

THE SAN FRANCISCO SUNDAY CALL CONDUCTED BY UNA H. H. COOL

"The Old Virginia Gentleman and Other Sketches"

By George W. Bagby. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Price \$1.50.

The public at large may not appreciate what has been done for us by Thomas Nelson Page in bringing to notice this charming volume of sketches. But a certain number of American letters and critics, who stray by "best sellers," are never led astray by "real value"—these will all feel that they owe Mr. Page a debt of gratitude.

"The Old Virginia Gentleman and Other Sketches" is the title of the book written by George W. Bagby, Thomas Nelson Page, in his introduction to the book, says: "Next to Poe, the most original of Virginia writers was without a doubt the author of sketches of a mildly satirical and exceedingly original type, but who was master of a pathos rarely equaled by any other American author. Like Hawthorne, he was known among his contemporaries merely by a small coterie of friends. But these adored him."

George W. Bagby was absolutely realistic, a purely realistic that no one can read even a random page of his genre sketches and not recognize at once the truth of the picture and—if he be a Virginian—point to the original. He was not a fictionist, but a realist.

"Other writers had magnified her (Virginia) through an idealism colored by reading of other life and other times. The scenes were painted and the life and speech. It was generally well done, but not really done, but it was not real. In the desert of unreality came a new writer, a contributor to newspapers and magazines, who, discarding the stilt and the artificial, the "painted palaces, pictured old Virginia homes, and the back, simple and peaceful and plain, under the immortal oaks and locusts, with the life lived there with its sweetness and simplicity and tender charm."

"But while he pictured Virginia, he reflected the human nature of the universe. He is set down in a recent biographical encyclopedia merely as a physician and a successful business man more than this. He was a physician by profession, a humorist by the way, but God made him a man of letters."

This author has gone practically unrecognized all these years, but the war and the dreary and depressing reconstruction period had much to do with that. The sketches, 16 in number, have more than a local value, for they preserve with a photographic fidelity some of the little known features of Virginia life as it was before the war. The author is a fine example of the author's home, "When Rubenstein Played," has often been printed in papers and magazines and generally credited to Mark Twain. Many readers, misled without prejudice, that it is better than anything of the kind done by Mark Twain.

The life of Doctor Bagby is briefly sketched. He was born in Richmond county, Virginia, in 1833; educated at Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania, taking his M. D. at the latter. He practiced for a time at Lynchburg, but soon devoted himself to writing. He edited the Express and other papers of his state, and his short stories and essays appeared in all the principal papers of Virginia. He volunteered when the war broke out and served in a clinical capacity at Beauregard's headquarters. He was assistant secretary of the army and his short stories and essays appeared in all the principal papers of Virginia. He volunteered when the war broke out and served in a clinical capacity at Beauregard's headquarters.

"The Lure of the Antique" By Walter A. Dyer. (Published by the Century Company, New York. Price \$1.50.) The purpose of Walter A. Dyer's book, "The Lure of the Antique," is explained in a long subtitle: "A book of reference for collectors of old furniture, china, mirrors, candlesticks, silver, posters, glassware, and other household utensils, clocks and other household furnishings of our American forefathers, and a handy guide for the determination of age, style, maker, genuineness and value." The book is a sort of primer for amateur collectors and will be found of use as well as of interest to the veteran collector. The author never allows sentiment to run away from him and does not agree with the collectors who say that antique exist for their own sake to be treasured and admired. He believes they have a distinct use: "I believe that antique furniture can be made to serve a distinct purpose in the modern home, particularly the bedroom. The use of the various articles, a branch of the subject seldom touched upon in books, which is a great help to the beginner.

The chapters headings will give a fair idea of the subject and manner of treatment: "The Quest for the Old and Beautiful," "Old Chairs in Modern Homes," "Old Desks and Secretaries," "Tables and Sideboards," "Four Poster Bedsteads," "Some Old Clocks," "The Looking Glass of a Hundred Years Ago," "Old Lamps and Candlesticks," "Old Blue Staffordshire," "The Beautiful Pottery of Wedgwood," "Luster and Lowestoft," "The Porcelain—Salt Glaze," "English and American Glassware," "Bohemian Glassware," "The Collecting of Old Silverware," "The Pewter on the Dresser," "Sheffield Plate," "Old Brass and Copper," "When a Window is a Window," "Log Cabin Glass," "The Truth About Antique Furniture."

The wide range of subjects means that each one is briefly treated, but enough space is given to each one to make the subject clear and to give the collector and knower just how much is necessary and useful to the beginner. Perhaps the most valuable chapter in the book is the last, in which the author gives the collector a review of determining whether or not the object under consideration is "fake." He cautions not to beware of auctions, for the excitement causes hysteria and besides the fact that the dealer is interested in the sale, which adds as much to the value as to the interest of the book. It is a companion volume to "The Quest of the Colonial" by the Shackletons, which appeared last year.

