

CONTEMPORARY IRISH CANADIAN WRITERS.

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HE intellectual wealth of a people is its best and most enduring riches. Consequently, a prominent article of my creed is, that by directing attention to Canadian writers, a Canadian journal consults its own and its subscribers' highest interests. To pursue this train of thought a step further, a Canadian Catholic magazine should, I believe, frequently occupy itself with the condition and progress, particularly the mental progress, of Canadian Catholics, and the remark is applicable in a special manner to such among Catholics as display intellectual aspirations. Still to adhere to the direction taken by my first proposition, while narrowing its application, I hold that Irish Canadians should invariably do everything that lies in their power to exploit the men and women of their race who form the most praiseworthy class, that is, those among them whose intellectual endeavors reflect a lustre upon the Irish in Canada, and through them upon the Irish in Ireland.

Actuated by those convictions, now that the day so dear to Irish hearts, when

"St. Patrick's praise we gaily sing
As he comes smiling linked with Spring"

is at hand, I propose to celebrate the festival in a manner which, I hope, will lead to extensive emulation, that is by compiling a few outline sketches of Irish-Canadian writers. Although many of those I am about to mention are highly deserving, not one of them, I venture to assert without the slightest fear of truthful contradiction, has shared in the praises, so lavishly bestowed by the newspaper and magazine critics throughout the Dominion, upon their associates of other nationalities and other creeds.

In the little assembly of ladies and gentlemen whom I am about to introduce to my readers, I would willingly give precedence to the ladies, were it not that

such extreme gallantry smacks of formality and affectation, two things at which real ladies everywhere bridle, and that, too, without being "New Women," or otherwise eccentric or wild. Another intention of mine was to present the party in couples, like Juno's Swans, lady and gentleman, two by two, but while the unmarried gentlemen would, very probably, prove agreeable and their mates not unwilling, the married gentlemen might object, and if they did not their wives would certainly object. Besides, the arrangement might cause the married ladies some embarrassment. Even if none of those mischiefs happened, the sagacious and bashful Bird of Minerva, under whose "distinguished patronage," as the mural prints express it, this bit of writing is to be given to a world most eager for its possession no doubt would, to quote Tom Hood :

"Obscurely blink in pensive glooms and corners."
as loath to countenance such a vivacious proceeding. A simple plan which will, I hope, give full satisfaction to all concerned, is that of calling the roll without premeditation and almost at hap-hazard. This arrangement commended itself to me in a special manner as, the instant I proceeded to carry it out, the name which sprung up before my mind was that of a young lady—Miss Emily McManus.

The town of Bath, in Western Ontario, takes a laudable pride in claiming Miss McManus as its daughter. She was educated at the Bath Public Schools, Kingston Collegiate Institute, and Queen's University, Kingston. She was graduated at Queen's, in 1894, with the Degree of M.A., having taken First Class Final Honors in English Literature and Political Science. She has published one novel, "The Old, Old Story." It has not been my good fortune to meet with this book although I have searched for it, but if it is as good as some of her shorter stories which I have seen, enough of originality has been employed on "the old old story