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The Phoenix Nest

WE don't care that we weren't able to buy that *Gutenberg Bible*. * * * We'd just as lief *Dr. Rosenbach* should have it. * * * Even if it is a Melk copy, and therefore Certified Grade A, as our *Jamulus* puts it. But we grieve that *Suzanne* beat *Helen*. * * * We grieve more over *Helen* than we do over *Vera*, though the way *Vera* has been treated aroused in us this rhyme:

VERA'S VERACITY

You told the truth; you're not allowed to stay.

You should have held your peace,—and run away.

It isn't what you do that's reprehensible; It's what you say. Say, Lady, ain't that sensible?

* * * Vera's case is just one of those little incidents that tends to make the majesty of the law a trifle less majestic. * * * I met a fool in the forest, a motley fool,—a miserable world! * * * Of course by the time this appears in print the whole complexion of things may have changed. * * * We have to gamble on futures in this column. * * * Well, *Helen*, anyway, for *antipasto*, you didn't do a thing to *Didi Vlasto*. * * * But we mustn't let our alien interest in tennis or the double standard intrude upon our literary musings. * * * For *Appleton, John Vandervoort Sloan* has prepared suggestions for twenty-four programs on leading writers of the day (*Appleton* writers). * * * These suggestions are incorporated in a neat pamphlet. * * * Literary sections of women's clubs take notice! * * * But oughtn't we to add our belated tribute to *Captain George Fried*? * * * We will, anyway.

Oh hero, home across the tide,
Do those you love pronounce it Fried?
We bow before your peerless deed,
But tell us,—do you call it Fried?

* * * Here, here,—back to the job! * * *

Elswyth Thane was born in Iowa, twenty-six years ago. She doesn't write of Sioux or Kiowa,—oh, good heavens, No! She writes at night between eight and three. Don't confuse her book with "Riders to the Sea." It's the maiden novel of her interesting mind (*F. A. Stokes Co.*) "Riders of the Wind." * * * Where *Gene Field* rested once, a new apartment rises. The *Sabine Farm's* no more. I hope the tenants, *Gene*, may suffer grim surprises; I hope you'll grieve them sore! * * * I hope you'll haunt them, *Gene*,—but no, you would not haunt them, you antic gentil sprite. Cloistered at *Kenilworth* I know you would not want them to wake in fright at night. * * * Yet, if you came, a ghost,—stood listening for "the pitcher the boy brings up the hall,"—how could your wraith affright, how could your rapt Horatian still syllables appal? * * * You would not stand there "p'intin," nor even looking cross-eyed,—but round you like a light would shine of *Shut-Eye Town* its fabulous child's garden, if they "saw things" at night. * * * Perhaps the chocolate cat would rub against your ankles, the *Dinkey-bird* would trill, the misty sea of *Nod* in slumberous phosphorescence would seep across the sill. * * * You'd bring such dreams, and peace,—a wistful wild enchantment we moderns seldom know,—once more the *Lyttel Boy*, the stranger ghost than *Dibdin's*, from thirty years ago. * * * A gorgeous old bookman is *Henry A. Beers*, a poet, a scholar, a teacher for years. Another *Horatian* and lyricist, he's got any number of things he can say about botany. * * * We see *Arthur Colton* has recently praised him. So shy is the man that it must have amazed him. * * * But indeed we endorse, as uncommonly fine, this *Professor Emeritus, Yale '69*. * * * And *Somerville* and *Martin Ross* are here again, though *Ross* is really gone. Read "The Big House of Inver" and take cheer again. Recall them in their dawn. Light-hearted writers, fitly celebrating the hunting-field of yore,—what pith, what charm in their collaborating "Along the Irish Shore"! * * * There's a book that *John Macrae* calls big. "Pig Iron!" A Casting in a mould is called a "pig." *Pig Iron!* The story that *Charles G. Norris* can write'll hold your attention in spite of the title. He's sometimes heavy—but he's sometimes vital. *Pig Iron!* * * * We missed the *Quinn* collection exhibition. Sad, but a fact! However, here's an int'restin' edition by *Walter Pach*. The *Viking Press* has published his "The Masters of Modern Art." Look at the illustrations, poetasters,—and so take heart. * * * *Henry Holt* and Company said they would have a new set of offices at One Park Avenue. Well, on February first they moved them o'er, and you'll find them located on the seventh floor. * * * *Countess Gizycka*, pronounced *Gi-zee-ka*, has

had a new novel out for just a week, a book about a Frenchman in the Diplomatic Corps. You'll have to read it, for we'll tell you no more. * * * Nor will we comment—not that it matters—on the fact that she used to be *Eleanor Patterson*. * * * Oh yes, the title! (if your interest arouses), *Minton, Balch & Company*,—ask for "Glass Houses." * * * Better than a bun shop, better than a cook shop, we wish to speak of the *Phoenix Book Shop*. We hope it may delight the very best brains among readers of *The Phoenix Nest*. * * * Not on the best street, not on the worst street,—it's at 21 E. 61st Street. * * * *Vestigia V. Flammae* sends us a poem. We print it at once without further proem: *Said Christopher Robin to P. Christopher Wren*,
"I hear Beau Geste's been reprinted again."
Said P. Christopher Wren to Christopher Robin,
"When We Were Very Young' still keeps on throbbin'!"

