

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to Mrs. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

M. A., Santa Fé, New Mexico, asks for information in books or magazine articles, concerning the part taken by the "lyceum" and the Chautauqua, especially the former, in the cultural development of a young and growing America.

WITH two books one could get a pretty good idea of the lyceum and its place in our spiritual background. One, however, is accessible only in typescript: "The Development of the American Lyceum, with special reference to the mission of the local associations in New England," a dissertation offered by Katherine H. Porter for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of Chicago in 1914. There must be other copies besides the one I read. Its feature is the fashion in which its plentiful information is correlated with the intellectual life and physical conditions of the period. The public lecture, as it developed in early nineteenth century America, "may be not unhappily likened to the essay of the eighteenth century in England" as a medium for the imprinting of individual thought and opinion on the public mind. "Both enables men to apply the unrestrained expression of their thoughts to the immediate and passing needs of life. . . . Both aimed to effect reform by awakening public sentiment," the difference in needs being as great as that in forms of expression. The platform lecture in the United States was raised up to meet the discussion of education, temperance, and slavery.

By 1869 this immediate need was past, and when the first lyceum bureau and general headquarters was organized by Ridpath at the close of the Civil War, the old order had changed. "The Life of James Ridpath and the Development of the Modern Lyceum," by Charles F. Horner (Barse & Hopkins) takes up the story at this point in its eighth chapter. By this time Emerson had risen from a fee of five dollars for a lecture (provided the committee also gave him three quarts of oats for his horse) and was getting as much as \$500, though the financial topline was Beecher, at a thousand dollars a performance. Butler, Banks, "the immortal Julia Ward Howe," Lew Wallace, T. W. Higginson, Charlotte Cushman, Edward Everett Hale, Theodore Tilton, were among the stars, though there were exotics like Du Chaillu or the nineteenth wife of Brigham Young, and humorists were greatly in demand, not only Mark Twain, but Henry W. Shaw, "Josh Billings," who must have had some trouble in getting over the footlights a type of humor that depended to such a degree upon bad spelling. But the "Queen of the Lyceum" was Anna Dickinson, of whom it was said that she was "not afraid to say shirt or legs and everyone feels as if they were sitting in the presence of a very chaste and pure-minded woman." Quite like the Greek Slave, she must have been, in her effect upon the public mind.

In like manner there are two books about the Chautauqua, "The Story of Chautauqua," by J. L. Hurlburt (Putnam), and "Fifty Years of Chautauqua," by Hugh Orchard (Torch Press). This press is in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, from whose hospitable public library I sent out a recent Guide, being at the time on a lecture tour of the Middle West—which may explain to recent correspondents several unexpected postmarks. Miss Porter's book has a long list of references, and several are names in Mr. Horner's. There is illustrative material in biographies of the period, as so many of its celebrities had experiences on the road; these include William A. Linn's "Horace Greeley" (Appleton) and Honoré Willie Morrow's "The Father of Little Women" (Little, Brown). Major Pond wrote on "The Lyceum" in the *Cosmopolitan*, 1896. The *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* has a thirteen page article on "Rock Creek Lyceum" in the volume April-July, 1926, published at Springfield, Illinois. If the contemporary development is also to be studied, John Noffsinger's "Correspondence Schools, Lyceums, Chautauquas," is one of the volumes of a general survey of adult education, published by Macmillan and these are also treated in Dorothy Canfield's "Why Stop Learning?" (Harcourt, Brace).

The initials quoted above stand for the name of Mary Austin. This author has deserved well of American readers, and I hope that some of those who read this column may have access to more material on this subject and will tell me about it.

A. E. H., Chicago, Ill., has "recently ac-

quired a bit of orchard and meadow in the deep country," and "wonders about keeping a bee and other rural pursuits. Are there any good books on the old-fashioned farm occupations—, making cider, brewing mead, putting up fruits, herbs, and simples?"

