

tempted in prose. Perhaps his work suffers somewhat from the fact that Mr. E. W. Thomson had already exploited the same field in "Old Man Savarin"; but there is ample room for both.

As has already been mentioned, the preponderating form of fiction in Canada at the present day is the historical novel. Considerably more than half the books above referred to belong to this class. It is but natural that in a new country, endowed with an unusually romantic past, and where the complex influences of social life have not yet taken deep root, the mind of the novelist should turn to the promising and fruitful field of history. It is unnecessary here to discuss the relative merits of historical and other forms of fiction; but, if we compare the historical stories of Canadian writers with those from the pens of English and American novelists in recent years, the result will be found to be not at all unfavorable to the young writers of the Dominion. That they can do equally good work in other fields of fiction is shown by at least two of the books mentioned in this article, "Black Rock" and "The Forest of Bourg-Marie." Having in view the distinctive characteristics of each, it may be safely said that, after "The Battle of the Strong," these two stand highest among recent Canadian novels, both by reason of their excellent substance and their equally excellent workmanship, and also because they are, each in its own way, most typical of the soil.

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