

Using Our Resources

THERE has perhaps been no time in our history when the question of the proper literature for children has had more careful consideration than it is getting today, no time when the reading of children has stood more in danger of subordination to other interests than at present. Where once the child was dependent for his stories upon the printed page or the favor of an elder who would spin a yarn for him, today he has but to sit before the radio to imbibe at the least possible cost of effort some tale, or go to the movies to see it presented in pictured form, or pore over the comic sheets to slake his desire for incident and humor. For the child who has a natural inclination for reading, there will, of course, be no substitute for a book; he craves it as irresistibly as he feels the need to run and jump. The radio will not satisfy him, for he must wait upon its hours and take not what he chooses but what it doles out to him; the screen will not suffice, for no matter how enthralling it may prove at the moment the motion picture provides only passing enjoyment, not a source of pleasure than can be tapped for the reaching to a shelf. We need not fear for him; he will turn to books as the sunflower to the sun.

But the child who has no inborn interest in books, to whom the mere act of reading presents difficulties, and who with the universal instinct of childhood will resort to the thing that gives him pleasure without having to exert himself for it—for him there is cause to fear. During the impressionable years when in the past through force of necessity he found in books the only means aside from the nursery tales of his mother of indulging his liking for a story, he is now getting incident in the raw instead of incident woven into literature through the play of fancy and language. He is forming his taste and attuning his ear for style on the pared simplicity which the heterogeneity of a radio audience and the inevitability of the spoken word imposes upon its narrators. He can have nothing of the leisurely comment, nothing of the entertaining byplay, little of the charged description and episode that require time for the savoring, that the book provides. He is taking his literature in great gulps, and learning to be impatient of masticating, his food. He is becoming habituated to emphasis rather than quality in narration,

and he is doing altogether without distinction of style.

Now, it is useless to suppose that the child will not seek the radio and the movie and consider himself unabused if deprived of them. Since this is so, and since it goes without saying that in thus abjuring his right to books he is thrusting aside one of his most precious heritages, why not make the very instruments that at present are militating against his inclination to read conduce to it? We believe that many a child who might show slight inclination for books could be led to them if the pictures shown on the screen, or tales outlined over the radio, instead of being of nondescript character were based on some standard story, desire to be acquainted with which would be whetted by such portrayal. There is a wealth of children's literature in existence which would lend itself admirably to the motion picture and radio and which so might become of vivid interest to the child naturally disinclined to books. Let us use it.

Children's Books

By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY JR.
(Age 11 Years)

I THINK children's books should be mysterious, humorous, exciting and instructive. Children should enjoy their books, not be bored by them. For example take, Colodi's "Pinocchio" that alone is a very good book for both boys and girls. David Putnam's "David Goes to Baffin Land," is written by a boy and ought to be liked by all boys.

Books are very good for children. They not only are enjoyed by the reader but they teach children very good traits. That is if the child takes what he reads seriously and if it is a good book. Of course if the child is not especially interested in books there are plenty of books about what he is interested in. For instance if they are interested in the sea, Jules Verne's "The Mysterious Island" is a perfect book about the sea. Or if he is interested in Marionettes or masks or shadows W. H. Mills

and L. M. Dunn's "Marionettes, Masks and Shadows." And so on. If you want to give a child a present that will please him or her be sure to give them a book.

Childhood

The LITTLE LONG AGO. By LAURA SPENCER PORTOR. Dutton. 1927. \$5.
Reviewed by REBECCA LOWRIE

ALL of us have a little long ago, but a few of us can recapture the mood in which we had it. There is always the temptation to idealize, to rationalize, or to sentimentalize over childhood—and once this is done the psychological value of the recollection is lost.

In the Main Miss Portor gives simple, straightforward pictures of childhood. You cannot read far into the book without a sense of wonder that some one else has known your secret thoughts and imaginings, that some one else had invited the King to dinner, and had consulted the oracle of Buttons, not just the buttons that showed, but petticoat and pantie buttons, in order to escape the doom of marrying a THIEF!

It seems to me that Miss Portor changes her mood occasionally. Sometimes she writes as an adult, considering childhood. (I wonder if a child ever thinks of itself as "tenderly ridiculous"?) Sometimes—and here she is delightful, she takes the complete step between Now and Then—as in "I go a-visiting" (except for the sophistication of the single sentence, "I look innocent because I feel innocent.")

