

The "RATTLESNAKES" on Our BOOKSHELVES



Anthony Hope, Charged with Holding Loose Views of Marriage



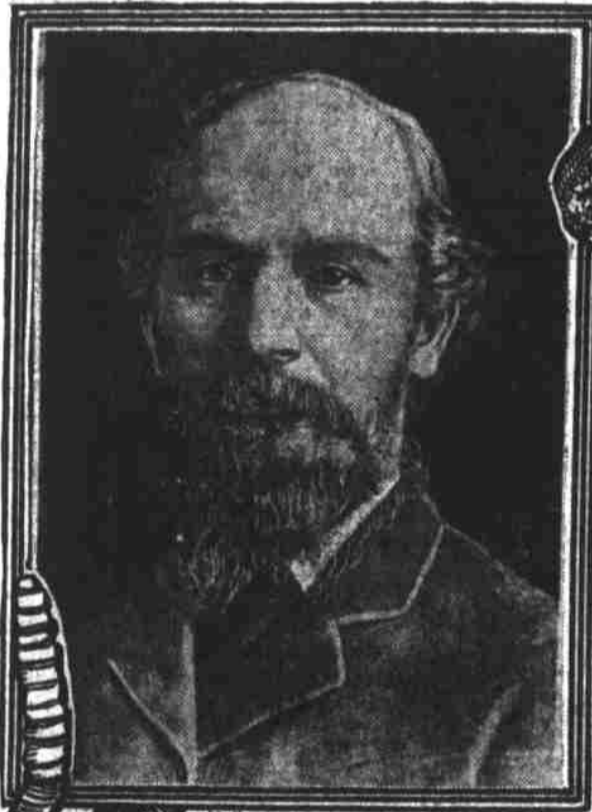
Marie Corelli, also Writes with a Bad Streak



"Ralph Connor's" Warning to the Young Readers of America

IF YOU had your choice, would you take a nest of rattlesnakes into your home rather than one of the highly inflamed, erotic novels that have marked recent broadsides of modern literature from the printing press?

You say you would prefer to handle the red-covered volumes of fervid love stories? But if you had children—daughters just budding into womanhood, or sons whose minds



Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Misical but Rotten"

might be receptive to evil suggestion? What then?

"If I had my choice," declared "Ralph Connor"—the Rev. Charles W. Gordon, of Winnipeg, Canada—"I would rather take a nest of vipers into my house than such a book. Rattlesnakes might kill physically—but bad books kill spiritually. I would rather take the worst man into my home—a man of degraded, corrupt morals—and let him be among my family than a decadent book."

"You may protect your children from the evil influence of a man; but you can't protect children from the bad influence of an evil book. An evil book has a personality as much as a human being. It cannot be destroyed. Its influence is insidious."

"The popularity of erotic fiction and putrid poetry tends to degrade and corrupt the youth of the land. The success of books of this type in America is most significant. It is ominous."

"RALPH CONNOR," as you know, is the author of "Black Rock," "The Sky Pilot" and a number of other novels which have enjoyed tremendous popularity. They are all healthy books, dealing with rugged people, out-of-door life; with men and women with red blood in their veins, normal moral instincts and high character.

What Dr. Gordon has to say, therefore, concerning the popularity of such books as the late production of Mrs. Elinor Glyn is of unusual interest. You will remember the fuss that was stirred up when the Titian-haired authoress published the story of her hero, Paul—and fresh in your mind are the breathless, whispered discussions with your friends about the book. Critics were almost unanimous in consigning it to the literary hades, which meant a sale of about 175,000 copies. And so it was the success of the season.

You recall, too, the visit of Mrs. Glyn to this coun-

Mrs. Elinor Glyn's Book Called "A Literary Rattlesnake"



Hall Caine, "Writes Books with a Bad Streak"

try, her spirited reaction with the Puritan Mothers in New York and her indignant denial of any suggestion of impropriety in her novel.

"Why," she declared in a softly murmuring voice, "it is a moral story. It teaches a moral. It is the story of a young man's awakening—his spiritual awakening—through the love of a beautiful and noble woman."

Some people took it at that. One would not dare discuss some of the droilery of Balzac in polite society, because it is not immoral, but unmaral. Mrs. Glyn gave her story a moral. That saved it—in her opinion.

Recently there came an evangelistic mission to the United States from his parish in Canada, "Ralph Connor." Appalled by the popularity of decadent books in this country, in an interview he has uttered the most ringing words of warning. He foresees a corruption of the youth of the country by modern books. He can see no moral in such stories.

"This is as though one would have to go to hell first to get to heaven, is it not? Personally, I have not read Mrs. Glyn's book. I do not think I should wish to do so. But from what I am told of the story the claim of its teaching a moral lesson is absurd."

"When I read a book it leaves a most vivid impression on me. It is as though I had met the characters. And books which leave evil impressions wreak more spiritual harm than vipers."

