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Early Gold

## BOOKS, LITERARY NOTES, ETC.

(By WINNIFRED REEVE)

A new book by Edith Wharton is always a distinguished event in the literary world. "Old New York" comes in four volumes, "False Dawn," "The Old Maid," "The Spark" and "New Year's Day."

The New York Times, in reviewing "The Old Maid," says that she has "written a story as universally significant and as enduringly beautiful as 'Ethan Frome,' a story which exercises the inevitable authority of great art."

I should not call "Ethan Frome" beautiful, but great it is, probably one of the greatest stories ever written. Though it is several years since I read it, the characters still stand out clear cut in all their stark realism.

"Ethan Frome" was different from anything Edith Wharton had previously written. "The House of Mirth," "The Fruit of the Tree," even "Summer" gave no inkling of the fact that she was capable of depicting the bare, sordid life of the poverty stricken farmer of an isolated region with such vivid verisimilitude. "Summer," it is true, was laid in a country region. It was a study of beauty, adolescent youth and betrayal in the environment of a small town near the mountains.

"Ethan Frome," on the other hand, was a haunting study of a strong man's love for his wife's niece, whose beauty, youth, goodness and gaiety of heart contrasted with the narrow, dull, mean and hard nature of the wife who was several years his senior. The drama unfolds in an isolated farmhouse, with a background of penetrating poverty and work, and there is something terrific in the way in which the story sweeps along its course to the immense climax.

"The Old Maid" was, I believe, published some time ago as a serial in an American magazine. It is slightly reminiscent of "Ethan Frome," inasmuch as there is the same tense situation of drama with the overhanging and threatening tragedy.

In her youth "the old maid" had made one false step. She is the mother of a child, adopted by the woman the "old maid" had wronged. The story is mainly concerned with the conflict between the real and the foster mother in the upbringing of this child. The futile, reaching out mother love of the "old maid" for the child who regards her with careless interest, makes a poignant situation.

Variations of this plot will probably be attempted by less skilled writers than Edith Wharton.

A Canadian writer whose work is coming to the fore is Mrs. M. L. Strange of Penn, Alberta, wife of a champion wheat grower. Mrs. Strange is writing stories of life in the West. Her work has been bought by the leading American publishers and has recently been published.

her farm stories are running at the present time in the Grain Growers' Guide, and are attracting very favorable notice. Prior to coming to this country from England, Mrs. Strange was already well known as a writer of short stories. Despite the distractions of a large farm and the growing fame as a scientific agriculturist of her husband, her inclinations have never been entirely weaned from her former occupation as a writer. Young, attractive and full of energy and interest, Mrs. Strange has taken up her writing again with renewed enthusiasm, and we may look for some good results from her effort.

MacLean's Magazine is unique this month (May), inasmuch as it publishes a splendid article by M. D. Geddes of this city, who has recently been sojourning in the east. Mr. Geddes' article, "Canada's Mountain Play-

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# Counter Tender Acid

By letting  
relief, last

It removes  
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the most  
the acid