

CHRISTMAS BOOK SUPPLEMENT

THE SEASON'S BOOKS IN REVIEW

(Continued from Page 22.)

For the most part, an idyll of the rural England of 1820, containing love, gypsies, a tinker, fights with ruffians, duels, etc. The average reader will enjoy it, but I must confess that my own pleasure in this book was marred to a certain extent by its close resemblance to such of his earlier works as "The Broad Highway" and "The Amateur Gentleman." Peregrine Vereker, a rich orphan, coddled by an aunt until the age of 19, is goaded by remarks of his uncles into seeking his manhood along the highway. He meets with various highwaymen, thugs, drunkards and adventures, and soon becomes a close friend of a gypsy girl, whom he calls Diana. This is the beginning of a story which Mr. Farnol carries to a conclusion in his best style.

"Huntingtower" by John Buchan (Hodder and Stoughton).

Like all of Mr. Buchan's adventure stories, this novel holds the reader spellbound right till the last line. The central character is Dickson McCann, a retired Glasgow grocer, who sets out on a walking tour in Scotland in search of experiences at least, and adventure if possible. He falls in with a socialistic young man, Heritage, and the two of them become interested in the old castle of Huntingtower owing to the mysterious actions of the caretakers of that supposedly unoccupied building. Their talk with Douglas, the precocious and strong-minded leader of the Gorbals Die-Hards, a troop of alum boy scouts who are camping near the place, does nothing to dispel their suspicions of the castle. They join forces, and discover that Sacka, a young Russian noblewoman is held prisoner in the castle by Bolsheviks, who are trying to force her to surrender some of the Russian Crown

jewels which she possesses. The main action of the story now begins. The arrival of more Bolsheviks by sea and Sacka's fiancé by land precipitate the thrilling climax. Douglas, Dickson McCann, and Mrs. Moran, at whose home McCann and Heritage visit during the early part of the story, are characters which any novelist might be proud to have created.

"The Rustle of Silk" by Cosmo Hamilton (Allen).

The Rt. Hon. Arthur Fallaray.



ARCHIE P. MCKISHNIE Author of "Openway."

the man to whom all England looks for her salvation, falls in love with Lola Breze, great-granddaughter of the famous French courtesan Mme. de Breze, and lady's maid to the erotic Lady Foe Fallaray. Lola has an active brain for men. Simpkins, the valet, falls in love with her. She stands in front of the Savoy until

Sir Peter Chalfont, V.C., speaks to her and is straightway captivated. He is merely a means to get her into society and to introduce her to Fallaray. Then Fallaray is here and is willing to give up his place in politics. This is a well-written novel of post-war conditions.

"The Cathedral" by Hugh Walpole (McClelland & Stewart). In the foreground of this story we have Archdeacon Brandon ruler of the Cathedral and the cathedral town; behind him we have the town itself, back of the town lies the Glebe-shire county; back of Glebe-shire, England; beyond England the world of men and affairs, all moving with set purposes. Throughout the novel the Cathedral is presented as a living organism and an indestructible force.

"The Evil Shepherd" by E. Phillips Oppenheim (McClelland & Stewart).

Sir Timothy Brast is the figure of dominant mystery in Mr. Oppenheim's novel. He fulfills all the characteristic Oppenheim requirements and not until almost the final page is the reader able to determine whether he is a good man, or a monster in many varieties of iniquity.

"Lilian" by Arnold Bennett (McClelland & Stewart).

Other novelists present the marriage problem. Arnold Bennett thinks he has solved it. Since between husband and wife there are no moral standards, he argues, there can be no such thing as an ethical code, no lofty abstract principles of right and wrong. Marriage occurs when a man and a woman take the law into their own hands, not only the human law, but the divine.

"The Black Gang" by "Sapper" (Cyril McNeile) (Hodder & Stoughton).

