boasted a conservative and aristocratic society composed almost entirely of southerners, to which the north, lately victorious in the Civil War, sought entrance in vain.

Into this milieu Dr. Talbot, a prosperous and popular physician some forty years of age, brings his young Bostonian wife. She is much the superior intellectually of the women to whom he introduces her, as well as of her husband, a man who never reads himself, and who considers women with a taste for that pastime as bluestockings. Into this community also comes a gifted, clever man named Langdon Masters, to take a position on one of the city newspapers. He and Madeleine Talbot meet, find they have tastes in common, and before they know it are swept into an intimacy that can only result in disaster if it goes any further. Talbot is informed of it and he insists that Masters leave the city. This Masters does, going to New York and giving himself over to dissipation. When Madeleine hears of it she resolves to follow his example and, leaving her husband, tries to drink herself to death. He divorces her and she at once sets out for New York to rescue Masters and devote her life to him. They are married and happiness at last is theirs. Neither of them seems to have had much difficulty in escaping from the power of the demon rum, and the scene where Madeleine invades a dive at the Five Points and drags Masters from the clutches of the woman with whom he has been living, is absurd. The descriptions of the degradation and drunkenness into which Masters had fallen read like an old-fashioned tract, and the picture of a San Francisco society that frowns upon divorce strains our powers of imagination.

FROM OUT THE PAST

By Mary K. Ford

THERE is a curious old-fashioned air about Gertrude Atherton's latest book, "Sleeping Fires". This is not warranted by the fact that the scene is laid in San Francisco some fifty years ago, in the days when, according to the author, that city

Mrs. Burnett's "The Head of the House of Coombe" is also a trifle old-fashioned albeit a much better piece of work and a much more interesting story. It deals with London before the Great War, and the best drawn character in it is Mrs. Gareth-Lawless, a beautiful but heartless woman. To read of her is to realize the wonderful power personal beauty wields, no matter what the handicap as regards lack of intelligence. The heroine is her daughter, so neglected as a child that until she is six she has never been kissed. Living in dismal upper rooms in a small London house, she knows her mother only as "The Lady Downstairs". Lord Coombe, from whom the book takes its name, is a rather theatrical character, known all over Europe for his good clothes, his fine breeding, and his vices; but it is to him that Robin Gareth-Lawless, all unwittingly, owes her education, the companionship of two women who love her, an escape from her dull existence, and even more than that, for Lord Coombe rescues her from a great and real danger. The book closes in August, 1914, but there is to be a sequel in which we may follow the fortunes of the characters. It will be worth while, for Mrs. Burnett has the ability to tell an interesting story. The character of Robin will meet with scant favor from the admirer of the modern, hard, brilliant, individualistic heroine with whom we are now supplied. The beautiful, sensitive child, with her thwarted, loving instincts and her unappeased hunger for affection, is as different as possible from the young women drawn by recent writers, with their single-minded pursuit of their own interests and their keen eye for the main chance. Some of us may prefer Robin.

Sleeping Fires. By Gertrude Atherton. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

The Head of the House of Coombe. By Frances Hodgson Burnett. Frederick A. Stokes Co.