

said the preacher. "We are honored to have you-all's company."

"We walked across the yard and entered the little church. The pews were board benches. At the far end in the centre was a platform on which were a bare table and two chairs. The preacher mounted the platform.

"We are honored today by havin' the company of distinguished white friends, an' I'm goin' to ask them to name the first hymn we sing. What'll it be, Miss May Lou?"

"Somebody's Knockin'," said Mary Louise. "I love to hear y'all sing that."

The simple melody rose, gathering volume. More people were entering the church. It was almost full.

"Knocks like Jesus
Answer Jesus
Somebody's knockin' at your do'."

Now the benches were full and men were sitting in the windows. Their voices grew louder.

"O sinner, why don' yo' answer?
Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'."

When the song ended the preacher announced the "first collection."

"That's for us," whispered Mary Louise. "He's afraid we'll leave before the end of the sermon."

After he had blessed the offering the preacher began to speak, slowly. His text, he said, was from Isaiah, the thir-

ty-fourth chapter and the second verse:

"For Jehovah hath indignation against all nations and wrath against all their host."

He said it was a mighty bad thing for men to get mad. And it was a bad thing to make men mad. Usually it was the fault of both people when they got mad at each other. But when the Lord got mad at a man it couldn't be anybody's fault but that man's. The Lord was always right. He didn't get mad often, but when he did, awful things happened.

The preacher was warming up now—striding nervously from side to side of the platform.

"Anythin' the Lord do is right," he shouted.

"Have mercy, Lord," came back at him in a hysterical feminine shriek from the front bench. He broke into a chant—beginning on a high note—ending in a low, breathless, husky minor.

"The Lord can throw a thunderbolt
An' burn your cabin down
An' he'd be right.

The Lord can raise a hurricane
An' blow your chimney stones away
An' he'd be right.

The Lord can raise a mighty flood
An' drown your mules an' children, too
An' he'd be right.

Ain't he a terrible God?"

Cries came from all over the little chapel:

"Oh, yes, Lord."

"Jesus, have mercy."

"You're right, brother."

Behind us a big black woman began to shake convulsively. Two men arose and held her.

"Let me alone!" she screamed. "I'se bound to shout. I see the light—I can see Jesus." Above the rising Babel—the preacher again:

"The Lord can make the sun so hot
Burn up all your beans an' corn
An' he'd be right.

The Lord can make boll-weevil come
Eat up all your field of cotton
An' he'd be right.

Ain't he a terrible God?"

Mary Louise lifted her bowed head and leaned toward me.

"Please let's go," she said. "I can't stand it. These poor people!"

When we got to the Ford a tall black boy was sitting on the running board.

"Jes' waited to see nobody touched your Ford, Miss May Lou," he said.

"Thank you, Rafe," said Mary Louise.

We turned back toward home. The noise inside the little church was very loud now. But above it all rode the preacher's voice—asking his proud question.

UNDER COVER

By Margaret Emerson Bailey

WINGS match the underside of shade;
But no more softly than the hush
Where hemlocks make dark neighborhoods
Is matched by notes of birds. The thrush
Instilled with a desire for song,
Finds cover for his voice that sings
In the slow drip of forest rains,
In overflows from icy springs—
With no more sunlight in his throat
Than there is sunlight on his wings.

With pinions white as shining salt,
Wings match the crested wash of waves;
But in the blowing of thin scud,
The sea-gull finds the voice he saves
To keep it harsher for the storm
That breaks in thunder on the beach.
He whistles loud with whistling wind,
But under cover of its reach,
He turns the lashings of a gale
Into the whipcords of his speech.

AS I LIKE IT—William Lyon Phelps

THE award of the Nobel Prize to John Galsworthy was received with general satisfaction. His literary career began at the beginning of the century (the publications of 1897 and 1898 are of interest only to the biographer) and in 1906, with the appearance of "The Man of Property," he found himself famous. At that time he had no intention of writing anything more about the Forsytes; but the preference of thousands of readers was as intelligent as it was insistent; it was a happy day in English literature when he once more put that family on paper. Assembling five works in one volume in 1922 and giving it the faintly ironical title "The Forsyte Saga," he made what seems to be a permanent contribution to English fiction. He has had many imitators during the last ten years; but there are, in our century, only two "era" works of high distinction, "Jean Christophe" by Romain Rolland and "The Forsyte Saga" by John Galsworthy.

