

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"SANDS OF GOLD."*

[Miss Kathlyn Rhodes is so well known for her vivid stories and descriptions of Eastern life that she needs no recommendation to entice her readers.

"Sands of Gold" is not only rich in descriptive colouring, but is a romance of lively interest and original conception.

Keith Preston, a promising young surgeon, for some mysterious reason disappears from the world of science which had expected such great things of him, and the opening chapter of the book finds him arriving in Cairo *en route* to a private lunatic asylum situate on its outskirts, where he is taking up work as assistant medical officer. It seems a curious position for the brilliant young surgeon of ten years ago to have chosen.

Sir James Seton and his wife, against whom he accidentally runs in Cairo, express their surprise at his acceptance of work which from their former knowledge of him they judge to be uncongenial. Keith, however, avoids the subject, and, as he is in other respects a normal and pleasant man, his position is accepted without any undue curiosity.

During his two or three days' sojourn with the Setons he found time to fall in love with their charming young guest, Denise Coradine.

The mental Sanatorium was run by a Dr. Phillimore, a pleasant, kindly and able man, whose sole companion in that sad family on the edge of the desert, was his young and bizarre daughter, Celia. After a fascinating picture of the young girl's immediate environment, which was stamped with her very own individuality, Celia is introduced to the reader and to Keith. At the same time Miss Phillimore was seated on one of the most luxurious divans, one foot tucked under as she lay, the other, clad in silk stocking and small suede shoe, swinging idly under the hem of her blue-grey frock. Beside her on the divan was an enormous box of Turkish Delight and a silver case of thin Russian cigarettes. Miss Phillimore had all the outward attributes of an expensive wax doll. Yet never did any woman look less like a wax doll. Her eyes were of a brilliant forget-me-not blue, but for all their bright colour they were oddly deep, and there was something in their depth, something haunting, something unfathomable, which made Keith say to himself with all a mental student's quickness, "This girl has a secret," followed by a second flash, "I wonder what it is?"

Though Celia was not an accomplished musician she had temperament, and passionately loved music; "her playing, with all its inaccuracy, all its defiance of the laws of harmony, had a strange and quite original charm." Her playing was somewhat typical of herself.

Among the unhappy inmates confined in surroundings which, however beautiful, were prac-

* By Kathlyn Rhodes. Hutchinson & Co., London.

tically a prison was a Greek, Dimitri, a magnificent pianist, who possessed the further attraction of an exceeding handsome personality.

"So virile, so vigorous, so eminently healthy and sane did he look, so clear were his blue eyes, so crisp the fair curls round his brow, that for a moment Keith felt there must be a mistake—that the young Greek was imprisoned here as the result of some dreadful error."

The plain truth was that Celia was hopelessly and passionately in love with Dimitri, her father's unhappy patient. The strength of her hopeless passion warped the girl's nature and made her furtive and secretive. There are wild passages and situations which, if they are improbable, are none the less interesting and exciting.

The climax was reached when Dimitri, with the connivance of his attendant, escaped from the sanatorium and was followed by Celia to a native café, where she bravely tries to rescue him from being made the sport of the Arabs. That Dimitri, in his sane moments, was a charming man could not be denied, and it was he who eventually rescued Celia from being killed by the horse, Mazeppa, at the cost of his own life.

Poor Celia had her one little moment of pure joy at their last parting: "Thou wilt come, Celia. In another world I shall be free."

With the hope of freedom upon his lips, Dimitri went forth from the world where he had been so long a prisoner.

The mystery that hung over Keith is cleared up, and he is at last free to marry Denise; and we congratulate him on his charming wife.

We consider that the reason for which he gave up his ambitions and his early promise was exceedingly quixotic, but we can only say, in explanation, that it was supposed to be in expiation for the fatal result following a thoughtless prank of his young manhood.

We can cordially recommend this book to the jaded novel-reader as both stimulating and imaginative. H. H.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

"With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight to the end."

—SIR DOUGLAS HAIG,
To all ranks of the British Army in
France and Flanders.

COMING EVENTS.

April 22nd.—Irish Nurses' Association. Meeting Conjoint Committee. To nominate three representatives to sit on the Central Midwives Board for Ireland. 34, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. 3 p.m.

April 29th.—Central Midwives' Board for Scotland. Examination qualifying for admission to the Roll of Members. Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen.

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