Two White Mice

LADY GREEN SATIN AND HER MAID ROSETTE. The History of Jean Paul and His Little White Mice. Translated from the French by the BARONESS E. MATINEAU DES CHESNEZ. New York. The Macmillan Co. 1927. \$1.75.
Reviewed by MARGERY WILLIAMS BIANCO

GOOD children's books, like buried treasure, have a trick of turning up again after long periods of oblivion. One

thinks one knows them all, and then a lucky turn of the spade reveals something quite new and unexpected. "Lady Green Satin and her Maid Rosette" is just such a find, brought to light again through the agency of Clara Whitehill Hunt, who would seem to wield a positive hazle-wand for such discoveries. Lest the title mislead you let me hasten to explain that Lady Green Satin and Rosette are—two white mice, owned by a little French peasant boy who sets out on foot for Paris, to try and earn money for his family by exhibiting his tiny pets through the countryside. Written for children of an earlier generation, this quaint simple tale of courage and friendship has that rare lifelike quality independent of time or country which will set it in the first rank of favorite books. Jean and his little friend Madeleine are lovable and enduring figures. Children should gain much from this picture of an earlier, unhurried Paris and familiar French life. Winifred Bromhall's drawings are perfectly chosen to reflect the charm of the story.

Joy Street Again

NUMBER FIVE JOY STREET. By WALTER DE LA MARE and others. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1927. \$2.50.

THERE'S another book-house on Joy Street—Number Five—pleasantly different from its neighbors, but of familiar architecture. The cloth binding in a close Italian design is festive, with the dignity befitting a classic, and should also stand much loving handling. Inside one finds a medley of things-coming-alive-at-midnight, crooked dwarfs and sweet golden-haired maidens, kings and queens with nothing to do but behave as fairy-tale kings and queens should, fiery dragons and talking geese—all that old-fashioned fantasy that will never be old as long as eager-minded children continue to discover the earth.

We suspect that young funny-bones will be especially tickled by the fat inn-keeper who turned to a Toby-jug, told with folk-lore humor and simplicity by Mabel Marlowe, and young sense-of-justice satisfied by the triumph of Rose Fyleman's "Chestnut Man," whose value to the community no child would dispute. "Mr. Cupboard," by Algernon Blackwood, is a long but absorbing story with quite exciting moments, reflecting that feeling of personality in furniture which hovers about many of the worn and familiar objects of our early homes. Walter de la Mare contributes one of his beautifully told tales. Eleanor Farjeon gives a slightly introspective account of "A Bad Day for Martha," when everything went wrong for a small girl, who will find her sympathetic audience among the legion of the "not understood."

There are amusing illustrated nonsense verses, minus moral or reason, especially refreshing in these solemn days of child-psychoanalysis and Freudian scandals about the Frog Prince and Cinderella. The jingles have rather more character than the poems—or perhaps we are all spoiled by Milne's perfect blending of the two.

A few stories seem pleasantly told but a bit aimless. Altogether, however, "Number Five Joy Street" is a pleasant house of fancy, well worth entering.

Books for Parents

Compiled by EMILY RUSSELL McDEVITT
TRAINING THE TODDLER. By Elizabeth Cleveland. Lippincott. \$2.
THE NURSERY SCHOOL. By Margaret Macmillan. Dutton. \$2.50.
THE INNER WORLD OF CHILDHOOD. By F. G. Wickes. Appleton. \$3.
SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE FAMILY. By E. R. Groves. Lippincott. \$2.50.
UNDERSTANDING OUR CHILDREN. By Frederick Pierce. Dutton. \$2.
CONCERNING PARENTS. A symposium. New Republic. \$1.
THE CHILD, HIS NATURE AND HIS NEEDS. A symposium. Children's Foundation, Valparaiso, Indiana. \$1.25.
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S NERVES. By Walsh & Foote. Lippincott. \$2.
THE HOME MAKER AND HER JOB. By L. M. Gilbreth. Appleton. \$1.75.
EVERYDAY PROBLEMS OF THE EVERYDAY CHILD. By Thom. Appleton. \$2.50.
CHILDREN'S READING. By Terman & Lima. Appleton. \$2.
HEALTHY CHILDREN. By Josephine Baker. Little, Brown. \$1.25.
THE BABY'S FIRST TWO YEARS. By R. M. Smith. Houghton Mifflin. \$1.75.
CARE AND FEEDING OF CHILDREN. By Emmet Holt. Appleton. \$1.25.
HOW TO COOK FOR CHILDREN. By Estelle M. Reilly. Putnam. \$1.50.
PASTIMES FOR SICK CHILDREN. By Whitten. Appleton. \$1.25.