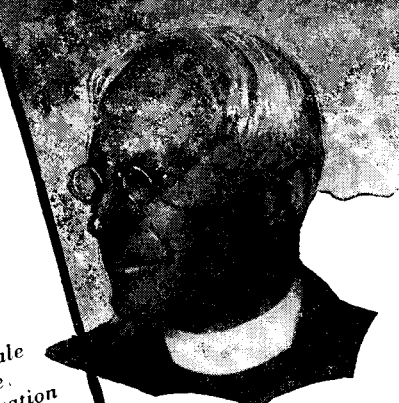
I THINK I will reply on a larger scale than the modest tone of this request might seem to call for: I have been too often invited to visit someone's shack or hovel in the country and found there something my humble New England mind took for a reconstruction of Hampton Court Palace. That bee, now: "Productive Bee-keeping," by F. C. Pellett (Lippincott), is a safe choice: it covers all phases of this enterprise and does not leave out its nature-study aspects. The cyclopedia of the subject, I suppose, is Root's "A B C and X Y Z of Bee Culture" (Root): at least, that is the book recommended to me as standard and stand-by, by the amateur hive-keeper I consulted. I myself know little about bees; last Saturday I came upon one in the middle of Morningside Drive, stiff and stark with the cold, and brought him home to thaw out. I brought him in my hand, and he came to almost at once and bit me, so I took him the rest of the way in a bit of paper;

then we put him on the radiator and he turned out to be a wasp. We named him Willie to encourage him, and he was quite chummy for a while and ate sugar, but the next morning he had resumed his interrupted voyage to oblivion. So I could not pursue my study of bees, and can only trust the favorable London reviews for my conclusion that "Practical Bee Breeding," by A. Gilman, lately published here by Putnam, is the most important of the new bee-books. It concerns a new method of queen introduction, and is meant for those who rear queens for sale rather than for those engaging in the business of honey-making.

There are several admirable sets or series of farm manuals covering the various activities of rural life: "Lippincott's Farm Manuals," "Rural Manuals" (Macmillan), "Rural Science Series" (Macmillan), "Poultry Science Series" (Wiley), "Amateur's Book of the Garden Series" (Doubleday), "Country Life Education Series" (Ginn), "Harper's Handbooks" (Harper), and the "Farm and Garden Library" (Orange Judd). From the catalogue lists of these the student may select in safety manuals for his particular branch. In the past few months there have been several interesting additions to the literature of farm-life, beginning with a book intended for the city man who wants to know about the present state of farming; this is "These Changing Times," by Edward R. Eastman, editor of the *American Agriculturalist* (Macmillan), with a preface by L. H. Bailey. Mr. Bailey's own latest contribution

to this library is a series of essays with letters from contented farmers, "The Harvest of the Year to the Tiller of the Soil" (Macmillan), by one with an unshaken faith in the farmer's future. "Time and Change," by William Everett Cram (Marshall Jones), is a volume of essays arising from a New Hampshire farm life, tranquil and happy in tone. "The Stump Farm," by Hilda Rose (Little, Brown), should be in every farmer's library, or in that of anyone who finds inspiration in stories of noble and heroic struggle, kept up with unflagging spirit. This story is in the Northwest, though they pull up stakes there and take a claim in Alberta. "The Farmer's Standard of Living," by E. L. Kirkpatrick (Century), gives facts and figures from all over the country. "What the Farmer Needs," by Isaac Lippincott (Appleton), is not so much information on marketing as the application of business management methods to production, so that costs may be reduced and consumption augmented.

E. D. S., Boston, Mass., tells me to add to the list of books for a seven year old child beginning French, "Que Fait Gaston?" by Perley (Ginn), saying that one of the teachers of the lower school of Beaver County Day School told her that there is nothing quite like it. I have since read the book, and heartily agree. It is the tale of the everyday adventures of a mischievous and attractive school-boy; the sentences have just that quality of unexpectedness that makes them instantly taken in and long remembered by a child.



Abbé ERNEST DIMNET
"He put a kick in thinking."

