



**THE YUKON TRAIL.** By William Macleod, Maine. Thomas Allen, Toronto.

**A**LMOST, but not quite, a Canadian story, the Yukon Trail has at least one big Canadian character, in Colby Macdonald, who is depicted at first as the heavy villain of the piece, but turns out to be a much better man than he seemed to be at the start of the story. Macdonald is a well-drawn character, true to that kind of rough-daring life, but not merely a raw-meat type. His love for Sheba O'Neill is a powerful affair most originally painted. His rival in love and in plot is the United States mining inspector, Gordon Elliott, who is supposed to be the true hero of the piece and whose experiences bucking against the Macdonald clan of interests makes the bulk of this most interesting and sit-up o' nights kind of story. The story is very well written and should be popular with all those who like a high percentage of strength coupled with an element of tenderness.

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**RUSSIA IN 1916.** By Stephen Graham. Cassell and Co., Ltd., Toronto. \$1.25.

**S**OME ten years or so ago Mr. Graham resigned a lucrative position in London, England, and went to Russia. During that period he travelled far and wide, covering practically the whole country. Indeed, when war broke out he was on the Russo-Chinese boundary, a thousand miles from a railway. The knowledge he acquired during these years has stamped him as an authority on Russia and its peoples and problems. In his new book, "Russia in 1916," he describes the life of the people under the stress of the war. His comparison of conditions as they were before the war and as they existed in 1916 is highly instructive. He touches upon Literature and Art, and speaks of the value of prohibition not as a war measure only but as a permanent, uplifting force in the life of the people. In the light of subsequent events, his chapter on the "Prospects of Peace" makes rather curious reading. It is a book, however, that we should all read. Authoritative and well-written, it will do much to correct our information concerning this the present "dark horse" of what I might call the Grand Alliance.

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**CANADA, THE SPELLBINDER.** By Lillian Whiting. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., Toronto. \$2.00.

**I**T is not given to most of us to travel the length and breadth of this land of ours, therefore, we have to fall back upon the writings of those more fortunate than ourselves. There are now quite a number of books on Canada. One of the best of these that we have seen is "Canada, the Spellbinder." Miss Whiting, who is a traveller and writer of note, opens her book with a chapter on the "Creative Forces of Canada," in which she gives brief but vivid

sketches of the men and institutions which have shaped and directed the destinies of the Dominion. She then proceeds in the succeeding ten chapters to describe the beauties and the wonders and the commercial developments and possibilities of the provinces and the large cities, enriching the narrative with interesting bits of historical information or of folk-lore. In another chapter she pays high tribute to our very creditable list of Canadian poets, and she closes her book with a chapter on "The Call of the Canadian West." Numerous excellently reproduced illustrations help to bring more vividly before the reader the scenes she depicts. It is an exceedingly well-written and entertaining book which should not only bring to those who do not know Canada (if indeed there be any such) a full realization of the grandeur and beauty of its scenery and the wondrous opportunities for home-making that it offers, but should enable us Canadians to realize that we ought to make the jewel of our citizenship worthy of the fair surroundings in which it has been set. Its principal fault is a noticeable lack of proportion. Scarcely anything, for instance, is said about the C.P.R., the Mendelssohn Choir or The T. Eaton Co.

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**CHIN MUSIC WITH A MARTIAL NOTE.** By Keble Howard. S. B. Gundy, Toronto. 35 cents.

**I**T is to laugh—that's all. "Chin Music" isn't a novel and it isn't a play. Nor is it a volume of essays. It is not a philosophy of life but it is a sure cure for the blues. In some thirty bright, witty dialogues Mr. Keble Howard hits off in kindly fashion the follies and the heroisms, the tragedies and the comedies in the lives of the men and women of England who cannot go to the Front. It is all the more interesting because some of their problems are ours too. Get it and read it and thank the gods that in these days of strife and stress we are top-dogs and so may keep from cracking up under the strain by laughter joyous and whole-hearted.

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**LETTERS AND DIARY OF ALAN SEEGER.** S. B. Gundy, Toronto, \$1.25.

**W**AR books are falling from the press thick and fast as ever autumn leaves fell in Vallombrosa. Like leaves of autumn many will disappear, never to be seen again. Some, however, possessing the vitality of that species of cactus whose leaves grow no matter what the soil they fall on, will live and flourish. Among these latter must be placed the "Letters and Diary of Alan Seeger."

They are written with the grace of diction belonging to the poet, with the force and directness of the soldier, and with the keenness of perception of the man, high-strung, sensitive and refined, who has seen his own soul stripped of its tinsel and gauds, and has learnt to recognize the things that are eternal and essential from the

things that are temporal and fleeting. Alan Seeger, a young American poet, enlisted as a private in the French Foreign Legion three weeks after war was declared and served until he was killed in the charge on Belloy-en-Santerre on the 4th of July, 1916. His letters and diary describe very simply and straightforwardly the miseries of life in the trenches, the exhaustion from long marches, the boredom of inaction, but through them all there runs a spirit of quiet acceptance of these things as inevitable to warfare. There is never a word of complaint, never a desire to withdraw. Always there is the firm determination to see the thing through to the bitter end—and then the return, if Fortune grants, to the great cities of the world to describe the Beauty of Earth in

"New masterpieces of more rare romance."

But it was not to be. Alan Seeger had a rendezvous with Death, and to his pledged word was true.

## MUSIC

**A**FRIENDLY suggestion for an allies concert in Massey Hall on July 4 is made by Mr. Atherton Furlong, principal of the College of

Vocal Art. The idea is that on this national holiday of the United States the entry of that country into the world war on the side of the Allies could be made the occasion for a notable musical rally of international forces. There are in Toronto now leading musical representatives of all the great nations at war on the side of the Allies. Mr. Furlong's idea is to unite them in a big programme, the financial proceeds of which would go to the benefit of returned soldiers. The idea is an eminently good one, and it is to be hoped will be taken up readily by the various interests appealed to on that occasion.

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**A**PIANO recital by pupils of Mrs. E. J. Clark, of the Hambourg Conservatory staff, will be given in Foresters' Hall Friday evening this week. The proceeds are in aid of the Red Cross. Mrs. Clark has a number of very brilliant young pupils whom she has been training for this occasion. Her own interest in music dates back a long while, and reflects also the best methods in vogue at the present day. She has worked away quietly for a good many years. This will be the first occasion of any of her pupils appearing in public giving a programme entirely their own.



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