

Literary Notes

(By S. G.)

Celebrating "Book Week" in British Columbia.

"Book week" activities started in Vancouver by a lecture at the Carnegie Library by the President of the British Columbia Authors' Association, Mr. Robert Allison Hood, who spoke of the life and work of Marjorie Pickthall.

Short addresses were given on the life and work of Pauline Johnson, William Henry Drummond, Ralph Connor, R. G. Macbeth, Frank Bullen and Robert Stead, before the Junior High School Association. At the General Gordon School the Rev. R. G. Macbeth lectured on "Canadian Authors." At the Bayview Parent-Teachers' Association, Mr. A. M. Stephen spoke on "Canadian Poetry East and West." Other meetings were addressed by Mrs. Winlow, Percy Gomery, and Robert Allison Hood.

A short address on "Canadian Authors" was given by Mr. Bernard McEvoy at the Gyro Club luncheon.

Mr. Hopkins Moorhouse, vice-president of the Canadian Authors' Association, was the honoured guest of the local branch of the Association. Mr. Moorhouse addressed the Women's Press Club, the Parent-Teachers' Association and the Women's Canadian Club, and was the guest of the Association at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Dalton.

The bookstores of the city made special window and counter displays of Canadian books during the week, notably the Hudson's Bay Co. and David Spencer's; and the stores featured "Book Week" in their advertisements. The newspapers also devoted space and editorials to the subject.

Pauline Johnson.

The Indian poetess, Pauline Johnson, was the subject of an informative lecture given on the closing evening of Canada's "Book Week" at the Carnegie Library, under the auspices of the Vancouver branch of the Canadian Authors' Association. The lecturer, Mrs. Laura Rees Thomas, touched on the romantic history of the Indian race, and on the debt of gratitude that British Columbians owe to Pauline Johnson for the glamour of poetry and romance which she has thrown about their beautiful coast.

Mrs. Rees Thomas laid emphasis upon a point which is worthy of consideration. It seemed to her that one note the Indian singer struck

which would cause her poetry to live when much of the work of others, and in some respects perhaps greater poets, might be forgotten, was the fact that she was the only poet of outstanding ability whom the Dominion had so far produced who painted Canada in its natural state.

The story of Miss Johnson's life followed, with interesting sketches of the personalities and characteristics of her Indian father and English mother, and the unique training which they gave to their children. Miss Johnson's fine mentality was not due solely to heredity, but to a large extent to the insistent teachings of her mother.

The lecturer quoted Theodore Watts-Dunton (who had known Pauline Johnson and appreciated her writing greatly) as stating that the poets of new countries like Australia, Canada, and South Africa should be particularly strong in nature poetry because they knew nature uncoloured by that spirit of antiquity associated with almost every square yard of Europe, the historical associations of which were so difficult to get away from. Wordsworth tried all his life to get away from them.

Throughout the lecture the outstanding features of the work of the poetess were discussed, and the various points were illustrated and heightened by effective readings of selected poems.

The speaker explained that Miss Johnson's work would be more valued and read as the years passed, and when other poets were forgotten, not for its greatness, but because she alone had shown the Canada of the Red Man, and because it formed a strong and beautifully forged link with the past.

HOPKINS MOORHOUSE VISITS VANCOUVER.

"I think you have here in Vancouver one of the largest and fastest growing groups of Canadian writers in Canada, and that group will become a powerful influence in Canadian literary life, but the machinery is absolutely necessary to put across the national point of view that should be part of Canada's progress." This statement was made by Mr. Moorhouse in the course of an address to the Women's Canadian Club, in Vancouver.

Mr. Moorhouse declared there was undoubted talent in the coming generations, and also that the West was a decided place of inspiration for

these writers. A wonderful country Canada had three sections of country, and had as many problems, together with national difficulties, thus making it difficult to obtain a national viewpoint. But the present, added the speaker is the time to "assert" ourselves "if Canadians are to remain Canadians."

This he deemed necessary on account of the proximity of the United States with its multitudinous amusements and creative activities, flooding the country. Canada, he believed, was the only country that imported 80 per cent. of its reading matter.

"There is the beginning of a great literature in Canada, with its fourteen to sixteen professional writers at the present time," the speaker continued. "Yet there is no market for their wares, and they are forced to go to the United States to make a living. The copyright law in Canada militates against the welfare of the professional writer, and this difficulty the Canadian Authors' Association is endeavouring to overcome. On the other hand the publisher has many difficulties, and it has been estimated that less than one per cent.

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