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The Children's Bookshop

The Saga of a Pigeon

GAY-NECK. The Story of a Pigeon. By DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI. Illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. 1927. \$2.25.

Reviewed by MARY GRAY

A NEW book by the author of Kari, the Elephant, will be sure of a welcome from a wide circle of all ages. This story of "Gay-Neck," the wonderful carrier-tumbler pigeon, whom the boy Mukerji, raised and trained and afterwards sent to service in the World War is more fascinating even than the adventures of Kari, partly because the material is so fresh. We had heard from Kipling and others a good deal of the habits of elephants, but we do not remember any previous animal story books about pigeons, with the exception of "Chico." Add to this a plot full of hair-breadth escapes on the part of the clever pigeon from hawks, eagles, and airplanes, and equally hair-breadth escapes from tigers and elephants on the part of his young master, and you have the material for a real "thriller" that will please the taste of even effete little movie fans. But unlike its movie counterparts, this story is told in Mukerji's excellent style, vivid, but thoughtful, with a good bit of Indian philosophy thrown in. Only once in a while are we conscious that Mukerji is using a tongue not his own, as when he says, "Let me give you just a slight picture of our setting," but for the most part he puts many of our native writers for children to shame. Listen to this bit of description:

The stillness was intense—like a drum whose skin had been so stretched that even breathing on it would make it groan. I felt hemmed in by the piercing soundlessness from every direction. Now and then like an explosion came the crackling of some dry autumn leaves as a soft-footed wild cat leaped on them from the branch of a tree not far away. That sound very soon sank like a stone in the ever rising tide of stillness.

That is from one of the adventures which befell Gay-Neck's master while he was searching for his runaway bird in the eyrie of an Eagle high up in the Himalayas. In one of the Lamaseries of these far-away mountains the pigeon is cured of his first bad fright by the touch of a Holy man who has conquered fear himself and Mukerji receives a lecture on the evils of that arch enemy, Fear.

Twice after that Gay-Neck suffers from what we have learned to call "shell-shock," and refuses to fly, and twice his owner succeeds in bringing him around again. The first time is after a very bad experience with two hawks, the second with German airplanes and their bombs. These incidents furnish further material for analyzing the effect of the conquering of fear.

The illustrations and designs by Boris Artzybasheff have a striking Indian flavor that fits the tale well. We can thoroughly recommend Gay-Neck to American youths, philosophy and all.

Magic and Realism

THE MAGIC PAWNSHOP. By RACHEL FIELD. Decorations by ELIZABETH MACKINSTRY. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. \$2.

YOU have read many a fantastic child's story, compounded of magic and nonsense, and you have read not so many naturalistic stories of real little girls in familiar situations,—not nearly so many, as a matter of fact, as the average little girl would like to read, for the magical tale seems to be far more frequent.

If you possess yourself of this little book of Rachel Field's, you will enjoy a very charming combination of both types, and that, too, in the continuous-story form which seems for some reason to be used less often for children than the short tale with which they are constantly supplied.

Not that even the most up-and-coming little girl could really involve herself in the delightful impossibilities that happen to Prinda during her visit to the magic pawnshop to secure a miracle for her sick uncle's use; but that they are all recounted with a running maintenance of realism in background, in character drawing, and in the logical following-out of a real plot—which even has two bits of love stories bound up in it. So a little girl reading will have the pleasures of recognition of many items

of her own surroundings, combined with the surprises of a magic broomstick and its proprietress-rider, and all the goings-on in the magic shop over which she presides.

Especially delectable is the idea of the Conscience which one of the characters has pawned, and which appears as a luminous, colored Something in a wicker bird-cage, fading gradually to nothingness unless reinstated in its owner's bosom; and of the superfluous elderly aunt pawned by her family only to find a comfortable realm of usefulness in the pawnshop itself, so that she cheerfully repudiates their efforts to reclaim her when they find they have made a mistake and need her very dreadfully after all.

Full of suggestion are Miss Field's pawnshop shelves, and many real bits of understanding of human nature flash from her lines, as her ingenious little plot develops. A grown-up will not lack enjoyment in reading this story with a child.

The little colored decorations are in keeping with the feeling of the book, and although they are slight and not very frequent they add to its satisfying make-up. We hope Miss Field will give us more books in the same key.

