

Conducted by B. G. Lathrop.

THE two books of the week that will probably attract the most attention are two that the world could very well do without—"A Pasteboard Crown," by Clara Morris, and "Bylow Hill," by George W. Cable, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

Every one will wish to read "A Pasteboard Crown" because it is the first novel of one who in her day has been a great stage favorite; and, in turn, "Bylow Hill" will receive a hearing because it is the work of an author who has enjoyed popular favor and who has better books to his credit.

Both of these books are well written, melodramatic trash, most depressing in motif and altogether unwholesome in moral.

In "A Pasteboard Crown" it is easy to see the hand of the actress in the perfect "stage business" of the book. The dialogue is all practical—of the kind that could be consistently spoken, even though it often possesses the flavor of "gallery play."

The scenes that depict the realities of stage life could not have been better done, for example, the description and character work in that part which tells of "The Costuming of Juliet." The enthusiasm of the old costumers, Lefebvre and Nonna Angelioue, when they see the model upon which they are to show their skill, the turns, out of boxes, the trying on of this and that, the complete change of two old crabbid, commonplace people into inspired artists of their peculiar vocation when they are given a subject worthy of their work and professional pride—all this is told as only one versed in the mysteries can tell it.

There is a certain consistency in the character drawing, too, that shows the authorship of one who has studied character and life through years of hard and practical experience. A breach of this almost perfect consistency comes, however, in the story, and it is one that cannot be forgiven. The author finds it necessary to give her story a tragic ending, and has her hero-villain shot down in the presence of the girl he has wronged, but who has consented to live with him a life of shame because of the pure love she bears for him.

Any woman such as Sybil is shown to be, who has given up all for a man, would certainly not leave him when he falls back dying in her arms; yet that is exactly what the author forces her heroine to do. The reason for her doing is, of course, to clear her heroine's skirts from the scandal of the shooting and have her story end with some possibility of happiness, even though miserable at the best.

This part of the story is certainly very lame in plausibility and most unfortunate in reflecting discredit upon otherwise excellent character drawing.

made of the moral flavor of the book can be deduced. Stories of a worse tenor have made great successes, but there has been more literary merit in them than is evident in this novel by Clara Morris. It seems unfortunate that one possessing the evident talent of this author and one so well versed in phases of stage life should have put her pen to the work of showing the worst possible side of a theatrical career.

Her heroine is pictured as a refined and altogether lovable girl who might as well have enjoyed the same beautiful life of domesticity that fell to the younger daughter but for her laudable effort to support her family by taking up the only course apparently open to her, that of a life on the stage.

Her histrionic success is great, her moral downfall deplorable. Thrall, as the actor, stands well at the head of the profession; as a man he is of the lowest, low. Even Jim Roberts, with his apparent kindness of heart and general

er just to see how much tragedy they can take from the Cable literary snuff box without sneezing. Let us say he is trying a little Mark Twain on us or giving us a touch of the humorous fancy that Eugene Field loved to indulge in at the expense of the credulous—that is the kindest way to look at "Bylow Hill."

Practical Forestry. D. Appleton & Co. of New York have just published a book on "Practical Forestry," by Professor John Gifford, New York State College of Forestry, that will be found useful for those who are interested in the subject either as students or in a commercial way.

The recent establishment of the Bureau of Forestry at Washington, the steps taken in different States for forest protection and the movement for national forest reservations which began a few years since, are tangible evidences of the increasing interest in a subject of immediate and general importance.

The American Book Company of New York has just published "Animals at Home," by Lillian L. Bartlett. This little supplementary reader contains material suitable for the fourth or fifth grades.

In simple style it gives sketches of the lives and habits of twenty-five representative birds, animals, fishes and insects. These are most interestingly processed and special care has been taken to make the subject matter correct. The author has gone to reliable sources for information, and used the descriptions of eye-witnesses for many of the incidents.

The book is attractively illustrated from drawings and photographs, and will tend to awaken in the child an appreciation for nature and a love of nature-study. This volume is the latest addition to the popular series of Eclectic School Readings. Price, 45 cents.

Benjamin Swift's latest book appears under the title, "A Game of Love." The story drags to a certain extent and it possesses this peculiarity, that the heroine does not appear on the boards until half the leaves have been turned over, and then it is easy to foretell the end of the tale.

Another point is that the number of characters who divide honors with the real personages of the book and distract the reader's attention without giving him any compensation therefor. There is a starving poet, and then a pickpocket, and a miser, and a young man of the nobility who cuts a wide swath and then is obliged to eat his bread in repentance as a beggar.

The Russian tramp novelist, Maxim Gorky, is said to be at his best in the short story. Certain it is that he writes with great power, but his style in translation is crude and the flavor of his stories, both short and long, is morbid to a degree.

