

## Esther Gould's Book Corner

### JUST PARAGRAPHS

It may not be recent news but it is nevertheless authentic that Samuel Pepys once wrote a very entertaining book. And, in the midst of what Fanny Butcher bewails as a particularly arid season, it is a pleasure to go to Mr. Pepys once more and learn that he and his wife took dinner with his cousin Tom where everything was very excellent "except the venison pie being manifestly beef, which wasn't handsome." Which may perhaps go to show that it isn't the what to say but the how to say it that in the moderns is so often lacking.

Louis Bromfield is slated for a novel to come out on September 13, "The Strange Case of Miss Annie Spragg." We hope for Mr. Bromfield's sake as well as our own that it will come up to the advance publicity that it will undoubtedly call forth. Other authors on Stokes' list for the next month are Louis Jordan Miln and Hugh Lofting.

### NOT THAT TO US

#### "THE ROAD TO HEAVEN"

By Thomas Beer  
Alfred A. Knopf

Thomas Beer is decidedly disappointing in "The Road to Heaven." After his suave and brilliant performance in "The Mauve Decade" we had, it seemed, more to hope for than he has given. In fact, this book is one of those which leaves you wondering why after all it was written. Its style, its content, its purpose, none of them seem adequate to excuse the writing of a book. It is simply one of those before which the author has said, "It is time to have a book," and rolling up his sleeves has fallen to it.

Mr. Beer evidently thought it rather a coup to have, instead of the usual country boy dreaming of an escape to the city, a city boy dreaming of escape to the country. Though Lamon Coe is only a city boy temporarily, only until he can get back to his native and beloved farm from which his irate papa has thrown him because of a compromising affair with a widow.

So New York is dust and ashes in Lamon's mouth and he sprinkles "am's" and "g's" generously about waiting for papa to die off and leave him the farm which is the "Heaven" that New York is the road to.

In the city, "Lamon's experiences are not uplifting." He picks up a mistress whom papa would never have approval of and lives with a literary cousin who is unreal as belonging to Lamon's family tree. But he is necessary to bring in the literary background that Mr. Beer knows and might as well use. Well, to make a long—too long—book short, on one grand night the mistress burns to death, a former lover of hers, cuts his throat and the cousin dies, and next day Lamon marries a girl from home and goes back to be taken in by papa. Oddly enough the homesickness of the boy is touching, it is the only touching part of the book. Is that because homesickness a more or less universal experience strikes a response even when poorly done?

### SUFFERINGS DELUXE

#### "BEAU IDEAL"

By Percival Christopher Wren  
Frederick A. Stokes

If you like your hot weather straight—straighter than that Chicago has been able to furnish lately—you may be interested in going once more into the African desert with Major Percival Christopher Wren in the third and avowedly last of what are now called "the Geste books." If this is the last we can only say that Major Wren was a bit incontinent in killing off two of his three heroes in the first one, otherwise they might have gone on forever like "the Rovers." But things being as they are and John Geste being the only one alive and he happily married it looks as if Major Wren might have to keep to his decision.

"Beau Ideal" is full of those gestures of high and rather excessive sacrifice which the populace, being quite unwilling to do itself, so loves to have its fictional heroes do for it.

Otis Vangrugh joins the French Foreign Legion and deliberately has himself sent to the Penal Battalion in search of John Geste, the husband of Isobel whom he loves. John Geste, in his turn, has gotten into this decidedly uncomfortable battalion through his insistence on travelling from home and safety back to the desert in search of the two buddies who had rescued him, and whom in ill health he himself he had been forced to "abandon."

So Major Wren having placed his two characters in this position has a chance to have them beaten, kicked about, starved, deserted, and all but cut in little pieces, from which there would have been no return. In any case the narrowness of their escape and their sufferings are all that can be desired. But in the end—though that would be giving it away and you never suspected it. However, if you liked the other "Geste Books" you will like this, though I fear in a lesser degree.

## STEPHEN C. SIMMS DIRECTOR OF MUSEUM

### HEADS FIELD INSTITUTE

#### Succeeds Late David C. Davies Has Been Member of Scientific Staff Many Years; Some History

Stephen C. Simms has been elected director of Field Museum of Natural History by the institution's board of trustees, to succeed the late David C. Davies, who died July 14, it was announced by Stanley Field, president of the museum.

At the same meeting of the board, a resolution was adopted honoring the memory of Mr. Davies, and expressing the trustees' grief at his death.

Mr. Simms, the new director, has been a member of the scientific staff of the museum since it was founded by the late Marshall Field in 1893. He was born in Georgetown, District of Columbia. After completing his education, he became a newspaper man, and from 1884 to 1890 worked in various positions from reporter to assistant managing editor on Washington, D. C. papers, and as Washington correspondent for papers in other cities. He always had a strong interest, however, in the natural sciences, and in 1890 gave up journalism to pursue his career in this field. In 1891 he became connected with the organization preparing for the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, as assistant secretary and charge d'affaires in its department of foreign affairs, and continued in that position until the end of the exposition.

#### Result of World's Fair

Field Museum, then Field Columbian Museum, was born largely as a result of the World's fair, the nucleus of its exhibits being material from the exposition, and Mr. Simms came to its staff at the very beginning, as assistant curator of industrial arts. Later he became assistant curator of ethnology. He was sent by the museum on many expeditions, notably several to the Philippine Islands and among the American Indians of the west. While on the R. F. Cummings expedition to the Philippines in 1909, Mr. Simms recovered the body of Dr. William Jones, leader of the party, who was murdered by native headhunters on the upper Cagayan River, Island of Luzon. Mr. Simms also rescued Dr. Jones' collections and rec-

ords, and on a subsequent expedition completed Dr. Jones' work, obtaining for the museum one of the most notable collections of Filipino artifacts in the world.

In 1912 Mr. Simms was appointed curator of the N. W. Harris public school extension department of Field Museum, founded by the late Norman Wait Harris. He originated and organized the system whereby the museum is now circulating each year in Chicago's schools more than 1,000 traveling museum cases containing botanical, geological, zoological, anthropological and economic exhibits. At various times Mr. Simms has had leave of absence to act as an official of expositions, among them the St. Louis Exposition of 1904 the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915, and the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial Exposition of 1926, at the last of which he was vice-president and secretary of the international jury of awards. Early this year he was appointed acting director of Field Museum, when Mr. Davies' illness became serious.

Cleveland P. Grant, one of the museum's staff lecturers, has been appointed acting curator of the N. W. Harris public school extension department, formerly in charge of Director Simms.

### BECOMES FATHER AT 60 AND LIKES JOB

#### Lincoln Steffens Tells How It Feels to Have a Growing Child Late in Life

Becoming a father after 60 constitutes a liberal education and an opportunity for appreciation of an offspring such as is impossible for the younger husband of today, in the opinion of Lincoln Steffens, writing in The American Magazine.

Youth and a better understanding of mankind is possible through study of a boy infant by a father who has reached three score years, says the writer.

"No loving mother with a house to keep, and no beloved father with a career to carve out," he says, "has had or would have time to sit by a baby's cradle and watch the development of Man as I have watched the development of Pete." "Pete" is Mr. Steffens' son.

Becoming a father after old age has been reached gives a man the opportunity to feel himself a father, a grandfather and a child again, all in one, thinks the writer.

"He feels a triple happiness that only a few young fathers know," he continues. "Young fathers frequently are busy or vain."

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