This is a "Bull-Dog" Drummond novel—a hair-raising, bloodcurdling adventure story in which the amiable and amusing Mr. Drummond and his gang, composed of young men-about-town like himself, are pitted against the agents of Bolshevism led by Drummond's old enemy Carl Peterson. Most of the action takes place in London. The thrilling escapades of Drummond will stir the pulse of anyone and the reader is given quite an education in the enigmatical English slang of the present day.

"The Red House Mystery" by A. A. Milne (E. P. Dutton & Co.).

Mr. Milne, the English author of this story, is acquiring a considerable reputation as a humorous, astute, and interesting writer. This is his first venture in the field of the detective story, but has a great success. In the five months after its appearance it ran through ten editions. If Mr. Milne is an amateur in the writing of detective novels, his hero, Another Gillingham, is also making his first attempt to solve a mystery. He arrives at the manor house just as the fatal shot is fired and, being out of a job at the time, decides to investigate. His friend Bill Beverly, who is staying at the Red House at the time, plays Watson to him. The interest is well sustained and the

HOW CHARLES JENKINS WAS MISTAKEN FOR A GAME-PIRATE

There is a story of how Charles Christopher Jenkins was himself mistaken for a pirate, but of a somewhat different type to the leading character in his novel, "The Timber Pirate."

The incident occurred some years ago, when Jenkins and a party of companions who had been on an expedition into the bush were returning across a northern arm of Lake Superior in a motor boat. "We were a pretty tough-looking outfit," said one of the other members of the party in relating the story. "What with living and sleeping in the open, the grime of camp-fires, liberal applications of black-fly repellent and a week's growth of beard, Jenkins was



C. E. JENKINS Author of "The Timber Pirate."

perhaps the hardest-looking customer in the crowd. He was at the wheel of the boat when he sighted what appeared to be a big pleasure yacht following steadily in our wake. As it drew nearer we saw the crew swing out its boats ready for lowering, while the skipper, coming up to the bow, signalled us to stop.

"At that time rum-running near the international boundary was at its height, and on several occasions rum-runners wearing badges and passing themselves off as provincial police boarded private pleasure boats and in a high-handed manner searched them for liquor, which they confiscated to add to their own stocks. From the peculiar actions of the boat behind us Jenkins concluded we were being pursued by a rum-runner and a drunken one at that. So when the skipper motioned to him to stop, he shouted back a message to the other to be off to warmer regions, swung the boat out to sea toward Pic Island, which lay about five miles to our starboard, and signalled for full steam ahead. "The pursuing boat had been gaining perceptibly on a straight course, but owing to her size and draft, she

could not make the turn as quickly as our craft, which was a disproportionate-looking ex-stub of the smaller type used for tramp work on the upper lakes. So each time the big yacht crawled up within hailing distance, Jenkins, who is considerable of an expert at small-boat navigation, would swing his boat on a new leg, by which manoeuvre he made the other lose all he had gained on the straight course. This was kept up for possibly three-quarters of an hour, Jenkins thoroughly enjoying the apparent exasperation of the skipper behind. Finally, deciding that by these tactics, he could lose his pursuer any time he cared to, Jenkins, out of curiosity to know what the other really wanted, allowed the big boat to get within three hundred yards of him.

"The skipper, his face red with anger, came up to the bow of the boat and bellowed through a megaphone. 'If you don't lay to we'll give you something what will stop you.' Two of the crew brought forward what looked like a small cannon, and then for the first time we noted the name 'Thiera' on the other's bow. It was the Canadian government cutter, then doing duty on the North Shore. "Jenkins stopped the engine. 'Pull up alongside, you game-pirate,' ordered the Thiera's master. 'You and your gang are under arrest.' "Just when things looked mighty uncomfortable, though none of us could imagine what we had done to merit arrest, there stepped to the rail beside the skipper, George MacDonald, Deputy Game Warden for Ontario, a personal friend of Jenkins.

