

Among the New Books

(Concluded from page 10.)

continued to hate it, although he drank because others did, and because he would never allow himself to be called a quitter. For years he had no love for the drink. But the time came when, without the excuse of company, he would fetch out his bottle, and drink by himself. Still he had no taste, no liking for the stuff. Then the liking came. The practice of years became the passion of to-day. All the times when he had drunk, although he detested it, had paved the way for, and made sure the foundation. Now, it is built upon. And the building, as London himself would admit, is no credit to him.

I know of no book more gripping, more irresistible. The virile language, the consummately real descriptiveness, the impression, always there, that this is the baring of a man's soul so that others may take warning—all these combine to make "John Barleycorn" a classic in its own field. The book lives, because its author lived. If the people could be made to read it, the necessity for temperance legislation would not be so great, nor so insistent. It is an epoch-making story. (Bell & Cockburn, Toronto, \$1.25 net.)

"The Confessions of Arsene Lupin," by Maurice Leblanc. I don't know that even Sherlock Holmes is more of a hero with the lover of the detective yarn than is Arsene Lupin. His real charm is his consummate coolness. Some time ago, stories of his daring and his subsequent coups ran in the "Storyteller," one of the most popular of the London magazines, and they had a great vogue. Lupin is a lovable rascal. As the daring, clever, albeit calculating thief who set all Paris by the ears, he has entranced thousands of people. When you read about him, you say to yourself, "What a scoundrel!" but there is something in you that praises him just the same, because he gets away with it. The detective tale has a great public these days. And of the detective tales, none are more absorbing than these of the dare-devil Frenchman, who receives messages in his hard boiled egg when in prison, and accomplishes an undreamed-of escape while the gendarmes are sleeping the sleep of the just. In the Lupin tales, as in those of Sherlock Holmes, much fun is made of the methods of the regular police department. And one ventures to think, rightly so.

Maurice Leblanc needs no introduction. He has written of the versatile Arsene, until one wonders if he has assimilated the characteristics of this most rollicking of rogues. The book is fascinating from cover to cover. The style in which it is written is crisp, never labourious. The characterization is that of a master hand. Altogether, you cannot do better than spend a few hours with "Arsene Lupin"—even though you run the risk of becoming a crook in real earnest! (Hodder & Stoughton, Toronto, \$1.25 net.)

It is with a good deal of pleasure that one hears of the visit to America and this country of Canon J. O. Hannay. G. A. Birmingham (as he is known to an admiring public) is a writer who has done for Ireland in fiction what Allen Raine has done for Wales, and Ralph Connor for Canada. He is known as the author of "Doctor Whitty," recently reviewed in these columns, and also of the remarkably successful play, "General John Regan," which is enjoying a long and successful run in London. The play is to be published in book form shortly. Canon Hannay is to lecture in America on his pet subject, "The Place of the Irishman in Fiction." He is sure of a hearty welcome on this side of the water.

Compton Mackenzie, known as the son of Edward Compton, a noted English actor-manager, and famous later as the author of "Carnival," a book which was dramatized, the first presentation being given in Toronto, has written a new book, "Sinister Street," which is being well received. It is a thoroughly enjoyable book.

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