



The WAY of LETTERS

TO many persons poetry is extremely prosaic. It may be a fault of the person himself, but more likely is it a fault of the poet. However that may be, it is not the author's fault if a recent volume of "Irish Poems," by Arthur Stringer, fails to give delight. These poems are imbued with the mirth and abandon, the madness and the sadness of the Irish people. Coming from a writer of Mr. Stringer's standing, they must be regarded as the outcome of a direct literary design, and yet within themselves they display the qualities of spontaneity and emotion. One is convinced that Mr. Stringer has interpreted Irish sentiment well, and he has performed the difficult task of expressing it in suitable verse form, lyrically, delightfully, artistically. It is perhaps for their artistic excellence that these poems can be most praised, but everyone, whether Irish or not, will sympathise with their pathos, smile at their naïveté, and respond heartily to their soft, limpid music. They are quite different from the class of poetry that Mr. Stringer has produced heretofore, and are therefore an evidence of this author's versatility and enterprise. It would be a pleasure to quote from "The Philanderer," "The Sisterhood," and "Wimmin Folk" as examples of what the volume contains, but we shall instead quote one poem in full:

THE MEETING

I'd niver seen the face av her;
And she knew naught av me.
She'd fared that day from Shela Hills,
And I'd swung in from sea.

It may have been the warm, soft night,
The soft and moitherin' moon!
It may have been the lonely streets
And the ould sea's lonely chune!

It may have all been doomed, in faith,
For many an' many a year,
That soft and mad and wishful night
Without a laugh or tear!

She helt me face betwixt her hands,
And out av wishful eyes
For long she watched me sunburnt face
Wid wonder and surprise.

For long against her quiet breast
She helt me throubled head;
And when I kisst her shmilin' mouth,
"Ye'll ne'er come back!" she said.

And out she fared to Shela Hills,
And I swung back to sea;
But och, the ache and loneliness
That wan night left wid me!



MR. ARTHUR STRINGER, WHOSE LATEST VOLUME, "IRISH POEMS" IS HERE REVIEWED, RAKING HAY ON HIS FARM AT CEDAR SPRINGS, ONTARIO