Colonel Charles F. Fisher, a Confederate officer who was killed in the battle of Manassas, in July 1861, she was deeply affected by her father's death. She shut herself out from the world. Most of her time was spent in the Fisher homestead, with a maiden aunt for a companion, and in walking or driving about the beautiful mountain region. She began to write when she was very young, and in her affliction she found solace in literary

work. In 1870 she published her first novel, "Valerio Aylmer," which proved an immediate success, and since then she has produced twenty other novels. In 1888 she married, and since has lived chiefly in Mexico, where her husband has large mining interests.

MARY A. SADDLER, now seventy-six years of age, while quite a young girl, contributed a number of poems to a London magazine. Shortly after her advent to this country she married James Saddler, of the publishing house of D. J. & J. Saddler & Co., and then embarked on a literary career which lasted with but slight interruption for almost half a century. Her books, which number between fifty and sixty, including translations, were, it is claimed, the means of preserving the faith to numberless Catholic emigrants. She addressed herself to an audience of her countrymen and countrywomen, and addressed herself so well that it listened and learned and laughed as she told it of its duties, warned it of the dangers surrounding it, and amused it with her wit and humor. In March, 1895, she too received the Laetare Medal, from the University of Notre Dame. She is of a kind and sympathetic nature, and many are the poor and friendless who have profited by her charity and assistance.

ANNA T. SADDLER has inherited no small part of her mother's talent for writing. She has been a frequent contributor in prose and verse to most of the periodicals of the United States, as well as to some in England and in Canada. She has written many short stories, some of them very good, notably, "A Yellow Lady," which appeared in the Catholic World. One of her earliest literary ventures was "Sorrow Years and Mirth," a novelette published in Harper's in their Half Hour Series. She is also the author of a number of other original stories, besides translating many from the French and Italian.

REV. JOHN TALBOT SMITH stands in the very foremost rank of American Catholic writers of fiction. He lived for some time in the Adirondack region, and there met many of the quaint characters, French Canadian, and others, whom he so truthfully depicts in his books. He is the author of "A Woman of Culture," "Solitary Island," and other clever novels.

CHARLES WARREN STODDARD, poet, traveler, actor, romanticist, and professor of English in the Catholic University of America, is best known by his wonderful description of Hawaii, which place he visited on more than one occasion, once as the guest of that martyr to duty, Father Damien. Of Mr. Stoddard, so rare a critic as W. H. Howells has said: "He produced the lightest, sweetest, wildest, freshest things that ever were written about the life of that summer ocean, the South Sea. His genius lies in his 'wonderful reproduction of the ever-changing hues of land and sea under the tropical sun.' His fame will rest on those exquisite poems the South Sea which have caused his critics un-animously to say that he has written in his 'South Sea Idylls' not less now, but for all time."

The very best story of each of these writers is to be found in "The Round Table of Representative American Catholic Novelists," just published by Benziger Brothers. Many of these stories were written expressly for the book, and the others were specially selected by their authors. Besides, there are exquisite half-tone portraits of the writers printed in two colors, sketches of their lives, and a list of works. The book is finely printed, put up in an appropriate and elegant binding, and sells for \$1.50. No better or prettier Christmas gift can be found.

A cup of muddy coffee is not wholesome, neither is a bowl of muddy medicine. One way to keep a reliable and skillfully-prepared blood-purifier is by its freedom from sediment. Ayer's Sarsaparilla is always bright and sparkling, because it is an extract and not a decoction.

ST. LAURENT COLLEGE.

Over 80,000 Specimens for a New Museum in a Montreal College.

The Montreal Star says: The College of St. Laurent has given the example to other Catholic educational institutions in the Dominion by erecting a special fire proof building to preserve her many magnificent collections, including natural history, numismatics, geology, paleontology, and the fine arts, for which it is justly celebrated. It is the intention of the faculty of the college that the museum shall be for the exclusive use of the professors and students of the institution; in other words, to make it a "musee scolaire," or, as it would be known in the States, a "working museum." This will undoubtedly be the best manner of placing before the students advanced object lessons, so extolled in our day, and of uniting interest with practical instruction. The honor of organizing the first museum in the Dominion of Canada, both of right to the University of Laval, which has spared neither expense nor labor since the day of its inception to make it second to none. Numbers of different collections of great value have from time to time been added to the museum, and to-day her departments of mineralogy, botany, zoology, paleontology and numismatics are unrivalled. The Rev. Sisters of Holychild are also deserving of great

praise for their ornithological collection, which is undoubtedly one of the best in all Canada. Previous to 1880 these were the only large museums owned by Catholic institutions. McGill University had long ere this erected the Hoopah Building, and the University of Toronto (since destroyed by fire), owned a very fair museum, as did the Natural History in Montreal and the Geological Survey, since transferred to Ottawa. But all these museums were the work of non Catholic corporations, aided by the princely gifts of men prominent in the world of science and finance.

It is but a few years, comparatively speaking, since the Rev. Joseph C. Carrier, of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, formerly director, as well as founder, of the scientific department of the Notre Dame University, in Indiana, began, as a labor of love, the herculean task of erecting a museum in connection with St. Laurent College. Perhaps no one could have been found better able to undertake this immense work than the Rev. Father, who has spent nearly half a century in assiduous and exclusive study, broken only by a term of three years when he served in the war of the rebellion as a regular chaplain in the Federal army. He is a member of a number of different learned societies, and a frequent contributor to scientific periodicals, both English and French.

Some years ago the Rev. Father, at his own request, having voluntarily relinquished the presidency of the Catholic University of Texas, was sent by his superiors to organize in the College of St. Laurent the same departments he had founded in the University of Notre Dame; and here his fruitful teaching and oration have brought him to the prominence, but his innate modesty is the explanation of the proverb: "The most learned are the most humble." The grand edifice now nearing completion, owes its construction to his enterprise, and to the generosity of a few noble men, among whom the name of Sir Donald Smith, ever the patron of the arts and sciences, stands forth in bold relief. The dimensions of the building, which is octagon in shape, are as follows: Length, 144 feet; width, 104 feet; height to mansard roof, 62 feet; height to the top of the observatory, 87 feet; total height, 288 feet.

In the department of numismatics are many ancient and modern coins, representing the money of various countries, medals, both religious and civic; magnificent classified collection of stamps, comprising full sets from many countries, and more than 200 Papal medals. In the department of fine arts is a grand collection of sketches, photographs, medals, sculptures in marble, clay, models, and a complete collection of Prang's work of art, bronzes, statuettes, etc. The department of antiquities is rich in Mexican and Indian bead and feather-work, objects in ivory, and various articles which date back to the colonists under Champlain. A strange but unique collection is that consisting of many thousands of buttons, representing all the forms and materials which, from time immemorial, have entered into their make up. To attempt a detailed description of the many objects of interest comprising the twenty five different collections would tax the ingenuity of even the most exacting, and prove an almost impossible task; suffice to say that the combined collections number over 80,000 objects, which have been gathered from nearly all the habitable quarters of the globe, the value of which is almost priceless, representing, as they do, in their classified form the genius and erudition of the rev. collector. It may be remarked that once before the Rev. Father had accumulated a magnificent collection of objects of natural history which he installed in the museum of the University of Notre Dame, but which was, unfortunately, almost entirely destroyed by fire in 1879. For years he had labored to preserve the present collections from a like fate; and, at last, is able to see the fulfillment of his desires in the museum just completed.

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