



The Gentleman from Indiana. By BOOTH TARKINGTON. Toronto: William Briggs.

The story opens with a graphic but somewhat discursive description of a western town in the State of Indiana. One of those crude but original spots of civilization inseparable from recent settlement and western freedom, where individual personality stands out in rude relief, and where environment and history, commercial development or egotistic citizenship provide a field for the exercise of unusual ability on the part of some great soul whose lot is by fate or the force of circumstances thrown upon it. There is nothing impossible in the tale, as probably like thrilling scenes and evil doings may be read any day in the western news of the lawless communities in that land of liberty. The plot is dramatic and well held together. The *Six Cross Roads*, the cancer sore to the law-abiding citizens, are excellent foils to the scenes in the judge's house and garden, and the persevering editor of the western paper, who works so hard for the right. The story is quite sensational enough for the most exacting novel reader, and is no doubt a faithful picture of life in the western towns.

Dionysius, the Weaver's Heart's Dearest. By BLANCH WILLIS HOWARD, Author of "One Summer," etc. Toronto: William Briggs.

Any one who has read "One Summer," that delightfully written idyl in prose, will need no further recommendation to purchase "Dionysius, the Weaver's Heart's Dearest," by the same loving pen. But for those who have not, I would say, open the tastefully gotten up, clearly printed volume at any page as you stand by the counter in the crowded shops at this season, and read but a few lines. It will be enough to ensure the volume being sent home with the other purchases of the day.

The picture drawn of the life among the hills where life is so hard a struggle for existence, of the gentle weaver and the child who, born to him in his later life, has more of his inner refined nature than her older brothers and sisters is good. The child whose genius leads her into wild pranks, and therefore, under the condemnation of her more practical mediocre relatives, yet in whose character there is enough of the practical mother to make her a capable woman, is an interesting, lovable character. There is no padding. The story of the girl's life, and how the environments into which her career takes her moulds or warps her life, is told with a straight unerring pen. There are gems of description and character sketches, as for instance, the French chef who teaches the girl his art, its dignity and possibilities, and the grave acceptance by his pupil of the trust bestowed upon her. The scene in the kitchen of the Schloss when the adored Countess Nekla comes to Vroni for a lesson in cooking that she may be the more useful to "Dear Eck," when he gets that secretariatship in Africa for which he is seeking and they are married; or again, when the story of their life is told, the scene on the hillside where the girl, who, fallen a victim to her faith in her lover, saves the countess, standing on the brink of a like precipice, from falling.

How Vroni wins her way to a lucrative position by her knowledge of cooking

and preparing perfect lunches, dinners, and suppers; how an evil genius mars her young life, and how the strong, true nature reasserts itself and shakes off the cloak which would condone to the world her shame, yet fetter her to misery, is well told in this strongly written, fascinating story.

There is a subtle knowledge of the workings of the girl mind in princess or peasant, the first depicted in the pursuit of Vroni by her lover, and the second in the scene between Vroni and the Countess on the hill, when Vroni the peasant, who has tasted the bitterness of the draught, pleads for the peace of Nekla the Countess, and by the power of her love, takes from her the cup of sorrow. "Dionysius, the Weaver's Heart's Dearest," will have many readers, and few will lay it down without a sense that the author has told of life and treated the sorrows of shame from a higher standpoint than the events which form the keystone to the plot are usually studied.

A Sister to Evangeline—The Story of Yvonne de L'amourie. By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS, Author of "A Forge in the Forest," "Earth Enigmas," "A History of Canada," etc. Toronto: George N. Morang & Co., Limited.

