

## LITERARY NOTES

## A QUATRAIN.

MR. PETER McARTHUR, the Canadian humorist whose work is known to both New York and London publications, has recently been visiting his native country, enjoying the renewal of old associations. Mr. McArthur has lost none of the true Canadian's enthusiasm for the scenes of his own land and, on hearing our *Chant National*, sung by two French-Canadian boatmen whose voices were equal to the emotional demands of that splendid song, he expressed the warmest sympathy with its sentiment.

On the following day he sent to the friend who had shared his enjoyment the following:

No matter the words, if the thought be golden,  
No matter the tongue, if the heart be true;  
No matter the creed—or new or olden—  
When all are doing what each should do.

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## THE CLIFF END.

THE best English novel since the publication of *Joseph Vance* is *The Cliff End*, by a new novelist, Mr. E. C. Booth. It is a tale of Yorkshire which fairly steeps the reader in the atmosphere of the quiet village whose romance centres about *Pam*, a goddess-like young person, a Diana who condescends to act as post-girl. As in the first novel by Mr. William De Morgan, the reader feels the Dickens influence in the spirit of humorous benevolence which pervades the narrative. After the novels of fashionable life, stuffed with cheap epigrams, and the motor yarns redolent of gasoline, this genuine work of the novelist's art comes as a salty breath across the moors. May we have many such books from the writer of *The Cliff End*, with heroines as pure and radiant as *Pamela Searle*! Toronto: The Macmillan Company.

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## THE FIRING LINE.

DR. JOHNSON defined a novel as "a smooth tale, generally of love." Just what Boswell's burly idol meant by the adjective "smooth" is not for this age to know. But Mr. Robert Chambers' latest novel seems a modern exemplification of the Doctor's idea. There appear to be two literary personalities in Mr. Chambers' constitution. One of them writes such good stuff as *The Search for the Unknown* and *Iole*; the other indulges in popular tales of the "loviest" kind of love, with multi-millionaire environment. Such was *The Younger Set* which was one of the very best sellers which have recently made glad the heart of the publisher. *The Firing Line*, which has just appeared in book form and which ran its exciting course as a serial in the *Saturday Evening Post*, is a novel, sure of popularity with the younger set and much finer in workmanship than its predecessor.

The scene of the more dramatic events in the story is Florida and all the writer's descriptive skill is lavished on that strange, exotic land which is brought vividly before the fancy of the northern reader. Mr. Cardross, one of the traditional plutocrats with more money than he can conveniently spend, has an adopted daughter, *Sheila*, whose beauty is sadly distracting to all masculine beings in the neighbourhood. Her lover, *Hamil*, is a fine specimen of athletic American

manhood, who finally attains the desire of his heart.

The novel would merit hardly more than "a pretty love story" notice, were it not for *Louis Malcourt*, a Mephistophelian gentleman with a streak of chivalry in his sinister character. *Malcourt*, who after many intimations of his intent, finally takes his own unsatisfactory life, is not to be forgotten—a bit melodramatic, perhaps, but a striking figure in his reckless boyish abandon.

By the way, why does Mr. Chambers find it necessary to represent all Englishmen as atrocious cads? He followed that policy in the *Maid-at-Arms* and no doubt pleased the Anglophobian gallery. No one objects to an occasional villain from the British Isles; but to represent all inhabitants of those despised regions as entirely lacking in virtue and honour is an unimaginative proceeding.

*The Firing Line* is a novel of marked interest in narrative style; but the "smart set" with its facile divorces is hardly worthy of such ability as produced Mr. Chambers' early works. One might also inquire why he spoils a good Celtic name like *Sheila* by mis-spelling it throughout the volume. Toronto: McLeod and Allen.

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## A STORY BY THEODORE ROBERTS.

A NEW novel, *Captain Love*, by Theodore Roberts, is attracting the attention of such as enjoy a story of adventure. The *Argonaut* thus sums up the plot and style of the narrative: "Two gentlemen riding toward London some time in the last century are assailed by highwaymen. One of them is killed and his companion so seriously injured that when he recovers his health his memory is gone. He assumes the name of Captain Love, plunges into the fashionable life of London, and undergoes a series of adventures with lovely ladies, highwaymen, duellists, and all the reckless and delightful elements of an irresponsible day. Eventually he recovers his identity and his sweetheart of other days, and everything ends as it should. The story is thoroughly wholesome and skilfully told."

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## DEVOTION.

BY ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.

He saw Love gently take her by the hand,  
And Beauty leaning down to kiss her face,  
But she sought not his eyes, for loud and clear  
Youth piped her onward to Life's feasting-place.

He saw Love leave her at the gate of tears,  
And Beauty hide between the sunset skies;  
But as she turned, a beggar from Life's feast,  
She found her heaven waiting in his eyes. —Smart Set.

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## NO DICKENS STATUE.

A PROPOSAL of the town council of Rochester, England, to set up a statue of Dickens in their gardens has fallen through on account of the objection of the novelist's son, Mr. H. F. Dickens, who sent to the council this extract from his father's will: "I conjure my friends on no account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial, or testimonial whatever. I rest my claims to the remembrance of my countrymen upon my published works, and to the remembrance of my friends upon their experience of me in addition thereto."

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