

THE BOOK PAGE

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His Dominion, by William T. Gunn (Canadian Congregational Missionary Society, Forward Movement of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, Board of Home Missions and Social Service of the Presbyterian Church, cooperating through the Canadian Council of the Missionary Education Movement; 269 pages, fully illustrated, including a large, colored Resource Map of Canada; 60c. cloth, 40c. paper).

It would perhaps not be possible anywhere else than in Canada for so many churches to unite in the issue of a volume wherein the missions of their own churches are treated so intimately as in this book of Dr. Gunn's, just issued. It is a feat in cooperation. And it is a singularly attractive and informing piece of writing. This is not a complete history of Canada, or of the churches, but rather "an interpretation, from the Christian point of view, of our Canadian story and of those things in that story which bear upon our present Christian equipment and ability to meet the task of making our Dominion 'His Dominion,' of building in Canada our share of the kingdom of God."

The foundation for Nation Building in Canada, the early days and French Regime, the coming of the English and the century of preparation, Protestant Beginnings and Development, the Romance of early Home Missions, the new Home Missions, the incoming tide from all nations, and Canada's Century, are treated in as many chapters. One does not know which to admire most, the author's breadth of view, his comprehensiveness of his information, his Christian charity and vividness of his account of present conditions and problems, or his unvarying vigor and felicity of style and presentment. His *Dominion* is a piece of real literature, and whilst useful as a Mission Study book will be eagerly read by young and old. Dr. Gunn has laid all the churches under a debt of gratitude, for, whilst, naturally, prominence is given to Protestants and Protestant missions, the great work, especially in the earlier days, of the Roman Catholic Fathers is given its full place.

Letters and Diary of Alan Seeger (S. B. Gundy, Toronto, 218 pages, \$1.25). The poems of this young American, who out of his great love for France enlisted with the Foreign Legion at the beginning of the War, made a deep impression in France and England as well as in the United States. In this new book we have arranged in chronological order letters to his mother, father and friends along with extracts from his diary. These have not been embellished by any remodelling but stand as they came red-hot from the hero's pen. With a literary career before him, he chose to enlist as a private. Sensitive to the joy and promise of life, so that his aim was to enjoy, under the guidance of the best in conscience, thought and feeling, every minute to the full, he found his fulness of life in the struggle for liberty and justice. Bearing heavy burdens, marching weary miles, sleeping in filthy dug-outs, he still had an

eye for the natural beauty of the landscape. Enduring the weariness of inactivity he longed for the victorious charge. At last it came on July 4th, 1916, when he laid down his life. Some time previously, he had written his mother,—"You must not be anxious about my not coming back. The chances are about ten to one that I will. But if I should not you must be proud, like a Spartan mother, and feel that it is your contribution to the triumph of the cause whose righteousness you feel so keenly."

The Tale of a Tank, by Harold Ashton (Mussos Book Company, Toronto, 250 pages, \$1.25), is a series of short sketches which have well been called "lively." Indeed, if the reader is unacquainted with the author he will save himself some guessing if he prepares himself for a streak of the Leacock humor. Mingled with this, is much pathos and the whole is enveloped in a well informed and original style. The sketches may be said to radiate about four centres, the army, the navy, a small English village and the casual acquaintance. "The Tale of a Tank" is the first story in the book and in it we make the acquaintance of "Tugby Sparrow," a former coroner's assistant, now serving in France, and we enter with a happy wonder into his first experience in the first tank "Topsy." While the stay-at-home may object to the fun that is made of the horror of the War, he will remember with profit the effort of Bainsfather and others to make us see with the soldier, its comical features. However, the book is not all laughter any more than the sketches are all of War. Many of the reading public who have been "fed up" on War stories will follow with pleasure the delightful stories of days and ways of peace, which are after all the normal state of things and to which our hearts go out with longing.

The optimism of **All's Well**, a new book of verse by John Oxenham (McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, Toronto, 165 pages, \$1.00), has been reached after, not before, an earnest struggle with the floods and rocks of the present shipwreck of civilization. The prologue, which also runs into epilogue, reminds one of Browning's "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." But the brightness is especially for "those who have so nobly responded to the Call, and those who, with quiet faces and breaking hearts, have so bravely bidden them 'God-speed.'" Our poet naturally looks at the horror from the civilian's standpoint which, to the fighter, may savor at times of mere emotionalism, but which finds an echo in the hearts of those who are not privileged to share in the actual conflict. On the whole, we meet with an orthodoxy in faith that is at least refreshing after the groping utterances of some of our present day writers. Oxenham indicates stern days of trial ahead of us in which we shall be proved, to see whether we have been worthy of the sacrifices made and whether we are able to rise to the demands of righteousness.

"Take it to heart! This ordeal has its meaning,
By no fell chance has such a horror come,
Take it to heart! nor count indeed on winning
Until the lesson has come surely home."

Over the Top by Arthur Guy Empey (William Briggs, Toronto, 315 pages, \$1.50), derives its title