The success of books of that type in this country is regarded by the Canadian clergyman as the most ominous sign of national decay.

"In England a really healthy book has little chance nowadays," he declared. "The people have been poisoned by the fetid, hothouse literature of the drawing room. Many of the popular books are perverse and poisonous. The people want such things."

"But in the United States the people have demanded healthy literature. And the recent popularity of decadent fiction is a sign of a cancerous formation. It should create alarm in the hearts of parents. They should protect their children."

An author, in the opinion of Mr. Gordon, should be judged by the influence of his books; whether they uplift and help the reader, or whether they depress the mind, weaken the character and corrupt the morals. Some of the most popular writers, he says, pander to a demand for the forbidden.

Among the writers who have to greater or less degree injected the decadent note in their books he places "Lucas Malet" (Mrs. St. Leger Harrison), Anthony Hope, Marie Corelli, Hall Caine and Algernon Charles Swinburne.

"People buy what they like to read," said the Canadian writer, "and the fact that they buy bad books is one of the most awful signs of the times. It shows the mental attitude of a people. Books which deal with sin and make it attractive or glorify the baser passions are deadly, poisonous, fatal. And such books are on the library shelves and tables of many families. They are literary rattlesnakes."

EROTICISM LACKS POWER
Possibly you have read Swinburne and surged on the roseate waves of passionate melody. But have you ever analyzed his poetry, grasped the thought beneath the musical lines and become acquainted with the naked immorality clothed beneath the glamour of his genius?

In the opinion of many critics Swinburne is the greatest living poet, the one notable figure in contemporary English literature whose voice sings above the mediocrity of the day. His work is classic. "Ralph Connor" asserts emphatically:

"Most young people and most women would find Swinburne deadly. His poetry is wonderful; it possesses sweetness and rhythm; it surges and sings and ripples with music and song. It intoxicates one with its sweetness and bewilders one with its ravishing music."

"He has put in words the singing of nightingales and the thunder of the sea. But in many of his poems, beneath the words that flow so marvelously, one detects grisly, horrible things. He touches gracefully upon things which, if expressed in ordinary language, would disgust and shock people. Many of his poems, while musical, are rotten."

"Swinburne would appeal to the man who has gone through experience and tired of simple things and seen the lower phases of life. To the inexperienced mind, which cannot detect his subtleties, many of his poems would have anything but a wholesome influence."

"I fall to see any effect of Swinburne on English literature; I cannot detect a single mark of his influence. Shakespeare is alive today in every man's mind, because he was strong and vital. Many of these writers who are the product of a certain type of English society, of the hothouse variety, are popular for

a little while, but the current soon changes.

"In this country there was an effort to make Salome popular; it failed. The effort to give a vogue to the poems of Wilde is another evidence of an unhealthy taste. His poems are graceful, beautiful, imaginative, but there is not in them a single vibrant note of power; passion undoubtedly, but not the calm strength which would appeal to the person with the big heart and broad, healthy mind."

"In many books of fiction I find a lack of reverence for marriage, loose ideas about love and a lax sense of responsibility. The evil of such books is that they make sin attractive; by a specious philo-



Rev. Charles W. Gordon, "Ralph Connor"

ophy they tend to blind people's eyes as to the proper relation of right and wrong.

"Take Anthony Hope's 'Double Harness.' Hope is undoubtedly clever; some of his stories are the most delightful I have ever read. I admire in many ways and consider 'Zenda' a superb romance. The 'Dolly Dialogues' are diabolically clever. But his idea of marriage is loose—in 'Double Harness' he is like a man dancing a tight rope over a precipice. One watches breathlessly to see whether he can get back. But Hope deals with these things dexterously."

"What do you think of the books of Hall Caine and Marie Corelli?" was asked.

"I find a bad streak in both of them," he replied. "Caine, however, usually does pain without making it attractive; he depicts the punishment of the sinner. I think the philosophy of Corelli is pretty shaky."

Probably every reader of "Three Weeks" gloated over "The Sorrows of Satan." In this book is the famous love scene between the Prince Lucio—the earthly incarnation of Satan—and Lady Sybil Elton. It takes place in the depth of night on a staircase. Lady Sybil is in a white shimmering robe and in the red glow of a window depicting the martyrdom of St. Stephen pleads to Satan to reciprocate her love.

The husband, listening at the top of the stairs, hears Lady Sybil scornfully reject the love-mad woman. Of course, Lady Sybil had a terrible end. A scene in some respects resembling this takes place in "Sir Richard Calmady," the popular novel of "Lucas Malet."

"Parts of this book," said "Ralph Connor," "are ghastly. 'Lucas Malet' has written some charming things; she can write beautifully, and I thought it was pitiable that she should have put her pen to this."

"INGROWING" LITERATURE

Another authoress who has undertaken to treat of the smart people of London society is "Frank Dabry," whose "Pigs in Clover" won such popularity. The book was universally decreed as being "clever," but "slightly naughty."