The remarkable John Bigelow has written two articles which form this little book published under the title "The Folly of Building Temples of Peace With Untempered Mortar." The real reason why the peace efforts are being made is not the desire to make peace, but the desire to make money. The articles, which were brought forth by invitation to him to join various organizations for the purpose of "promoting peace among the nations of the earth and for the reconciliation of international differences, a substitute for war." These two articles form his excuses for declining those invitations. The author declares that peace efforts are useless until the war causes are removed, viz: the tariffs on imports. He gives many reasons for his beliefs and expresses himself clearly and sanely; incidentally giving a few hard raps to the doctrine of the Rev. Dr. Lyman M. Roosevelt which he has so often abused. The second article suggests a substitute for tariff to raise revenues. He suggests that the state be entitled to a share in the profits of all franchises. It is important to read these articles, which are well written and much benefit will be derived from a careful reading of the author's views. (E. N. Huebch & Co., N. Y.)

"MUSIC OF THE WILD"



MOTHS OF THE MOON.

"Music of the Wild"

By Mrs. Gene Stratton-Porter, author of "Birds of the Bible," "What I Have Done With Birds," etc. Published by Jennings & Graham, Cincinnati. Price \$2.50.

The fortunate readers of the books by Mrs. Gene Stratton-Porter need only the announcement of a new one from her pen to send them hurrying to the nearest bookstore. But to those who do not know her work a word is necessary. In the first place, she devotes herself almost exclusively to nature study, and birds, if one may judge from her books, are her favorites among the handiwork of nature. A long time ago there appeared "What I Have Done With Birds," telling how she had made friends with many of the feathered tribe. "The Song of the Cardinal" is another. Last spring that tremendous work, "Birds of the Bible," appeared, than which nothing finer has been done. "Music of the Wild" is just what its title tells us. It is divided into three parts, the first "The Chorus of the Forest," the second "Songs of the Fields," and third "The Music of the Marsh." Of course, the birds are the "prima donnas," if one may so call them, in this great nature chorus; but no creature is too low or mean to have his place in the general chorus or orchestra. Mrs. Porter is one of the few elect who can understand the forest. See what she says in her opening lines:

"Since the beginning the forest has been singing its song, but few there are who have cared to learn either the words or the melody. Its chorus differs from that of any other part of the music of nature, and the price that must be paid to learn it is higher. The forest is of such gloomy and forbidding aspect that intimate acquaintance is required in order to learn to love it

truly. So only a few peculiar souls, caring for solitude and far places and oblivious to bodily discomfort, have answered this wildest of calls and gone to the great song carnival among the trees. The forests are the temples of God, and no one can go into them and not feel the spirit and essence of the Almighty."

The book is written in the first person and tells in simple yet picturesque fashion how the author came to know the woods and all she saw in them. Many people would wander through the forest for long and not see what Mrs. Porter has seen, but even if they had that ability it is doubtful if they would be able to convey to readers their impressions in words so beautiful.

"If the forest is the temple of God, the fields are the amphitheater of man."

So says Mrs. Porter at the opening of her second part. "Because we love this music above all other we rejoice that a few old fashioned fields remain to be flooded with such melody in its proper environment. Here, dotted with wild trees and outlined with lichen and ferns, covered old snake fences, every corner of which is filled with shrubs and bushes sheltering singing birds and insects, the great song festival of the fields is held."

The beautiful thing about this is that the author is so sure and human in her love for all this; the towers, the birds and insects, the people, the seasons, all have some part to play in the great miracle play.

The last part of the book is devoted to the marsh, and after reading the author's novels, "Freckles" and "A Girl



DUSKY FALCON.

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A CROW SOLO.

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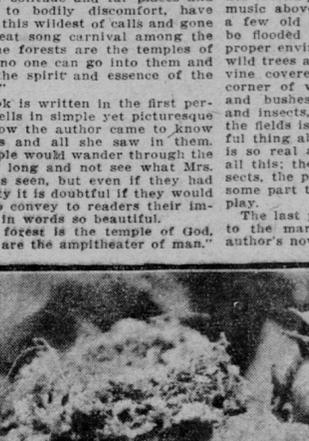
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PROFESSIONAL WARBLERS.

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"Burning Daylight"

By Jack London. (Published by the Macmillan company, New York. Price \$1.50.)

The average novel reader does not care for sociology, consequently Jack London's last few books have not been as popular as his earlier ones. His latest book may not be quite so strong a piece of writing as his "Call of the Wild," but it is more interesting and has a more direct and human appeal. Elmer Harnish is the hero of the book and we first meet him in a dance hall of Chicago in the Yukon country. He is a few years before the gold rush. From a habit he has had of routing out his companions at dawn with the cry that daylight was burning, he had gotten the nickname "Burning Daylight," and as Daylight he is known through the story.