The STORY of THE ART of THINKING

Told in Figures

First edition	November 1928	3,000 Sold Out
Second edition	December 1928	3,000 Sold Out
Third edition	January 1929	6,000 Sold Out
Fourth edition	January 1929	6,000 Sold Out
Fifth edition	February 1929	12,000 Sold Out
Sixth edition	February 1929	12,000 Sold Out
Seventh edition	February 1929	12,000 Sold Out
Eighth edition	April 1929	10,000 Sold Out
Ninth edition	May 1929	10,000 Sold Out
Tenth edition	July 1929	14,000 Sold Out
Eleventh edition	September 1929	10,000 Now on Sale
Twelfth edition	November 1929	10,000 In reserve
Thirteenth edition	November 1929	10,000 In preparation
Fourteenth edition	December 1929	

Making a grand total of 140,000 copies printed to date

an INDEX of AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE

What are the reasons for the impressive roster of printings — totalling more than 140,000 copies of Abbé ERNEST DIMNET'S famous book *The Art of Thinking*?


ISSUED in November, 1928, in a modest first edition of 3,000 copies, this stimulating exposition of thinking as a fine art, aglow with the wit of a French gentleman and scholar, immediately attracted the attention of JOHN DEWEY, America's foremost educator and philosopher, who gave it unstinted praise. He said: "Before a work of art one is likely to be dumb or to indulge only in ejaculations; and when asked why one likes it, to reply 'Go and see for yourself'. That is the way I feel about this genial and witty book. I would say to the reader, 'Taste it, try it for yourself. Keep it close at hand, read a page or two, a paragraph, opening at random. Browse about in it; read it consecutively. Keep it on a bedside table and read it to compose your mind at night, to arouse it in the morning'."

OTHER LEADING educators, including President JOHN GRIER HIBBEN of Princeton and President NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER of Columbia, urged readers

at once to buy *The Art of Thinking*, echoing Professor Dewey's unqualified endorsement. Reviewers all over the country discovered in the book an adventure for the mind and nationwide criticism became nation-wide acclaim. The book of the hour became the book of the year. Educators and men of letters hoped (but dared not prophesy) that *The Art of Thinking* would be enjoyed by those nineteen out of twenty men and women who needed just this wise and mellow introduction to the joys of real thinking.

IN TWO MONTHS *The Art of Thinking* had reached its fifth edition, with a total of 30,000 copies sold. The high hopes of its sponsors had been realized. American readers welcomed this by no means easy challenge to their intelligence.

IN THE LUCID table talk of the Abbé ERNEST DIMNET thousands of new readers every month discover that this was one book that they must not borrow and read hastily but *own*, to read and reread, mark and remember. Here is a book to be related to one's own life and growth, to one's deepest secrets and aspirations. The enormous sales of *The Art of Thinking* now continue steadily—editions of 10,000 appear regularly—after 11 months—in order to meet the mounting demands of new readers. What was formerly said of the unprecedented sale of *The Story of Philosophy* now applies with equal force to *The Art of Thinking*: Here is a book more exciting than fiction and selling faster. Here is a true tribute to the intellectual curiosity of the American reading public—an index of mental alertness, a chart of thinking.



at all bookstores \$2.50

THE ART OF THINKING
by ABBÉ ERNEST DIMNET

TO YOUR BOOKSELLER or THE INNER SANCTUM of SIMON and SCHUSTER
Publishers • 37 West 57th Street • New York

I want to read r-38

THE ART OF THINKING

Check one of these

☐ Enclosed find \$2.50

☐ Send C. O. D.