"Literature in London has been ingrowing for years," said Mr. Gordon. "There the modern man has his being in the Strand. The popularity of books of this sort in the United States is alarming. Parents should be sure to learn the character of the books they buy."

"I regard the United States as a field where can grow up a healthy, virile, strong, wholesome literature. The colonies of the British empire and South Africa hold promise. They will produce great things. The men are of a many type. Of the British colonies, Canada, in proportion to its population, has done more than any other. Mrs. Glyn's book, which received such an enthusiastic welcome in the United States, was not very popular in Canada."

"In England today Wordsworth is not popular. The people prefer the drawing room poets. They ask, 'What is good and what is evil—what is a good book and what is a bad book? There are standards of right and wrong in life and books. As I said, what elevates, strengthens and ennobles is good; what tends to corrupt, enervate character and destroy faith is evil."

"It is a happy thought, however, that no bad book has ever lived. People always demand what is their level. I have read copies of 'The Gentlemen's Magazine,' published a hundred years ago, and the correspondence in it is awful."

"America undoubtedly is a great field for a great, good literature. But if you want to get it, you must be careful that the coming generation is not poisoned by noxious poetry or fiction."



"Lucas Malet" (Mrs. St. Leger Harrison) whose work is called "A Ghastly"

absorbent cotton, soaked with a hot 1 per cent. solution of sodium chloride. On this is placed a pliable tin electrode, to which is soldered the conducting wire. The second electrode must be much larger, and may be placed on any point of the body, so long as it is symmetrically placed in the axis.

All the necessary apparatuses are placed between the supply and the large electrode on the back, which is connected with the positive pole. The head electrode must be connected directly with the negative pole. By this means the potential of the head is raised to a state of cerebral inhibition analogous to chloroform narcosis. The experiment can be stopped instantly by cutting off the current.

"Awakening is instantaneous; usually the animal gets on its feet, looks quietly around, shows no signs of suffering, fright or fatigue, and when released from the electrodes, jumps about gaily and eats with appetite food offered to it."

There are no after effects, no vomiting, rarely a little stupor. The experiment seems to cause no pain for the animal, not only so, but shows it, but evinces no fear and no revolt during preparations for another application.

Assisting Dr. Leduc in some of his experiments, kept a rabbit in electric narcosis for eight hours and twenty minutes without interruption. The animal came to without displaying discomfort.

In the experiment on Dr. Leduc himself, in the presence of Malherbe and Rouzeau, of the School of Medicine of Nantes, the current was not raised to a level high enough to cause total unconsciousness, but was carried far enough to convince the operators that it was necessary this could have been done.

The current was raised to 25 volts and 4 milliamperes in the interrupted current. Altogether Dr. Leduc was under the influence of the current for 20 minutes. He felt no after effects, unless we count such a sense of well being and physical vigor immediately afterward as being before the positive electrode.

Retraite Ouyviers.

Electricity's Newest Promise to Surgery.

THERE is hope—leading scientists of France are already declaring it a certainty—that the mortal dangers which have always lurked in the use of ether and of chloroform as anesthetics are to be ended at last.

In Nantes, Professor Leduc, assisted by Miss Louise G. Robinovitch, a young girl physician from New York, who has already won distinction in France and Germany by her experiments in electrical anesthesia, has developed a remarkable method of inducing narcosis, or suspension of sensibility, by means of the interrupted current.



Rabbit in Sleep Caused by Electricity

For years there has been no physician who has dared use either of the treacherous drugs without preparing for a deadly collapse of his patient, and far too many such collapses have occurred in spite of every precaution taken.

Recent experiments upon the organs of patients who have died from chloroform and ether have shown that the most important organs of the body undergo a fatty degeneration—heart, lungs, liver, brain and kidneys—and the opinion is gaining ground that the appearance of fatty degeneration of some of these organs in patients who at the time appear to suffer a minimum of inconvenience from the inhalation is due to the baleful anesthesia.

Professor Leduc's experiments, extensively conducted upon animals, were carried by him, in the true spirit of science, up to the use of man as his subject, with himself as the first subject.

The result, he explained recently, was a narcosis analogous to that of ether, a condition in which the subject is without power of voluntary movement, makes no reply to stimulation, and exhibits only some reflex movements, such as the beating of the heart and respiration. This state, produced by the action on the brain of a definite electric current, can be maintained for several consecutive hours, and ceases immediately with stoppage of the current.

APPLIED TO BASE OF BRAIN
In order to induce electric narcosis, the circuit is formed by the supply, the rheostat, the interrupter, the current reverser, the milliammeter and the subject. The hair is shaved from the head of the animal to be experimented on, dog or rabbit. The hair should be shaved off close and the skin must not be cut. The shaven surface must extend in front to the eyes, so that all the anterior part of the brain is traversed by the current and under its influence.