

THE BOOK PAGE

Two stories, each with a Canadian background, have come to us from J. M. Dent and Sons (Toronto), each of a high grade in its class. In *Blantyre-Alien* (265 pages, \$1.25), Alan Sullivan, the author of *The Passing of Oul-I-But*, draws a keen-edged picture of the scion of an old and poor and proud Irish family, who had so little besides themselves to think about or care for, that they thought about themselves and little else. Blantyre, a young ship's doctor, when the story opens, is very much of a man in every way, but has the taint of his ancestral exclusiveness running in his blood. How Stella Blake, a charming Canadian heiress, was fascinated by him; and how he made the best effort possible to him to live the new life as her husband and a practising physician in one of our, to him, raw and tumultuous Canadian cities, and what a dismal wreck he made of it all in the end, is told, with a keenness of observation and analysis which keeps the reader's attention tense to the very close. Incidentally, the book gives a photographically minute picture of one Canadian city and its society and of a number of very well known Canadian public men in that troublous year of the Reciprocity vote, 1911. *Webblock*: The Autobiography of an Automaton (172 pages, \$1.00), is a curious tale, not always pleasant or perhaps even wholesome. The story is told of himself by a man who makes a very narrow escape from being one of the great army of the unfit. The wholesome thing about the book is, that he does make his escape and finds out that life, after all—and he had some curious experiences of the ups and downs, especially the downs, of it—is really worth while. Montreal and Ottawa afford the background of the autobiography, and there are some very curious glimpses into the sometimes devious ways of the Civil Service. The writer is Harry McDonald Walters.

"German militarism seems to be bred in the bone of the Prussian people, and the microbe of militarism has been inoculated into the German people;" so speaks Charles Sarolea in his introduction to *The German Enigma*, by Georges Bourdon (J. M. Dent and Sons, Toronto, 357 pages, 75c.), which, as a subtitle states, is "an inquiry among Germans as to what they think, what they want and what they can do." M. Bourdon conducted the inquiry in the year 1913, that is, it was concluded eight months before the war broke out. He is the editor of the *Paris Figaro* and included in his visit to Germany personal inquiries of leading statesmen, professors, diplomatists, editors and military men. His object was pacific, namely, to find a basis of reasonable understanding with Germany for good neighborhood. The book is extremely interesting, as giving a firsthand view, and one of the conclusions is the conclusion of Mr. Sarolea quoted above. M. Bourdon has taken the Kaiser at his word as standing for peace. "Twenty-five years," he says, "have not belied the Imperial utterances." How curiously the words read in the light of the occurrences since August 4th last! Nevertheless, to any one who wishes really to understand German opinions and the attitude of Germany towards its neighbors will do well to read this most instructive and suggestive volume.

It is like coming out of a sulphurous cave into the open air, to pass from *The Secrets of the German War*

Office to Mr. F. A. M. Webster's capital paper-covered book, *Britain in Arms* (J. M. Dent and Sons, 304 pages, 30c.). The book is a lucid account of the army of the United Kingdom, including the Indian army and the forces of the Dominions, Commonwealths and Colonies. Mr. Webster begins with a short and brisk history of the British army, followed by a list of the various regiments,—which are very much more than lists; indeed a condensed account is given of the regiment's history and its valiant deeds. Small as Britain's permanent forces are, as compared with the great German and Russian armies, one cannot read this story of the regiments without a constantly swelling pride in the great things that the smaller force can do. Numbers count, and the total strength of "Kitchener's army," as it is popularly called, must be in the neighborhood of two million men. But it is the stuff that the men are made of that counts most, and there is no sign of "decadence" in the British forces at the battle front or of those in training in the old land and in the various parts of the "greater Britain beyond the seas."

In these sad days a new book from such a pen as that of Stephen Leacock is doubly welcome. It is a wholesome diversion. Every one knows his Nonsense Novels and his Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town. This time, it is *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich* (310 pages, Bell and Cockburn, Toronto, \$1.25 net). The place is a great Canadian seaport, which is also a great University city. Every one who has been there immediately recognizes Montreal. The time is just about this present year of grace; and the people are of the new rich who are taking time to be philanthropic, and the longer rich who strive to abate their ennui by such fads as the Yahi-Bahi Oriental Society. There are the rival churches on Plutonia Avenue, and, above all, the adventures of a pompous, but weirdly shrewd University president, and the "great fight for clean government" in the city. The reader will easily see how much room there is for Stephen Leacock's keen satire and piquant fun; and these are poured out without stint.

The Teens and the Rural Sunday School (Association Press, New York, 151 pages, 50c.), edited by John L. Alexander, International Sunday School Association Secondary Division Superintendent, contains the observations, findings and recommendations of the Commission for the Study of the Adolescent in the Country Sunday School, appointed by the San Francisco Convention of the International Sunday School Association, 1911. It is not a statistical, but a very suggestive and practical, handbook on this difficult and important problem.

Students and the World-Wide Expansion of Christianity (Student Volunteer Movement, New York, 743 pages, \$1.85 postpaid) is the title given to the Report of the Kansas City Convention held during the opening days of last year. The volume is of permanent value. It is an encyclopedia of missions brought down to date, and it is more, for it contains a discussion of missionary problems and methods by leaders whose knowledge and experience give immense weight to their utterances. Those who wish, in their information and thinking, to keep abreast of the progress of Christianity in our own day, will not be content to lack this book from their equipment.