



forced to employ, and one moreover that can be guarded with one-tenth of the troops, seeing that it runs mainly through a friendly country. Another effect of the possession of this railway and the junction of the armies of Lord Roberts and Buller will be to completely isolate the Boer armies of the Free State and the Transvaal, and thus once effected they will be easily dealt with in detail by the British forces which can be concentrated upon them. In fact the situation at present looks as though the Boers have about played their last card, and nothing is apparently left to them but surrender or a guerilla warfare in which they would speedily be hunted down by the superior forces opposed to them. The Boers have put up a good fight in some ways, but their leaders must be a badly disappointed crowd now that the hollowness of their military strength has been so completely exposed to themselves as well as to the world. These two countries which might have remained as independent powers had they only had the sense to have fallen in with modern conditions, have now to look for their future *within* the British Empire, and they may just as well make up their minds to accept the situation and make the best of it. Under the new conditions they will be citizens of a country which will give them the fullest measure of liberty and a higher phase of freedom and civilization than they could ever have hoped to enjoy under the rule of the oligarchy which has been disgracing the name of republic for the past eighteen years.

LITERARY NOTICES.

ERNEST SETON-THOMPSON'S "Wild Animal Play" gives special interest and sprightliness to the *July Ladies' Home Journal*. Into its roles children are ingeniously fitted to impersonate the wild animals Mr. Seton-Thompson has known and told about with so much charm. The early days and notable incidents of "The Fashionable Summer Resorts of the Century" are graphically recalled, and the story of a real heroine of the Continental Army is told in "The Girl Who Fought in the Revolution." Edward Bok sets forth with much emphasis the benefits of living in the country, "An American Mother" writes on "Is a College Education the Best for Our Girls?" and Edward B. Rawson points out the harmful effects of "Letting Children Rust in Summer." The experiences of "A Missionary in the Great West" are continued in the *July Journal*. The fiction features are "The Story the Doctor Told" and "The Voice in the Choir." "The American Girl at Her Sports," by H. C. Christy, is shown in a page drawing. Other pictorial features are examples of the work of "Albert Lynch: a Painter of Fair Women," "In Some Old-Fashioned Gardens," "Here and There in a Summer Cottage," "Through Picturesque America," etc. Timely articles on every branch of home making and special features for the entertainment of children make the *July Journal* instructive and helpful, as well as interesting and attractive. By the Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia. One dollar a year; ten cents a copy.

"THE REDEMPTION OF DAVID CORSON." Comment by Newell Dwight Hillis, Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. The historical novels, like "To Have and To Hold," and "Richard Carvel," have their limitations, clear and sharp, and are easily placed. But it is not easy to classify such a story as "The Redemption of David Corson." It strikes a strong, healthy, buoyant note. If there are stormy elements in the scene, there is also a bow of promise in the black cloud. If there is the life-long story of human frailty and trouble, there is also victory over trouble. If this youth and maiden finally eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and are driven out of the paradise to wander amidst thorns and thickets, they soon revolt from the thorny path, and leaving the desert, they turn eagerly back toward the lost Eden, and in the cool of the evening they find again the old path that leads to happiness and peace. This Quaker boy enters the scene, clothed with the fascination that only the strong possess. He dreams, he sings, he sees visions of the future, he is tempted, he loves, he hesitates, he sins;

he falls, he wakes with a shock of horror, he climbs slowly upward upon the rounds down which he descended, he conquers our admiration and our love.

The plot is very simple, and that itself is high praise. All complex work is poor, and all good work is simple. The sweetest song represents a single chord embroidered with a few notes, high and low. The Venus de Milo is simple; a single substance, marble, for the wide brow, shaped by a single line, named the curve. The perfect gown for the bride is the Greek gown; one color, white; one flower at the throat, a red rose. And "David Corson" deals with but two or three universal elements. A Quaker boy, at once strong and fine, but undisciplined; a gypsy girl, whose native beauty and goodness are ancestral, whose sweet waywardness comes through environment and association; a quack doctor, familiar fifty years ago to every American town and city; then, the play of a few simple motives—doubt, love, jealousy, sin, reaction, forgiveness of one's enemies, and at length the youth, no longer prostrate in the mire, but David Corson, who has recovered his native simplicity.

Charles Frederic Goss is well known in the west for his studies of municipal life, and for that charming little volume, "The Optimist." This is his first attempt in fiction, and "The Redemption of David Corson" has its place among the strong books of the year. Fortunately the field is new. Other novelists have worked the old Jesuit regime, the Puritan life of New England, while more recently the story of old Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky has been freshly told. There remains only the old Dutch life at Albany, with its somewhat sombre tints, the rich tropic atmosphere of early Florida and South Carolina, to which must be added that fresh field named the interior and West. In the Ohio Reserve there met a strange, strong, motley company, and in these pages we taste that early life with the crisp pungency that belongs to the wild strawberry. Mr. Goss has a great field, and if his first novel has charmed and delighted his readers, it is a pledge and prophecy of a second novel already in preparation—a book that we hope is soon to come. William Briggs, Publisher, paper 75; cloth \$1.25.

LONDON TO LADYSMITH VIA PRETORIA. By Lieut. Winston L. Spencer Churchill. Few men at the age of twenty-five have attained such remarkable prominence as Lieut. Winston Spencer Churchill. Of distinguished parentage—a son of the late Lord Randolph Churchill—he early showed inherited tendencies toward greatness; but with his own hand, he has made the bell of the world ring out his name as soldier, war correspondent and novelist. It is as a maker of books we have to deal with him now, though his personal history is very interesting and difficult to lay aside.

Hardly had his latest book, "London to Ladysmith via Pretoria," issued from the publishing house before comments full of highest praise appeared in the leading journals not only of the British Empire but the United States.

Written of things passing before the author's sight, this story of the war has all the vivacity, all the intense interest of a great play. The account of the departure from England, and the sea voyage, is not made tedious. Then comes the first advance toward the front. With a thrill we read of the narrowing freedom of the line as the scene of active operations was approached; and the fight on the armoured train, when Lieut. Churchill was made a prisoner—a lively scene. When he again reached the front—after his escape—it was on the banks of the Tugela River, and the story becomes wholly absorbing—the operations there being yet fresh in our minds. A simple diagram enables the reader to get at the exact situation before Spion Kop, and the story of Acton Homes and the Kop itself is told with concise clearness. The writer's view of the failure to permanently dislodge the Boers from Spion Kop after a desperate fight should be studied by everyone interested in the progress of the war.

One by one the vital positions of the besiegers were taken, and the deadly British bayonet glutted itself with Boer blood. At length the town was in sight, the relieving column was in touch with the defenders. News came to the advance guard that the way was open to the city.