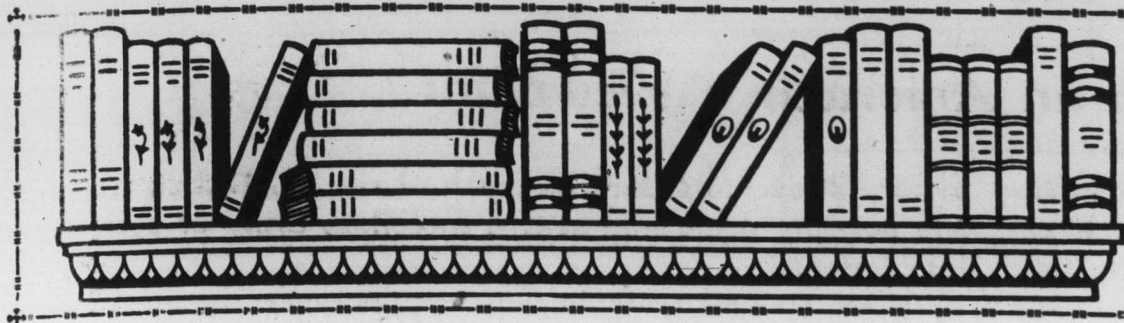




Book Selections

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.

"Every Man for Himself"

Hopkins Moorhouse is already somewhat known to literary fame through the publication the other year of "Deep Furrows," of which a timely notice was contributed to this magazine by Mr. Francis Dickie, one of our own Farthest West story-writers.

This second book is of a very different type. Avowedly a story "purely fictitious," and "with characters therein not even composite portraits," it is none the less a record of exciting events which should hold the interest of the reader to the end.

The thread of the story is connected with a contribution to a political party fund, with the disappearance of which in transit are involved good and bad characters alike. The inevitable hero and heroine are well-drawn and attractive types, and both undergo more than an ordinary share of adventure jointly and severally before the climax.

Though "Every Man for Himself" is from first to last a novel, the author has one or two serious passages worthy of more than passing notice. Below we quote a few and leave them to speak for themselves and Mr. Moorhouse.

"Just a Beginning."

Only of late had he begun to analyse things for himself, and it had been something of a shock to discover that a college education was just a beginning—that beyond the campus of his alma mater spread a workaday world which scoffed at dead languages and went in for a living wage, which turned from isosceles triangles and algebraic conundrums to solve the essential problems of food and clothing and shingled roofs. It was a new viewpoint which planted doubts where what he had supposed to be certainties had been wont to blossom.

"Successful Politicians."

Phil Kendrick had begun to think for himself, and his study of political history had awakened him to the knowledge that there was a very "practical" side to politics as they existed throughout the country just then—that successful politicians too often were men who regarded the whole thing as a game wherein the end justified the means, the end being to carry elections.

The Weight of Public Office.

When you ever accept a public office in later life, try to look upon it as a sacred trust to be fulfilled according to the dictates of conscience. Then you will begin to understand what is meant by 'burden of effort' and 'the heat of the day.'

The Tendency to Discredit Politics.

It is no sinecure to hold public office and administer a pub-

lic trust, and I am moved to protest most earnestly against the public tendency to discredit politics and the men who are devoting their energies—frequently at great personal inconvenience and loss—to the government of the country. There are those who cannot seem to admit that it is possible for a man to enter the political arena and remain as honest and sincere in public life as he has been as a private citizen. Such a condition of the public mind is to be deplored, even as the past events upon which the condition is based, are to be deplored. If the people look upon government as a joke, the joke is on them; for their government is what they make of it or permit it to be.

The People's Responsibility.

It is my belief that below all government, like the sure-rock foundation of a worth-while edifice, must lie the spirit of fair dealing and a law-abiding citizenship. Let the people determine that corruption in politics will spell political ruin instead of personal aggrandizement and see how swiftly every political yacht will trim its sails. The cry that politics are so rotten that the men who count most in their communities will have nothing to do with active participation in government will then cease and we will have genuine public service. . . .

As long as party success and corporation support dictate our political standards, so long will we have men like Nickleby there attempting corruption, so long will political leadership be forced to dance for its balance upon shifting platforms.

All reading Canadians, and particularly Western Canadians, should include this book among their holiday season stories. The price is \$1.75, and the publishers The Musson Book Company, Limited, Toronto. (C)

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