Name

Address

City State

for Christmas

**MIKI**

by Maud and Miska Petersham

Adventuring in Hungary in the most gorgeous picture book of the year. \$2.00

A MONKEY TALEby Hamilton Williamson
with pictures by Berta and Elmer Hader

Jocko's jungle adventures told in amusing and colorful pictures. . . . 75c

**POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF PARK**

by Rachel Field

A gay little book about a tiny park in a big city. . . . 75c

COCO THE GOAT

by Rhea Wells

A mischievous goat in Spain—by the author of **PEPPI THE DUCK**. \$2.00**THE BLACK ARROWHEAD**by Caroline Dale Snedeker
Illustrated by Manning de V. LeeThe background of American history—in a fine new story by the author of **THE BECKONING ROAD**. \$2.00**THE MAGIC TRAIL**by Grace Moon
Illustrated by Carl MoonIndian children of the Southwest—A new book by the popular author of **CHI-WEE**. . . . \$2.00**A BOOK OF MYSTERIES**by Augusta Huiell Seaman
Illustrated by Kurt Wiese

Three mysteries in one by one of the most popular writers for girls. \$1.75

**SHANGHAI PASSAGE**

by Howard Pease

Mutiny, mystery and revolution in a great sea story for older boys. \$2.00

FORGOTTEN GODS

by Theodore Acland Harper and Winifred Harper

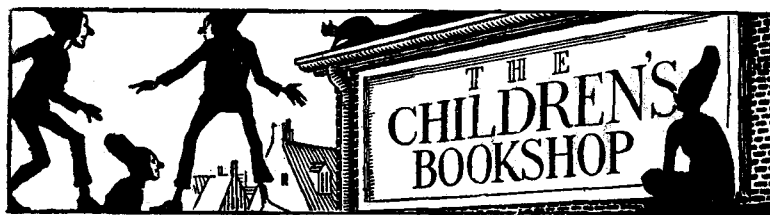
Modern adventure in the Mayan ruins of Yucatan. A Junior Literary Guild selection. . . . \$2.00

THE WINGED HORSE ANTHOLOGY

by Joseph Auslander and Frank Ernest Hill

The "finest anthology of poetry in English." Boxed with **THE WINGED HORSE**—a perfect gift for any age. Each, \$3.50 Boxed, \$7.00**Junior Books**

DOUBLEDAY-DORAN



Conducted by MARION PONSONBY

On Reading Aloud

By MARION C. DODD

READING aloud to younger children is a happily accepted custom; no one questions either the enjoyment or the advantages for both partners of the team. But except in an occasional family where there happens to be the tradition or the special taste for it, we hear very little of reading aloud to older children—say from ten to fourteen or thereabouts. Are there good reasons for this? Or is it merely a slackening of conscious effort on the part of the parents, and a re-absorption of time for their own purposes as the more obvious demands for its expenditure upon younger children are withdrawn?

Both are probably true. The second needs no comment—it is merely human nature in operation. But sometimes human nature does take steps which may be re-directed with advantage. As to the good reasons in question, they bear analysis. The most prominent (is it indeed perhaps the only one?) is the feeling that continued reading aloud after children are able to read to themselves will check their progress. It is true that as soon as they have passed the stage where their own reading is slow and a little difficult, they should begin naturally to spend more time with books in their own hands. To read aloud to them, then, to such an extent that all their interests would be fully satisfied and their practice curtailed would indeed be a mistake, but this is not likely to happen because of the pleasure which a child gets out of the performance of any action by himself and for himself,—which condition is completely fulfilled by his act of silent reading. Also, any such possible danger may be avoided by remembering the fact that the child's interest and intellectual development often run a little ahead of his ability to read the language that usually goes with corresponding material. His own reading can cover only what lies within the scope of his ability; so what is read aloud to him may be selected with the idea of grading it to a more difficult scale, and will thus not overlap or take the place of the different and simpler range of material to which he will have independent access. Each will have its own interest and value for him.