When I was in London in 1928 I picked up the morning newspaper and saw the headline

DEATH OF SOAMES FORSYTE

the most gratifying compliment that any writer of our time has received.

And now, whether he wants to or not, he must live with the Forsytes until death do them part. His novel of 1932, "Flowering Wilderness," makes up in steady interest whatever it may lack otherwise. From first page to last, it holds the reader's attention, the touch of melodrama being as exciting as it is improbable. In this book we enjoy a novel written with the refreshing competence of a master.

Outside of the fortunes of the Forsytes, among the novels of Mr. Galsworthy I prefer "The Patrician."

If Mr. Galsworthy had never written a novel, he would still deserve the Nobel Prize. This rather bold assertion is based on his admirable plays; for in the magnificent florescence of the British theatre between 1892 and 1914, he has a garden of his own. Where he learned "the technique of the drama" I do not know; but the glorious year 1906, which

saw that masterpiece of fiction, "The Man of Property," also saw his first play, "The Silver Box," revealing a first-rate dramatist. 1906 was a red-letter year.

"The Silver Box," "Strife," "Justice," "The Pigeon," "The Skin Game," "Loyalties"—among living men only Barrie and Shaw have equalled John Galsworthy as dramatist.

His verse is respectable rather than remarkable; but his essays are very fine. There is a good reason for giving him the Nobel Prize, apart from his work as dramatist and novelist; he fulfills the intention of the original donor. Although John Galsworthy is a one hundred per cent Englishman in ancestry, breeding, and education, he is an internationalist. To him foreigners are human; as intelligent, *even as trustworthy*, as Englishmen.

Mr. Galsworthy is one of the few men now living who write all their work with pen and ink; so that not only his manuscripts—which he carefully preserves—will have value because he wrote them, but in time they may be noteworthy as twentieth-century curiosities.

Two Englishmen, two Irishmen, and one American have received the Nobel Prize. The English language may dominate the world in other respects, but it does not seem to overawe the Nobel Committee.

Mr. Galsworthy's great contemporary, Sir James Barrie, returns to prose fiction for the first time in thirty years, with the publication of "Farewell Miss Julie Logan." This is in the fourth dimension, of imagination all compact. No one but Barrie could have conceived it and certainly no one else could have made so fantastic a dream so vivid. It takes us back over forty years to "The Little Minister." Incidentally I learned more new words than I have from any English book in a long while. The Scots language has peculiar felicities; I wish I knew it better. It comes as naturally from Barrie as ghost-stories from A.E. When the latter gentleman appeared in my house, I rather expected to see him accompanied with a leprechaun.

The accomplished Percival Christopher Wren delights his enormous and

loyal constituency by writing another novel on the French Foreign Legion, and at the same time granting a wish I expressed in these columns three years ago, that he would continue the history of the prize-fighting hero of "Soldiers of Misfortune." He has done both in "Valiant Dust," a ripping yarn of adventure, filled to the last page with excitement.

New murder-stories that will hold you in thrall are "Valcour Meets Murder," by the dependable Rufus King; and "Rope to Spare," by Philip MacDonald. Works of this kind I select carefully; I have had the bad luck lately to read six would-be thrillers that were intended to "distil me almost to jelly with the act of fear"—but they didn't jell. Nothing is worse than a dull murder story.

The second volume of Arnold Bennett's "Journal," covering the years 1911-1920, is even better than the first. His observations are acute; whatever one may think of his novels and plays, he was a born journalist. He told me in 1912 in London that he would certainly visit America again, and possibly he would have done so if it had not been for the interruption of the war. I have seen reviews of these two volumes of the "Journal" which complain that they are commonplace. I find them extraordinarily interesting—not a dull entry. His conversations with Barrie, Hardy, Wells, Moore, Shaw, etc., are thrilling. The Journal abounds in good stories—Mrs. Patrick Campbell, after being rebuked by Shaw at a rehearsal of one of his plays, said "You are a terrible man, Mr. Shaw. One day you'll eat a beef-steak, and then God help all women."

Recently I heard that on a certain occasion Bennett came up to E. F. Benson, and said "I have just been reading your latest book, and it is plain you can't write." Benson replied, "When I took up your latest book, I found I couldn't read."

Esmé Wingfield-Stratford's "The Victorian Sunset" is not nearly so good as its predecessor, "Those Earnest Victorians." It bears the marks of haste and of something more unfortunate—the determination to finish a job.