

Canadian Authors

(By Winifred Eaton Reeve)

Calgary has reason to be proud of the fact that the most successful of any of the Bliss Carman recitals in the western cities was the one on Friday evening in the Central Methodist church. About 1,500 people packed the church, and gave not only a splendid ovation to the Canadian poet, but followed his reading with the most rapt and delighted interest.

Before leaving the city Mr. Carman expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the fine reception accorded him in Calgary. He stated that it marked the peak of his tour, and that he was unlikely to forget the sunny city of the foothills. The poet will spend a couple of days in Banff before returning to Vancouver.

Douglas Durkin is the author of a new Canadian novel entitled "The Maggie," which is causing heated discussion, especially in the city of Winnipeg. This despite the fact that the book has been banned by some of the critics of that city, who refuse to review it on the ground that it may hurt the sensibilities and feelings of Winnipeggers. Under the circumstances we propose to read and fully review said "Maggie."

Too many books are ignored or banned because of prejudice, while others are "boosted" and fulsomely praised out of all proportion to their merits. Not always are the methods employed for "boosting" a book ethical or legitimate. We knew of a case where a certain new writer entered into an agreement with a critic to act as her agent. He revised her script, sold it to the publishers, and then proceeded to write most of her reviews and to influence other reviewers. One of these reviews, in fact, appeared in the Literary Digest, International Book Review, and as many critics are like the proverbial sheep, it was inevitable that a number of them fell into line and followed the lead of the man who was proclaiming his "discovery" as a work of genius, and for which he was receiving a slice of the author's royalties.

This is not legitimate criticism. It is just as if an author were to write his own criticisms and reviews. It is not fair to other authors, who must send out their work and have it judged through the usual channels. From a financial viewpoint, of course, it may prove remunerative to the author who is not possessed with a fine sense of literary honor, unless, of course, discovery results, when an exposure and scandal are sure to follow.