He is the kind of barbarian Jack London does so well; he is perfect physically and can do everything just as well as the best of them. He is the most skillful in wrestling, in lifting; has the greatest power of endurance of any white man in the north and is absolutely "square." His word is his bond, but that is usual in the primitive places; sneaks and scoundrels can find no place there. He has never loved any woman, being fearful of "apron strings" and the habit women have of trying men with them.

Daylight comes to celebrate his birthday when the book opens. He has \$20,000 in dust and a claim worth as much more. Dancing and drinking and gambling are the pleasures the author has to offer and Daylight gives the limit with them all. The poker game is a wonderful bit of description and is sure to be quoted far and wide. It is an unusually fine piece of writing. Daylight is cleaned out and begins over again. He has a "hunch" about new gold fields and he stakes claims all over the country. He has little to prove his theory, but he gambles his prospects on the result; he stakes town after town, showing himself a thorough businessman. His "hunch" works. It is the great Klondike gold rush and in a few years Daylight has accumulated \$11,000,000. This he considers a fair stake and he goes out. He has been in Alaska about half his life, having gone in as a boy and the world is new to him. He is just past 30, young enough to learn and he can smooth his rough speech and learn to wear a civilized, clothes with little trouble. He has a fine sense of honor and does not know how to cope with the "ground sharks"

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"Crow Step"

By Georgia Fraser. Published by Witter & Binkner, New York. Price \$1.50.

When "The Stone House at Gowanus" appeared last year we knew that an author of ability had appeared upon the horizon and that we should have more interesting work from her pen. This promise is now fulfilled in "Crow Step," which is one of the best historical romances to appear in many a day. During the early of the revolution a lovely quaint, early Dutch mansion on western Long Island—the historical "Stone House"—had been wrenched from its owners and turned into a military redoubt; and when, the war over, it returns to domesticity, it is then invaded by one of those who had turned against it, had set and occupied it and who now wishes to capture the hearts of those who dwell therein.

The book contains many more than a hundred reproductions of photographs of birds, flowers, insects, and scenes, all printed and bound with art and taste. An exquisite offering for the holidays to all nature lovers.

"The Girls of Fairmount" was such a success last year that its author, Etta Anthony Baker, has prepared a sequel entitled "Frolics at Fairmount." This tale is principally of times passed outside the school room, when all sorts of adventures come to these girls. A dark mystery, which affects their relations with a neighboring school, a burglar, a ransy pull and a wedding, are a few of the incidents, and every wholesome girl will enjoy every word in the book. (Little, Brown & Co., Boston; \$1.50.)

"The Winning Ten," by Edward Mott Woolley, is not likely to interest the boy reader unless he is contemplating a trip to New York. It is filled with information about the great city which is sure to bore the young reader who is anxious to get on to the "story." In this case the story is not very clear, and part of it having to do with Wall street speculation is of a decidedly unwholesome tone. The hero has adventures thick and fast, but they do not entertain. The book is illustrated poorly by Howard Heath. (D. Appleton & Co., New York; \$1.50.)

"Crow Step"

By Georgia Fraser. Published by Witter & Binkner, New York. Price \$1.50.

When "The Stone House at Gowanus" appeared last year we knew that an author of ability had appeared upon the horizon and that we should have more interesting work from her pen. This promise is now fulfilled in "Crow Step," which is one of the best historical romances to appear in many a day. During the early of the revolution a lovely quaint, early Dutch mansion on western Long Island—the historical "Stone House"—had been wrenched from its owners and turned into a military redoubt; and when, the war over, it returns to domesticity, it is then invaded by one of those who had turned against it, had set and occupied it and who now wishes to capture the hearts of those who dwell therein.

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Brief Reviews

"Army Goose Melodies," by an army woman is the modest little title on the cover of a Christmas booklet. Inside on the title page we discover that they are written by Florence Kellogg Krebs and illustrated by Herbert Morton Stoops. They are not for children, but are decidedly amusing and with the clever little drawings make something quite out of the ordinary.

"Ding, dong, dell. The sergeant's in the well! How did it happen so? Dam! I know!" That is the sort of foolishness running through the book. An interesting light is shed on many phases of army life. The drawings by Stoops are specially clever. They add greatly to the little volume and they lead one to expect much from this young artist. (Paul Elder & Co., San Francisco.)

When in doubt what to give a friend in acknowledgment of hospitality or as a gift for the new hour of the old, a Guest Book will be found most appropriate, for in this volume each guest may leave a written record of his stay as a remembrance to his host and for other guests to read.

"A Book of Hospitality" might be called a reading good book. The foreword is a bright essay on house mottoes, giving many old verses applicable to modern dwellings.