Conducted by MARION PONSONBY

Daisy and Ellen

By E. M. DELAFIELD

ARE Ellen Montgomery and Daisy Randolph still as well-known to American children as they are to English ones?

Not long ago, I was in that happy hunting-ground of Londoners, the Charing Cross Road, looking for old friends amongst what is officially known as "Juvenile Literature," and made some interesting discoveries, both as to the books themselves and as to their place in present-day nursery literature.

To begin with: that it is impossible to obtain a first, or even a very early, edition of Mrs. Sherwood's "Fairchild Family." Abridged editions exist in plenty—one of them with distressingly picturesque illustrations of Lucy and Emily Fairchild in elegant, frilled pantalettes and a profusion of curls that would have shamed the worldly Miss Augusta Noble herself. The original dark, sober volumes, without illustrations, in very small print, and with an immense and pious homily at the end of every chapter, can no longer be found. Nowhere, now, is that astonishing incident recorded, of Mr. Fairchild's visit to a cottage in which lay a corpse upon which he desired his three children to gaze, so that they might realize the corruption of the body to which all humanity is subject. The children who were to be thus enlightened, were aged, as far as I remember, eight, six, and four years old. The incident, however, proved too much even for the reading public of its date, and was suppressed in editions subsequent to the first one.

On inquiring for one of Miss Yonge's novels, I learned that "any book of Miss Yonge's goes into the window at once, and is usually bought within twenty-four hours."

Except for one or two of the very early ones, Miss Yonge's books are not at all difficult to obtain, so the implication would appear to be that there is still a very definite demand for her work. Indeed, I have several times tried the experiment of giving some of her books—the non-historical ones, as well as the classic "Little Duke" and "Chaplet of Pearls"—to preesnt-day children, and always with success. The criticism has usually been: "We like the children, because they are so real, and don't have too many adventures."

(Writers of school-stories, with lost wills, fatal accidents, and rescues from drowning, please note.)

It is certainly true that children have a strong instinct for characterization, in stories, and this, I think, is the reason why such books as "Little Women and Good Wives," and "What Katy Did," and others of the same type, are still liked. They depend mainly for their interest upon the development of character—and to say that it is this element that makes them popular is only another way of saying that the children of to-day can still recognize themselves in these portraits of the children of yesterday. Though I am bound to add that, in the case of "What Katy Did" the early, and unregenerate, days of Katy are invariably a great deal more popular than her later phase, of saintly invalidhood.

All this set me to remembering those old friends, "The Wide Wide World" and the three books about Daisy—"Melbourne House," "Daisy," and "Daisy in the Field."

Both Ellen and Daisy,—although the former has been, not altogether unjustly, accused of bursting into tears on every page of an extremely long book, and the latter was constantly admonishing her elders—were real, and consistently-drawn, little girls. Of the two, Ellen is, and always has been, my favorite, for, in spite of her tears, she had a sense of humor and she loved outdoor things. Her first practical experiences on a New England farm, after her life in New York, are delightful, and although we know that she wore white cotton stockings and pantalettes (the former of which her aunt Fortune unkindly threw into a tub of dye), there is nothing else in the account that might not equally apply to a child of to-day.

"The Wide, Wide World" is still read by English children, and so is a charming collection of short stories, supposed to have belonged to "Ellen Montgomery's Bookshelf" and gathered together under that title. There is, however, a blot on that volume, in my eyes. It contains a story called "Mr. Rutherford's Children" which I first met in a tiny little booklet, wherein the children bore the picturesque names of "Sybil" and "Chryssa." But in "Ellen Montgomery's Bookshelf" they are called plain "Mary" and "Edith"—for what reason, I can never imagine.

Daisy, of "Melbourne House," although far less endearing a personality than Ellen, was even more interesting to read about, since she lived continuously upon the dizzy verge of catastrophe, owing to her own cast-iron views of right and wrong, unshared by her parents.

On one occasion, the point at issue was the singing, by Daisy, at her mother's command, of a "worldly" song from "The Camp in Silesia." Daisy's conscientious reasons for refusing now appear wholly preposterous; but the frame of mind that possessed her, the non-comprehending vexation of her kindly father, and the coldly-tyrannical insistence of her unkindly mother, are as real as any conflict of the present day could be. There is the true quality of suspense, too, in the continual postponement of the crisis: Daisy's mother is inflexible, and the reader knows that she will never yield, any more than Daisy will. If it isn't one Sunday, then it will have to be the next. There is no arbitrary solution of the difficulty. On one occasion Daisy is saved by her father's intervention—which occurs quite naturally, on perfectly legitimate grounds, and without unseemly dissension between Mr. and Mrs. Randolph—and on another by an accident that takes her away from home. Throughout the whole book, Daisy, her parents, the guests in the house, and the servants and slaves on the estate, are psychologically consistent, and therefore convincing.