Gorky is not healthy reading. A book of his short stories, under the title of "Twenty-six and One," has just been published by J. F. Taylor & Co., New York, and quite characteristic of his style, and if you have yet to make the acquaintance of the author will answer as well as any others of his tales.

The contents include three stories—"Twenty-six and One," "Tchekache" and "Aialva." The first has for its theme the seduction of a young girl by the strutting wiles of an ex-soldier, who comes as a baker in an underground bakery and is dazed to the conquest by his twenty-six fellow

portance. The need of popular information regarding this subject, presented in a form comprehensive and practical but interesting, has prompted Professor Gifford to prepare this book. It is based upon actual experience as well as scientific knowledge, and also upon an acquaintance with the needs of the many different classes of those interested in the forests for economic or partially sentimental reasons.

The author explains simply and clearly the points of practical interest relating to soil, the growth of trees, their care, their relation to the water supply, the evil of wholesale cutting and the practical value of judicious selection. He places before the reader in his sketch of forest distribution a most interesting picture of American woodlands, which emphasizes the importance of a source not only of wealth, but of safety; much neglected in past years.

Aside from the value of this book to special students and to those interested in the forests for economic reasons, the work is full of suggestions to owners of country, homes and to all who care for nature. Trees and forests are treated with an intimate knowledge and a breadth of view that give the volume a distinctive character for educational and practical purposes and for the general reader. Professor Gifford's extensive field work has enabled him to select unusually effective illustrations. Price \$1.20.

Another detective story comes from Guy Boothby, "A Millionaire's Love Story." It is written in the usual vein affected by Mr. Boothby, plenty of complication and adventure and rather interesting reading withal.

Just enough plot and excitement to carry you along without too much effort or mental strain. This time it is the adventures of George Kilvert that hold center stage. He, with the able assistance of Detective Burrell, carries on a search for the beautiful woman of his heart's desire—the charming Madame Cadew. Many dangers hover over the trail and one murder impresses that fact on the mind of the reader, but all ends happily at last. The book is published by

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The above illustration is from a drawing by Howard Chandler Christy, done for "A Pasteboard Crown," published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Copyright, 1902, by Clara Morris Harriott.



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The Bookman for June, besides its usual "Chronicle and Comment," contains the following: "Effigies" (poem), Florence Wilkinson; "The Great Newspapers of the United States," Frank B. Sanborn; "My Heart Hath Sung of Thee" (poem), Herbert Muller Hopkins; "The Bound of the Astorbirds," Chariton Andrews; "An Oxford Man's Impressions of American Universities," E. S. P. Haynes; "To the Sound of Rolling Logs," Annie Nathan Meyer; "Marion Crawford's Rome," Louise Closser Hale; "Motherhood" (poem), Eliza Barker; "The Drama of the Month," Norman Haggood; "Fuel of Fire," Ellen Thornycroft Fowler; "The Queensness of Henry James," Frank Moore Colby.

Hamlin Garland got the idea which was to develop into "The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop," recently published by the Harpers, away back in 1897. At that time he went in company with a young lieutenant, who was stationed at Fort Custer, to see him inspect a drove of cattle which had been brought into the Crow Indian agency for sale to the Government, for the use of the Indians. The lieutenant, noting the poor condition of the animals, set him pondering as to the possible power of a man like that if he were appointed Indian agent. The lieutenant who inspired the thought is now a captain, and is the head of the Forestry Department in the Philippines.

Judging by the season, and the subject, the most appropriate contribution to the June number of The Critic is Mrs. Annie Russell Marble's extensive paper entitled "Where Thoreau Worked and Wandered." Mrs. Marble here gives an accurate and interesting picture of Thoreau in his various favorite haunts in the neighborhood of Concord, Mass. The poet-naturalist's attitude toward nature is explained at length, and the article is enlivened by many admirable views of Thoreau's Concord and vicinity, especially taken by A. W. Hosmer of Concord.

Of somewhat the same scope, though of course more critical and interpretative, is the Rev. Stanford A. Brooke's third paper on "Browning's Treatment of Nature." Rev. Stopford Brooke traces the growth of Browning's appreciation of nature and its increasing definiteness of expression in his poetry in a manner both logical and stimulating, the present paper being one of the best of the series.

Other features of the current number of The Critic include Mr. W. G. Collingwood's paper on Ruskin's "Jump" and Ruskin as a waterman in general, Mr. Frank Norris' second causerie under the caption of "Bait and Sincerity," together with literary notes from London and the continent, and a "Lounge" which covers current phases of life and letters, and which is prefaced by a frontispiece of Queen Wilhelmina from the admirably executed relief by Mr. Henry Hudson Kitson, the Boston sculptor.