GILMAN of REDFORD

A New Novel by William Stearns Davis



ABOVE all things, a human narrative properly tinged with the atmosphere of the age. It is to be recommended as telling a vital story in a manner that is usually interesting and sometimes absorbing. It is a carefully wrought, illuminating and capable production.
—New York Times

EVERY page of the novel is enshrouded in the picturesque atmosphere of the day; every page is quivering alive with its spirit. Seldom has so much that is representative of... the colonies that were to become a nation been brought within the covers of a novel.
—Boston Transcript

THE love story of Roger Gilman never falters in its blending of fiction and fact into a glamorous tale. Mr. Davis has written some unforgettable scenes into this novel... Throughout all the story is the romance of Roger. It adds a further element of charm to an already entrancing book.—Philadelphia Ledger

ONE of the most appealing pieces of American historical fiction that has come from the press in recent years... at once a gallant and spirited tale of the Revolution. Here is a volume which should be on every family book-shelf in the United States, a story which should form part of the historical knowledge of the American people.
—Dallas Times Herald

GILMAN of REDFORD

At all bookstores — \$2.50

The Macmillan Company

New York

The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

SOLITARIA. By V. V. ROZANOV. Translated by S. S. KOTELIANSKY. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. \$4.

Imagine a writer who with equal sincerity hates and adores God; who one day enthusiastically glorifies Christianity and next day despises it in his writings; who in one paper proves himself the most reactionary and in another the most radical ideologist; who with a sincere enthusiasm writes the most contradictory essays about everything; add to this a great deal of talent, paradoxicalness, cynicism, and scepticism; and you will have some idea of Rozanov's personality and writings.

"Solitaria" is one of the most peculiar books of this Russian erratic. It represents a collection of short thoughts previously put on the blank sheet of a letter, or on the back of the lined sheet, or on toilet paper, according to where and when they occurred to the author. The notes were gathered together and published in the form of a book.

The wind blows at midnight and carries away leaves. . . . So also life in fleeting time tears off from our soul exclamations, sighs, half-thoughts, half-feelings. . . . They come straight from the soul, without elaboration, purpose, and premeditation. . . . I have always somehow liked these "sudden exclamations." Afterwards one can't remember them for anything. Yet certain things I succeeded in jotting down on paper. The jottings went on piling up. And then I decided to gather together those fallen leaves. . . . What for? Who needs it? Merely I myself. Ah, dear reader, I have long been writing "without reader" merely because I like it so. I do not stand on ceremony with you, reader, so you need not stand on ceremony with me. "To the devil!" "To the devil! With a reader it is much more tedious, than with oneself. He opens his mouth wide and waits for what is going to be put into it. In which case he has the look of an ass before braying. Not a very engaging sight. . . . What the dickens do I need him for?

This shows the character of the book and something of its style. Such a note as the following on the Russian Revolution gives an idea of Rozanov's paradoxes.

La Divina Comedia. With a clang, thud, and bang the iron curtain is dropping down on Russian History. The performance is over. . . . The public gets up. . . . "It's time to put on our overcoats and go home." They look round. But there are neither overcoats to put on, nor houses to go to.

In a similar way Rozanov describes a series of important phenomena, beginning with God and ending with sex. We may like or not his thoughts but one thing is certain: he has a genius for looking at many things from an unusual standpoint and a talent for describing his thought pictorially in a few words. "Solitaria" is certainly not a book for the common reader; but those who like to meditate over Pascal's "Thoughts," or Montaigne's "sceptical fragments," or Nietzsche's pages, or even Confucius's "Analects" will certainly enjoy many of its pages.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF FRANÇOIS RABELAIS. Rendered into English by SIR THOMAS URQUHART and PETER MOTLEUX. Illustrated by FRANK C. PAPÉ. Boni & Liveright. 1927. 2 vols.

The English of Urquhart is of course the best receptacle for Rabelais, so far as English and American readers are concerned. The original French is racy and delightful but a little too difficult for foreign readers—too much spills off the idiom and is lost. But Urquhart has that favorable Jacobean English that makes even a tract good reading. There is no more successful translation into our tongue except the King James Version in English of the same brand. Thus God and the devil were both served by a magnificent style. Mr. Pape's illustrations for this edition are desirable also, broad, racy, and good-humored as illustrations to Rabelais should be. Indeed the two volumes are eminently satisfactory, and will be coveted.

ARE THEY THE SAME AT HOME? By BEVERLY NICHOLS. Doran. 1927. \$2.50.

