

## THE BOOK SHELF.

(Conducted by ALBERT LEE, '91.)

The wise and the fortunate ones who have read "Little Mr. Thimblefinger and His Queer Country" will remember that just as Buster John and Sweetest Susan and Drusilla were about to leave those wonderful regions, they were asked if they knew a man named Aaron; and upon replying that they did, they were informed that Aaron, the son of Ben Ali, knew the language of animals and that they could make him divulge this marvelous secret by twisting his left thumb backwards and making a cross mark on it. Therefore, at the first opportunity, Buster John exerted this talisman, to the great amazement of Aaron, who was forced to obey the mystic command and instruct the children as to how they, too, might understand the talk of the animals. This forms the opening incident in Mr. Joel Chandler Harris's "Story of Aaron" (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) and it is plain to see that the opportunities thus afforded might be exceedingly interesting. Mr. Harris takes advantage of them in his usual happy manner, and the three children become the confidants of a number of interesting animals that live on the plantation with them. The first result of the acquaintance with the talk of beasts is the placing of Buster John and Sweetest Susan upon terms of friendship with Timoleon, the Black Stallion, an animal whose reputation had hitherto been one of fierceness and intractability. The boy and the girl take a ride on his back, to the terror of their mother, but to the great satisfaction of their grandfather, who had always maintained that Timoleon was a gentle beast, in spite of the fact that he crippled stable boys every now and then. But Aaron, the son of Ben Ali, had always been on terms of friendship with Timoleon, and Aaron is truly a wonderful person. Mr. Oliver Herford's illustrations add greatly to the appearance of the volume.

Another book by the same author is "Sister Jane" (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.). This was intended by Mr. Harris, I believe, (by his publishers, I feel almost certain) as a novel—a long story with a plot, a beginning, a climax, and a conclusion. But "Sister Jane" is really not a novel; it is a picture of the life in a little Georgia corner, in those days before the war, when slavery was a part of the local civilization. The slaves that Mr. Harris writes about in "Sister Jane" are picturesque, and their masters are not brutal or overbearing; "Sister Jane" will never rank in the same class with "Uncle Remus," but any one who wishes for pleasant, peaceful reading may well take up the book.

Those who like the opposite kind of entertainment will find a very serviceable volume for making a railroad journey pass quickly in "Don Belasco, of Key West" (New York: The Home Publishing Co.). The author is the prolific and versatile Mr. A. C. Gunter, who has already given us several "Mr.'s" from various cities, the most famous being one Barnes; and now we have a Don who is mixed up with adventures connected with the Cuban revolution—a very serviceable background for Mr. Gunter's imagination to work against.

Mr. Bret Harte's latest collection of Short Stories is entitled "Barker's Luck" (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), and they may well be said to rank among his better efforts. Some, of course, are of a higher order of merit than others, and among these we may place the title story and "A Yellow Dog." Mr. Harte's ability to define character without scarcely touching upon his subject is one of his greatest qualities, and this is especially exemplified in the case of Kitty in "Barker's Luck."

The Graduates' Club held a meeting on Tuesday evening, February 9, and elected the officers proposed a week previous by the nominating committee, published at that time in the Yale Alumni Weekly.

## Scientific Monthly for February.

The Scientific Monthly appeared February 5, with the following articles: "Appendicitis," by Walter B. Jennings, Ph.B.; "The Inhabitants of Alaska," by Erastus T. Tefft, '98S.; "The Milwaukee River Flushing Tunnel," by Lawrence Fitch, '98S.; "August Von Kekle," by Claude H. Miller, '98S.; "Argentiferous Lead Smelting at Leadville," by Franklin Ballou, Jr., '99S. Besides these articles there were the regular departments, viz.: Editor's Notes, Scientific Notes, Book Notices, The Month, Alumni Notes, and a Digest of Freshman Physics compiled by R. C. Lanphier, '97S.

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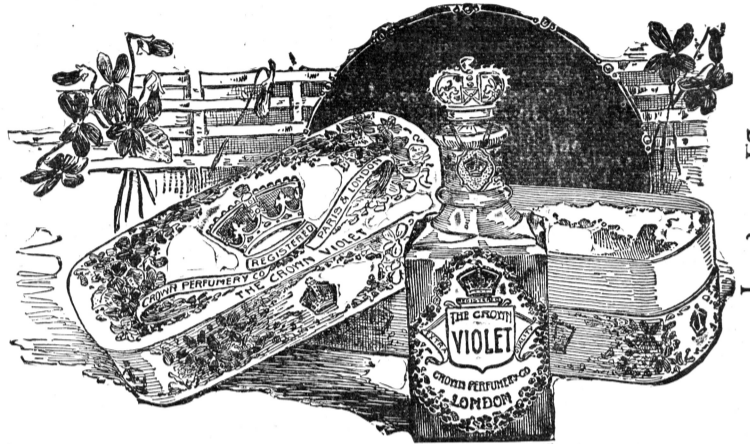
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