* * * *Louis Untermeyer* isn't incommuni-cado. He is merely journeying through Colorado. * * * He was really awed, though he laid himself odds, by the famous *Balanced Rock* in the Garden of the Gods. * * * But a fact that seems to us far more sinister is that *Sinclair Lewis* has been stopping with a Minister. * * * However, though he isn't yet back in *Mt. Kisco*, he's now deserted *Kansas* for *San Francisco*. * * * The Movies are doing *M. R. Werner's* "Barnum." * * * Well, as long as they don't get *William Farnum*—! * * * "Odtaa" is *Masefield's* novel for the Spring. * * * "Odtaa that title seems, as anything!" * * * "The Battle to the Weak" is a novel of pith by a writer who's compared to *Sheila Kaye-Smith*. The author is Welsh, and her story is drawn from wild Welsh life, and her name is *Hilda Vaughan*. * * * *Benefield's* gone North in his *Chicken Wagon*. If we had a flagon we'd toast him in a flagon. He'll write another novel full of authenticity. He has shaken off the harness of *Century* publicity.

Said Barry to John, "While kine can graze field,

Your reputation is established, *Masefield*."
"Oh, well," answered *John*, "while summer shows a green field—"

"No! Watch out!" yelled *Barry*. "It is not pronounced *Beanfield*!"

* * * *J. T. Rogers* succeeds old *Barry*. Is he also a novelist? What? Yea, marry! * * * *Laura Riding Gottschalk*, the American poet, has gone to England, though you may not know it. Thence, with *Nancy Nicholson* and *Robert Graves*, to Egypt and to Cairo she has crossed the waves. * * * In Cairo she and *Graves* will write a book, while *Nancy* sketches people as they look. * * * They all may go to India ere they are done. * * * *Nancy's* children are along, and they cry, "What fun!" * * * We are deeply indebted, for this news of their affairs, to a lady in Los Angeles, *Isabel Mayers*. * * * And you get in the swing of this darned old thing and you can't let go of its ting-a-ling-a-ling! * * * But by the gods, we'll try another strain instead! We'll ask you why you haven't read a book by *Metcalfe* called "The Smoking Leg?" * * * Good egg! Good egg! * * * Your answer's quite correct. It won't be out till Spring. * * * Watch for it though, old thing! * * * They say that some of his short stories are full of glories. Your thirst if you'd assuage, watch for *John Metcalfe's* tales from *Doubleday, Page*. * * * And now—now that the perspiration beads the brow of him that chanted erst (now that we've done our worst)—farewell to this and that! * * * We're hurrying swiftly to an Automat.

THE PHOENICIAN.

A collection of the letters of the late *George W. Cable*, author of "Old Creole Days," "The Grandissimes," "The Cavalier," etc., is being prepared for publication by his daughter, *Mrs. Henry Wolfe Bikle*. *Mrs. Bikle* has asked that persons having in their possession letters written by her father lend them for this work, sending them to her at 324 South Twenty-first Street, Philadelphia. Any letters so sent will be promptly returned.

In commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the founding of New York by the Dutch, *Martinus Nijhoff*, bookseller at The Hague, Holland, has issued a catalogue, "The Hollanders in America," containing a collection of books, maps, and pamphlets relating to the early colonization, voyages, explorations, etc., by the Hollanders, in different parts of North and South America.

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The World of Rare Books

By **FREDERICK M. HOPKINS**

A NEW HIGH RECORD

A NEW sensationally high record was made on the evening of February 15, at the Anderson Galleries, when the Melk copy of the Gutenberg Bible, consigned by Edward Goldston, a London book-seller, was knocked down by A. N. Bade, auctioneer, to Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach for \$106,000, breaking the previous high record by more than \$50,000. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that this copy of the first printed book would bring about \$85,000, and when the \$100,000 mark was reached there was prolonged applause.

A crowd which filled every seat of the Anderson Galleries and used most of the standing space waited patiently through the second session of the sale of the selections from the R. B. Adam library, until about 10:30, when the sale of the Bible was started by a bid of \$50,000 by Miss Belle Costa Greene, librarian of the J. P. Morgan library. Gabriel Wells raised the bid to \$55,000 and continued in the race with Dr. Rosenbach until the bidding passed \$80,000, when he dropped out. William Evans Benjamin then entered the race, his last bid being \$105,000, which Dr. Rosenbach raised to \$106,000 and captured the prize.

