

Rare Books

The Art of Aubrey Beardsley

The Burton Historical Papers John Jacob Astor's Seven Flutes News of the Dealers and Sales

THE SUN had occasion recently to mention the series of interesting papers issued by the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library from the original manuscripts. This material covers not only Detroit and Michigan, but takes in pretty much all of the Western country, Indiana having a large amount of space devoted to her history.

Thus far there have been six numbers of the first volume put in print. Wherever breaks occur in the continuity of the papers photostat copies are made from the connecting links in other collections.

Mr. Burton, to whose generosity Detroit owes this valuable lot of historical material, and his daughter, M. Agnes Burton, have arranged all the papers in chronological order. C. Gerhardt, 25 West Forty-second street, has been made the Eastern depository for these publications and will receive orders for them.

The Astor Flute.

Henry Goldsmith, a devoted collector of everything about this city, has among other curios a boxwood flute, ivory trimmed and stamped on each of its sections "W. Astor, London." This was a brother of the first John Jacob Astor, and in a pamphlet giving sketches of *The Wealth and Biography of the Wealthy Citizens of New York City*, . . . an Alphabetical Arrangement of the names of those whose Wealth is estimated at \$100,000 and Upwards, which was published at THE SUN office, corner of Nassau and Fulton streets, 1846, it is stated that "Mr. Astor on his voyage to America became acquainted with a fellow countryman, a furrier, who induced Astor to learn this art. The main portion of Mr. Astor's property at this time consisted of seven flutes from his brother's manufactory at London, which with a few other articles of merchandise he sold and invested the small proceeds in furs."

Mr. Goldsmith believes that the flute now in his possession was one of the seven. No mention is made in the pamphlet that Astor in 1789 had piano warehouses at 81 Queen's street, from which place he advertised in the *Daily Advertiser* that he sold pianos and bought furs.

The Late Miss Stephens.

Miss Ann S. Stephens, a novelist loved of our grandmothers, died March 15 last, leaving an estate valued between \$125,000 and \$140,000. Letters testamentary were granted to James Speyer July 10, he being the sole executor. Among the devises are a portrait of Mary Woolstonecraft, by Opie, which had formerly been in the possession of Aaron Burr, to Mr. Speyer; to the Metropolitan Museum, a portrait of Henry Clay accompanied by a lock of his hair, and strands of the hair of George Washington and of Abraham Lincoln.

All the remainder of Miss Stephens's estate is divided among six ladies. Her connection with certain of our earlier magazines in an editorial capacity brought her into contact with many eminent persons in public and private life.

Among the dollar a year men at Washington are many well known collectors of books and prints. The New York auctions are also represented in the person of Gustavus T. Kirby of the American Art Association.

In the Auction Rooms.

The Walpole Galleries sold Tuesday morning and afternoon, July 16, Part III. of the Closson library, 734 lots, consisting of books relating to history, travel, biography, law and lawyers, crime, &c. As with all the books of this library already sold, this lot was in fine condition and proved especially attractive to those who are forming readers' libraries.

Stan. V. Henkels of Philadelphia sold last Wednesday some unusual Franklin, Bradford, Keimer and Chittin imprints; an orderly book kept by or for General Smallwood, in which is a clear and interesting account of Arnold's treason and Andre's capture, trial, and the order for his execution; and a death mask of Oliver Cromwell, with a lot of other rare Americana.

At the Walpole Galleries on Friday afternoon, July 20, there will be sold books on art, prints, china, paintings, furniture, &c., 317 lots, in which may be found many interesting and unusual color-plate books.

Buried Treasure.

THE SUN's account last Sunday of the finding of some valuable manuscript journals of Western exploration led a gentleman to remark that there were undoubtedly

many other such cases of valuable contributions to the history of the country lying buried in the archives of organizations, and if they ever saw the light and were utilized as their writers intended it would be entirely by accident.

He recalled that a friend of his had applied to a historical body in this city for permission to look over papers that had been presented some years earlier by his father. The custodian disclaimed any knowledge of the existence of the papers until confronted with correspondence covering the gift. As the gentleman was persistent a search was made, the missing material being found in the basement with thousands of other packages of a similar character and of which the society had no knowledge.

This gentleman also told the writer that when the times are more propitious for such a step he intends to join with others in urging upon the United States Government the appointment of a commission whose duty it shall be to visit every society likely to have valuable manuscripts with a view to locating them and securing their publication. The first notion was to appeal to the legislatures of the States to take the matter in hand; but the uniformity to be secured by action of Congress would be much better.

Replies to Questions.

G. D. H., New York—No list such as you ask for is in existence. In the enumeration of the census the various businesses of cities and towns are noted without taking the names of the individuals who conduct them. It would only be possible to make up such a list as you desire by taking the population sheets, whereon names and occupations are given, and compiling the list from them—a matter which, THE SUN is informed, has never been undertaken. In lieu of this you might use the directories of the various cities and towns in the Public Library.

