

surface of the river and blows it away in clouds of dust. The natural color of the river is seal brown, but when it rains for two or three days at a time, and gets the river pretty wet, it changes to a heavy iron gray. A long rain will make the river so thin that it can easily be poured from one vessel to another, like a cocktail." Of course our genial friend's reputation for exact verity is not to be impugned, and his explanation gives comfort when those awful days come and the old town lies below me swathed and shrouded in dust clouds. Even the Big Muddy can flash and glisten in the sunlight, and if you go close to the river's edge the old instinctive love of water which, strangely enough, clings to all the descendants of Noah, will get the better of you in spite of your judgment. The awful sense that the river is crawling leaves you as you watch the water swirling and eddying on its way. The miniature white caps sparkle—not a seal brown sparkle either—and you actually wish for a boat, and own that this ugliest river in the world is not wholly repulsive. The only trouble with those who would give the old river so bad a character is that they have come from the east westward, and have not in their souls that passion for flowing water which is born of living or sojourning in desert lands.

And quick young deities again descend,
Bringing the gifts of God with joyous cries.

I lead the Graces and the Winged Powers:
The world the Anarchs build I will destroy,
For I will storm upon its demon powers,
With wind of laughter and with rain of joy.

And at the first break of my Social Song
A hush will fall upon the foolish strife.
As though a joyous god, serene and strong,
Shined suddenly before the steps of life.

Cold hearts that falter are my only bars:
Heroes that seek my ever-fading goal
Must take their reckoning from the central star,
And follow the equator: I am soul.

My love is higher than heavens where
Taurus wheels,
My love is deeper than the pillared skies:
High as that peak in Heaven where Milton kneels,
Deep as that grave in Hell where Caesar lies.

Still hope for man: my star is on the way!
Great Hugo saw it from his prison isle:
It lit the mighty dream of Lamennais;
It shook the ocean thunders of Carlyle.

Wise Greeley touched the star of my desire,
Great Lincoln knelt before my hidden flame:

It was from me they drew their sacred fire—
I am Religion by her deeper name.
—Saturday Evening Post.

LITERARY NOTES.

A. B. FROST'S COUNTRY FOLKS.

A. B. Frost, the artist, has undertaken what is thus far his most ambitious and sustained piece of work, in a series of eight paintings, entitled "A. B. Frost's Country Folks." The series will present the best of the American rural types in the different aspects of their social and neighborhood life. Each painting will be distinct, and be given a full page reproduction in The Ladies' Home Journal, the series running through that magazine for eight issues, beginning with the Christmas number.

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An Interesting Indian Bird.

One of the most beautiful and elaborate nests known is that of the baya bird, a native of India.

The structure, which might easily be mistaken for a closely-woven flask-shaped basket of human manufacture, consists of three compartments. The first, in the long tubular entrance, might be called the sitting and sleeping room, which when the little birds are strong enough, they occupy with their parents, having before been kept in the inner compartment or nursery; the third is placed by the side of the nursery; and its use is not quite understood, though it is thought by some to be the especial property of the male. But the strangest part of the furnishing and completion of the nests remains to be told. When otherwise finished, the nest is studded with balls of soft clay, which the natives declare are used as candlesticks, for in each one the baya fastens a firefly.

THE MUSE OF BROTHERHOOD.

By Edwin Markham.

Author of "The Man with the Hoe."

I am in the Expectancy that runs:
My feet are in the Future, whirled afar
On wings of light. If I have any sons,
Let them arise and follow to my star.

Some momentary touches of my fire
Have warmed the barren ages with a beam:
There is no peak beyond my swift desire,
There is no beauty deeper than my dream.

I make an end of life's stupendous jest—
The merry waste of fortunes by the Few,
While the thin faces of the poor are pressed
Against the panes—a hungry whirlwind crew.

I come to lift the soul-destroying weight,
To heal the hurt, to end the foolish loss,
To take the toiler from his brutal fate—
The toiler hanging on the Labor-Cross.

I bring to Earth the feel of home again,
That men may nestle on her warm, still breast;

I bring to wronged, humiliated men
The sacred right to labor and to rest.

I bring to men the fine ideal stuff
The young gods took to build the spheres
of old:

The fire I send on men is great enough
To burn the iron kingdoms into gold.

I hold the way until the bright heavens
bend—
Until the New Republic shall arise,

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