

ON THE LINE

The Girl at the Half-Way House. By E. Hough. (Heinemann. 4s. net.)—The Day of War, the Day of the Buffalo, the Day of the Cattle, the Day of the Plough, are the last four of the days which went to the creation of America. The author is filled with the consciousness of the great work in hand, and succeeds in giving his men and women not only life but something of the heroic air and movement. From the storming of the trenches before Louisberg in chapter ii. to the surrender of Mary Ellen in the tram-car on the last page, neither the story nor the characters ever fall below themselves. Of course the hero and heroine, though quite satisfactory, are not the pick of the basket: that place is undoubtedly reserved for Battersleigh, formerly "lance-sergeant in the ould Tinth Rigiment," and now pioneer, speculator, and uncrowned king of Ellisville, the town at the end of the trail. "Never yet was Batty without the arms and the appar'l of a gintleman": and if only for the way in which this boast was maintained on the occasion of "The First Ball at Ellisville," he deserves to be remembered no less than Captain Costigan himself.

The very air of the North breathes fresh and strong in the lovely tales **From a Swedish Homestead**, by Selma Lagerlöf. (Heinemann. 6s.)—Rare is this fragrance of a foreign land around us whilst we read; few writers—at most but one or two of those acquainted with human nature—