There is, however a good deal of unconscious humor about Daisy, as, for instance, when, full of grave doubts as to her father's ultimate salvation, she inscribes upon a sheet of notepaper the singular request: "Dear Papa, won't you think about being a Christian?" and places it inside his box of shaving-soap.

It remains to the credit of Mr. Randolph that he received this demonstration with calm, and in silence.

The classic utterance of Daisy's mother remains: "I'd as lieve not have a child as not have her obey me."

The two later books about Daisy afford a very vivid and detailed impression of Civil War days, from a social and civilian point of view. It need scarcely be said that Daisy, since her parents are Southerners, contrives to fall in love with an officer in the Northern Army, who eventually dies in the hospital to which she goes as nurse. Again, there is nothing in the account of Daisy's school-days that might not apply to modern school girls, excepting the fact that the girls sleep five or six in a bedroom, address one another as "Miss," and drop curtseys on occasion.

It would seem unfair to write about Daisy without saying anything about Fleda, of "Queechy." But Fleda, at any rate in England, never enjoyed the same popularity, partly, perhaps, because her tears flowed even more copiously than those of Ellen, and partly because her English lover, the haughty Mr. Carleton, represented the conventional type of Englishman, rather than any recognizable type of human being.

I have seen copies of all these American children's books in almost every class of English home, their popularity only slightly diminished in the third generation. They are read, and liked, not because the problems of their heroines come, even remotely, within the sphere of present-day experience, but because the personalities depicted are true to life. Daisy, for all her sententiousness, is real, just as Ellen is real.

I am sure that it is this quality of characterization that largely accounts for the popularity, on both sides of the Atlantic, of the Dr. Dolittle books. The Doctor is a real person; his animals have real individualities. The stories, in fact, represent the ideal combination for the intelligent child-reader: sound characterization (what I have called "real people") and *also* a sufficiency of fantastic adventure.

The day will probably come when John—then Mr. Brown—or Mary—become Mrs. Robinson will wander up and down the Charing Cross Road, or its equivalent, eager to recapture the magic of the past, by means of an ancient fourth- or fifth-hand copy of a childish story-book. And there are, happily, books that will triumphantly surviv the test.

Reviews

THE BOYS' LIFE OF JOHN BURROUGHS. By DALLAS LORE SHARP. Century. 1928.

Reviewed by HENRY S. CANBY

THIS is a really excellent biographical sketch of one of the great figures in our American relationships with the woods, the birds, and nature generally. Burroughs has often been sentimentalized, but here he emerges as a kindly, very human figure, full of quirks and indecisions, but driving nevertheless always toward his goal of a better adjustment between man and his natural environment. He had a great capacity for friendship and this enriches his biography also, for Whitman, of whom he was one of the earliest and staunchest admirers comes in, and Roosevelt, and many more. It is a book strongly to be recommended to young people who love the woods, and can profit by a sense of the tradition of love and enjoyment and better knowledge which men like Audubon and Thoreau and Burroughs have carried on. Mr. Sharp, of course, was particularly fitted for his biographical task.

INDIAN HEROES. By J. WALKER MCSPADDEN. Crowell. 1928. $2.

THIS is the sort of book which each young generation demands be rewritten for it in the light of the time in which it appears. All the stories have been told many times, with no other excuse than that they are worth telling. If Mr. McSpadden brings no new light of history to bear upon the incidents he does bring, perhaps, a more human feeling toward the heroes of his selection.

The selections are excellent and include among the well known names of Pocahontas, King Philip, and Tecumseh, others less familiar, Squanto the friend of the Pilgrims, and Tammany the friend of William Penn with whom was made the treaty "never sworn to and never broken." In old accounts of the chief of the Lenapes, he is sometimes referred to as St. Tammany or Tamanend, the "Well-thought-of," who came as near to canonization as any Indian who ever lived, so far as veneration can do that for any man.

