

AFRICAN MISSIONS AS SEEN BY MR. ROOSEVELT

THEODORE ROOSEVELT is optimistic about the work of missionaries in British East Africa and Uganda. He went and saw and judged with a calmness based upon his experience with the difficulties of a mixed people dwelling in the same land. In any country such as that of East Africa, where we have whites thrown in contact with the mass of savages, hostility is apt to grow up among the different classes. The officials do not like the settlers or the missionaries; and the settlers do not like the missionaries or the officials, he declares. A traveler will always hear the missionary work decried by men who have lived on the ground and who honestly believe they are good observers. Such was Mr. Roosevelt's experience, but, as he told a Methodist missionary gathering in Baltimore, he had the proper corrective. In *The North-western Christian Advocate* (Chicago) we read:

"Fortunately, I had been out West a good deal and I had sifted for myself the statements that both settlers and Army officers used to tell me about the Indian, and I knew that much of it was not so—I knew that because I knew the Indians. And so I was not surprised, but I was greatly pleased, to find that on the average the mission boy who had received some education at one of the mission schools was raised incomparably above his former pagan comrades.

"Now, of course, I do not mean to say for a moment that you can not pick out an occasional mission station where no good work has been done. Missionaries are human like everybody else, and there are other walks of life where I could pick out occasional members of any profession who amount to very little. Of course, you take a well-meaning little fellow whose zeal outruns his knowledge and he may find himself pitifully unable to grapple with new and strange and sometimes very terrible conditions. But, as a rule, I was immensely impressed with the improvement in the character of the natives who had been under missionary control. We had one of our headmen, a mission boy, who used to receive regularly in the mail, every week—his mail would come as regularly as mine—the missionary pamphlet printed in the native character. And really I wished I had had the time to get him to translate it, as I am sure it must have been interesting from the way he read it. He was a very intelligent and very self-respecting man. I am mentioning merely one—and I could mention a number of instances of that kind, where I came into contact with improved natives.

"I found one partial explanation of the insistent allegations of mission boys going wrong. Of course a percentage, a considerable percentage, of the mission boys do go back into paganism—a percentage turn out badly. I have never yet known in any of our own colleges a class every member of which did well. And a percentage of mission boys may drift into the towns, and, for instance, be among those engaged as porters. Well, as they are the castaways of the missions, they naturally fail to do well as porters, and the man who has engaged one will condemn all mission boys because there is a rejected missionary boy who has done badly as a porter in his outfit. Taking the Africans as a whole, I am certain that any unprejudiced witness will testify to the improvement wrought. Now mind, I am speaking of British East Africa, where the cultural development of the tribes is low, where they are still in such primitive savagery that it is impossible to expect to bridge over in a few years the great gulf between them and our civilization."

Of the extent of the field of his observations Mr. Roosevelt remarks:

"I visited a number of missions in British East Africa, in Uganda, which is right in the heart of the continent, lying as it does on both sides of the equator and right in the middle of Africa—in the Upper Nile regions and near Egypt. In East Africa the missions that I visited were the American Interdenominational Mission, under Mr. Hurlburt, at Cawjaba, with its branches here and there; and a Scotch Presbyterian mission. In Uganda there were the missions of the English Established Church; in the Sudan and in Egypt, the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Of course I saw widely different stages of success attained by the different missions. That depended partly upon the missionaries themselves, and, of course, partly upon the

material with which they had to work. A farmer in the arid belt has a good deal harder time of it than one on the bottom lands of the Mississippi Valley; and it is just the same way in missionary work."

In Uganda, where a much higher cultural stage has been reached by the natives, a totally different state of things was found. He gives us here some details of native life:

"They had developed a semi-civilization, a sort of advanced barbarism of their own; they had some settled industries. They made a cloth out of the inner bark of a certain peculiar tree they had there; they were cunning ironworkers, 'workers in iron,' as the Biblical phrase has it; they had musical instruments; they had herds of cattle and goats; they were industrious cultivators of the soil. They had a fairly well-developed governmental system—almost a representative system—not an elective system, but a representative system. They were under a cruel and bloodthirsty tyranny, but they had great capacity for development. And, fortunately, they were taken by the pioneers of Christianity in the very nick of time.

"The Mohammedans reached them from the North just about the time that the Christian missionaries reached them coming in from the East Coast. Now, as all of you who are acquainted with conditions in North Africa know, while Mohammedanism unquestionably works some temporary good in any pagan tribe, and brings them up to a distinctly higher stage of culture, ethical and intellectual, it unfortunately petrifies them at that stage, so that they can not easily advance further, and become impervious to Christian missionary effort, or well-nigh impervious. And if the Mohammedans had had time to make these Uganda people Mohammedans, we would have had the extreme difficulty in dealing with them that Christian missionaries encounter everywhere in Moslem lands."