If, then, parents may continue to read aloud to children without any serious disadvantages to be considered, what on the other hand are the possibilities for good? We all have an ideal of maintaining a wide range of communication with our children upon every sort of topic, not only with the idea either of pleasure or of education, but for the sake also of developing sympathetic common interests. But life is full and busy, and accidentally or by default many channels of communication may never be opened. A steady habit of reading aloud, browsing among the world's good books, will bring up topics to be discussed, mistaken ideas to be corrected, suggestions to be fostered, to the most surprising extent. The fathers and mothers who may occasionally be heard regretting that they seem to have insufficient topics of common interest as a basis for lively conversations with Johnny and Mary are passing over a fertile source of the wished-for give-and-take of intercourse, if they have never read aloud. This joining in a common mental occupation and the resultant spontaneous talk upon whatever proves to be of interest or value I should place at the head of the list in counting advantages. Moreover, juvenile ideas may be highly diverting at times, but they may also be most suggestive and stimulating; for children have a way of seeing things in a straightforward and unadorned fashion whereas the grown-up has often allowed habits of rationalizing or conventionalizing to cloud his mental processes. The enlarging of horizons will be found not always to lie all upon one side.

Ordinary reading for mutual pleasure and imaginative stimulus does not, however, cover the whole possible scope. Another advantage in reading aloud to older children is the opportunity to enrich their school curriculum. Not every text-book is as stimulating as it should be, and even if

it were there is an enormous amount of possible collateral reading open to any eager student which no school child would be expected to cover in routine time, even if the average teacher were sufficiently enterprising to suggest it. But reading aloud with parents falls not into the routine but into the recreation category, and so wears seven-leagued boots. Many a name in history or geography instead of remaining merely a name—or not remaining at all in any sort of pigeon-hole—will become a living personality set in its proper period, or a familiar, vivid spot on the globe, if biography or good historical fiction, or travel books are read into the record. It is a platitude to add that this type of reading is thoroughly enjoyable on its own merits. Again, in addition to this enlarging of the immediate school horizon, rewarding as that is in itself, another feature may be developed. The reading may later take on what might almost be called a vocational or avocational aspect, in the simplest significance of that word and divesting it of any pseudo-scientific or over-serious context. Parents, that is, would often like to direct children into more complete knowledge of phases of life activities which later on may attract them, or away from other phases which are perhaps already making a mistaken appeal. No wise parent wishes to force a child toward or away from any life occupation, but wide and well chosen information is part of fair play and sensible selection. And school years are not too early for a modicum of preliminary thinking on this subject. Any expert in the so-called vocational guidance which is one of our most active modern developments will bear witness to the unhappy maladjustments and the wasted time and efforts that are daily uncovered as a result of uninformed and unsuitable selection of occupations, and will express a belief that much earlier information upon the general subject should be encouraged. If this idea is extended to include the merely avocational as well, the connection with general reading is still clearer. The special advantage of carrying on even a little of this particular type of reading aloud is that parents and children may together reach some sympathetic (although of course immature) conclusions upon a topic later on to be of vital interest to both.

Obviously we have touched again this point of sympathetic converse. It recurs, indeed, in every phase of any analysis of this subject. No matter what the type of reading under consideration or the immediate end in view, this aspect makes itself felt with and through every other. A deepening and widening of the range of communication between generations is of inestimable value, and since in reading aloud such a process will be accomplished almost automatically, it will be no mistake to leave this as the outstanding point to be stressed in this brief consideration.

Reviews

NIX-NOUGHT-NOTHING. By NAOMI MITCHISON. Illustrated by WINIFRED BROMHALL. Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1929. \$2.

LITTLE PLAYS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE. Compiled and edited by A. P. SANFORD and ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER. Dodd, Mead and Company. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by JANE DRANSFIELD

THE very titles of Mrs. Mitchison's four plays for children are enticing—"Nix-Nought-Nothing," "Hobyah! Hobyah!," "My Ain Sel," and "Elfen Hill." And the plays are charming. Light as thistledown they trip from prose to verse, burdened with no propaganda but fantasy and fun. Real little girls and boys get all mixed up with terrible witches and ogres, and little barking dogs are bewitched into losing their legs and heads only to come running back again quite sound and saucy to bark again. The stories of the plays, as the author states in her Foreword, are mostly based on Joseph Jacob's books of Fairy Tales, "which I had read aloud to me twenty years ago, have been reading aloud myself for the last five, and which I used to read to myself in the interval." Written for her own children to act at home, these fairy tale plays

