

would apply in actuality or not. It makes it easy for the writer, but it does not convince the careful reader. "Joyce of the North Woods" is therefore a novel that does not present a clear background; but the character of *Joyce* is pretty well drawn. *Joyce* is the daughter of a lumberman, and she has never been "South," beyond the hills that divide her world from the great world beyond. She marries a man of St. Angé, and for a time leads the sordid life of a woman of St. Angé—sordid, except for the part that *Gaston*, a young man, seeking health and forgetting his past, has to play in it. The development of her character, along the lines that her womanly instinct sets, is the best part of the story. In her case, good seems to come out of evil, or, at least, to follow evil. She is abandoned by her husband. Then she goes to *Gaston*, and in defiance even of the social demands of St. Angé, lives with him until the obstacles to their marriage are removed. (Toronto: The Musson Book Company. Cloth, \$1.25).

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ONE of the saddest features of a war is that it is followed by a deluge of fiction, in which its campaigns play a more-or-less important part. The Civil War in the United States is burning yet in novels, where a hero of the Blue weds a heroine of the Gray, after years of vicissitude. The Boer War has afforded an excuse for South African romance, which is hardly realised as yet. In the story, "Forged in Strong Fires," the writer, John Ironside, tells a decidedly readable tale of the stormy days in that part of the British Empire. The first scene of almost pastoral peace, where the better class of English and Dutch settlers enjoy picnic and dance, is in vivid contrast to the horrors which follow. Two women—or, rather, girls—appear to dominate the story and one hardly knows whom to admire the more—*Mamie*, the practical and matter-of-fact, who proves such a

tower of strength to her mother, and the helpless ones who have been sent to England—or *Joyce*, with her wonderful insight and loyalty, who remains to face the storm in South Africa. While there is nothing remarkable about the writer's style, the uncanny touch in *Joyce's* comprehension and control of the African nature lends an unusualness which makes the narrative more memorable than the average war story. The spirit shown in treatment of Boer and British characteristics is admirable in its fairness and freedom from partiality. (Boston: Little, Brown & Company).

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WITH wise foresight, the publishers of "The Golden Silence," the newest book of C. N. and A. M. Williamson, enclosed in it a notice: "This story is utterly different from anything the Williamsons have hitherto done." In these days of automobileless distinction such an announcement predisposes one to see what the Williamsons can write that is a departure from their rather tiresome motor stories. But after one has struggled through more than five hundred pages on the strength of that notice there is considerable doubt of the wisdom of such a move on the part of the authors. One thing that could be said of the motor stories was that they had some value as travel sketches; but the most that can be said of "The Golden Silence" is that it is clean. From the title, it is evidently intended as a desert tale, but compared with the atmosphere of Hichens this story might have been written in a kitchen window. It is to be hoped, for the sake of good literature, that Hichens is right. "The Golden Silence" starts with a disagreeable impression, and there is no reason for reconstructing this feeling to the end. A United States girl goes into the desert to find her sister. That is the theme. And when the