C. L., Brooklyn—Your copy of the Douai Bible is interesting rather than valuable. The Crimmins copy, which antedates yours by two years, received its value from the large number of valuable drawings and prints that were added by Augustin Daly, its first owner, and from the enlargement of the pages to folio size, by inlaying, and the expensive binding that was used on the forty-two volumes, to which size the 8,000 prints and drawings had extended it. Mr. Crimmins paid \$5,244 for the Bible at the Daly sale in 1900, and it was said to have cost Mr. Daly about \$20,000.



THE fascinating drawing above—fascinating because of its great decorative beauty—is only one of the sixty-four plates which make so immensely attractive *The Art of Aubrey Beardsley*, by Arthur Symons. We say "by Arthur Symons," but the book consists about two-thirds of Beardsley's drawings and one-

third an essay on Beardsley and his work by Symons. The drawing reproduced above is called "The Baron's Prayer," and is a good average sample of the pictures in the book, which is a volume of the Modern Library series.

THE ART OF AUBREY BEARDSLEY. By ARTHUR SYMONS. Boni & Liveright. 60 cents.

Five New Books of Verse, and One Is Good

OF five new books of verse *The Grass in the Pavement*, by M. E. Buhler impresses us as being the only one worthy of very serious consideration. Those who know poetry will see at once that it is the result of beautiful and poetic thought truly and memorably expressed, particularly when such poems as *The Builders* are come upon. This more surely than any other single poem convinces us of the distinction and depth of Miss Buhler's work. The two closing stanzas are quoted: "The deeds we wrought in all the vanished years; The thoughts we harbored as the moments sped; Things seen and heard and wondered at and felt; Yea, all the life we lived from day to day, Have fashioned us as we behold ourselves.

"And still we grow and change, and build again New lives from embers of forgotten days That passing come no more; and each man's life The outcome of his former living is."

It is vain to seek for the love note because it isn't to be found and is very little missed unless you are one of those persons who demand love in poetry and tune in music regardless of alleviating points of virtue. At times there is a certain carelessness, as in the second line of *To an Idler*, which gives us the feeling of having been jotted down quickly and thoughtlessly to complete the quatrain. But it has charm enough to overcome its faults and we like it.

"If Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do, How busily your hands to fill he's kept supplying you! And if, forsooth, 'tis idleness we find the mischief in, Why he is busier than you and guilty of less sin!"

The Retinue and Other Poems of Katharine Lee Bates is the second volume of her poems within the last few years and

is vastly more interesting than *Fairy Gold*, but for each good poem there are too many poor ones to save the book from mediocrity. Miss Bates has no difficulty in selling her poetry, which may or may not be saying good of it, and she is a regular contributor to some of our best magazines. These particular poems are mostly about the war and show the change in America's attitude before and after her entrance. Most haunting among them, though not illustrative of this point, is *The Babies of the Lusitania*:

"Those rosy, dimpled darlings cast So roughly to the sea, Wondering their bathtub was so vast, Reaching for breast and knee.

"Too innocent to understand What hate and murder are, But puzzled that the dandling hand Had let them drop so far.

"Swallowing like milk the bitter foam, Dismayed to miss their breath, Our little guests from heaven went home In the great arms of death.

"God pity Germany in all The grieving years to be When through her cradle songs shall call Drowned babies from the sea."

Not even as "pot boilers" can some little volumes of verse suggest the divine fire, but now and then their appeal is so wistful as to soften the hardest of critics. What can one say to a poet whose "Postlude" has such sweet humility as Forntassin Giff's in *Rain in May*? The opening stanza is a keynote to the lowliness of her mood and leaves us helpless:

"When I reflect on all that I have writ In moods of sorrow, hope, in pain or joy, It seems I have suppressed all that is fit, And left inscribed much that I should destroy."

And here we find full of tenderest pathos and patriotic fervor "the poem that circled the globe"—*Over the Hills of*

Home and others by Lilian Leveridge. One very strange thing about this book, scarcely conceivable in fact, is that both the author and the publisher have failed to realize the alarming resemblance to Kipling's *Mother o' Mine* in *Mother of Mine*, the first verse of which is used in the dedication and which will serve to show the surprising likeness. (It is not necessary to quote Kipling's poem as it is so widely known):

"There shines no pearl in the deep, deep sea, Mother of mine, So fair, so rare as your love to me, Mother, mother of mine."

The *Poems and Lyrics* of George Reston Malloch prove that it is still possible for an Englishman to write of other things than war. It does not come up to the standard which his contemporaries have set either as a volume or in the case of any individual poem. There is a certain amount of verse in the new form, but we notice in this as in most of the recent books of poetry a going away from the new verse which has now become almost old.

THE GRASS IN THE PAVEMENT. By M. E. BUHLER. James T. White & Co. \$1.25.

THE RETINUE AND OTHER POEMS. By KATHARINE LEE BATES. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.50.

RAIN IN MAY. By FORNTASSIN GIFF. The Four Seas Press. \$1.25.

OVER THE HILLS OF HOME AND OTHER POEMS. By LILIAN LEVERIDGE. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.

POEMS AND LYRICS. By GEORGE RESTON MALLOCH. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$2.

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