

Promising Stories.

THE TROLL GARDEN. By Willa Sibert Cather. 12mo. New York: McClure, Phillips & Co.

Miss Cather takes the title of her book from Charles Kingsley: "A fairy palace with a fairy garden; * * * inside the trolls dwell, * * * working at their magic forges, making and making always things rare and strange."

In this collection of seven stories the author has shown a great deal of deep feeling and real ability, but many of the stories are too ambitious, and seem to be more the work of promise than of fulfillment. One wishes, while reading them, that Miss Cather would eschew the complex psychological attitude which she so frequently displays, and would stick to the simpler and more sincere.

"Flavia and Her Artists," holding up to ridicule that senseless toadyism to genius which obliterates entirely any appreciation for real worth which has not already been accepted by the world, is perhaps the best story in the collection, although the simple pathos of "The Sculpture's Funeral" gives emphasis to the belief that Miss Cather would show wisest judgment in choice of simple subjects. There is something about "The Garden Lodge" which rings shallow in spite of the pathos in which it is enveloped, and the same might be said of "A Death in the Desert." Nevertheless, the little book contains some excellent work between its covers, and is well worth while if only as an olive branch of promise.

The New York Times

Published: May 6, 1905

Copyright © The New York Times