

# In the Bookman's Corner

## Maori Folk Tales

NEW Zealanders owe James Cowan an everlasting debt of gratitude for his researches and writings on things Maori, for he has preserved from utter oblivion much of great historical and ethnological value. His latest book, "Fairy Folk Tales of the Maori," is an undoubted acquisition to our national literature. Maori tradition is rich in fairy folk lore, every tribe having its collection of stories of the supernatural doings of the *Patu-Paiarehe* (Fairy Woodsmen), and of the fiercer and more terrible *Maero*, beings something akin to the ogres in the tales of our childhood. To the sensitive and superstitious native mind the dark depths of the mysterious forest were peopled with strange beings, and in particular the mist-wreathed mountain tops were the homes of fairy folk. All natural phenomena became the work of good or bad fairies, just in proportion as it was beneficial or the reverse to man. The *tohunga*, the wisest of all men, could invoke the aid of these unseen forces; he could raise demons to wreak his displeasure or good fairies and influences to aid and abet. It is interesting to note in this connection that the Maoris firmly believe that the great eruption of Mount Tarawera was due to the influence of the *tohunga Tuhoto*, who, displeased with his people resident in the vicinity of the mountain, raised a demon imprisoned in Tarawera, who destroyed the land. Most of the stories were told to Mr. Cowan by the older generation of Maori tale tellers. He thus describes the *Wharepuni*, a typical native house, in which most of these tales were told: "A sightly house this, within as well as without; its panels and rafters are brightly painted and scrolled, and the foot of the central pillar, the *Putoko-manawa*, is wrought into a carved and tattooed head, the effigy of the tribal founder; his pawa-shell eyes glare belligerently at us over the fire. On the walls hang weapons of the past and present—*taiaha* and *mere* and a long-handled tomahawk, deadly weapons all in skilled Maori hands, and a dozen or so of rifles and shot guns.

Now come the stories, for night after night in the warm and social meeting house the tales of the times of old are repeated, until every member of the tribe, to the youngest, is familiar with the unwritten history of the clan and the folk-lore of the land."

Maori folk lore offers a wide field for further investigation, and we sincerely hope that Mr. Cowan will not stop with this one volume.

The book makes fascinating reading. In style and sense it is not a collection of stories for young folk, but will appeal strongly to the student and general reader. Our copy from the publishers, Whitcombe and Tombs, Limited.

## New Zealand Pastorals in Prose and Verse

A DAIN'TILY produced book is that entitled "A Pleasant Land" from the pen of Mrs. Carr Rollett,

perhaps better known to many readers under the pseudonym of Hilda Keane. Mrs. Rollett possesses a lively fancy, and in these essays and verses gives full play to her undoubted gift of musical expression. She turns for inspiration to the heights and valleys, the lowlands, the coasts and islands. Her themes are of our own land, a land as she so

is an interesting story from beginning to end—an end that will take the reader by surprise.—Our copy through Whitcombe and Tombs Limited.

A BOOK of Joseph C. Lincoln is always something to be looked forward to. His latest character is Queer Judson, who gives the book

impertinent humour, and he is looked upon askance by many good Americans. But he is particularly refreshing, and in the candour of his expression, and his method of handling any subject which takes his fancy he stands on no precedent, nor shows any respect whether his butt is on the one side of the Atlantic or the other.

It might be said that he is not out to win the approval of his readers, but to make them think for themselves. Just such a book would appeal to one of either sex tired of the super-sentimental effusions so much the vogue. It is bold without being gross, witty without being strained, and opened at random there is food for thought in every page.

A book for a present, for a holiday companion, and for a bedside. With the recent visit of the American Fleet fresh in our minds it is worth reading for his remarks on that alone. Through Whitcombe and Tombs Limited.



STURDY PINES

Reuell Reynolds

Illustration from "A Pleasant Land" by Mrs. Carr Rollett

well describes it. "of grove and park, of tranquil hollows, and swelling knolls; of serpentine waterways and gem-like islands; of broad spaces and forested mountains."

We cannot imagine a more delightful souvenir for sending overseas than this book.

In addition to the beautiful printing, a feature we must comment on is the excellent illustrations delightfully printed on sepia paper.

The publishers are Messrs. Whitcombe and Tombs, Ltd., to whom we extend our felicitations on producing such an excellent specimen of the typographers' art.

## New Novels

ETHEL M. Dell's book, "A Man Under Authority," will be welcomed by her many admirers. The plot centres round the Rev. Bill Quentin, the man under authority, who, though a man under authority, is brimful of humour and commonsense. Early in the narrative he loves Mrs. Rivers, a widow with a past. The time comes when, for the love of her, he acts, and acts quickly. It

is an interesting story from beginning to end—an end that will take the reader by surprise.—Our copy through Whitcombe and Tombs Limited.

is a delightful manner Mr. Lincoln shows what happened to Judson, who, penniless and dependent upon the charity of his brother is looked upon with dislike by the people about him. Yet by sheer force of character he wins through like a hero. The story has an admirable plot, well handled, and in characters is just as richly laden as any book that has been done by this talented author. It is full of delightful humour, and delightfully human people. You will enjoy every line of it. Our copy through Whitcombe and Tombs Limited.

## "Prejudices"

THAT satirical jester, H. L. Mencken, has produced yet another volume, "Prejudices," fourth series (Jonathan Cape), which is, in our opinion, as fresh and diverting as any of his previous volumes.

Mr. Mencken has an impish and

## Recommended Book List

### GENERAL

- Rollett, Mrs. F. Carr - - - *A Pleasant Land* - - - 3/6  
 Hedges, F. A. Mitchell—*Battles with Giant Fish* - 10/6  
 Morton, H. B.—*Recollections of Early New Zealand* 10/6  
 Bailey, Hiram P.—*Shanghaied out of 'Frisco in the Nineties* - - - - - 9/6  
 Smith, C. Harold—*Rahvevia* (a true romance of the South Seas) - - - - - 9/6  
 Masefield, John — *Collected Poems* - - - - - 11/-  
*Child Verses from Punch* 3/6  
 Selections from Kipling - 6/-  
 Moreland, Arthur—*Humours of History* - - - - - 3/-  
*Pepys' Diary*, complete India paper edition, 3 vols. - 52/6  
 Marriott, J. W. — *One Act Plays of To-day*, 2nd series - - - - - 4/6  
 Yeats, W. B.—*Early Poems and Stories* - - - - - 14/-

### FICTION

- Birmingham, George A.—*The Gun Runners* - - - - - 6/-  
 Dyer, Mrs. Maud—*Coombe St. Mary's* - - - - - 6/-  
 Gibbs, Sir P.—*Unchanging Quest* - - - - - 6/-  
 Gibbs, A. Hamilton—*Soundings* - - - - - 6/-  
 Grayson, David—*Adventures in Understanding* - - - 6/-  
 Locke, William J.—*The Great Pandolfo* - - - - - 6/-  
 Pedler, Margaret — *To-morrow's Tangle* - - - - - 6/-  
 Raymond, Ernest — *Daphne Bruno* - - - - - 6/-  
 Rees, Rosemary — *Lake of Enchantment* - - - - - 6/-  
 Rinehart, M. Roberts—*The Mystery Lamp* - - - - - 6/-  
 Roberts Cecil — *The Love Rack* - - - - - 6/-  
 Wodehouse, P. G. *Sam the Sudden* - - - - - 6/-

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