

THE BOOK PAGE

The diary of an amateur farmer is what **The Common Lot**, by Sydney H. Preston (*The Copp, Clark Company*, Toronto, 316 pages, price \$1.25) sets out to be. But after all, the diary is less concerned with crops and soils, than with the love which comes to all sorts and conditions of men: to Jenny the maid, and her doughty lover Joseph, who, when Jenny flouted him, started sewing on a sleeping bag, "and the day the bag is finished I start for the Klondike" (the adventures and final end of that same sleeping bag form one of the most amusing minor episodes of the story). But love came also to the amateur farmer and Miss Olivia, charming, musical, and with a sense of humor; and to the inimitable Mrs. Biggles, who had married "Biggles," in spite of the fact that he played a trombone while she adored a "cornick." Mrs. Biggles, with her strong imagination, her humorous philosophy of life, and her shrewd strategies and sayings, plays a large part in the book, and is a joy indeed. The story throughout has a delicate freshness and spontaneity of humor which sets it apart at once from so many of the novels of the day. Mr. Preston is a Canadian, and widely known by his short magazine stories. This is his second book, and those who read *The Common Lot* will look eagerly for a third.

The Salvation Army has become a mighty force for the uplifting of mankind. There is an extraordinary variety in its operations, and they are carried on in almost every country. It has lifted multitudes from vice and poverty to a decent and

useful life. Many who looked at it askance in the early days of its work, are now loud in its praise. Behind all the marvelous achievements of this unique organization, stands the strong and striking personality of its founder and leader. General Booth is past seventy-seven, but his increasing years have not robbed him of the fiery resolution, the unflinching resourcefulness, and the indomitable courage, which have crystallized into one of the greatest religious movements of modern times. We needed a life of General Booth. Mr. T. F. G. Coates has given it to us, in a vivid picture of the great hero of faith and the rise of the army he leads. **The Prophet of the Poor: The Life Story of General Booth** (U. C. Tract Society, Toronto; Hodder & Stoughton, London, 354 pages, \$1.50), is as good a bit of biography as we have seen for many a day. The book rightly gives a high place to the General's devoted and talented wife, "the mother of the Salvation Army." To her, scarcely less than to her husband, the Salvation Army is indebted especially for its earlier successes. Chapters of great interest deal with the Army's work in rescue homes, slums and shelters, the women's work in the Boer war, and with its "colonies" over the sea. The world-wide scope of its plans and achievements are skillfully described.

In, **Spiritually Fit: A Young Man's Equipment**, by Albert G. Mackinnon, M.A. (Olipphant, Anderson and Ferris, 189 pages, 75c. net), the author places himself beside the young man who is setting out to make his place in the wide world. Each of the ten chapters is just a simple, frank talk concerning

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