

TO THE READER.

These stories were originally published in "*The Province*," at Victoria, British Columbia, and now appear in book form by the kind permission of the proprietors of that journal. A literary friend to whom I submitted the proofs assures me that "he has known worse stuff go down before now," wherein his experience, though evidently intended as encouraging to me, is hardly complimentary to the average reader. With this scrap of comfort, however, I must fain rest content pending the decision of that great tribunal, the general public, to whose decrees the writers of long and short stories alike must bow. I therefore cast these crumbs—they are not meet to be called bread—upon the waters of literature, knowing full well that if they ever come back to me save in the form of unsold copies it is not likely to be for many days.

Victoria, B. C. December 1894.