"Say, MacDonald," shouted the latter, "what the deuce does all this nonsense mean?" "The Deputy Game Warden took a keener look at the pirate and unkempt writing man at the wheel of the captured motor boat, then fairly doubled up with laughter. He whispered something to the skipper and the boarding officers were called back from the ladder which they had lowered.

"It's all right, Charley," he called down to Jenkins between outbursts of merriment. We mistook you for a game pirate who's been snarling moose along the North Shore and hauling them over alive for sale to zoos in the United States. Your boat answered descriptions we had been given of his! "And you'll excuse me," offered the now somewhat mollified skipper of the Thiera, "if I say that just now you look pretty much the part of a pirate yourself." "Better come aboard and make sure," invited Jenkins. "No thanks," declined the skipper. "Give me a clearance out of here, and we'll call it a day."

Gift Suggestions in New Books. Note the Specially Attractive Feature of Each. God's Green Country by ETHEL M. CHAPMAN. The Man in the Twilight by RIDGWELL CULLUM. The Real Robert Burns by JAMES L. HUGHES. Peregrine's Progress by JEFFERY FARNOL. Viola Gwyn by GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON. Ovington's Bank by STANLEY J. WEYMAN. Charles Rex by ETHEL M. DELL. Mr. Lloyd George by T. RAYMOND. My Life and Some Letters by MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL. The Outline of Science by PROFESSOR J. ARTHUR THOMPSON. Premier Books of the Year. THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF WALTER HINES PAGE by BURTON J. HENDRICK. CERTAIN PEOPLE OF IMPORTANCE by Kathleen Norris. FOURSQUARE by Grace S. Richmond. CANADIAN FAIRY TALES by Cyrus Macmillan. EMILE COUE The Practice of AUTO SUGGESTION Explained, Simplified and Interpreted by C. Harry Brooks. S. B. GUNDY, TORONTO.

CHARLES MAIR

He is Canada's Oldest Living Poet. By Charlotte Gordon.

At the great age of 84, Charles Mair, Calgary, Alberta, is Canada's oldest living poet. The rough pageant of the years, which has gone to the making of a new nation out of the undeveloped west, passes before us as we listen to his experiences or read his musical verse.

Mr. Mair's first volume, "Dreamland," containing thirty-five poems, was published in 1888, the year following Confederation. These poems marked the initial effort in dealing with Canadian natural phenomena in the manner of Keats. While the edition was passing through the binder's hands in Ottawa, the greater part was burned. Only a limited number of copies were issued. A second edition was not forthcoming until they were republished in 1901.

The son of the late James Mair, of Lanark, Mr. Mair was born in 1838, and educated at Perth Grammar school and Queen's College, Kingston. His love of nature may be traced to his early environment, as his father was one of the pioneers in the square timber trade on the tributaries of the Ottawa river.

He took up the study of medicine at Queen's College but a new interest called in the summer of 1863, when he was asked to prepare a précis of valuable records in the parliamentary library pertaining to the Hudson's Bay Company's territories and tenure.

His next adventure took him to the Northwest with a construction party to open up communication from the Lake of the Woods to the Red River. Shortly after reaching Fort Garry, Mr. Mair acted as correspondent for the "Montreal Gazette" and wrote a series of articles for that journal, entitled "Canada in the Far West." He will live in the history of Canadian journalism as the first writer to inform eastern papers of the possibilities of the prairie country.

He had just been married to Miss Eliza MacKenney, a niece of Sir John Schultz, later Lieut.-Governor of Manitoba, and it was at St. Norbert, when returning from St. Paul, that the pioneers were made prisoners by Louis Riel and his rebel followers. Mrs. Mair's loyalty and heroism during that time give her an honorable place in the history of Manitoba.

