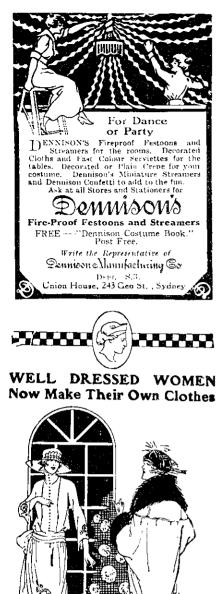
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# OF LITERARY INTEREST

Women Novelists

#### Some Writers Who Have Gained Popularity

SINCE the war the number of women writers of fiction in Eng-- nf S women writers of fiction in Eng-land has increased enormously, says the Paris Evening Telegram. If a poll were taken to decide the most popular writer of fiction, more than a dozen women's names would be found in the lists, including Dorothy Richardson, Rose Macaulay, Sheila Kaye Smith, Ethel Sidgwick, Kather-ine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, Re-beeca West, Stella Benson, E. M. Delafield, Clemence Dane, G. B. Stern, Mary Webb, Elemon Faricon beeca West, Stella Benson, E. M. Delafield, Clemence Dane, G. B. Stern, Mary Webb, Eleanor Farjeon, V. Sackville-West, Constance Holme, Sylvia Lynd, F. Tennyson Jesse, and probably Mary Falton, Hope Mirr-lees, Eleanor Mordmant, Amber Reeves, and Violet Meynell.

#### Test of Time

The time test is a hard one. It the phile test is a hard one. It would be an interesting venture to guess which of our favourites in a poll for popularity to-day will still be running ten to twenty years from лож.

Two guesses seem safe. One that the name of May Sinchir will still be known and her books real. Although not eligible for the poll, she belongs in a way to the present generation of novelists, as well as to that of a past or passing one. She might even be called the dean of English women neverists of to-day. While she has been a leader, she had also been a fellow-student and coworker with the younger writers, and she might even arknowledge to having profited by occasional ventures into new parts from a few of them—Dorointo thy Richardson, for example,

The other guess is that one of the The other guess is that one of the youngest, probably the youngest, competitors is going to freeve, if not a winner, at least a good cunner, Stella Benson, whose first book, "I Pose," was published in 1917, when she was in her teens, has shown a steady development in the later works, "This is the End" and "Living Alone,"

#### Some Faults

It is more for this reason than an actual estimate of her output up to this time that her name is included among those of Katherine Mansfield, among those of Katherine Mansfield, Rose Macaulay, Rebecca West, Sheila Kaye-Smith, and Virginia Woolf. In actual quality Miss Benson's work does not stand comparison with any of the five mentioned. But a forward outlook gives cause for thought. Refecca West's last novel, "The Judge," has proved such a dis-appointment to those who had pre-viously hailed her as the createst appointment to mose who had pre-viously hailed her as the greatest woman novelist of her time, that her best rating today must be based upon the high quality of her work as

literary critic. Rose Macaulay's excessive orse has become a liability instead of an asset in her latest publications; Sheila Kaye-Smith's insistence upon being 50 per cent, if not more, a man, is reflecting negatively upon the fine qualities that had given high promise of leading her into the coveted place of the greatest.

#### Women Like Books About Women

WILD have fifteen copies of 'This I Freedom, ' and ten copies of 'The Breaking Point,' '' I heard a women in a New York book shop say cently.

cently, She was sending books to her friends instead of Christmas cards, and this order was typical of the lavish way American men and women buy books during the boliday season. The two books of the year which have gone well over the one hundred



thousand mark are A. S. M. Hutchin-son's "This Freedom" and Mary Roberts Rinelart's "The Breaking Point.

They are both stories about women which any American publisher will tell you is the main reason for their popularity. The American woman is the great

st reader of fiction in the world, and she prefers stories about women, their feelings, sufferings, perplexities, prob-lems. She may resent "This Free-dom" is a matter of fact she does that it gives her a chance for dis-cussion, so she sends it to her friends or advises them to get it at their fiction library. Also she organises meetings to talk it over, and she writes essays on it. Booksellers say that the value of "This Freedom" she prefets stories about women, their writes essays on it. Booksellers say that the sales of "This Freedom" will far exceed those of "If Winter Gamme 5 Comes.