The highest previous record was \$70,000, when George D. Smith bought Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonais" at Sotheby's in London in 1919. The highest previous price paid for a copy of the Gutenberg Bible was about \$60,000, which Carl Pforzheimer, a New York broker, paid Dr. Rosenbach for a copy a year or more ago. The Hoe vellum copy, sold at the Anderson Galleries in April, 1911, brought \$50,000, which caused a world sensation at the time. The first Gutenberg Bible to come to America was bought by Henry Stevens for James Lenox,

who paid him \$2,500 for it in 1847. This copy is now in the New York Public Library.

The Melk copy of the Gutenberg Bible is one of the finest in existence. Seymour de Ricci, who prepared the catalogue, said that neither the printed book nor the venerable monastic binding has been cleaned, mended, or repaired. It is decorated throughout by a contemporary illuminator, with colored flowery scrolls and leaves running from the larger initials. The scrolls are similar to those embellishing the copy belonging to the City of Burgos, in Spain. The less important initials are painted in red, blue, or green, on a background of a different color, and it is believed are of the same hand as the designer of the celebrated initials in the 1457 Palter issued from the same press two years later.

In 1911, when the Hoe copy of the Gutenberg Bible brought \$50,000, it was believed that this would long remain a world high record. In 1919, when Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonais" sold for \$70,000, the same opinion was expressed about this sensational figure. At the present time it seems that the figure \$106,000 is a hard one to beat, but it must be remembered that prices in the last quarter of a century have been going up in leaps and bounds. It takes a large figure to create a sensation today.

GOOD PRICES AT ANDERSON'S

THE library of the late Mrs. Henry E. Huntington was sold at the Anderson Galleries, February 8 and 9, 576 lots bringing \$500,063.50. The three sessions were well attended and good prices were generally realized. A few of the more important lots and the prices which they brought were the following:

Alken. *Annals of Sporting and Fancy Gazette*, 13 vols., 8vo, levant, London, 1822-28. Includes the rare final number of June, 1828. \$850.

Alken. *The Sporting Repository*, with colored plates by Alken and others, Vol. I, all published of this short-lived periodical, 8vo, levant, London, 1822. \$625.

Bode (Wilhelm). "Complete Works of Rembrandt" with heliographic reproductions of the master's pictures, 8 vols., folio, levant by Ruban, Paris, 1897-1906. Edition de luxe on Japan paper. \$610.

Burney (Frances). A collected set of first editions of her novels, 18 vols., 12mo, levant by Reviere, London, 1778-1814. Includes the rare "Evelina." \$875.

Ralfe (J.). "The Naval Chronology of Great Britain," 3 vols., imperial 8vo, original marbled boards, in cases. London, 1820. Rare first edition. \$603.

Fielding (Henry). A collection of first editions of his writings, 19 vols., 8vo and 12mo, levant by Reviere, London, 1742-55. \$650.

Lafontaine (Jean de). "Fables Choises," with 718 plates by the best engravers of the period, 6 vols., 8vo, red morocco, Paris, 1765-75. With the arms of Marie Antoinette. \$625.

Lawrence (Sir Thomas). "Life and Correspondence," edited by D. E. Williams, 2 vols., 8vo inlaid to 4to, extended to 13 vols., with specially printed titles, levant by Zaehnsdorf, London, 1831. Contains 1,311 extra engravings, drawings, and autographs. \$1,200.

Reade (Charles). A collected set of first editions, 56 vols., 8vo and 12mo, polished calf, London, 1851-87. Long and fine set. \$625.

Sterne (Laurence). A collected first set of first editions, 22 vols., 16mo, mottled calf, London, 1760-75. \$510.

TENDENCIES IN COLLECTING

GEORGE H. SARGENT, in an introduction to "Private Book Collectors," discusses "Modern Tendencies in Book Collecting" from which we reprint the following paragraph:

"Undoubtedly an increasing number of young collectors will follow the fashion of today, unless a new one is created. To attempt to analyze the present tendencies in book collecting with the view to assisting the young collector to form a library which will be a profitable investment from a financial point of view is to venture into a field of prophecy for which I have no inclination, even had I the prescience. Most of the books which have been written to tell men how to get rich have been the work of writers to whom three square meals a day was a great blessing. The new fashions in book collecting are created by men who have made strongly individual libraries, like Stephen H. Wakeman and John Quinn. There will always be a following for such, and there will also be individual collections built up by men who have a distaste for treading beaten paths. But the tendency of the times, as indicated by the annual book prices current, is to collect those rarities of literature, whether old or new, which the owners themselves "can enjoy and show to their friends." Good books, well printed and in fine bindings, may be found in almost any line to which the collector may direct his activities. Such books will have a positive and permanent value, enhanced, it may be, by their provenance; by their being association copies or by excessive rarity.

Erratum

By a regrettable error in the review of "Oxford Observations," by J. Ainsworth Morgan, run in the issue of *The Saturday Review* for December 19, the book was listed as published by George H. Doran. Actually it is published by Frederick H. Hitchcock.

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