

## Nicholas Flood Davin.



ESIDES the big genial and witty Irisman, other men always seemed, and generally felt, dwarfed.

His wonderful intellectual activity was perceived and enjoyed by all who came near him. Old or young, wise or simple, none were too insignificant for his kindly notice, his boundless sympathy.

A prominent figure always in Parliamentary, literary and social circles, he could turn aside to advise a school-girl with aspirations to authorship how to develop and govern her latent talent.

Through the dry desert of arid-speech-making in the House of Commons, the stream of his eloquence sparkled and sang its way to the hearts of his listeners. He could throw a glamour over the dullest subject, evoke response from the coldest breast. The merry blue eye, the magnetic smile, the powerful frame, the ready wit, and the graceful compliment. Who that knew Flood-Davin, can forget these and other characteristics that set their mark upon him so visibly as the poet, the patriot, the scholar and the gentleman. Not twice in a generation does one meet his like. The pity that such fine clay is not always reserved for highest uses! Davin, eager, passionate, ambitious and generous could have risen to any height had not the better struggle for existence warped his great nature and retarded the development of his genius. Perhaps too it was his misfortune to be too easily eloquent in the political arena, a man of such a classic culture, so richly endowed for other aspirations may cheapen himself in opposition. 'Tis easy to believe how worthily he would have figured in the ministerial service of the country rather than on other side of the House of Commons; one is reminded in these days that compel attention to the Northwest, how persistently he urged what is now soon to be done, why was he defeated? Did the nation to whom he gave himself fail to understand him? He is dead, so is the sweet-souled Archie Lampman, and the prizes are seized by others, but Lampman has bequeathed us his sweet verse. Davin's verse, what of it? Sweet and strong, yes, but here too he failed; he was too busy to cultivate this best of nature's gifts; here too, he wrote too easily. But some of it, must be mentioned with Ireland's best and with Canada's most promising. "Young Canada" would make very good reading in our schools. So too "Forward" and "A Song of Canada", "The Canadian Year" is true to the year, and truer still to his own true Celtic nature.