THE London Merning Post says: 2 Sir James Barrie it annears 1 "Wir James Barrie, it appears, owed the name of 'Wendy' in 'Peter Pan' to W. E. Henley's fittle daugh ter. Barrie, as usual with children, had become great chums with her, but she could not pronounce his name with the double 'r' in it. One day she heard father allude to Barrie nd. Thereupon she began affude Barrie as began to hor friend. "friend." Thereupon she began to call him 'Wendy,' the nearest she could get to the word. Hence the name. The little girl, as everybady knows, died early, but she lives as the original of 'Wendy.'"

#### New Zealanders in London Talk with Dora Wilcox

NEW Zealanders, sad to say, do not In take that interest in their own folk who leave the Dominion that they with those who have made the nume of Australia famous in other name of Australia famous in other lands, and Americans not only "boost" all their own, but often by chain to other nations' children. Not so New Zealanders. They yet have to learn that pride of birth which builds a nation. In a short talk with a returned New Zealander, Mrs, Hamelius, who left her native land many years ago and became the wife of a Belgian professor, and is known to fame as Dora Wilcox, the New Zealand poetess, referred to the suc-cess attained by some of the sons and daughters of the Dominion who are at present working in London. Miss present working in London. Miss Evelyn Isitt, formerly a Wellington journalist, and daughter of the late Rev. Frank 1sit, is as present in a very responsible position in London as the representative of the Manches-ter Guardian, one of England's most solid journals, which maintains a

London office as well as its head-quarters in Manchester. Miss Isitt has succeeded admirably in the keenest literary competition in the world, and holds her own with the best.

Another writer, who was formerly an Aucklander, is Miss Jossie Weston, who writes as <sup>11</sup>C, de Therry, <sup>11</sup> multip in the *Onlooker*, and who has made a bitment more than the mutually in the Outbooker, and who has made a literary success. Mrs. Hame-lins has just received the news that Miss Weston has returned to Aus-tralia recently, and was married at Adelaide on the 7th of February to a gentleman from Melbourne.

### Woman Novelist of Rural England

## by C. A. DAWSON SCOTT

by C. A. DAWSON SCOTT **P**RESSED by bulky pareels of manuscript against the glazed front of a cupboard in my room are a number of newspaper cuttings portraits of friends. From among them, Sheila Kaye-Smith looks down at me as 1 work, a woman with a child's ponting mouth and the cycs of someone old and wise. At the moment she is denying me a sight of her book of noems because, as she moment she is denying me a sight of her book of poems because, as she says, it is just a limited edition of 250 copies, duly numbered and anto graphed. The type is to be dispersed, so that the book will not be published at all in the ordinary sense -merely issued to the subscribers. "Desides," says she - and here is the little prick --"they belong to a side of me you have not seen." After that, or course, I feel that I must get a glimpse of those Saints in Sussex. I want to know -yes, I really must know whether my novelist is also a poet. poet.

"The Last of the House of Alard" is her new novel, and 1 am wondering whether it can possibly interest me-more than did "Joanna Golden" or as much as "Little England," that tender and heautiful story of humble folk

When you say that Miss Kave Smith lives on a hill above the sea you give an impression of bleakness

you give an impression of bleakness which is so different from the truth as to be almost hulicrons. From the side of her home, the hill, rocky, free-clad, goes up and up, sheltering the house from the north and east winds. About it are more trees and a protecting garden wall, below which latter, a sweetness in that smooth and tidy place, dark-faced wallflowers are now in bloom. Far down the slope, a grey glitter, is the English Channel. The land, not the water, appeals to her.

When she came to Cornwall, what we talked about was not the beauty of those lonely shores, but soils and farming possibilities . . . the harvest of the land, not of the deep.

Her talk, indeed, is very like her books, those fine large books with their outdoor atmosphere, their clearly seen psychology, their preoccupation with sublimated, rather than func-tional, emotion, and their lack of form.

More than one of them makes me think of "Tono-Bungay," a story which lives because between its covers are real and vital people; but lives only because of that, and always in spite of the fact that it broke in the width.

middle. Miss Kaye-Smith handicaps her-self in the same way. The climax of several of her books comes in the of several of her books comes in the middle, instead of at the end. Be cause of the human quality of her books, however, we go on reading, and eventually give them a place on our shelves among the best literature of the day. the day.

NOTE:  $\stackrel{\text{rel}}{\longrightarrow} Helps$  to Young Writers  $\stackrel{\text{rel}}{\longrightarrow}$  will be found on page 38.