

accepted. His last appointment, which took place a few months ago, was to the great Catholic University of Washington, where he fills the chair of English literature.

Aside from the wealth of Mr. Egan's contributions to journals and magazines, he has published during the past sixteen years the following volumes: *That Girl of Mine*, 1879; *Preludes*, 1880; *Songs*, *Sonnets*, London, 1885; *Garden of Roses*, 1886; *Life Around Us*, 1886; *Novels and Novelists*, 1888; *Patrick Desmond*, 1893; and *Poems and Sonnets*, 1893.

I do not agree with a late critic of Mr. Egan's gifts that his literary work shows either haste, carelessness or crudity. On the contrary I see through it all the conscientious and reposeful artist. It is true he has the defects of all versatile writers who burn their fires too long and stay not hand or brain till every coal is quenched upon the hearth. The best art will not supply the fashioning power of the spirit, and this if it be jaded must languish in the mould.

Our poet and novelist was fortunate enough at a period early in his literary career to win for his work the commendation of such writers as Longfellow, Cardinal Newnan, Stedman and Gilder. These four witnesses of his rare and really fine gifts as a poet tell us that his work is both conscientious and artistic. The opinion of the rabble is worth very little in literature; it might be worth something at an exposition of roots and fat beeves where the product of field and stall, rather than the flowering of mind and soul, is under judgment.

It is claimed that Maurice F. Egan as a poet, has received wide recognition. This to an extent is true. Yet as a master of one form of poetic composition, the sonnet,

which Mr. Egan unquestionably is, he has not yet nearly the audience to which he is by right entitled. Stedman, in his book on American poetry, where he is generous enough to devote a few lines to what he is pleased to term the Irish-American school of singers, sums up the gifts of Maurice Francis Egan with the words, "A sweet and true poet." This, though brief, means a good deal, coming from so able a master of criticism as the author of "The Victorian Poets."

Strange to say, however, William Sharp, the English poet and critic, in his compilation of American Sonnets published in the series of the *Canterbury Poets*, makes no mention of Mr. Egan and his work, though he gives a place in his very defective collection to such mediocre names as Amelie Rives, Ella Wheeler Wilcox and several other erotic and neurotic versifiers. Doubtless Mr. Egan's Irish name hanging over his stall in the hall of Parnassus was too much for Mr. Sharp and he was contented to pass on further and fare worse. It reminds one of the work done by William D. Lighthall in his "Songs of the Great Dominion," where, with characteristic modesty, he gives a place to no less than eight of his own poems taken from a little mediocre volume of some thirty-five pages, but makes no mention of at least half-a-dozen of Irish-Canadian singers whose genius of song is patriotic, tender, and true. Perhaps it was because those sweet voices with an undertone of Old Erin in them jarred on Dr. Lighthall's imperial ear. It is but just to say, however, that some of the poems sent in to the English writer were omitted for the purpose of preserving the symmetry of the work.

So capable a critic as Walter