

"THE CLARION"

The pure food and drugs movement and the liberty of the press unite, in this new novel by Samuel Hopkins Adams, in producing a story of such extraordinary snap and vigour, such a carnival of physical and moral rough-house that it leaves upon the reader a bewildered impression of having seen the methods of foot-ball applied to the mature business and professional interests of life. You say all the time to yourself, "Of course, these things couldn't really happen, they are too extreme, too impracticable: it is reform carried to the Nth power," and then, the next moment, you find yourself secretly admitting, "But if it did happen, isn't it logical, isn't it refreshing, wouldn't it happen precisely that way?" And to attain such an effect in a story frankly drawn with that purely American type of exaggeration, where English social satire gets its effect by closer adherence to actualities, is in itself no small triumph. *The Clarion* may be briefly summed up as the history of an unique attempt in journalism, a newspaper run with unsparing honesty, asking no favour of anyone, subscriber or advertiser, and granting no favour; printing whatever is legitimate news, no matter how much it may offend private or public interests, whether social, financial or political. Incidentally, the newspaper in question is resting, unknown to its owner, upon a dormant volcano: Young Hal Surtaine is quite unaware of a fact that is common knowledge to every one else, that his father, Dr. Surtaine, has accumulated his millions through the sale of fraudulent patent medicines that for years have swindled the public and hastened the death of hundreds of dupes. The interesting question is, what the young editor will do when his honesty, instead of merely hurting his pocket-book, will strike at his

heart, what will he do when he is faced with the problem of exposing the origin of an epidemic in a rookery owned by the woman he is to marry? What will he do when it is proved to him that his own revered father is the most unscrupulous of charlatans? These are difficult situations, and the book, instead of shirking them, utilises them for its biggest situations. There is much sterling stuff in *The Clarion*, and just one little inconsistency: none of the most zealous reformers seems to realise that the paper is founded, supported and owes its very existence to the tainted money emanating from Dr. Surtaine's "Certina," and will probably continue to draw supplies from the incorrigible old reprobate's new venture "Cerebread," which he substitutes for the now discredited "Certina" and which is every bit as big a fake as the other.