

THE BOOKSHELF

The Bookshelf is for the benefit of those of our readers who are interested in things literary. If you are a book lover and like the idea of a literary club that meets through the Bookshelf column, you are welcome. You are urged to write in to this department any comments on current or past literature that you have in mind. If you see questions in this column you care to answer, by all means do so. If you have questions to ask pertaining to literature, send them in. Address communications to Editor of Bookshelf, Chicago Defender.

"Peder Victorious"

By O. E. Rolvaag. Harper & Brothers, New York. \$2.50.

"Giants in the Earth," saga of the Norwegian settlement of the Middle West, was eagerly hailed by the American reading public. Launched in an edition of 50,000, it has gone on selling steadily since its publication a year and a half ago, until today it is in its second hundred thousand.

Now comes "Peder Victorious," carrying on the story of the second generation of these pioneers. In contrast to their parents who cling to Norwegian language and custom, they are American in speech and thought. This is a tale of the '80s, which witnessed the division of Dakota territory and its admission to the Union; the establishment of schools and churches and the growth of towns. More particularly it is the story of Peder Victorious, son of Beret and Per Hansa, who in his personality exemplifies the spirit of the new America. His romance, which ends the book, looks forward to the amalgamation of pioneer races and religions.

Like its predecessor "Peder Victorious" was written in Norwegian. It has been translated by the author in collaboration with Prof. Nora O. Solum of the department of English at St. Olaf college, where O. E. Rolvaag is professor of Norwegian literature.

This Norwegian immigrant, who gave up a future as fishing captain in order to seek an education in America, has produced a tale of the Middle West which is epic in breadth and at the same time intensely human.

IN OPPORTUNITY

In the January number of Opportunity the winner of the Van Vechten award of \$200 for the best contribution of the year will be announced.

Alain Locke contributes a brilliant article on "Literary Achievements" for the year 1928.

John P. Davis, whose story, "Overcoat," in the December number, received very flattering comments, has another story of night life in New York called "Ruth Trent Cries."

Education in the Virgin Islands, under American rule, is comprehensively treated by Antonio Jarvis.

"North Carolina's Rating of Negro Colleges" is the title of an informative article by W. A. Robinson, formerly supervisor of high schools, of Raleigh, N. C.

Nella Larsen, whose novel "Quicksand," enjoyed a large sale, reviews the latest book on the Race woman, "Black Sadie," and C. C. Spaulding, president of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance company, contributes a sparkling review of "William Gregg, Factory Master of the Old South."

There will be a survey of significant events of the month.

T. Arnold Hill comments on the labor situation.

In addition to these features there will be selected poetry from new poets. The magazine is profusely illustrated.

A Lion Apiece

"The plains are literally swarming with game," reads one of the messages just received by George Palmer Putnam from Martin Johnson in Africa. "Our Boy Scouts have already seen 104 lions, and each boy has shot a particularly fine specimen." According to Mr. Johnson's messages, which were dispatched from Nalrobl, having been taken to the telegraph station, more than 150 miles, by native runners, the three Boy Scouts who were chosen to join his expedition have had some thrilling experiences and have obtained a wealth of material for the book, "Three Boy Scouts in Africa," which they are writing. It will be published by Putnam on their return.

Another message described an adventure in the camp. "Seven lions surrounded our camp," it said. "One actually entered the front seat of an automobile parked nearby and almost chewed up the rear tire. A third lion managed to get at a camera, which was soon reduced to a pulp. It was a thrilling night, but all is well."

Do would-be writers study established writers in order to form their own standards? The answer would seem to be "yes," for nearly every writer has been influenced by one or another school of literature at some time in his career.

John Gallishaw, head of the John Gallishaw School for Writing, feels that studying cases in craftsmanship is one of the most important steps on the road to success in that field.

In his new book, "The Only Two Ways to Write a Story," Mr. Gallishaw, who was at one time assistant dean of Harvard college and a member of the English department of Harvard college and the University of California, illustrates his "case method" with stories by some of the most representative story writers of the day. In this group are found, among others, Thomas Beer, Irvin S. Cobb and John Galsworthy.

We understand through a publication that has recently fallen into our hands, that Ernest Boyd, in his "Literary Blasphemies," has compared Shakespeare to George Cohan, the Marx brothers and Ethel M. Dell. This makes rather an amazing sextet (we were going to say triumvirate), and now the problem arises as to how to get them together. Shall we send Miss Dell's latest novel, "The Gate Marked Private" to Mr. Cohan and Messrs. Marx, or shall we merely ask them to autograph copies of the book? Any solutions will be welcomed.

President Coolidge says he is determined to have the Kellogg treaty ratified before he leaves office. But nation-wide campaigns are on to get the pact out of the senate trenches by Christmas. "Get the peace pact out of the senate by Christmas!" "Ratify the Kellogg treaty as America's gift to the world!" These are the shouted slogans. What are your sentiments about it?

"The Peace of Paris," a study of the Kellogg-Briand treaty, by David Hunter Miller (Putnam's), who was legal adviser to the American commission to negotiate peace at Paris, illumines the situation for most of us.