

### NEW VOLUME OF CANADIAN POETRY.

LITERATURE may not be the foundation upon which nations are built, but without literature national life can scarcely be developed. And the literature must be home-made and not foreign. That which is born of the genius of a foreign pen may demand our attention and excite our admiration. But it is when the soul of a native sings, and sings of the homeland, of its traditions, of its history and of its peculiarities, that there is excited within us that spirit which is the germ of all national life.

Canada is not without her national literature. And, while that literature may not be, perhaps, much larger than a grain of mustard seed, when compared with that of other nations, yet we have something more than even faith upon which to build our expectations of its enlargement. We know, we can see that it is expanding, and that steadily.

A recent evidence of this is the appearance from the press of William Briggs of a little book of poems, "Songs of the Settlement, and Other Poems," from the pen of Thomas O'Hagan. There are, in all, 31 poems, and the most of them have a Canadian environment, and the best of them certainly have.

In the arrangement of the poems, great judgment has been displayed, for the very first, "An Idyl of the Farm," brings one in sympathy at once with the work. And, whether possessing farm life experience or not, most of us will be quite ready to agree with the author when he sings in the first verse of the first poem:

Oh, there's joy in every sphere of life from  
cottage unto throne,  
But the sweetest smiles of Nature beam  
upon the farm above.  
And in memory I go back to the days of  
long ago  
When the tramper shouted "Haw, Hock!"  
"Gee," "G'lang," and "Whoo!"

It is charged against the most of us, and with good reason, that we do not, as Canadians, realize the great debt we owe to the sturdy pioneers who, as they felled the trees, cleared the way for civilization as well as for crops. But this charge cannot be levied against the author of the "Songs of the Settlement," for, in the "The Old Pioneer," after singing of the struggles and hardships of the early settler

... who moved into the settlement  
Way back in Fifty three,  
Before a man had come there,  
Or cut a single tree

he, in the fourth verse, pays this tribute to him.

And here is where the strength lies,  
Of this, our happy land,  
'Twas builded by the grace of toil,  
By strong and patriot hand.

"A Dirge of the Settlement," "The Dance at McDougall's" and "A Lullaby of the Settlement" are all poems which call up to us pioneer life in the Dominion. "A Lullaby of the Settlement" is one of the prettiest little poems in the collection, the first verse of which reads:

Flower of the forest, nursling of dawn,  
Sweet be thy slumber in cradle of light,  
Rock'd by the song of the robin on tree-top,  
Hushed by the lullaby voice of the night;  
Nature, thy mother, is kneeling beside thee,  
Filling thy dreams with the gift of her charm;  
Sleep in thy downy nest, sweet be thy cradle-rest,  
Sleep.

Thomas O'Hagan, the author of the "Songs of the Settlement," was born near



THOMAS O'HAGAN.

Toronto, and St. Michael's College, in that city, and the University of Ottawa were the chief institutions at which he received his early education. He graduated from the latter in 1882. Since then, he has pursued post-graduate studies in history, English, etc., at Syracuse and Cornell Universities, for which he holds the degree of doctor of philosophy. Before becoming known as a poet, Mr. O'Hagan had obtained some prominence as an educationist, having had experience as a teacher in Roman Catholic separate schools, and in high schools and collegiate institutes.

His first volume of poems "A Gate of Flowers," appeared in 1887, and six years later came his second volume, "In Dream-land." "Songs of the Settlement" is now

before the public, and it is to be hoped the little volume of 70 pages will secure the patronage it deserves.

### THE LATE P. O. ALLAN.

P. C. Allan, formerly one of the best-known business men in Toronto, died June 3, 19, as the result of a paralytic stroke. Deceased was 66 years old. Mr. Allan had been in business as a bookseller on King street, Toronto, for about 20 years. About four years ago he retired, selling out to Harold Wilson & Co., and since that time until recently conducted a private bank in Bermuda, where he owned much property. He was born in the north of Scotland, and came to Canada about forty years ago. He was well known in Brantford and Chatham, where he lived before settling in Toronto. Deceased leaves three sons, two daughters, and a widow. The sons are Mr. J. C. Allan, of Bermuda; Dr. T. M. Allan, also of Bermuda, and Mr. Fred. Allan, of Toronto; Mrs. A. J. Rolston, wife of the manager of the Great West Insurance Company for the Maritime Provinces, and Mrs. Sinclair are the daughters. Mrs. P. C. Allan lives in Toronto.

### THE LATE ALEX. TAYLOR.

The news of the death by drowning of Mr. Alex. Taylor, bookseller, Winnipeg, was received with regret by the trade in eastern Canada, where he was well known, he having a number of years ago lived in Lindsay, where he was a clerk in the store of R. Porter. When he settled in Winnipeg his first employment was with the late W. H. Lyons, as clerk. He afterwards managed a store for the same gentleman at Portage la Prairie. On leaving that place he took a position in the stationery department of Donaldson Bros' establishment, one of the pioneer business houses of Winnipeg, where he worked for several years. He then went into partnership with Mr. Joseph Benson, purchased the stationery business of Mr. J. B. Ferguson, and, since the dissolution of the firm some years ago, he carried on a large book and stationery business in his own name, and for the past few years has conducted one of the finest establishments of the kind in western Canada.

The deceased was 42 years of age. He leaves four sisters and two brothers and several other relatives.

The business is believed to have a good surplus, while, in addition to this, deceased carried life insurance, and it is probable the sisters will settle with the creditors and carry on the business.