The various lives of heroes are selected to give wide geographical reference and historical sequence from the arrival of the white men at the island of Manhattan to the capture of Geronimo, the last of the warlike Apaches. The book is competently illustrated and should prove a welcome addition to the Indian library of every American child.

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A review of the problems of the Caribbean, for which James M. Beck has written an introduction and Don Miguel Cruchaga a foreword. $4.50

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Children's Bookshop

DOWN IN THE GRASS. By HAROLD KELLOCK. New York: Coward-McCann. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by ANNE HAIGHT

THE small amount of enduring literature written for children is perhaps the clearest indication of the difficulty inherent in this type of writing. Sir Walter Scott tried it with his "Tales of a Grandfather" and failed. Many others before and after him have done likewise, for the dangers to be encountered in writing a child's book are both subtle and numerous. In trying to be instructive an adult is very apt to be boring, while his attempts to amuse children far too often attain a degree of silliness not far removed from hysteria, but very far from being funny to a child. The author of juvenile books is writing for perhaps the most critical class of readers in the world, for his work must meet the simple, frank, impatience that goes with childhood. Therefore it is always interesting when a well-known author of general literature enters this difficult field, and it is particularly so when this first attempt clearly embodies those qualities requisite to a really successful child's book.

In "Down in the Grass," Mr. Harold Kellock, the author of "Parson Weems" and "Houdini: His Life Story," has written a book which, though amusing and amazingly instructive, will never prove boring to his readers. The story starts rather bromidically with the "Alice in Wonderland" trick of eating and then growing smaller and smaller until the young hero, Bobbie, had to stop for fear of shrinking to nothing at all. Fortunately, however, he remains the size of "half your thumb" and then the fun down in the grass begins and he becomes acquainted with all the insects.

The home life of the insect is much stranger than fiction, but Mr. Kellock treats it in a most matter-of-fact way in relating the adventures of Bobbie. No child would ever dream, as he becomes absorbed in the kaleidoscopic events under the ground, on the earth, and in the air, that he is learning a great deal of Natural History, so subtly is it done. The combination of scientific fact and humorous and exciting adventure is cleverly written in a conversational style. The story, which sparkles with wit and never lags in its interest, is of the type to be appreciated and enjoyed by all ages.

The illustrations by Kirt Wiese are well done and most appropriate. The physical make-up of the book is excellent.

ABDUL. By WINTHROP B. PALMER. Illustrated by CORWIN K. LINSON. Macmillan Company. 1928. $2.

Reviewed by CATHERINE WOODBRIDGE

SOMEWHERE in the days before the movies spoiled our taste for the stationary, there was a thing dear to our childhood known as the stereopticon view. It had a glamor all its own. The very fact that the action was arrested made the scene seem less fleeting and gave it a significance beyond immediate reality. Mr. Palmer's "Abdul" has much this same quality. The constant background of the Nile valley pervades the book. There is a story, to be sure, but it is of the small activities of daily life which jog tranquilly along, changing the details, but not the large outlines of the scene.

Children who like to see how life is transformed by its surroundings will find this story of a little Egyptian boy of today very absorbing. Because it is so simply told they will catch much of the Egyptian atmosphere, as well. Mr. Palmers style is pleasantly devoid of mannerism. Illustrations by Mr. Linson, while following well the spirit of the book, satisfactorily complete an authentic glimpse of a life in interesting contrast with that of any American child.

THE STORY OF BOOKS. By ERNESTINE EVANS. City and Country Series. Harpers. 1928. $1.25.

This is a slight book covering a great field with a "hop-skip-and-a-jump." It is pleasantly written and reads so fast that a child of eleven said, "It's interesting because it changes the subject before it gets dull."

This child was one whose interest had previously been aroused through book-making, printing, and trips to the presses of more than one large publishing house. But to the child who has never made a book, printed a line of type, or visited any sort of a printing establishment it would be more likely to seem one of those awful books that unfriendly aunts send at Christmas time for one's good instead of for one's pleasure.

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.*

N. T. L., Ocean Grove, N. J., after reading "The Bishop Murder Case," finds himself "consumed with the desire to read something written for the layman about the great new mathematics and physics of Einstein and the others," and would like information about "books approaching these subjects in a descriptive manner that would be understood by the average college graduate."