While Christianity and Mohammedanism were competing for Uganda, a pagan reaction was suddenly threatened. "The pagans said they would drive all intruders out of the country." Then this happened:

"The Christians and the Mohammedans joined forces and said, 'At least we all believe in the Book.' They had a book, the Bible in one case and the Koran in the other; and they said, 'We all believe in the Book, and now we will prevent these pagans from driving us out of the country.' And they joined to stop the pagan revolt. Afterward, most fortunately, the Christians got the upper hand and saved the country. Now I wish I could show you what Christianity saved Uganda from. Perhaps I may in this way. When I passed through the Sudan tribe I saw on every hand what the Mahdi rule had meant in the Sudan. Mahdism was really an outbreak of various Mohammedan proselytizers which reproduced in the nineteenth century just the conditions of the seventh century. Well-meaning people, who did not know anything of the facts, would express sympathy with the Mahdists on the ground that they were struggling for independence. They cared for independence for just two reasons. In the first place, to kill out every Christian; and in the next place to establish the slave-trade. Those were the two cardinal principles of the government of the Mahdists. There was a cruelty of which we in our lives can form no realization. I passed through village after village in the Sudan where I could see native schools established in connection with the Gordon Memorial College. I would see a native school with a native teacher and lots of children up to twelve years of age, and perhaps three or four over that, and I asked about it. They said, 'Those are the Government children.' And I asked them what they meant. *All children were killed except as the Government took possession.* I came upon tribes of pagans where there would be children and old men, and no, or practically no, men of middle age, because they had all been killed out by the Mahdists. I would come upon the traces of communities where we would find still on the ground the remains of the old tribal fires, the fires of the villages where every living being had been killed. The figures will show this, that out of about ten millions of people, nearly seven millions were killed during the years of the Mahdi uprising. Now that is what Christianity saved Uganda from; that is what missionary effort saved Uganda from. It saved it from sufferings of which we, in our sheltered and civilized lives, can literally form only the most imperfect idea, and I do wish that the well-meaning people who laugh at or decry missionary work could realize what the missionary work has done right there in Middle Africa."



A GUIDE TO THE NEW BOOKS



SOME OF THE BEST BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

New books for children, as well as new books for adult readers, become each year more varied and perplexing to purchasers. In the following pages an attempt has been made, first, to select from the great mass published this year twenty-five which, if not actually the best, are believed to be among the best; second, to present a list of older books; and third, to give a selection from the favorite general lists of publishers. These three lists and the notices which accompany them have been in preparation for several weeks. The notices have been written in a critical rather than a merely descriptive or an amiably laudatory spirit. An unfavorable word, however, need not mean that the reader is to ignore the book referred to. All are believed to be good, each of its kind.

A SELECT LIST OF TWENTY-FIVE

Brown, Abbie Farwell. *The Christmas Angel*. Pp. 82. Illustrations by Reginald Birch. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 60 cents net.

We do not know when Miss Brown has written a more agreeable story for young folks; one might say that she was doubly handicapped at the outset; first, because "The Christmas Angel" challenges comparison with Dickens' "Christmas Carol," and second, because its ethical object is emphasized so persistently that it suggests "The Passing of the Third Floor Back." There is nothing original in a hardened heart being transformed by the Christmas spirit, but Miss Brown has so marshaled a number of familiar events as to give them a sweetness that is passing from the literature of the Christmas season. This spirit is very largely aided by Mr. Birch's drawings, which take us back to the days when he helped to make "Little Lord Fauntleroy" so distinctive.

The little story is recommended unreservedly; it makes good reading aloud, and bears repeating. Among the many volumes that have come to our desk, it is the only one thus far bearing the word *Christmas* upon its cover.

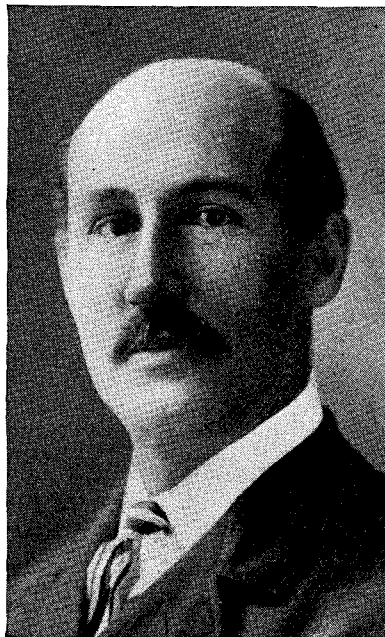
Brown, Katherine Holland. *Philippa at Halcyon*. Pp. 422. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50.

There are two excellent qualities about this book for girls: first, its author, being college-bred, knows what college life is; second, its author knows how to write. On the other hand, there is a big defect in the story: its moral quality is too well planned out, each chapter almost serving as a lesson. No reader will mind the quickness with which Philippa was taken into the inner circle of the college; the fun these girls have is too real to quibble over small details. The book will repay every one who reads it, for it is wholesome and frank.