Book Lists for Children

Suggested by JACQUELINE OVERTON

Children's Library, Robert Bacon Memorial, Westbury, Long Island

BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS, a suggestive purchase list published by the Bookshop for Boys and Girls, 270 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 1922. Price 25 cents. A new edition is now in preparation.

A LIST OF BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS, suggested for purchase by Marion Cutter of the Children's Book Shop, 108 East Fifty-seventh Street, New York. Price 35 cents. Although published seven years ago, this is still a good basic list.

THE CHILD'S FIRST BOOKS, a study of the best picture and story books available for the pre-school child. Prepared for the Child Study Association by Elsa H. Naumburg, Child Study Association, 54 West Seventy-fourth Street. Price 35 cents.

THE HORN BOOK, a charming little magazine published quarterly by the Bookshop for Boys and Girls in Boston. Besides excellent annotated lists of books, it contains special articles. Subscription price \$1. Single copies 25 cents.

BOOKS OF ADVENTURE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS of all ages. A booklist guide to stories, trails, voyages, discoveries, explorations, and places to read about as illustrated in the Map of Adventure drawn by Paul M. Paine. The Map may be purchased at Brentano's, New York. Price \$2.50.

OUTDOOR BOOKS published by the Bookshop for Boys and Girls, 270 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. Price 25 cents.

PLAYS FOR CHILDREN, a selected list compiled by Kate Oglebay. H. W. Wilson Co. 1922. Price 50 cents.

A list to aid dramatic directors and teachers in the selection of plays for children from six to sixteen.

CHRISTMAS, legends, stories, carols, and festivals. Children's Library, Westbury, Long Island. Price 25 cents.

An invaluable list for mothers and teachers. The stories have all been tried and tested many times in the telling.

HALLOWE'EN, a selection of poems, stories, and plays, compiled by Jacqueline Overton. Children's Library, Westbury, Long Island. Price 15 cents.

THE HARPER BOYS' AND GIRLS' BOOKSHOP, 460 Park Ave., New York City, has in preparation a Selected List of Books for Boys and Girls which may be ordered for 25 cents.

A Suggestion

FOR a group of mothers of children of the same grade to supplement their children's school work in any special field by forming for the children's use at home a circulative book-club of thoroughly interesting collateral reading in that field. Possibly each mother would donate one or more books. This plan, of course, could be carried out, at greater expense, individually. It should lead children to widen collateral reading at the library.

(See page 225 for brief review of children's books)

INTERNATIONAL

RUSSIAN POETRY

an anthology, chosen and translated by Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky. A selection of lyrics covering the period from Pushkin to the present day. \$2.25

MODERN RUSSIAN
COMPOSERS

by Leonid Sabaneyeff. Aesthetic characterization of about forty representatives of Russian music, including Scriabin, Stravinski, Myaskovsky, Prokofyeff and Rakhmaninoff. \$2.75

MATERIALISM and
EMPIRIO-CRITICISM

(Vol. XIII, of Collected Works) by V. I. Lenin. In this book Lenin fights against all attempts at philosophic revisions of Marxism. \$4.00

The AMERICANIZATION
of LABOR

by Robert W. Dunn. A new book giving the ramifications of the present employers' offensive against the labor unions. \$1.90

VOICES OF REVOLT

a series of small books in which are collected the outstanding utterances of renowned revolutionary leaders. The first to be published are: Robespierre, Marat, Lasalle, K. Liebknecht, Debs and Lenin. Each, 50c

HISTORY of the
AMERICAN WORKING CLASS

by Anthony Bimba. An account of the rise and struggles of American labor against the background of political and industrial development. \$2.75

The Life and Death of SACCO and VANZETTI

by EUGENE LYONS

A complete account of the social drama which has shaken the world, by a brilliant writer who has been associated with the case from the very beginning. Fascinating as a novel, penetrating as a history. \$1.50

RUSSIA AFTER TEN YEARS

Report of the American Trade Union Delegation to the Soviet Union. \$1.00

HISTORICAL MATERIAL-
ISM—A SYSTEM OF
SOCIOLOGY

by Nikolai Bukharin. All the social phenomena closely scrutinized and interpreted from the materialist viewpoint \$3.25

KARL MARX: MAN,
THINKER, AND REVOLU-
TIONIST

A collection of essays on Karl Marx, by Engels, Plekhanov, Mehring, Luxemburg, Lenin, Lafargue, W. Liebknecht, Riazanov, and others. \$1.75