At Portage la Prairie, with Dr. Schultz and Major Boulton and others, Mr. Mair raised a force of loyalists and marched to Fort Garry only to fall into the hands of Riel through treachery. Major Boulton and Thomas Scott were shot. Mr. Mair was also told by Riel that he would meet the same fate. But one stormy night he crawled through the window of his prison, eluded the sentry at the gate, and escaped to Portage la Prairie. He travelled four hundred miles on snowshoes to St. Paul and on to Ontario.

After peace was restored, Mr. Mair returned to the Northwest and endeavored to recover valuable manuscripts and papers, for he had been busy with his pen through these stric-

ring times, but he found that the work of years had been burned by Riel or some of his followers.

Discouraged by his loss, he entered the fur trade at Portage la Prairie and Prince Albert. Active minds, however, cannot remain at rest and Mr. Mair began to use his pen again by writing articles for the "Atlantic Monthly."

Foreseeing the trouble which culminated in the second Rebellion, he removed his family to Windsor, Ontario, in 1882, and settled down to wait till the troublesome times were over. He again turned to literature, and began his best-known work, his drama "Tecumseh." While he was engaged on this, the Rebellion broke out, and he at once offered his services in the Governor-General's body-guard, as quarter-master and served throughout the campaign. On his return east, he completed his drama, which was published in 1886.

In this work, which made for Mr. Mair an enduring place in Canadian letters, there is the reflection of a great period in our early history, and the author depicts dramatically the time and scenes in which the great Indian Chief so nobly played a part. It is of special interest to know that Mr. Mair received warm praise for his work from Charles Sangster, the father of Canadian poetry.

Mr. Mair next transferred his interest to the Okanagan Valley, settling at Kelowna of which he was one of the founders. He erected the second building in the town. He later joined the Immigration Service in Winnipeg and continued in that work at Lethbridge, Coultis, on the boundary, and at Port Steele, B.C.

During these busy years, true to literary traditions, he never let his pen lay idle for long. "The Last Bison," a verse poem of the great West, was written in 1890. In 1901, his collected poems appeared. In 1908, a prose work, "Through the MacKenzie Basin," created widespread interest in giving an account of the Great Peace River Treaty of 1899 with the Indians of the North, who ceded a territory 800 miles long by 400 miles in breadth. Mr. Mair was secretary to the script commissioner and wrote extensively of the vast wheat region of the north. His favorable comments have since been confirmed by the extensive immigration into that country.

When 82 years old Mr. Mair took a trip to New Zealand to visit his daughter. Since his return to Canada he has lived with another daughter, Mrs. E. J. Cann, Calgary. Julia Ward Howe once said "All the sugar was in the bottom of the cup," and as Mr. Mair reviews his active career, his sunset hours are sweetened by a sense of life well-lived. With the steady rhythm of a well-ordered life, the years have dealt kindly with him, and he carries his 84 years with a fine dignity. Canadians are proud to apply to him the phrase, our "Grand Old Man," for his literary work has won for him an enduring place in the history of our national song.



JEFFERY FARNOL Author of "Peregrine's Progress."

dialogue is frequently humorous. The two friends have to do everything from discovering a secret passage to diving in a pond at midnight.

"An Ordeal of Honor," by Anthony Pryde. (Goodchild). This story of a man accused of a crime which he has no part, of misfortune heroically borne, and of a love which endures in spite of doubt and even degradation, is a book which is unflatteringly dramatic.

"Sea Wrack," by Vere Hutchinson. (Century Co.). Vere is a sister of the famous A. S. M. Hutchinson. The setting of this story is the north coast of England. One day, a baby boy lashed to a spar is thrown by the sea into the arms of a big farmer, Swinco. The story is mainly that of the boy and his foster brother, of their growth, loves, schemes, and fights, with the gigantic sea ever just beyond the human figures and playing its part in the drama.

"Ann and Her Mother," by O. Douglas. (Hodder and Stoughton). A story of a woman's life—an ordinary woman interested in ordinary things, such as husbands and babies, neighbors and tea-parties, servants and frocks. It is told in the first light, told with laughter and tears, and will appeal to all who care for clean and simple things. O. Douglas is the pen-name of a sister of John Buchan.

