

THE BOOK PAGE

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The North American Idea (McClelland, Goodchild and Stewart, Toronto, 240 pages, \$1.25) is the title of The Cole Lectures for 1917 delivered before Vanderbilt University by James A. Macdonald, LL.D., the distinguished Canadian writer and orator. The "Idea" developed in these lectures is defined as: "The Right of a Free People to Govern Themselves." It was, of course, inevitable that lectures on such a subject from a Canadian should be tinged by the spirit of the War, and this was the more natural because at the time of their delivery, the United States had entered the War, and Mr. Balfour with Marshall Joffre were in conference with President Wilson at Washington. The lectures are marked by the eloquence and beauty of diction of which Dr. Macdonald is so completely the master. The opening lecture, especially, entitled *The Land of the World's Good Will*, both in style and matter, would be hard to surpass.

"EMPIRE, TRUTH, LOVE, UNITY AND NO PARTY GAMES"—this is declared to be the theme of **Donald and Helen: A Romance of the Old Army**, by R. W. Campbell (The Mussion Book Company, Toronto, 352 pages, \$1.35). Donald Loomes was the grandson of a plain Scottish weaver, who was an uncompromising Radical. His father had made a million sterling out of woven goods, and was a great Liberal. Donald, after a course at Sandhurst, became an officer in the Northern Highlanders in the days before the great War. He carried the Radicalism of his grandfather into the duties of his profession, and worked with passionate earnestness to make the army more efficient. Helen Glenshee was the daughter of an ancient Highland family, with all the pride and courage of her race. The story tells how Donald labored to train his company into smart and effective soldiers and to awaken the military authorities and the people of Britain to a sense of the necessity for preparedness in view of the German menace. His justification came when the War broke out, and he went with General French's gallant army to the aid of France and Belgium. Mr. Campbell's book, with its love stories of the aristocratic Helen and the radical Donald and of Bobby Glenshee with the truehearted American actress, is a plea for the uniting of all classes in Britain for the defence and upbuilding of the empire. There is plenty of humor in this, as in the author's earlier tales. Jock McGhee and Privates Muldoon and Docherty hold a place of their own in the creation of fiction.

One would imagine that there could now be nothing new to be told about the early stages of the War, but Alice Cholmondeley's **Christine** (The Macmillan Co. of Canada, Toronto, 250 pages, \$1.25) will dissipate this notion. Christine is a most intimate view of Germany in the months and weeks before the War broke out and of the weird and tumultuous days after War had been declared and hostilities begun. The book, which consists of letters from a charming young violinist, who reached Berlin in May, 1914, to study

under one of the great masters, to her little widowed mother in England. "Chris," the daughter, had her eyes wide open. She writes with all the abandon of a daughter writing home. Her pictures of German life and character and opinion—and the young student had rare opportunities of seeing and hearing amongst high and low—are photographic in their vividness. There is a pretty love story, which comes out charmingly bit by bit in the letters, and the final getting away from the hating Germany, by a door, of which love found the key. Christine has all the vivacity and charm of which Alice Cholmondeley is master. It is well worth reading for this alone.

A Green Tent in Flanders, by Maud Mortimer (William Briggs, Toronto, 242 pages, \$1.25) an American woman in the V.A.D. service gives an account of her hospital experiences five miles back of the firing line in Belgium. The feature of the book is the vivid sketches,—sometimes pathetic and not unfrequently humorous—of the wounded "poilus." These humble heroes of the great War are presented to the reader in such a way as to awaken in his heart a real personal interest in them.

"After all, it's the mothers, I think, who do the biggest giving when their sons go to war. I suspect it's what they put into their sons that stands for the real stuff in the crisis." This is part of the closing paragraph in **The Whistling Mother**, by Grace S. Richmond (McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, Toronto, 31 pages, 50c. net), a short story about one mother of a college boy who came home to say goodbye before he went to the front, and how she sent him forth to fight in the sacred cause of justice and freedom, "with a kiss and a smile and not a single tear." The picture of this little book might have been drawn from the life in the case of multitudes of mothers, whose splendid patriotism and heroic courage have been proved in the giving of their best to the great cause.

In **Green Fancy**, by George Barr McCutcheon (William Briggs, Toronto, 355 pages, \$1.35) a New York engineer and clubman, on a six weeks' walking tour through New England, while sojourning at a country inn, finds himself involved in a conspiracy, which has for its prize the crown jewels of a royal house in Europe, and wins out against the crafty schemes of the cleverest crook in the world. The hero's adventures with the company of stranded play actors whom he finds in his hotel, and the matching of his wits with the Irish adventurer, O'Dowd, furnish many amusing episodes. But the chief interest of the story centres in his rescue of the countess by whom, through a cunning trick, the jewels have been brought to America and in whom at last he finds a bride. The rapidity of movement in this story almost takes the reader's breath away, and holds his interest to the very close. Another story from the same publishers is **Martie the Unconquered**, by Kathleen Norris (376 pages, same price), in which a California girl breaks through the repression of a home life ruled by the whims and fancies of a tyrannical father, to seek freedom and happiness in marriage with an actor who happens to visit her native place. The scenes of the story shift rapidly from San Francisco to New York and back again to