The plot of this story centres around the girl whose gentle wit, beauty and grace has won the love of two men of widely opposite temperaments and characteristics, and is framed in the stirring events of the expulsion of the Acadians, that most pathetic page of Canadian history. The rivals have all the individual characteristics of their nationalities. The English Quaker, the French Canadian soldier, each mould their conduct on the traditions of their race and meet as men, respecting, honoring each other in their bitter rivalry. We meet again Grd, the fantastic madman, whose strange influence over the dark schemes of the Black Abbe we were familiar with in "The Forge in the Forest," and as before, find him one of the strongest of the threads woven through the story. We are given a nearer view of him, and e'er the tale is fully told learn the reason why the wicked priest dreads the wierd cry and the espionage of the madman. It is a gruesome tale, but told with the strength of simple language and wise reticence.

Mother Pêche, the old woman whose "tales of wizardry, had charmed their youth," is another interesting character, whose soothsaying runs like an undercurrent of fateful warning through the story. She "lived to do good deeds, and loved to think she did them from an ill motive. Her witchcraft, devoutly believed in by herself, and by a good half of Grand Pré as well, was never known to curse, but ever to bless; yet its white magic she called black art. There was no one sick, there was no one sorrowful, there was no child in all Grand Pré, but loved her; yet it was her whim to believe herself feared, and in hourly peril of anathema."

The cloud of coming sorrow which hung over the lives of all who then dwelt in that fated valley, the wickedness in high places which was to draw down so much misery upon the innocent, the rumors and counter rumors, the fear and uncertainty which bade them trust in none, least of all in the English who were their true friends, is well told in the story of Yvonne's lovers and their

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adventures. The story of "A Sister of Evangeline" has perhaps more than any of Roberts' former works an indefinable charm which only genius can bestow. We read it as no mere tale of imagination, but with attention so absorbed, interest so chained to the page, that we feel the author has lived the life while he penned the page, bringing to his genius a store of knowledge of historic annals of the past and close the book with the firm conviction that much of the story told was gleaned from old letters or historic archives to which the author has had access, and by his genius made to live again. Such work as this is not alone a novel to charm but a powerful factor in attracting attention to the value, picturesqueness and romance of Canada's past, winning others to study and appreciate its history.

Active Service. By STEPHEN CRANE. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is a decided disappointment to the reader. A knowledge of the author's former works anticipated something better. When all thoughts are on the actual "Active Service" in Africa, the title is one to attract; and no matter how well the book may be written or how interesting the plot might be, without the anticipation of something connected with real active service, the result would be disappointment. We can rouse up no interest in the scatter-brained professor, his class, and the autocratic though ill-bred newspaper editor, who, as war correspondent, goes to the scene of active service during the Turko-Grecian war to rescue them at the bidding of a sensation monger for the columns of a local paper, that copy may be supplied possessing that personal attribute so dear to the sensation-loving reading public. One puts down the book with a sense that the majority of the characters were thrown in haphazard and left to sort themselves.

Suspense. By H. S. MERRIMAN. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Company, Limited.

There is a subtle strength about Mr. Merriman's men and women which is very difficult to put into words. The personality of each seems to impress itself upon the reader without his knowing exactly why it does so. We would emphasize that word "personality" in speaking of them, for it is the personal rather than the intellectual or physical element in them that influences us, and makes them so different from the creations of many other authors. They are not paragons of wit and beauty, and yet they are far from commonplace. There is in his heroes and heroines a quiet forcefulness of character which is very pleasing, a certain reserve force, as it were, which gives the

reader confidence in them in any emergency. And Mr. Merriman has the art of bringing his readers into very real contact with his people, so that one experiences, after reading this book, much the same feeling of invigoration that comes from meeting strong, self-reliant men and women whose very presence affects us.

For Book Borrowers.

I of my Spenser quite bereft,
Last Winter sore was shaken;
Of Lamb I've but a quarter left,
Nor could I save my Bacon.

They pick'd my Locke, to me far more
Than Brummah's patent worth,
And now my losses I deplore
Without a Home on earth.

They still have made me slight returns,
And thus my grief divide;
For, oh! they've cured me of my Burns,
And eased my Akenside.

But all I think I shall not say,
Nor let my anger burn,
For as they have not found me Gay,
They have not left me Sterne.

—Notes and Queries.

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