

LITERARY NOTES

SOME MACMILLAN NOVELS.

IN the autumn months the Macmillan Company of Canada has sent forth a goodly number of novels—and the greatest of these is "The Gentleman." Ever since the tale of "Bob, Son of Battle" was told, the world has known that Mr. Alfred Ollivant is among the elect story-writers. Wherefore, we took up "The Gentleman: A Romance of the Sea" with the assurance of brave company. But the hours passed—and passed—while all those gentlemen unafraid were at each other's throats—and then we came to the very last line—in italics: "I will answer no questions about this book.—A. O." Not since the time when one revelled in the sailors of *Westward Ho* has there come into the day's reading such a chronicle as this of 1805—for the reader who follows the fortunes of *The Gentleman* is swept away from all the modern grind of graft and bargains to the year of Trafalgar—to the summer which preceded that grapple of giants. Napoleon stands on the cliffs of Northern France, wondering, wondering why he cannot crush that "stubborn little land of Bibles and evening bells," and long before the tale is told the secret of the resistance is revealed. Ah! such writing as this has not come our way for many a year—not even in the glorious slaying of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island." Through all the tumult, there is one maimed figure towards whom the fighters strive, one set face whose purpose means the saving of England. Nelson, the "Saviour of the silver-coasted isle," Nelson, the Sinner, who was almost a traitor for the sake of a sordid passion, stands in the way of Napoleon and leads all such spirits as young Kit Caryll unto him. There are pages in the story which fairly drip with the slaughter—and yet the artist will not let the deck become a mere shambles. He treats his story as Brutus would have the slayers of Caesar deal with the great Julius—"Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,

Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds."

The writer's pen is as swift and as delicate as the sword of Fighting Fitz. Blood-stains there may be, in a plenty, but there is no stain of the spirit. After the hot-house emotions and the tiresome nastiness of the neurotic novelists, this romance of the sea fills one's weary lungs with the salt and saving breath of great deeds and stirring times.

Members of the Peace Society and officers of the Hague Tribunal will hardly look with favour on this chronicle of blood. The delightful feature about the narrator is that he does not offer the faintest apology for all the strife—in fact, the captain of the little *Tremendous*, "Old Ding-dong," is a Christian indeed, although he accounts for a host of the enemy ere the last fight comes. The final scene, after Old Ding-dong's great encounter, is written with the author's finest touch.

"About him was stillness, hushed waters, and the moon a silver bubble.

"In the quiet cove, beneath the quiet stars, after sixty years of storm, his soul was slipping away into the Great Quiet."

The gallant, dare-devil figure of "The Gentleman," fighting with white bitterness and yet with unflinching Irish gaiety against the England which he hates consumingly, is a character to be remembered, as an embodiment of the Celtic tragedy. But through all the tumult surges the Sea

which Caryll, Ding-dong and Nelson love, and which holds the English genius, be he poet or "first-class fighting man." As the author's prelude song reminds us:

"New suns and moons arise;
Perish old dynasties,
For ever rise and die the centuries;
Only remains the Sea,
Our right of way, the Sea."

* * *

Another fighting tale, but of strongly contrasting style and aspect, is Mr. H. G. Wells' "The War in the Air." This book is highly — one might say wearisomely — modern, with aviation, socialism and other modes of progression and retrogression in full working order. It is the very latest word in fiction on aerial possibilities and perils.

Miss Zona Gale wrote a memorable book in "The Loves of Pelleas and Ettarre," and that volume of delicate fancies is likely to be thrown in her face by the readers of her latest venture, "Friendship Village." This book is amusing—in patches—but monotonously moralising as a stretch of fiction. The world is fairly convinced that helping others is a good way of achieving happiness for oneself. But to preach this doctrine on every page, to allow that persistently cheerful spinster, Miss Calliope Marsh, to display her garrulous philanthropies in every chapter, is surely unworthy of the writer of such airy, subtle sketches as Miss Gale's earlier work. "Friendship Village," in its less agreeable tracts, reminds one of those ghastly mottoes hung on office walls—"Do It Now," "Be Kind," and other exhortations to industry and sympathy.

