

Literary Notes

A WORD FROM KIPLING.

THE "Canadian Courier" of last week contained a reference to the Calgary despatch concerning Mr. Kipling's alleged investments in South Africa and Canada. The distinguished author, who visited Toronto last week, received the "Courier's" comment and wrote in reply an extremely pleasant note which concludes: "Thank you for the delightfully comic account of my 'fortunate investments' in South Africa and Canada. I very much wish this were true or that I had the pleasure of knowing Lord Strathcona.

"Very sincerely,
"RUDYARD KIPLING."

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Dr. W. J. Dawson, who is to conduct evangelistic services in Winnipeg in the church of which Rev. C. W. Gordon ("Ralph Connor") is pastor, has a literary record of more than usual interest. Dr. Dawson is a Cornishman by birth and is the son of a Methodist minister. At an early age the future evangelist entered the Congregational ministry and soon became known as one of the most prominent members of that influential Non-Conformist body. Several years ago Dr. Dawson came to this continent on a lecture tour and afterwards published his American addresses under the heading, "The Evangelistic Note." The volume attracted general attention on account of the somewhat rare union of deeply spiritual feeling with delicacy and finish of literary expression. "Makers of English Fiction" and "Makers of English Prose" also proved that the evangelistic author has a remarkably wide acquaintance with the literature of his native land and as remarkable critical discrimination. But Dr. Dawson's latest achievement entitled "A Prophet in Babylon" is likely to become more widely known than any of his former volumes and has already, although a work of fiction, furnished Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis with the matter for a startling discourse.

"A Prophet in Babylon" is a book which is sure to provoke discussion, for it is an attack on the conventional church-goer's attitude towards the Great Submerged, and concerns itself with the retirement of a fashionable pastor from his charge and his final absorption in work where he is brought into immediate relations with New York's poorest and neediest.

It is rather curious that an Englishman should have written such a striking story of New York life. Of the author's discernment of character there is no finer instance than this paragraph describing Deacon Roberts and his wife:

"There are many people of this description to be found in all large cities—people to whom the city as a vital entity does not exist. They never go to a theatre or a concert; they take no part in those intellectual conclaves where the movements of art and literature are discussed; they never look upon a celebrated person, or are present at an historic occasion; they remain provincials with a provincialism more inelastic than any other, the provincialism of cities. The only New York they know is bounded by the business office on one side and the apartment house on the other. They are ignorant alike of the splendour and the squalor that surround them. They are like the peasants of some war-devastated country, who see without curiosity the spears and banners of contending hosts marching hither and thither, themselves content to go on tilling the soil, without so much as a question concerning the tremendous issues which antagonise the nations. The capacity for the tragic is not in them. They would stick to the narrow round of daily habit even though the Last Trumpet blew, and would resent an interruption which disclosed to them the Gates of Paradise." Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company.

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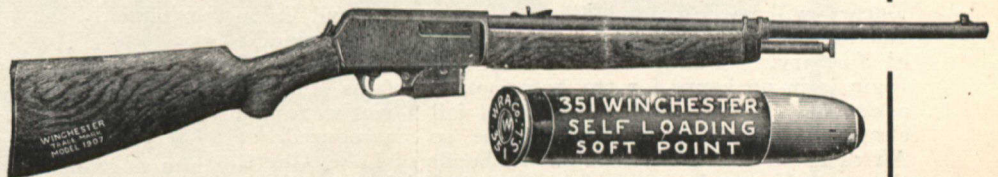
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