

driven out the ideal, and in two generations more, young Canada will have learned to smile at a world that could have stood in awe of Agamemnon for three thousand years. Her contributions to English magazines began at a very early age, but the novelty of Canadian life and the wild beauty of Canadian scenes caused her to turn to the natural rather than to the intellectual.

In her works of fiction Mrs. Traill cannot be acquitted of faults. "Lost in the Backwoods," the most typical of these, is both dramatic and descriptive to a degree, but the dialogue is stilted, and the wisdom that of the old rather than of the young. The story opens in Lower Canada at the time of the "famous battle of Quebec," when the wounded Scottish soldier, Duncan Maxwell, meets for the first time the widow's daughter, the *petite habitante*, Catherine Perron. A few years elapse. They marry. Catherine has a brother, Pierre, who is a hunter, and who, in his hunting expeditions, had gone up as far as the Plains of the Rice Lake. He suggests that Duncan and he, with their wives, should found on the shores of the Rice Lake their future homes. Thither they go and establish themselves amid the loneliness and isolation of the forest. We wonder at their courage, but, as the author tells us, "there was in those days a spirit of resistance among the first settlers on the soil, a spirit to do and bear that is less commonly met with now." Hector, a boy of fourteen, is the eldest child of Duncan. Louis, of the same age, is the only son of Pierre. Catherine, the sister of Hector, is two years younger. All three set out one lovely morning in May to find the cattle. They lose themselves in the forest, and their wanderings furnish the materials of the narrative. As the warlike Mohawks and the Chippewas still "held their councils and their hunting-parties on the hills about the Rice Lake," the fear of capture and of torture add horror to the anguish of the parents. The author avails herself of every occasion to inculcate practical Christian teaching and to describe the manner of life in the forest and among the Indians. One would suspect, however, a different conclusion from the children when "they beheld a savage enemy in every mass of leafy shade, and every rustling bough struck fresh terror

into their excited minds." "They might have exclaimed," says the author, "with the patriarch Jacob, 'How awful is this place!'"

Yet no more accurate and entertaining description of the woods, flowers, forest-animals and Indians could be wished. Nor dramatic, as it is, is it one particle overdrawn.

Even the old frequenter will know the Rice Lake country the better for having read this book. Who can resist the flowers' appeal, when Mrs. Traill interprets; still, the botanical names, hidden though they be in parentheses, give one a sort of chill. The naturalist has clearly overborne the romancist. The minuteness of detail is extraordinary, but it sometimes lengthens into a catalogue. Her imagination, too, is restrained by an intensely religious spirit, and her candour is such that she does not forbear to acknowledge the legend which she has made use of to develop the story. This is as it may be, but it is not literature in the strictly literary sense. When the weirdness of the tale has secured the reader the reading will do much more than entertain, and the reprinting of the tale by the publishers speaks for itself. It would indeed be a great pity if no record of the fortitude of these pioneers had not been kept. The chronicles are few, and the tale of patient courage is such as will never again be told in Canada. Unlike Cooper, Mrs. Traill tells of the white man rather than of the Indian, excelling him in her descriptions of nature, though his greater field admits a greater plot and a more elaborate treatment.

In "Pearls and Pebbles" one will find a book of poems in prose. There is nothing more difficult to describe, perhaps, than the Canadian seasons. They have been done almost to death. But I know of nothing more exquisite than some of her shadow-dreams of Autumn.

—HAMPDEN BURNHAM.

### THE NEW MAN.

(Dedicated, without permission, to The New Woman.)

A New Woman is now on the market. In these days it is only the bran new article that can arrest attention. We have no leisure, no love, for the old. The old religion, the old virtues, the old books, that satisfied our fathers in their day are