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LITERARY NOTES

SOME OF THE OLD BOOKS.

IN the midst of the reports of the best sellers, it is somewhat interesting to find what novels of yesterday are in demand.

"Well," said a Canadian bookseller, "I find that Dickens sells better than any of the others."

"Especially near Christmas," suggested the questioner.

"That is true of the 'Christmas Carol' and the other stories of the season. But we find that Dickens sells well at any time."

"Is there any favourite among his stories?"

"I think 'David Copperfield' and 'A Tale of Two Cities' are asked for, most often. A good many Thackeray novels are in demand."

"What about Lytton?"

"There isn't a week that we're not asked for 'The Last Days of Pompeii.' Then 'Kenelm Chillingly' and 'My Novel' are in no danger of being forgotten. Then there's Scott. He's as popular as Dickens. There's not a week that some boy doesn't come in for 'The Talisman' or 'Quentin Durward.'"

This was cheering information, for the youth that is being nourished on such fare as Sir Walter provides is not likely to worship false gods. After all, the "best sellers" are but for a season, while "Ivanhoe," "Jane Eyre" and "Esmond" smile serenely as each amazing new heroine goes away in her automobile to be forgotten in a day.

* * *

A PLEASANT ROMANCE.

READERS of the popular magazines will need no urging to induce them to consider a novel by Mr. Joseph C. Lincoln, whose delightful yarns about characters in sea-coast villages appear all too seldom. "Cy Whittaker's Place" is the homely title for a story which introduces one to old-fashioned parlours and wide fireplaces and people who take life in leisurely fashion. Bayport does not differ from other small towns but the quick eye of the writer has seized on piquant and humorous traits which render his account of the "Third Cy's" adventures more than merely entertaining. The local magnate, who has the speech habit and who swells into professional vocabulary on the slightest provocation is easily recognised; yet we are glad that his hypocrisy is not exposed, for he is so nobly ornamental that, as Cy Whittaker admits, it would be a pity for the local monument to topple over. This novel is a pleasant bit of rural romance and is all the more salutary for the artistic concealment of the "moral." (Toronto: McLeod and Allen.)

* * *

TO STEVENSON—OF SOME CRITICS.

They scan the page all musical with perfect word and phrase,
And frown to find you trivial who talk of primrose ways;
Nor fathom your brave laughter, nor know the way you trod—
O serious-hearted wanderer upon the hills of God!

There where you lie beneath the sky far in a lonely land,
You who were even glad to die—care not who understand
Your whimsical sweet strays of tune and your heroic mirth—
Diviner of Arcadian ways throughout the dreary earth!
GRACE HAZARD CONKLING, in *Putnam's* and *The Reader*.

* * *

THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE.

THE November issue of the *Canadian Magazine* opens with a stirring article on "Moose Hunting in New Brunswick," by Douglas W. Clinch, which gives even the uninitiated reader a thrill when he learns that "the ivory bead covered the flying chest," as the monarch of the silent places went to his death. Mr. John Boyd contributes a valuable study of "The Poetry of Louis Frechette," and Mr. H. Mortimer-Lamb is the writer of an article on "The Art of Curtis Williamson, R.C.A." The *Canadian Magazine* has recently published several articles on our artists and their work which should be enlightening to many who have been content to deplore the lack of Canadian art, without possessing any knowledge of what is being accomplished in the studios of the Dominion. The current article is finely illustrated with reproductions from Mr. Williamson's paintings, the page of Newfoundland scenes being especially impressive. Mr. Williamson's studies of Dutch life are well known to all Canadian frequenters of exhibitions and the frontispiece of the magazine shows "Klaasje," the original of which is in possession of the Dominion Government. In the October magazine there was an article by Mr. E. F. B. Johnston on "The Art of Mr. Archibald Browne" which did justice to the distinctive charm of that poetic artist's work and it is to be hoped that Canadian studios will furnish material for further additions to this series.

The stories are of a commendable variety, ranging from the farce of "The Late Mrs. Sullivan" to the tragedy of "My Lady Played," a romance of the stirring and swashbuckling order by Marjory Bowen, whose first novel, "The Viper of Milan," brought her fame in a season. Mrs. Grace E. Denison contributes a story, "The Little Gentleman," which tells of how the chivalrous hero rescued a delightful girl from a loveless marriage and even sacrificed himself to make a friend's happiness secure. Altogether the reader of this November magazine has no reason to believe that Canadian writers and artists are not keeping up with modern progress.

By the way, it is interesting to compare a copy of this magazine of October, 1893, picked up by chance near the shores of a Canadian lake, with the current number. Yet there must have been pessimists of fifteen years ago who predicted disaster and an early death from low circulation for the new venture in Canadian journalism. But the pessimists are a poor lot, anyway, whose croaking is seldom prophecy.

* * *

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