

RUDDER GRANGE, by Frank R. Stockton, illustrated by A. B. Frost, Crown 8 vo. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price \$2.00. Here is an old friend in such sumptuous attire that if it did not fit him so well and become him so admirably there might be some difficulty in recognizing him. We have always felt grateful for the chance which a few years ago introduced us to "*Rudder Grange*." Perhaps it would have been more correct to have written "Newsboy" instead of "Chance" in the last sentence, because it was on board a train that one of these irrepressibles (being a cheap Canadian reprint of the book (by which I fear the author profited little) into our lap. The odd title secured the purchase of the book, and a perusal of the first chapter convinced the reader that a most excellent investment had been made, while a reading of the whole work established the hitherto unknown Frank Stockton upon a pedestal from which he has not yet descended and from which, judging by the excellence of his later writings, he is not likely to descend in a hurry. Whatever our opinion may be worth, here it is—that the author of "*Rudder Grange*" is the most original, refined, natural humorist at present entertaining the public, and having made this confession of faith it is perhaps unnecessary to add more.

But then this edition of "*Rudder Grange*" contains more than the original story. It is embellished with a wealth of illustration from the pencil of A. B. Frost, there being over one hundred in all, which for aptness, accuracy, and sympathetic interpretation of the author's drollery could hardly have been surpassed. Familiar as we were with *Rudder Grange* these illustrations seduced us into another reading just that we might get their full flavour, and having gone through the book in this way, we were at a loss to understand how it could ever have got on without them so long. However, text and illustration so peculiarly fitted for each other having thus been happily wedded under the auspices of Messrs. Scribner's Sons, they can never again be divorced, and "*Rudder Grange*" thus worthily equipped takes a place no other book can fill as a perennial source of entertainment.

BIRD WAYS, by Olive Thorne Miller. 16 mo. pp. 227. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Price \$1.25. This dainty little volume in its dark green binding, prettily relieved by an empty cage, and flitting bird stamped in gold on the front cover, will prove a genuine revelation to many a bird lover, and can

hardly fail to awaken interest in and sympathy for birds among those who have hitherto been altogether indifferent to the charms of the winsome creatures Mrs. Miller has described with such delightful spirit. We had the pleasure of reading several of the papers in this book when they appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's Magazine*, and thus had our appetite whetted for those that now appear for the first time, and combine to make one of the best books about birds with which we are acquainted. Mrs. Miller seems to have possessed every qualification necessary for making a careful study of these tricky ariels which she so graphically describes for us; plenty of time, infinite patience, entire self-control; great ingenuity, and above all a profound sympathy which enabled her to read as it were the very hearts of her little visitors—for visitors they only were—never captives. "The moment one shows a desire for liberty for the world outside my windows, he is gladly allowed to depart"; such was her rule of action. The Robin, Thrush, Cat Bird, Black-bird, Oriole, and Sparrow have each several chapters devoted to them, and one rises from a perusal of the book, not only quite ready with Mrs. Miller to "recognize in the birds something like intelligence and reason," but willing to admit with her "that they too have their opinions, and could express them, if you could only understand their language." While the moral is not very obtusive, there is one all the same, and it is this: "Be kind to the birds. They were not made to be slaughtered ruthlessly, but to brighten the world by their beauty, and charm it with their songs," and if any man or woman can read "*Birds-Ways*" without resolving to deal more considerately with their little feathered friends henceforth the future punishment should be relegation to a limbo where things are reversed, and the birds have it all their own way

J. M. O.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER for December is one of the most elaborate of all the Christmas magazines and one of the best, in an artistic and practical sense, that this publication has given us. There is a beautiful colored plate, showing an apartment decorated in Moorish style, and there is a supplement giving the studio of Frank L. Kirkpatrick, the artist. There is an elegant design for an Entrance Hall, a most interesting account of the Produce Exchange, with sketches of its new building, an illustrated paper on Chantilly, design for a kitchen, decoration of city houses, Christmas decorations, designs for cabinets, mantels, etc. Articles on furnishing country houses, picture frames, art events, curtain hanging, and a vast number of other valuable and interesting pieces. The magazine is published at 32 East 14th Street, New York.