

FOREWORD.

These are the soul of thy renown,
The gems immortal in thy crown,
The suns that never shall go down!
—*McLachlan.*

NEARLY half a century ago the writer of an introductory essay to a collection of Canadian poems used these words: "A national literature is an essential element in the formation of national character. It is not merely the record of a country's mental progress; it is the expression of its intellectual life, the bond of national unity and the guide of national energy." What a marvellous change has been wrought since those words were written! What were then the disunited provinces of Canada are now parts of a mighty Confederation, a national spirit prevails where sectionalism then reigned, and to-day Canada stands before the world as a young giant. That the work of Canadian writers both in verse and prose has been a most important factor in the fostering of a national spirit, and that it will be more and more so, is indisputable.