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## Literary Notes

*The Man Who Stole the Earth*, by W. Holt White. Copp, Clark Co., Toronto.

From Alexander to Napoleon, there have been mere humans who have desired to control the universe. But the task has proved too formidable for battle-axes and muskets. Air-ships and high power explosives were the means used by John Strong to bring all creation under his sway. It would spoil the effect of Mr. White's highly imaginative and dramatic narrative should we tell how far his conquering hero triumphed in his remarkable ambition.

\* \* \*

*The Sporting Chance*, by Alice and Claude Askew. Ward, Locke & Co.

All lovers of the horse and the racing game will find "The Sporting Chance" to their liking. Those who have followed the race-track revelations at Ottawa recently know that the paddock, the betting ring, and the judge's stand teem with romance. English tracks are no exception, as readers of the breathless pages of "The Sporting Chance" will realise.

\* \* \*

Somebody called Mr. Hamar Greenwood a foreigner during his recent electoral campaign, but that was a slight insult compared with that meted out to his brother Canadian, Sir Gilbert Parker, who was charged by some Bohemian litterateurs with being a plagiarist. A radical paper, called the *Star*, printed an attack on Sir Gilbert by an American, Benjamin A. Nead, which claimed that the novelist in the "Seats of the Mighty" had presented facts, ostensibly the product of his own imagination but really cribbed from an old book, "Memoirs of Major Robert Stobo of the Virginia Regiment." Thirty parallel passages were quoted as proof. Sir Gilbert explained matters to his constituency. He admitted that he had used material from the book in developing his character of Moray; but he denied that acknowledgment had not been publicly made for his indebtedness to it. Sir Gilbert submitted that when "The Seats of the Mighty" began its serial run in the *Atlantic Monthly*, there was the following note after the title: "Being the Memoirs of Capt. Robert Stobo, sometime officer in the King's Regiment, and afterward of Amherst's Regiment."

\* \* \*

*The Literary Digest* has the following comment on Mr. Charles G. D. Roberts' "The Backwoodsmen."

*The Backwoodsmen*, by Charles G. D. Roberts. Published by the Macmillan Company, New York; \$1.50.

Mr. Roberts gives us fourteen stories of men and animals and one story of men only—fifteen in all—and we like the animals better than the men, perhaps because we know less of animals and therefore are not so critical. The story-teller can do almost anything he likes with an animal so long as he is interesting, and the chief trick of making an animal interesting is to endow him with a sort of childlike humanity. But pictures of men must in some way conform with universal experience, and Mr. Roberts' men do not always do this. We may doubt, for instance, if such an one as "Red McWha" was even so "gentled" as in Mr. Roberts' story, while other of his human characters are too artificial to be spontaneous. "Nature faking" is permissible with animals, because we don't know enough of them individually to be sure that it is faking; but the standard for human beings is much more exacting. Nevertheless the fourteen stories are good reading.

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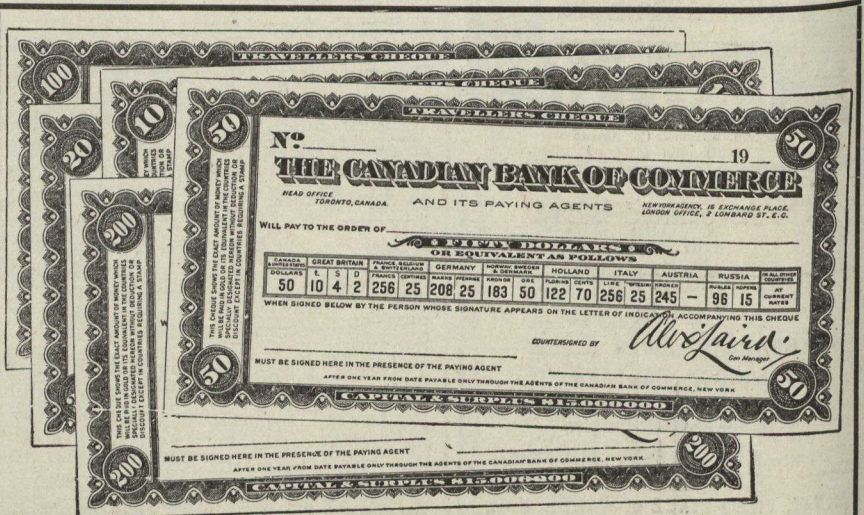
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