

seems to have made great headway. A correspondent of the *New York Evening Post* quotes the following extract from the *Historia di Espana*, of Altamira "As for the Arab women, they shone, not only in poetry, but in all the sciences. The Spanish Moslems never opposed the instruction of women, but approved and fostered it. The teaching of religious law was not seldom entrusted to women professors. Girls enjoyed the same primary instructions as boys, and then devoted themselves to professional studies, some of which they practised; for example, medicine and literature, serving in the latter domain as secretaries and writers in the Caliph's civil service. So highly was the education of women rated that a prince of royal Spanish blood wedded a negro slave woman, merely on account of her intelligence and knowledge. Another prince was captivated by the woman who became his wife through hearing her improvise verses. Some of the celebrated Spanish poetesses . . . showed their great love for letters by collecting and copying good books."

A Book of the Week.

OUT OF THE CYPRESS SWAMP.*

Yet another story of the race trouble in America! But one that stands out among the rest by dint of a vigorous and simple style, and a power of description which is sometimes peculiarly telling.

Most dramatically does the action open, with the pursuit of a man by bloodhounds. A handsome young Englishman, with well-cut features, and blue eyes, flying for his life! He encounters an old negro woman, and wildly bids her bring him food. Cowed and servile at once, she is about to do so, when the baying of the dogs falls upon her ear. In a moment her attitude is changed; the fawning slave becomes the insolent equal. The hunt is up for this man; then he is tainted—tainted, though invisibly, with the badge of servitude; like herself, he is some white man's property, and as such, has no rights upon this earth. Why should she help him?

Such is our first introduction to him who is known as Honoré de la Barre, the son of Colonel de la Barre, and Mariana, a beautiful octoroon. Well, strenuously, ably, is given to us the story of his flight. He encounters, after long semi-starvation, an Englishman, Dr. Vaughan, who is on a hunting tour in America, but has put himself beyond pale of the law, by openly taking the part of a negro who was being flogged to death. The two join the Baratarians, a historical group of smugglers, who, in the early years of the nineteenth century, flourished on an island near New Orleans, winked at by governor Claiborne, privately traded with by all the prominent planters in the place. There is something particularly humorous in the account of the way in which these men entertain General Humbert at a banquet, with the printed notices of a reward for their apprehension, signed by the Governor, fastened upon the very walls of the building in which they carouse.

The adventures of Dr. Vaughan and Honoré during their life with the smugglers, are passed over with the very briefest mention. The Baratarians did not belong

*By Edith Rickert. Methuen.

to the most brutal class of smugglers; Dominique You, the "Little Captain," was not without the rudiments of chivalry, and never permitted his men to murder in cold blood, nor to ill-treat women; yet one must imagine that the deeds and the sights of those years must have had a brutalizing effect upon the young man already driven desperate by the injustice of his social position. After realising a fortune in plunder, the two friends go to England; but Honoré, now known as Honor Vaughan, cannot be happy there; he hears the South a-calling, and goes back to Louisiana; and upon the ship which takes him out, is his fate, in the person of Miss Joyce Clifford.

He falls in love with Joyce, and elopes with her, in face of the somewhat mysterious opposition of her father, who says that he promised his dead wife that Joyce should enter a convent. The young couple enjoy almost a year of great happiness; and then Joyce's baby is born, and proves to bear distinct traces of negro parentage. The indignant insolence of the doctor, paid an enormous sum by the young husband to come to the remote plantation to attend his wife, upon finding that his patient is not "white," throws a lurid light upon the social ethics of the day. The result of the fatal birth, for which poor Honor believes himself alone to be responsible, is the temporary separation of husband and wife—who indeed are no longer legally husband and wife in the States, the negro taint annulling the whole contract. Then Joyce makes the discovery that the fatal black blood is present in her also; that it was on this account that her father so opposed her marriage,—that it was for this that her mother wished her to be a nun; her baby inherited his African traits from both sides of the house.

The thing which mainly strikes the reader in this book is that the parts which tell of battle, smuggling and adventure, are so much better done than those which treat of the heroine. Joyce is the invention of the usual male novelist, the colourless convent-bred girl, who is simply the object of the man's devotion. All the men's characters are well drawn, as far as they go; the woman is a dummy. Had not the name appeared on the title-page, most people would unhesitatingly pronounce "Out of the Cypress Swamp" to be a man's work. G. M. R.

Coming Events.

March 10th.—Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association Conference. Miss Gibson, Matron of the Birmingham Infirmary, will read a paper on "The Scarcity of Nurses in Country Workhouses; its Cause and Cure." Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C., 4.

March 11th.—Lord Cross presides at the Central Poor Law Conference at the Guildhall (two days).

March 11th.—The Lord Mayor presides at the Annual Meeting of the East London Nursing Society, Mansion House. Speakers: The Right Rev. the Bishop of Stepney, Mr. Alderman Edward Mann, J.P., Mayor of Stepney, W. J. Hadley, Esq., M.D., and others, 3.

March 13th.—Princess Louise Duchess of Argyll opens the David Lewis Northern Hospital, Liverpool.

March 19th.—The Duke of Fife presides at a Festival Dinner in aid of the Charing Cross Hospital Special Appeal.

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