

plays a very small part, and yet serves its purpose in contributing towards a satisfactory ending.—“Vivat.”

“Scaramouche.”

(By Rafael Sabatini.)

“SCARAMOUCHE,” by Rafael Sabatini, is my favourite novel. The literary style of the writer appeals to me in every way.

The scenes are laid in picturesque old France, than which there can be no lovelier setting; then the historical interest is not lacking, leading up, as it does, to the first steps of the Revolution.

To follow “Scaramouche” from the quiet village to the city of Rennes, there by his “dangerous eloquence” to do his best to avenge the death of his friend Vilmorin, and when he had thoroughly roused the inhabitants, to vanish, thus living up to his name, is intensely interesting.

His next adventure, working up the troupe of M. Binet, to such a successful company, and eventually using it as a means to further his private hatred of M. de La. Tour d’Azyr, and his again vanishing when things were in the worst state of chaos.

Lastly, the skilled swordsman, using that skill to further the cause he was upholding, and incidentally doing his best to kill his friend’s murderer, only to find that murderer to be his own father.

The love interest is there, but as an under-current, rather than the theme: so that everything to make a splendid novel is collected and told in Sabatini’s inimitable style, in “Scaramouche.”—“Helen Wake.”

“Sally in Rhodesia.”

(By Sheila Macdonald.)

SALLY, in the most fascinating of letters, written in a particularly sparkling and amazingly open style, allows quite an extensive glimpse of her life in Rhodesia. One gasps with horror at the terrible domestic tragedies that Sally encounters, and evokes scowls from one’s family the next minute, by loud laughter at the extraordinary doings of Whiskey and Sixpence, the two native servants, who like most of their kind do not concern themselves with anything pertaining to hygiene, and bring one to feel more

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decidedly than ever that ignorance is bliss.

The rather frequent babies, including most energetic twins, will assuredly bring forth a “poor thing” from many a tender-hearted mother; however, the tremendously optimistic Sally generally manages a laugh in times of disaster, even though it be at herself, and somehow the trouble dwindles considerably.

Those who are interested in flowers are charmed by Sally’s gardening activities, and although she has an enormous number of enemies in the way of peculiar kinds of weather and various strange bugs, she has evidently a garden of great attraction. The charm of the book is found not only in its humour and individuality, but in that it is a true picture of a most fascinating country.—“Margot.”

“Adam Bede.”

(By George Eliot.)

I MAY be considered old-fashioned (if so, so be it) when I say that “Adam Bede” is my favourite book, its authoress being “George Eliot.” Many reasons could be given for this choice, let three suffice. “Adam Bede” is so interesting, humorous, and educative.

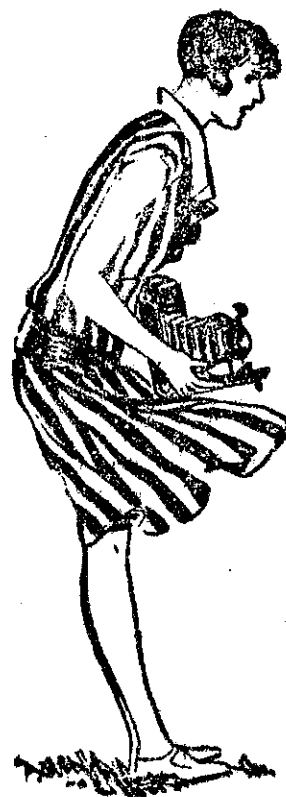
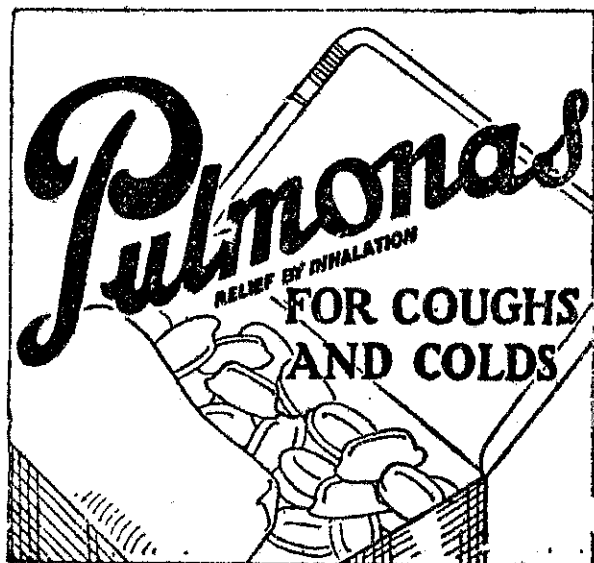
Interesting because every character save Hetty Sorrel is historic, mostly relatives of the novelist. The prototype of Adam was George Eliot’s father, and her mother was Mrs. Poyserd. Every word spoken by Adam is pregnant with meaning, and we have the finest description of a British working man ever produced.

We get rare humour in Mrs. Poyser, which simply fascinates me. Here is a bit: “I’m not denying that women are foolish. God Almighty made ’em to match the men.”

Educative—teaching the gospel of work. Work was Adam’s religion, no cramped work for him. Adam put his conscience into all he did. The book is a splendid insight into English rural life in the early nineteenth century, a vivid contrast to present day, and Dinah’s prayer is a piece of classical literature. I’m thrilled when the authoress turns from the story to moralise; we see her then to advantage. The whole book is simply charming.—M.A.B.

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