"The Crystal Globe," by Reginald Glossop. (Oldham's Press, London). This exciting story of Chinese mysticism and torture deals with the attempt of the powerful society of the Yellow Leaf to recover its most prized possession, the Crystal Globe. Two mandarins of the society are delegated to trace the foreign devil who has taken it. The trail leads to Dane Court, England.

"Bill the Bachelor," by Denis Mackall. (Thomas Allen). Bill is a young English gentleman who, unlike the majority of trans-Atlantic heroes, is engaged "in trade." He is also, for much of the time, almost engaged to the charming Honorable Leslie. He is immensely likeable himself, always doing the most surprising and yet absurdly natural things, and the whole story fairly ripples with humor. "Manchester Guardian" calls this story "The most enjoyable popular novel published since the war." Mr. Mackall already has two charming novels to his credit, "What Next?" and "Romance to the Rescue."

"Captain Blood," by Rafael Sabatini. (McClelland & Stewart). The redoubtable Peter Blood, buccaneer par excellence, is captain of the great ship Arabella, terror of the Spaniards, and is undisputed master of the waters of the Spanish Main. Many a biased novel-reader will feel a thrill he has not experienced since boyhood dreams of buccaneers and pirate ships, Spanish gold and pieces of eight.

"The Man Who Knew Too Much," by G. K. Chesterton. (McClelland & Stewart). An amateur detective who rivals Sherlock Holmes—who unravels crimes among the upper classes, but only to be hushed up; he never brings a single criminal to justice, although he captures every one he goes after.

"Tales of Chinatown," by Sax Rohmer. (Gundy). Further adventures of detective Paul Harley of "Fu Manchu" fame in London's sinister Chinatown, "Limehouse."

"The Desire of His Life," by Ethel M. Dell. (McClelland & Stewart). The author pits against each other as rivals for a girl's love, a controlled and sophisticated older man and a determined, impetuous boy.

"The Judge," by Rebecca West. (McClelland & Stewart). "Every mother is a judge who sentences the children for the sins of their father." This theory, propounded by Marion Yaverland to her son, Richard, is the keynote of Rebecca West's novel, a tale full of human experience and rich with the genius and vivid personality of the author. The setting of the book is vivid, in Edinburgh and on the shores of the Thames.

"The Three Lovers," by Frank Swinerton. (Ryerson Press).

In this story one of the greatest English stylists of the day tells the story of a girl's adjustment to a life with which she is entirely unfamiliar and of her struggle for the love of three men who are attracted to her and to whom she feels herself attracted.

"Ovington's Bank," by Stanley J. Weyman. (Ryerson Press). It is pleasant to see the name of Weyman back in the lists again. In this novel this master of historical romance gives us a splendid tale of adventure in which he sketches most vividly the struggle of progress against tradition of county and commerce in the life of the early nineteenth century. Adventure, love and commerce are blended in admirable style.

"The American Fiction." Rabbit, by Sinclair Lewis (George McLeod). This is the outstanding story this season in the United States. It is exciting even more discussion than "Main Street." It is an almost brutal satire on the booster type in the business world of the middle west. It is a very clever book, crowded with photographic detail of the doings of a real estate man, who is one of the moving spirits of Zenith, "the

Zip City. In its reproductions of American slang as used in offices, cafes, conventions, and smoking cars it makes very amusing reading. On the whole, however, this novel is open to serious criticism for its failure to recognize the existence of the better side of American life. Miss Willa Cather has produced a really great novel in "One of Ours." It is a story of Nebraska farm life, depicting the spiritual struggles of a young Hamlet of the prairies. His home and college life, his love affair and unhappy married life are depicted with remarkable power. The latter part of the book describes his adventures as a soldier in the American army. I wish to recommend this volume as one of the (Continued on Page 24.)