Mr. Nichols's aim in this book is to give intimate pictures of all the people who get their names into the papers—authors, painters, musicians, politicians, theatrical managers, actors, aviators, athletes—but the one successful portrait he achieves is of a person whose name is not listed in the Table of Contents, himself. One gets a very complete image of a young man who

assiduously reads the journals and then dashes out to put himself in the way of the latest celebrity, to make him or her talk for publication and the enhancement of Mr. Nichols's already excessive reputation for impudence. Curiously, both Mr. Nichols and his publishers are very proud of this last trait in him. In reading these interviews one finds that the young author's supreme demand of life is that it make him the constant companion of the clever and a connoisseur of rare vintages. Apparently his one demand of posterity is that as an author it regard him as the lineal successor of Mr. Frank Harris, the author of somewhat similar collections of anecdotes recording passing conversations with the celebrated of an earlier era.

ALL THESE. By Paul Revere Frothingham. Harvard University Press. \$1.50.

Biography

"MY DEAR GIRL." The Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin with Polly Stevenson, Georgiana and Catherine Shipley. Edited by JAMES MADISON STIFLER. Doran. 1927. \$3.50.

Part of this correspondence is new, and more of it is old. Everyone who has read Franklin's life or works knows that for more than a dozen years as a colonial agent in London he lived at the home of Mrs. Margaret Stevenson, a widow with a daughter named Polly. Franklin had an affectionate paternal interest in the girl, who was nineteen when he, then past fifty, came to dwell under the same roof. He maintained the acquaintanceship until the end of his life. Indeed, Polly, by this time Mrs. Hewson, brought her three children to visit the old statesman at Passy in 1784-85; and in 1786 she came to live in Philadelphia, and was one of his intimate friends in the three last years of his life. One of his letters to her is especially well known: that of 1767 in which he describes a trip from Dover through France, his presentation at Versailles to the King, the architecture and paving of Paris, and the exceedingly polite manners of the French. "Only think," he wrote, recording the fact that his Paris tailor and perruquier had transformed him into a Frenchman, "what a figure I make in a little bag-wig and naked ears!"

Mr. Stifler has collected all the letters addressed to Polly, perhaps three dozen in all, into one body, and by an unobtrusive connecting text makes of them a pleasant story of friendship. Several statements in the early epistles justify the inference that Franklin once hoped to make Polly his daughter-in-law. He brought his son William to London, and wished that wayward young man to take a respectable wife. Later we find him sympathizing with her in her quarrels with Aunt Tickell, whose property she hoped to inherit; rebuking her when she was ill-natured with common friends; writing her with affectionate counsel when she married; and even confiding to her political information. To piece out the book, the editor has included some fifty pages of Franklin's letters to two daughters of Bishop Jonathan Shipley, whom he first met at Twyford, England, in 1771. Nearly half of these letters are new, and several of them, such as Franklin's admirable "bread-and-butter letter" after a three weeks' sojourn at Twyford, have literary charm. In the last, dated April, 1789, Franklin speaks of his enfeebled health. The book as a whole is a useful compilation, and the well-chosen illustrations add to its value.

Fiction

THE SECRET FOOL. By VICTOR MACCLURE. Brentano's. 1927. \$2.

Fergus Blaine, protagonist of Mr. MacClure's novel considers himself a "secret fool." In his heart he knows that he is afraid of life, and yet he passionately wants to live. Disappointed several times in love, he comes suddenly and strangely upon the greatest love that he has ever known—and still is afraid. Mr. MacClure makes of him a genuinely attractive character, adequately motivated and sympathetically drawn. A most cogent reason for reading the novel is to see and understand this Fergus Blaine; his peculiarities are those of many of us, his problems almost as common as they are poignant. Laying bare a sensitive and struggling soul is not easily accomplished, but here it has been done with notable success.

Not so much can be said for the other
(Continued on next page)



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S P L E N D O R	
<p>Mr. BOK'S OFFICE PACKARD BUILDING PHILADELPHIA</p> <p>My dear Mr. Macrae:</p> <p>I read Mr. Williams's "SPLENDOR," and I know of no book that I have read which reflects in such a true and unerring sense the home life of a family of moderate means in the suburbs. There are thousands of people of that kind, and no book could portray their lives as well as does this novel. It seems to me to be singularly reflective of the life which he describes, and I hope the novel may be a great success.</p> <p>Believe me, Very cordially yours, <i>Edward W. Bok</i></p>	<p>GEORGE ADE HAZELDEN FARM BROOK, INDIANA</p> <p>Dear Mr. Macrae:</p> <p>At a football game the other day John McCutcheon began to rave about this book by Ben Ames Williams. Mac and I were together in a newspaper office for many years—a kind of office described in the book. Mac told me that SPLENDOR was the real story of a real working newspaper man. The story is the kind of realism that keeps me reading into the night. It is a splendid book.</p> <p>I am, with best wishes, Sincerely, <i>George Ade</i></p>
D U T T O N	