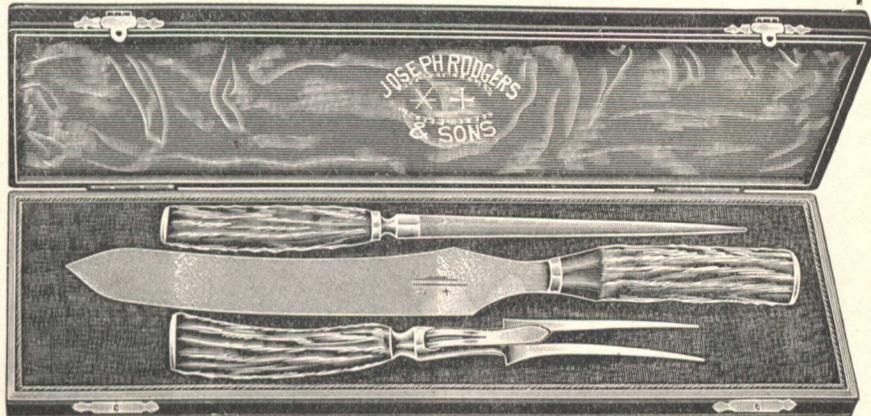
There once was a weekly publication in Toronto, known as *The Week*, of which the editor was Mr. Goldwin Smith. From one of the copies of that journal, found at the Public Library and dated twenty-two years ago, we learn that Mr. Marion Crawford was regarded as a remarkably prolific novelist in the year 1886. Yet in the autumn of 1908, there comes briskly along, "The Diva's Ruby," a new novel by Marion Crawford which completes the trilogy concerning the artistic and sentimental adventures of a charming prima donna. The story is of unusual entertainment and, if not one of Mr. Crawford's best, is yet in better style than the majority of the "good sellers."

The novels by Agnes and Egerton Castle are invariably of romantic charm and their latest chronicle of moving events, "Wroth," is highly dramatic. Indeed, one is almost certain, before the third chapter is reached, that the Byronic hero will be on the stage before another summer, with Mr. James K. Hackett in the role. The hero is really a high-minded villain who, of course, reforms and becomes a model landlord. The first scene of high revels at the old abbey, with the noble Juliana breaking unawares into the orgy, is a spirited piece of writing, while the novel plot is unfolded with a grace characteristic of these happy collaborators. The conclusion is none the less enjoyable because it is foregone.

The Macmillan Company of Canada has brought out some worthy novels this year, of which "The Gentleman" and "The Cliff End" are easily the most distinguished. The latter is the first production of a novelist, from whom we may hope for high things; the former is such a *tour de force* as surprises even those who expected much from the author of "Bob, Son of Battle."

What Shall I Give ?

The most satisfactory gift to give, and one that will be most appreciated by a friend is a Set of Carvers—3 pieces—Knife, Fork and Steel. Similar to illustration.



Satin Lined Case, Sheffield Make, from \$4.00, or a Set of Table Knives and Forks; Case of Pearl Handled Fruit Knives; Dessert Knives. We have a large variety of these goods to select from. Call and inspect our stock before buying.

PRICES TO SUIT ALL

Aikenhead's

Aikenhead Hardware Limited
TEMPERANCE STREET, TORONTO

Vichy Celestins

There is only one Genuine "VISHY" Water. It comes from the *Celestins* spring, which is so highly prized for its curative properties in Kidney and Bladder complaints, that the water is bottled under French Government Supervision, and sealed with a Special Label to prevent substitution.

ASK FOR VICHY CELESTINS



FREE STAMPS 15 ALL DIFFERENT CANADIAN and 10 INDIA. Free for the names and addresses of two stamp collectors and 2c. postage. New lists Free. We offer these sets. Great bargains. No stamps alike in any set. All in good condition. Postage 2c. extra.

7 Persia04	7 Siam15	40 Japan05	10 Uruguay06
25 Italy04	100 U.S.20	200 Foreign10	10 Paraguay07
50 Spain11	10 Egypt07	500 Foreign59	10 Bulgaria08
10 Turkey03	3 Senegal05	1000 Foreign2.40	50 Brit. Col.06
20 Turkey07	40 France10	6 Mauritius04	20 Roumania05
2 Congo03	30 Sweden10	10 Straits07	1000 Hinges05
3 Samoa05	25 Canada15	25 Denmark10	

Remit in Stamps or M. O.

MARKS STAMP CO., Toronto, Canada