

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE GUN-BEARER. A War Novel. By Edward A. Robinson and George A. Wall, authors of "The Disc," etc. Illustrated by James Fagan. Cloth, \$1.25; paper, 50 cents. Robert Bonner's Sons, New York.

"The Gun-Bearer" is a story of the great Civil War. It opens with the cry of war sounded by a newsboy through the stormy midnight air in a country village. There is a hasty gathering at the village tavern, and intense excitement over the firing on Fort Sumter. There is a delightful romance woven in the hero's life, but the great interest of the story is in his adventures in the army. We have never read anything giving a more vivid picture of a soldier's life and feelings in camp and in battle than "The Gun-Bearer." On every page are proofs that it is drawn from the writer's experience. None but a soldier could have written it.

BERNARDIN DE ST. PIERRE. By Arvede Barine; with portrait, and a preface by Augustine Birrell. Cloth, \$1.25. London: T. Fisher Unwin; Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.

The following extracts from the preface will give some idea of the treat in store for him who reads this entertaining biography. "St. Pierre was no ordinary person, either as man or author. His was a strong and original character, more bent on action than on literature. Though a master of style and a great painter in words, he was ever a preacher. His masterpiece—as the French reckon Paul and Virginia to be—came by chance, and is but a chapter in a huge treatise, a parable told by the way in a voluminous gospel. Bernardin de St. Pierre was as obstinate a theorist as ever lived, and his theory was that Providence had fashioned the whole world with one intent only—namely, the happiness of man. That man was not happy, St. Pierre sorrowfully admitted; but there was no reason whatever, save his own folly, why he should not be as happy as the days were long. The terrible catastrophes of life—plague, pestilence, and famine, earthquakes and shipwreck—counted with him as nothing."

THE RAIDERS, by S. R. Crockett. **THE STICKIT MINISTER,** by S. R. Crockett. Canadian Copyright Editions. Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto.

A review of these two books in connection with some information concerning the author's life was given in the April issue of this journal. Dealers should be careful not to import foreign reprints, as notices have been sent to all the customs officers that copyright has been secured on these two books. Moreover, the Canadian editions of these two books are really creditable, and worthy of the trade's support. The title page of

"The Raiders" is done in two colors, a feature which is extremely pleasing, but seldom seen in Canada. The Methodist Book and Publishing House are really the only publishers in this country of whom the dealers can speak with a glow of pride. They have, considering their limited market, shown a commendable energy and a deserving patriotism in undertaking tasks which were difficult and, perhaps, thankless. But they have given to the country many books which will benefit it in numerous ways, and will especially be an encouragement to the authors of this young nation. A nation's strength lays not wholly in material possessions; often it lays still more in its educational facilities, the sturdy independence of thought among its citizens, and their intense regard for peace, order and good government. No nation was ever made without a literature; no nation can be a nation without producing a literature. Canada is producing a literature; and it is as wicked to condemn it as it is to discourage the child's first attempts to walk. Publishers who encourage Canadian books, or even Canadian editions, as in the case under consideration, should in turn receive the encouragement of the trade.

HORACE CHASE. A novel by Catherine Fenimore Woolson. New York: Harper and Brothers; Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company.

This novel, written by the lady whose recent tragic death in Paris has aroused such comment, contains a vivid portrayal of life. The scene is laid in the Southern States, and the characters portrayed in the everyday of life but add to the fascination. The leading character is a young lady, Ruth, who, like so many other young women, married because she was fascinated by a clever young man. And Horace Chase, like so many of the sterner sex, married for entertainment. As in this case, so in the everyday occurrences, the woman finds herself possessed of a heart and later finds it is given involuntarily to another's keeping; and as often does the man find this infatuation gradually ripens into the deeper and more lasting bond. To my mind Chase is the ideal of an American man—keen, sharp, almost too much so in business, yet kind and over-indulgent in home life, his supreme aim being the gratification of every wish and the giving of every comfort to those in the home circle; and to be successful in business with ambition to a degree found only in the modern American. He was apparently too much engrossed in the race for wealth to think of social life until he suddenly falls into infatuation with youth and beauty and vivacity. The two natures were admirably adapted to each other did there but exist love.

Ruth, an American girl of the period, attractive and bright, lured by the fascination of a life of ease and luxury, forgot her heart

and pleased only her mind. And what an awakening was hers—purely selfish, however—when her heart craved and she could not resist its influence. Even her last act must be viewed with all charity, for such a nature as hers once awakened knew no bounds.

The Franklin family, of which Ruth was a member, seems to have been one wholly contented one with the other, and there seems to have existed what one so often finds, a bond so strong as to be comparable only to the branches of a tree—injure one and the whole is affected. Dolly, the weak branch, a crank on account of chronic infirmity, given to strong dislikes and very few likes, to offset this was a miserable existence—miserable to those around her at least. Jared Franklin, Jr., evidently married the president of a Dorcas Society, one of those women who continuously neglect home duties for those of supposedly philanthropic ones. Poor helpless fellow! he almost deserved his fate for his unmanliness. Mrs. Franklin, Sr., in common with her daughter Dolly, possessed to a large degree those qualities of perception which enabled her to truly estimate character, and eventually led her to a fatal overtaking of nervous energy brought about by the tragic death of her son Jared, and with a keen appreciation of the character she was wrought up to an effort which undoubtedly cost her life. Walter Willoughby, Chase's junior partner, a character we frequently meet, in his ambition first and later in his careless fascination of Ruth, did much to mar the happiness of several. Not a villain, not even a flirt, he enjoyed conquests, not estimating to the full the harm he was capable of doing, finally he falls desperately in love and dreams not of his poor dupe. Miss Billy, the Commodore, Malachi Hill and others help the interest, but develop nothing remarkable. Maud Merrill, fortunately a rare character, does not add to the grace of her sex.

One cannot but surmise the end; the author does not record it. Chase, grand fellow, forgives his erring wife. His was a broad nature, capable of the greatest sternness and of the greatest compassion—a nature in many points well worth emulating. The whole book is peculiar in the respect that saw for the fact that Malachi Hill in his profession was a clergyman, no mention is made of religion nor deity. Most authors deem it almost a necessity to engraft a certain amount of religious sentiment into every book, but this one is evidently written by an atheist or by one upon whom religious duty sat very lightly.

THE CONSTABLE OF ST. NICHOLAS. By Edwin Lister Arnold, author of "Phra, the Phunician." Cloth, \$1.25. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.

Count Oswald de Montaigne, the hero of this historical novel, was born and bred by