

KATHERINE ELEANOR CONWAY.

By Thomas O'Hagan, M.A., Ph.D.

THE name of Katherine Eleanor Conway stands for progress and prudence, wisdom and true worth, on the page of the Catholic literature of America. She has less faddism and more sanity in her literary purpose and labor than any other woman writer of to-day. This means that she stands at the head of a school of common sense writers who eschew fashion and frivolity in literature and make of life and art a serious and noble study. This age has been called the cycle of woman, and I know of no writer of our age who so well represents the mind and attitude of the Catholic Church upon the question as to the true sphere of woman, as Miss Conway. In this respect she is conservative in things essential, and radical where radicalism is a virtue. Possessing, as her beloved chief, her guide and master, the late lamented John Boyle O'Reilly once said, the intellect of a man and the heart of a woman, Miss Conway fully realizes and understands by very instinct the great and noble office of woman in the world moral, intellectual, and social, and so she has ever set her face like flint against the wild and foolish vagaries and theories of so called advocates of Woman's Rights, laying bare at times with her gifted pen, through the columns of the Boston Pilot, the weakness of their contentions and the absurdity of their demands.

Indeed, if I understand Miss Conway rightly, her views on the

woman question are summed up in the lines of the late poet laureate ;

"The woman's cause is man's ; they rise or sink
Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free."

Any advocacy, therefore, of segregating woman in the great economy of the world's life work and labor finds no favor with Miss Conway, for she knows that the weal and happiness—nay more, the true progress of the race, must grow out of a partnership in which man and woman are of necessity equally interested. Self appointed apostles of woman's rights and woman's advancement may rise up through the centuries, but they will be worsted by nature, for futile and foolish is the attempt to contend with its mighty current.

Katherine Eleanor Conway, poet, essayist and journalist, was born in Rochester, N.Y., September 6, 1853. She comes of good Celtic stock, and in scholarship is to the purple born, both her father and mother being intellectual in their tastes. Indeed for more than a century past the name Conway has been an illustrious one in teaching and journalism. Miss Conway's sister, Miss Mary Conway, is at present the head of the Collegio Americano in Buenos Ayres, Argentine Republic, while her kinsman Rev. John Conway, now a professor in 'St. Thomas' Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., was for many years editor of the North Western Chronicle.

The best part of Miss Conway's