E BOOK CORNER

Story of Gardiner's Career Record Of Canada's Rise To World Power

"ONE OF IT CAME EASY"
Nathaniel A. Benson (Burns and MacEachern—Toronto)

"Mr. Gardiner's career," writes A. T. Richardson, editor of the Toronto Telegram, "is compounded of fiction and reality. Historians James Garfield Gardiner, Canada's redoubtable and respected Minister of Agriculture, is a farmer legislator who is one of the most important figures in Canada's life. His remarkable career epitomizes the large phase of national development that followed the creation of Western Canada as the link completing trans - continental Confederation."

Mr. Richardson writes thus in the foreword of a fascinating new book "None of It Came Easy" written by one of Canada's celebrated posts, playwrights and anthologists, Toronto-born Nathaniel A. Benson. Mr. Richardson praises the book which marks another "first" for the publishers, Messrs. Burns & MacEachern.

Mr. Benson, in his easy-flowing, pleasant and crisp style, recounts the career of an indomitable farmboy who used the precious tool of an education to rise from hired man to country teacher, to high school principal to Premier of the wealthy province of Saskatchewan, finally to a position of national eminence as Canada's Minister of Agriculture, which he has occupied with distinction for 20 years.

Farmer, humanitarian, spokesman of the tiller of the soil and personal friend of Laurier, Mackenzie King, Churchill, Roosevelt, St. Laurent, the James Gardiner story from 1883 to 1955 is truly fascinating. Mr. Benson's narrative is an historical record of dramatic fact which reads like fiction. It is a glowing record of Canada's rise to a world power. It is also the story of the rise of a man from a humble position to one of history's greats—of a man who never lost the human touch.

At a celebration party in Toronto, given by the publishers, Burns & MacEachern, scores of press, radio and television critics were introduced to Mr. Gardiner. The Minister obviously delighted yet somewhat self-conscious, congratulated the author Nathaniel Benson on "an excellent piece of work." At the same time, Mr. Gardiner said. "If I had written it, maybe I would have dropped more politics into it." Nevertheless, "None of It Came Easy," will be a best seller. It's an honest narrative of a man, an honest man of the soil.

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Rewritten Hindu Epic Full of Humor, Wisdom

Today sees the second issue of the Daily News Book Page, sponsored by the Book Review Club of the Prince Rupert Public Library. It is hoped that the reviews of books from the library read by various city residents and presented every week will encourage others to use the public library's facilities to a greater extend.

"The Ramayana" as told by Aubrey Menen
Reviewed by DOROTHY L. BECKER

If you have ever shrunk from tackling an Indian classic — and who could blame you if you did? — Menen's Ramayana should make you delighted and a willing convert.

The Ramayana is one of the great epics of Hindu literature. It probably was begun around 1,000 B.C. and assumed its present form a few centuries before the Christian era. Its 24,000 couplets reveal the atmosphere, ideals, and customs of ancient Hindu life, and it embodies the general life ideal toward which Hindu men and women aspire even today.

It is known that the Ramayana has been revised and added to during the 3,000 years of its existence by the priestly caste of Brahmins who rewrote history and literature from time to time in order to perpetuate themselves in power.

Aubrey Menen has rewritten the epic in modern prose and in the form he imagined it to have been originally. The result is a bubbling mixture of humor and heroics which reveals the shrewd insight and satirical wit of the author.

Prince Rama, the hero of the story, was heir to the throne of Ayoda. He was a straightforward young man, earnest about his royal mission, which automatically made him suspect to his father's Brahmin courtiers. They intrigued against him and Rama is forced into exile with his wife and his brother as companions.

During the odyssey which follows, Rama picked up the necessary bits of knowledge about life, love, human nature and his own soul. He learned his lessons the slow and hard way but he learned them well. Ripeness came to him with the first dawn of cynicism and the gist of it seemed to be: If you want to stay healthy and happy don't let others run your life for you. Which then and now is a gem worth pondering.

There is real suspense and excitement in Rama's story and the whole work provides thought provoking parallels between ancient Hindu civilization and that of our own day.

Parker Novel Engrossing, Realistic Story

"THE LAND LAY WAITING"
by Ellanore J. Parker
(Pageant Press)

The quality of reader indentification is evident in "The Land Lay Waiting" the new novel by Canadian author Ellanore J. Parker, published by Pageant Press, Inc., and now on the market. Here is the story of three people, friends from childhood, whose lives are inextricably tangled in events and emotions.

Beth marries Bob when she is 16. When the story begins, they are living in London before the Second World War, the parents of two small children, struggling to make ends meet on Bob's tiny salary as a newspaper reporter. Tragedy hits first with the death of their little son. Their friend Charlie, a more successful newspaperman, arrives from New York and in trying to help he incites Bob's jealousy. Feeling himself a failure, longing for a less constrained life, a bigger country, Bob deserts his wife and child and goes to Canada. Beth, alone and frightened, turns to Charlie for protection.

Ellanore J. Parker's engrossing novel covers a wide canvas—encompassing war-torn France as well as Canada, Italy and London—as her characters, victims of dire world events as well as their own emotions, work out their destinies.

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