I HOPE Philo Vance does not represent the average college graduate. The very idea that an A. B. would make a man talk like that should discourage the endowment of higher education. I suppose A. S. Eddington's "The Nature of the Physical World" (Macmillan) would be too elementary for P. V., but it would keep most of us busy for one while, and many of us passionately interested. Beginning with "the downfall of classical physics," it describes the new ideas of relativity, time, gravitation, the quantum theory, man's place in the universe, and other means by which the spirit of man is now trying to get its bearings in the cosmos. These are the Gifford Lectures for 1927; the style is as direct as if the reader were listening. "The New Reformation," by Michael Pupin (Scribner), is another work that will reward the non-technical-minded reader; it is a history of the progress of ideas in this inventor's special province. Crew's "The Rise of Modern Physics" (Williams & Wilkins) is a valuable work. There is the marvellous A. N. Whitehead, who can, in "Science and the Modern World" and "Religion in the Making" (Macmillan), come down from the higher reaches of thought bringing gifts for the spirit of man; who can make even the principles of mathematics readable by the non-mathematical, in his little "Introduction to Mathematics" (Holt). His "Concept of Nature" and "The Principles of Relativity with Application to Physical Science" (Macmillan) move in these higher reaches of the mind. Whitehead reached me through the friend whose house I shared so long, to whom his books were dear; she had always a nostalgia for eternity, and now that she has gone back home I somehow do not like to talk about philosophical matters with other people.

Sometimes readers ask me if the new physics has registered in fiction as yet. If you would like to see the Quantum Theory and other phases of the new physics hit a mighty good novel and knock it all to pieces, read Mary Borden's "Jehovah's Day." If you would like to watch a well-assured technique keep a novel riding the surge of the new concept of time, read Virginia Woolf's "Orlando" or "To the Lighthouse."

L. M. G., Geneseo, N. Y., is at work on a term paper on the teaching of "Treasure Island"; plenty of material is available about R. L. S., but little about the book. Whatever may be collected will enhance not only this paper, but the teaching of a grammar school class next year.

SOMEHOW the idea of teaching "Treasure Island" does not exactly fire my spirit; this is the kind of book to be read by stealth under parental ban, to get the right thrill. Not that there is the least reason for banning it: as D. B. Wyndham-Lewis says in an essay preserved in the "New Book of Sense and Nonsense" just added to Everyman's Library, ". . . not a single wicked word is actually uttered by any pirate whatsoever in Stevenson's 'Treasure Island'; partly because, no doubt, these mariners were in advance of their period, and partly also because Stevenson's publisher would not allow any oaths, the book being written for boys. This I consider socially a benefit but artistically a blemish." Oh well, we thought a war play could not be written without as many oaths as "What Price Glory"—until we heard "Journey's End." In the park under my window the Lincoln School plays ball every afternoon and the general public on Sundays and holidays; on these latter occasions the air is blue—all in good part, but they just can't seem to get up steam without it. The Lincoln School, however, has to do without this stimulus. Curiously enough, it plays better ball.

The Riverside Literature Series publishes (Houghton) a "Treasure Island" with notes and topics for study; there are these and questions for a class in the edition published by the University Publishing Company (University Classics); there are notes by Wilbur Cross in the one in Macmillan's Pocket Classics; the book is one of those treated in M. E. Kingsley's pamphlet "Outline Studies in Literature" (Palmer). It may interest the class to know that the book may be found in dramatic versions, in three acts by Ruth Kimball (Baker) and in five by Beulah Chamberlain (Sergel's Acting Drama); that Appleton as well as Heath publish it in Spanish with notes as "La isla del tesoro" and Nelson as "L'île au trésor," while in the Mount Hope Classics published by Prentice, Wall street, N. Y., may be found "Insula thesauraria: latine interpretatus est Arcadius Avellanus," which may contrive a double debt to pay in the curriculum.

L. A. H., Elyria, O., will tour this summer in the New England States; how about books for planning a route of historic as well as scenic interest?