The ECONOMIC THEORY
of the LEISURE CLASS

by Nikolai Bukharin. A criticism of the value and profit theory of the Austrian School of Economics. \$2.50

MEMOIRS of a
REVOLUTIONIST

by Vera Figner. An autobiography of this famous Russian terrorist, who participated in the assassination of Tsar Alexander II. \$3.00

OIL IMPERIALISM

by Louis Fischer. The inside story of the struggle between the American and British oil interests for Russian petroleum. \$2.00

MRS. SOCRATES

by Fritz Mauthner. A defense of the most notorious scold in history, and a human pen-portrait of the father of philosophy. \$2.00



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—author of *Bugles in the Night*. He has long been recognized as an American short story writer of the first rank. His first novel, *The Chicken-Wagon Family*, was one of the best sellers of 1925-26.



CLARA SHARPE HOUGH
—author of *Not for Publication*. She is one of the best known younger women in journalistic circles, and now the wife of a prominent newspaper publisher. Her city room experience furnishes an authentic background for her new novel.



VINCENT SHEEAN
—author of *The Anatomy of Virtue*. An adventurous young newspaper man, who a few years ago told of his adventures in the forbidden land of the Rif, now writes a story of high places of English society.



WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD
—author of *The Locomotive God*. His long narrative poem *Two Lives*, published a few years ago, occasioned unprecedented critical discussion and enthusiasm. His latest book is among the most important of modern autobiographies.



CLARA SHARPE HOUGH
—author of *Not for Publication*. She is one of the best known younger women in journalistic circles, and now the wife of a prominent newspaper publisher. Her city room experience furnishes an authentic background for her new novel.



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Barry Benefield's distinguished new novel: the story of old Easley Wheatley and the beautiful young girl who is his "daughter." "You would swear it was Barrie you were reading, that nobody else could strike this note of sincerity, of whimsicality, of delectable fun."—*The Cincinnati Post*. \$2.00

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By CLARA SHARPE HOUGH

Author of *Leif the Lucky*

A rare story of the conflict between professional ideals and domestic duties in a modern marriage. \$2.00

DAPHNE'S IN LOVE

By NEGLEY FARSON

Presenting Love, Model 1927, in the high romance of a modern girl. Brilliant and humorous. The sprightliest novel of the year. \$2.00

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The ironic and beautiful story of Judith Quayle, the American wife of a wayward nobleman. \$2.00

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The long-awaited autobiography of the author of *Two Lives*. A frank, penetrating and vivid narrative with curious psychological undercurrents. Illustrated. \$4.00

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By JAMES C. JOHNSTON

Materials, methods and ethics governing the art of life-writing, with a foreword by Gamaliel Bradford. \$2.50

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By JAMES F. LEYS

A high-spirited and adventurous young man tells the story of his race around the world with a fellow who has been his amiable rival for many years. Gay and daring vagabondage. Illustrated. \$4.00

FATHER MISSISSIPPI

By LYLE SAXON

A history of the sometimes placid and sometimes raging Mississippi; of its discoverers, exploiters, gamblers and traders, of steamboats and cities, of levees and floods. A glamorous tale of romance and prosperity, tragedy and despair. Illustrated. October 26th. \$5.00

THOSE QUARRELSOME BONAPARTES

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The Brilliant New Biography of Napoleon

Critics and readers alike proclaim this the richest and most penetrating life story of Napoleon Bonaparte. It is great and true biography, executed with rare glamor and pageantry. \$2.50

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A distinguished novel: the story of Ellic Wingate and the beautiful thing which came into his life between tragedy and despair. \$2.00

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A modern story in a medieval setting. The surprising adventures of Messer Francesco Vitali. Delightfully sophisticated and witty. \$2.00

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By WALT COBURN

A swift-moving Western story by an author who has spent his entire life on the cattle ranches and ranges of the West. \$2.00

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By ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

Here the author of *Devil-May-Care* writes of the smart set of Long Island—a brilliant, fast-moving story of people who are forever seeking new excitement. \$2.00

STANDING ROOM ONLY?

By EDWARD ALSWORTH ROSS

A stimulating and provocative book which looks at the future population problem of the world. November. \$3.00

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