

Esther Gould's Book Corner

THE WINNING OF OREGON "WE MUST MARCH"

By Honore Willsie Morrow
Frederick A. Stokes Co.

"We Must March" is an historical novel told with the force and dramatic intensity which is necessary if such a novel is to carry its readers back into a time remote from their own.

Honore Willsie Morrow brings to this task her skill as a story teller as well as a greater depth and human insight than she has shown in her earlier work.

The chief figure of the story is Narcissa Whitman, who had within her the making of a great opera singer. Beauty and grace of person, a voice which could all but move mountains, and the peculiarly dramatic quality of personality which can reach across the footlights or the wilderness. It is the wilderness across which it is destined to reach.

Narcissa's father would not allow her to enter on the musical career which a marriage with the great composer offered her, and in an emotional rebound Narcissa turned to religion. Marcus Whitman was a medical missionary, about to start on the long perilous journey to Oregon to found a mission among the Indians. Narcissa, fired by his white-hot enthusiasm, consented to marry him and go with him on his journey.

Accompanied by Eliza and Henry Spaulding, another missionary couple, and a young man, William Grey, they begin the long perilous journey never made by white women before. Little do they know the forces of evil embodied in the Indians, or of intrigue, in the Hudson's Bay Company, that are to be pitted against their woefully inadequate little band.

But in Narcissa Whitman there is that which would have made her a great artist and which is destined to make her a great pioneer. Matching her wits against the trained unscrupulous ones of the great Governor Simpson, who though he loves Narcissa, must let nothing deflect him from saving Oregon for England, and against the childish crafty superstitious ones of the hostile Indians, Narcissa is the head and heart of the expedition.

And at last, after years of heart-breaking struggle, it is Narcissa who saves the large band of immigrants who are coming to secure Oregon for the United States, an expedition inspired by Marcus in an attempt to win

her love, and Narcissa, in giving her love to him, finds her own peace.

TWO SISTERS AND A MAN "THE ELDER SISTER"

By Frank Swinnerton
George H. Doran

Frank Swinnerton has returned, in "The Elder Sister," to a type of story immediately comparable to "Nocturne," though it is not, it seems to me, of an equal degree of tragic intensity. Yet it may be that in recalling "Nocturne" across a period of years the lighter parts have fallen away as the outer petals from a flower, leaving only the darker ones within. Mr. Swinnerton has taken his characters from that slightly sordid class of life from which most of his characters are drawn—a class intermediate between the middle class and the poor, one which must arouse our sympathies because it is likely to have the aspirations of the one and the deficiencies of the other.

Anne and Vera, the two sisters, live lives which are drab enough, in their little box of a house, two rooms above and two below. There are many hours on Sundays or in the evenings when they come home from their uninspiring work as clerks, which cry out for amusement, for gaiety, for companionship. While Mum and Dad with whom they live are satisfied to snooze away their leisure hours with newspapers over their faces.

For the girls, there is, to be sure, Mortimer. Slender and with an indefinable air of distinction Mortimer is a sort of intellectual-radical, with

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some brains and little stability. We see the three friends first, strolling through Hyde Park on a spring evening, enjoying the people, the bustle of excitement, the lavender twilight sky. It is Anne who makes the move to go home. Anne—sensible, irreproachable Anne. Vera, strung like a taut instrument to receive every impression resents having to go back to the stuffy kitchen—and to reality. Inevitably both Anne and Vera fall in love with Mortimer. And Mortimer asks Anne to marry him.

Then begins the duel of souls which Mr. Swinnerton knows extraordinarily well how to portray. And it is Anne who suffers most because she is capable of more suffering than the others, but it is Vera who goes down in the struggle. As for Mortimer—there is an invulnerability about his egotism which makes it impossible for him ever to suffer as the others do—makes it even possible for him to die without knowing the keenest of all suffering, self reproach, which even Vera does not escape.

TO OPEN HOME FOR BRIDGE

Mrs. John H. Milne, 2315 Orrington avenue, Evanston, will open her home, Tuesday, December 1, for an invitation bridge for the benefit of the Jane Addams Social Service Chair for Rockford college. Mrs. Milne can accommodate 50 tables in her lovely new home on Orrington avenue.

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By

R. T. M. SCOTT

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