Burroughs, W. Dwight. *The Wonderland of Stamps*. Pp. 238. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. \$2.

Boys usually locate stamps by comparing the stamp itself with its reproduction in an album. In this new book, a different method is used, which goes to illustrate that the wide-awake collector may learn much history, and equally as much geography, by giving a little thought to the matter. Mr. Burroughs writes of the historical significance of the details on the most important stamps of the world; he arranges his collection, not according to countries or in alphabetical order, but in accordance with the dominant feature of each stamp's design. His chapter-heads in-

dicate his method: "The Smallest Show on Earth" includes stamps depicting animals of varied climes; "The Songless Aviary" is what its name implies; and "Thumb-Nail Maps" is likewise sufficiently descriptive. The book contains two hundred figures on twenty-five plates; its great blemish lies in the narrative form of the text, through which a "good-natured" uncle tells his niece and nephews all they want to know. Why can not authors realize that direct and graphic description is more effective than priggish



WALTER CAMP,
Author of "The Book of Football."

questioning and stilted answering? Notwithstanding, Mr. Burroughs has accomplished a task which will afford pleasure to many young collectors.

Camp, Walter. *Book of Football*. [Walter Camp's Library of Sport.] Pp. 363. New York: The Century Co. \$2 net.

This is an entertaining book, wherein not only does the early history of football find full discussion, but also the pros and cons of the "new" game. With such a treatise in his hands, the novice may gain sufficient acquaintance with football to serve him at a real contest; with such a treatise, the enthusiast may strengthen his opinions and decisions. For Mr. Camp is America's authority on all sporting subjects, and he writes not only entertainingly on technical points, but the human touches in his book are very striking. Especially of interest to college men will be that chapter on "Personality in Football," where the distinctive players are lined up—a regular "Who's who" in the football world, past and present.

There is one note sounded by Mr. Camp that in its manliness escapes the charge of sentimentality: that is his continual appeal for honesty in sport. In order to play any game squarely, one must have the instincts of a gentleman. While "The Book of Football" is issued in juvenile format, it is intended for the general reader of any age. It is full of anecdote, and fairly bristles with pictures. When Yale and Harvard can at-

tract 35,000 people to the game, there is no gainsaying the wide interest in this sport. We predict a large circulation for Mr. Camp's book.

Collins, Francis A. *The Boys' Book of Model Aeroplanes*. Pp. 308. New York: The Century Co. \$1.20 net.

Few of us realize how much boys are accomplishing in the field of aviation, but after reading Mr. Collins' book there will be a sense that they are doing a great deal. For example, there is a Junior Aero Club of New York with a roster of two hundred members. Now, the models made by these young aeronauts may not be perfect, but they can fly, and their defects or excellences are suggestive study. Mr. Collins is practical in his suggestions as to how to build and fly aeroplanes; he is also very graphic in what he has to say of the history and science of aviation. His story is brought up to date, and is copiously illustrated.

In this book the technical calculations are entirely omitted. The next book we mention is not intended for the layman at all, but for the skilled mechanic versed in the mathematics of flying, M. Robert Petit's "How to Build an Aeroplane" (D. Van Nostrand Co., \$1.50 net) will be of value. It has been translated from the French by T. O. Hubbard and J. H. Ledebour.

Duncan, Norman. *Billy Topsail & Company*. Pp. 318. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company. \$1.50.

We have had occasion many times to recommend Mr. Duncan's first volume, introducing Billy Topsail, the young hero of the far north. Therefore, when we saw a second volume bearing his name upon the cover, we picked it up with some misgivings, for sequels are never a success. But we had only proceeded a few chapters when we recognized the old tang, and the same zest, with no abatement of picturesque adventure. The stories are not closely knit together; in fact, they appeared in various magazines at various times.

The boys of this rousing "penny dreadful" go forth in a vessel with the fantastic name of *Spot Cash*, to trade in competition with the piratical owner of the *Black Eagle*. The situations arising from such beginnings keep the reader's attention to the very end—an end which significantly closes with two words fairly characterizing the whole volume, "fine delight."

Gillmore, Inez Haynes. *Phoebe and Ernest*. Pp. 353. New York: Henry Holt & Co. \$1.50.

The first chapter of this book will convince one that its author is a keen observer of children. And because of this fact, her story will have quite as much interest for older people as for young readers. It deals simply with the thoughts, feelings, and struggles of two children growing up. In that first chapter we have humorous descriptions of how parents feel as the transformation takes place; the father's distress that his daughter is becoming a young lady with thoughts upon dress and sweethearts; the mother's shock over the fact that her son shaves. It is all very human and humorous.

Hatton, Henry, and Plate, Adrian. *Magicians' Tricks: How They Are Done*. Pp. 344. New York: The Century Co. \$1.60 net.

There is no telling how many hours of unalloyed pleasure this volume will bring, not