"TOURING New England on the Trail of the Yankee," by W. C. Whiteside (Penn) is a large book with pictures helpful in planning a journey; so is the record of travels in T. D. Murphy's "New England Highways and Byways from a Motor Car" (Page). "Along New England Roads," by W. C. Prime (Harper) is another helpful volume. The famous "Highways and Byways" series (Macmillan) that covers so much of England and part of France has one on "New England," by Clifton Johnson, much used by tourists. The same author's "New England and its Neighbors" is published by Macmillan. Knowlton Mixer's admirable account of "Old Houses of New England" (Macmillan) will sharpen the attention of even a languid back-seat tourist; this book is valuable also to anyone thinking of building a house in the country and looking for well-seasoned ideas to incorporate. For one who intends to step off along the way, even for brief intervals, "The Romance of Old New England Rooftrees," by Mary C. Crawford (Page), is enlightening, and for one who wishes to get the inwardness of the charm of Boston, Miss Crawford's books about it are delightful, "Romantic Days in Old Boston" (Little) and "Old Boston Days and Ways" (Little). Many famous buildings of this part of the country are described and pictured in Elsie Lathrop's "Early American Inns and Taverns" (Lippincott), including the historic inn occupied until lately by Zephine Humphrey, the house that figures not only in the history of Vermont, but most lovingly in her latest book, "Chrysalis" (Dutton) as the great house from which the family turns away, with reluctance but to save its soul, in order to build a smaller one.

I hope these travellers will look at Alice Mary Kimball's "The Devil is a Woman" (Knopf) either before they go or after they return. These novelettes in verse remind one of no other poetry save—faintly—of Robert Frost's, but they bring New England into the picture for anyone who knows and either loves or fears the country. These poems have a rugged native vitality: it is interesting to see strong new green shoots on the old tree—this book, and the vigorous and juicy novel "Back to Stay," the novel by Jonathan Leonard that the Viking Press now publishes, but that the author set up and sent out himself at first, not to be downed by editorial refusals.

C. C. F., Richmond, Va., asks for a list of titles useful to one contemplating a visit to Cuba.

THE "Baedeker" is T. P. Terry's "Guide to Cuba," published by Houghton. A general survey of history and present conditions popular with travelers is "Cuba Past and Present," by A. Hyatt Verrill (Dodd), revised to date not long since. The latest additions to informative literature include "Our Cuban Colony," by L. H. Jenks (Vanguard) and "When it's Cocktail Time in Cuba," by the sophisticated Basil Woon (Liveright). "Due South," by M. M. Ballou (Houghton), concerns Cuba, and so does "To Cuba and Back" (Houghton) by R. H. Dana, author of "Two Years Before the Mast." There is a little book, "Cuba" by F. Fairford (Macmillan, with colored plates, one of the "Peeps at Many Lands". The standard history is C. E. Chapman's "History of the Cuban Republic," (Macmillan).

Out of Print—Out of Date

WHY do books go out of print? (Perhaps, at the risk of seeming tedious to the initiated, we should explain that a book "out of print" is a book unobtainable except by chance at a second-hand book store, the original publisher having sold out his edition, and gone on to other things.)

TO go out of print does not mean that a book has been unsuccessful. On the contrary, it may have sold in large quantities, reached a public in six figures, and reaped rewards for publisher, author, and printer. But a book that has been in demand—even a book that has been fabulously popular—and then finally gone out of print, is a book that has gone out of date. One generation's best-sellers are the next generation's antiquated curiosities.

TOMORROW'S best-seller quickly replaces today's; but good books never go out of date. A best-seller list made up for a year is filled with books selling from 50,000 to 200,000 copies in that year. But a best-seller list made up for twenty-five years is quite a different list of books. For this will contain the books that sell from 5,000 to 10,000 copies the first year, the same number the second year, the tenth year, and so on indefinitely.

THESE are the books that never go out of print. They are first discovered by intelligent readers—readers who have minds and interests of their own, who read books for the books contain, and not merel cause the rest of the world is re them. The world reads a new because it is timely; an old book because it is for all time. Intelligent readers are reading today the books that the world will read tomorrow.

IT is a matter of interest that one publisher, over a period of five years, has built up a list out of which only one book has gone out of print. All the others, fifty-nine to be exact, have become established as a necessary part of the stock of a good bookstore, or of the contents of a good library.

Here are some of them:

By Bertrand Russell
OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD $3
SCEPTICAL ESSAYS $2.50
PHILOSOPHY $3

By John Dewey
EXPERIENCE AND NATURE $3

By John B. Watson
BEHAVIORISM $3
PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE OF INFANT AND CHILD $2

By Everett Dean Martin
THE MEANING OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION $3
PSYCHOLOGY $3

By H. A. Overstreet
ABOUT OURSELVES $3
INFLUENCING HUMAN BEHAVIOR $3

By Paul Bekker
THE STORY OF MUSIC $3.50

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