



Book Selections

New and Old

But granting that we have both the will and the sense to choose our friends well, how few of us have the power! or, at least, how limited for most is the sphere of choice! . . . Meantime, there is a society continually open to us, of people who will talk to us as long as we like, whatever our rank or occupation;—talk to us in the best words they can choose, and of the things nearest their hearts. And this society, because it is so numerous and so gentle, and can be kept waiting round us all day long,—kings and statesmen lingering patiently, not to grant audience, but to gain it!—in those plainly furnished and narrow ante-rooms, our bookcase shelves,—we make no account of that company,—perhaps never listen to a word they would say, all day long!—Ruskin.

Some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.—Bacon.

There is always a selection in writers, and then a selection from the selection. . . In comparing the number of good books with the shortness of life, many might well be read by proxy, if we had good proxies; . . . Each shall give us his grains of gold, after the washing; and every other shall then decide whether this is a book indispensable to him also.—Emerson.

On Getting Time to Read

"True, ye Kingly Men of Letters," may be the mental comment or lingering thought of many who scan the above quotations, "but how are we, in these twentieth Century days of crowded life, to find time for reading, even "a selection from the selection?"

Perhaps these and kindred great masters in literature, knowing our circumstances, would reply: In other generations life has been—or seemed—full and work seldom wanting to earnest souls. You must learn to watch against wasted hours and utilize your spare minutes. As one of old explained how he accomplished his task—"Not a day without a line,"—so you must try to plan that in the regular routine of life not a day may die without some stimulating thought being garnered from the records of the really royal writers, whose work endures."

That would not mean of course that we should the less "Go forth under the open sky and list to Nature's teachings," or that we should be indifferent to the lighter side of life.

CANADIAN SINGERS AND THEIR SONGS, is a collection of portraits and autograph poems compiled by Edward S. Caswell, and published by McClelland & Stewart, Toronto. This should be a prized addition to every Canadian book-lover's library. Western "singers" familiar in person to Vancouver city folks are represented by Mrs. Isabel Ecclestone Mackay, and Hartley Munro Thomas.

It is naturally of interest to note that the sonnet appearing in the compilation as the work of the Eastern writer, Alexander Louis Fraser is one, "Kin Unknown," which he contributed to the **BRITISH COLUMBIA MONTHLY**.

With all respect to the novelty of reproducing all the verses in autograph form, we venture to suggest that the worth of the book would have been enhanced had a clear type copy been printed concurrently in every case.

A book on **RECONSTRUCTION** by a writer, (Mr. C. H. D. Robertson) formerly an accountant in Vancouver, is primarily an evidence of good printing service at the command of the publishers, Marshall Brothers Ltd.

It is deplorable to have to say it, but we fear the word used in the title before "Reconstruction" may limit the sale of the book—at least in this part of the Empire—for unhappily to many people anything that suggests a religious connection in a publication is liable to cause attention to it to be left over to what one is tempted to call an "Agrippaian" "more convenient season."

Yet the writer of these notes who knew Mr. Robertson but

slightly, takes pleasure in bearing witness that he holds his book—or booklet if you like, there are less than 100 pages, all good clear type,—one that is more than interesting; it is arresting. No doubt others will read it, as the writer did, at one sitting, and like him find numerous passages worthy of mark and remark. Space prevents further comment at this time, but the price is a modest one for these times, 2/6 in Britain, so it will likely be on the Canadian market for 75c or thereby.

THE RELATION OF THE BRITISH RACE TO PROPHECY

is apt to be thought of by many as a subject of academic discussion only, like far-fetched arguments about Bacon and Shakespeare and kindred controversies. But the reader with an open mind will find not a little to ponder over, and much probably previously unconsidered evidence, and enlightenment on this subject in **PROPHECY, THE WAR AND THE NEAR EAST**, by G. Harold Lancaster, for which there has been so big a demand overseas that a (fifth) "popular edition" has been published.

In the same class and of similar interest are **GOD AND MY BIRTHRIGHT** by J. Llewellyn Thomas; and **THE COMING MIRACLE** by T. B. Westerdale.

The trend of World events in these days and the connection of the British Empire with them are expounded in such a way as should make readers concerned in the life of the race and in individual continuity, give these books more than a cursory perusal. Study and interest must be intensified, too, as momentous developments are assigned to the period extending from three to fourteen years hence. Each of these books is worthy of more space than we can give them together in this issue.

If you are going to the country for a holiday and have not yet read **JANET OF KOOTENAY**, take that book, (by Evah McKowan; McClelland & Stewart, \$1.50, net) with you. If you cannot go from the city, read it anyway, at the Bay or the Beach, and while following the romance of a winsome woman learn not a little incidentally of what may be done in fruit and other farming in the interior of our own unexcelled Farthest West Province.

C.

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