are now offered to all other little children to act in their homes, with description of the simple settings they require. (One such item would prove the author at least not American, "the straw packings of wine bottles," for Mrs. Mitchison is English with a play written when she was sixteen and performed at Oxford to her credit). There are also delightful illustrations by Winifred Bromhall to give suggestions for costumes and characterization. "Hobyah! Hobyah!" will probably act the easiest. The Lowlands dialect in "My Ain Sel" will doubtless put it out of the running for production, but this play is very lovely. Children who instinctively have a taste for good literature will love these plays, not only to act, but to read, or to listen to when read aloud.

To turn from Naomi Mitchison's book to "Little Plays For Little People" is to leave the illuminative realm of poetry and magic for a world with a capitalized Purpose. Here Mr. Sanford and Mr. Schaffler have gathered together twenty-eight plays, grouping them under the occasions for which they were written, or are suitable—Lincoln's Birthday, Safety Week, Children's Health Week, Christmas, Music Week, and so on. School and groups therefore desiring to give a play on such occasions will find this collection helpful. It should be stated, however, that very few of these little plays have any intrinsic or permanent value. They provide opportunity for children to act along propagandist or commemorative lines, but little more. The Christmas group is the best, with Percival Wilde's "Toy Shop," "The Littlest Shepherd" by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements, and a dramatization by Sally Knox Boon of Tolstoy's "Where Love Is God Is." "Story Terrace" by Frances Elizabeth Atchinson, is delightful, and by no means needs to be confined to Children's Book Week, although written for that occasion. Many of the plays included are offered for production without royalty. Almost all of the plays have been produced, some of them many times, proving the wide demand there is today among educators for plays suitable for production by children. That this demand should be discriminating rather than merely widespread would, however, be of more value to the child. Mrs. Mitchison's plays, for example, serve no serious minded purpose, but like the work of A. A. Milne they do release the imagination, and moreover give some hint of the rhythmic beauty of the English language, two things which most of the plays written for children precisely do not accomplish.

NUMBER SEVEN JOY STREET. By COMPTON MACKENZIE, LAURENCE HOUSMAN, LORD DUNSANY, ELEANOR FARJEON, V. CARRICK, MABEL MARLOWE, ALGERNON BLACKWOOD, ROY MELDRUM, MARIAN ALLEN, IAN MACNAIR, THE NIGHTINGALES, FLORA FORSTER. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1929. \$2.50.

THE CHARM STRING. By ALBION FELLOWS BACON. Illustrated by BILLIE CHAPMAN. Boston: L. C. Page & Co. 1929. \$2.

TAL. His Marvelous Adventures with Noom Zor Noom. By PAUL FENIMORE COOPER. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1929. \$2.50.

THE FAT CAMEL OF BAGDAD. By K. O. S. (Baroness Dombrowski). New York: The Macmillan Co. 1929. \$2.

THE STORY OF PIERRE PONS. By FRANCIS DE MIOMANDRE. Translated by EDWIN GILE RICH. Illustrations by P. GUIGNEBAULT. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1929.

THE GOLDEN GOAT. By HELEN HILL and VIOLET MAXWELL. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1929. \$2.

ALL ABOUT PETS. By MARGERY BIANCO. Decorations by GRACE GILKISON. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1929. \$2.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH WOODBRIDGE

THE educators will get us if we don't watch out! I have been nervous about them for a long while, but last week I became positively jumpy, when I read that now famous report about Teachers College and children's books. The report is now contradicted. The college has, after all, not blacklisted fairies or talking animals. It does not necessarily prefer the tale about how cotton turned into pyjamas to the tale about how the prince turned into a frog. Good! But I have not yet recovered my tone, and I find myself scrutinizing the crop of children's books with one eye on the dietitians. I am so afraid I may be caught liking something that is educationally unsound or unwholesome. Yet there