

Conducted by KATHERINE ULRICH

Rackham where his portrayal of the lovely girls, Laura and Lizzie, and his decorative handling of the little goblin men is in his best manner. Yet, as a feat of interpretation, I am more impressed by his drawing on page 244 of the "Fairy Book" for "The Emperor's New Clothes," where the procession is seen entirely by its shadows—a fine and original use of black and white.

This brings me to Miss MacKinstry's interpretations of Hans Andersen, because Miss Anne Carroll Moore, in her introduction, calls special attention to Miss MacKinstry's illustration of this same incident. To me it cannot compare with the Rackham drawing. If such a comparison be odious, I may say that I am a genuine admirer of much of the work of Elizabeth MacKinstry. It is to be judged by the highest standards of draughtsmanship. I like her vignettes in the Andersen, though a few remind us of the work of the late Lovat Fraser. I like her middle double-spread in color, for "The Most Extraordinary Thing." In general, however, I do not care quite as much for the style she has adopted here as for her manner in other work of hers I have seen. In the same season she has also issued another book for children, "The Fairy Alphabet" (Viking Press), wherein I find her "H is for Hiding—" and several other drawings of great charm, as is the colored cover design (not to speak of the perfection of the captions), but in general it seems to me that her style here has become over-ornamental. Arrangement in black and white has in many cases stolen away the life of her drawing. In spite of these doubtless hypercritical strictures it need hardly be said that Miss MacKinstry's work is always authoritative and full of imagination.

## Pioneers

LONE RIDER. By Hildegard Hawthorne.

New York: Longmans, Green. 1933. \$2.

NEW LAND. By Sarah Lindsay Schmidt.

New York: McBride. 1933. \$2.

HILLS OF GOLD. By Katherine Grey.

Boston: Little, Brown. 1933. \$2.

PRAIRIE ANCHORAGE. By Marjorie Medary.

New York: Longmans, Green. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by MARION CANBY

HERE is a quartet of competently written books, in which the beneficial effect of good material on style is plain. "Lone Rider," with the richest material—the thrill of the Lone Rider and the Pony Express are as valid as ever—has the most substantial style. "New Land," a warmly human story of two young people's efforts to work a claim in Wyoming under modern conditions, responds by candid writing to the often drastic realities which confront its characters. ("Life did things like that—queer, cruel, dreadful things..." a bromide, perhaps, but how seldom to be found in books for the young Polyannas we apparently believe our children to be!) But material is not all. "Hills of Gold" and

"Prairie Anchorage," for instance, are built on a skeleton of information, and at once seem impersonal in utterance, though both are sprightly and full of color. "Hills of Gold" takes us through most of the phases of the California gold rush, with the characteristic life of mountains and ranch as background, including a picture of Sutter's Fort. This book is a sequel to the popular "Rolling Wheels." "Prairie Anchorage" is really a diary written in the third person, based on real letters, etc., a pleasant medium for explaining the various modes of travel in the fifties—in this case all the way from Nova Scotia to the prairies via New York. The style is light and vivacious, in keeping with the entertaining and somewhat slight material. All four of these books are well documented, and on the right track because they are about something!

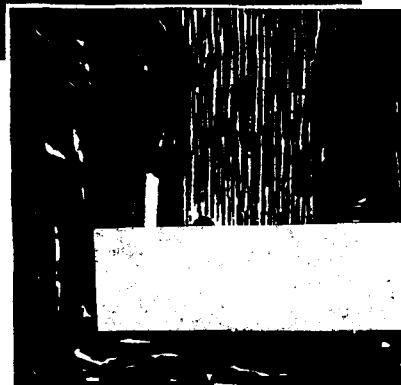
The fact that they, in company with scores of other recent juveniles, concern themselves with pioneering is significant as another straw pointing to our awakened national consciousness; and the "Lone Rider" lifts from local color and background to a considerable stirring of the imagination. But to this reviewer's mind, "New Land" has a touch at least of a different and deeper significance for our adolescent literature. It adds to locale the reaction of real people. To be sure, these people are all more or less sketchy except for the seventeen-year-old heroine, and she, certainly, does not depart, except in the vivacity of her presentation, from the type-heroine of most books for the teens, the plucky, straightforward good sport. Certainly we all know her like, and the healthy elements of American life are bound to produce her, but in most stories she is too apt to be merely a scarcely human outgrowth of the Campfire movement. Here at least she is a live girl, bang up against real conditions. So far, so good!

Perhaps the dullest average of present-day writing is to be found in books for the teens—why, who knows? Possibly because they are suspended between infantile fancy and adult imagination. This being so, the tediously conventional existence that we have wished on our adolescents seems to be the readiest because the most familiar material and the style follow suit. But, oh, when will some inspired person write about the uncannily bewitching combination of the serpent and the dove whom also, in her thousand variants, we have about us, when will someone put this girl against almost any true background—and there is no compelling need for that background to be far off or long ago! And when will some other or the same person write about a boy who is not a muscular moron and a hero at one and the same time? The difference between the generation of the 'teens in most books for young people and that same generation, only a little advanced in age, as it appears in adult books, is really too absurd! An area of personal material lies about us almost untouched, awaiting a rush of imagination to the heads of our writers for adolescence. Our publishers should page a modern Louisa Alcott!

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## The Glamorous Past

**ERIC THE RED.** By Lida Siboni Hanson. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1933. \$1.75.

**A LOYAL FOE.** By Ivy Bolton. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1933. \$2.

**THE APPRENTICE OF FLORENCE.** By Anna D. Kyle. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1933. \$2.

**GLORY OF THE SEAS.** By Agnes Danforth Hewes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by THOMAS TOBEY

WILL the future writers of historical fiction be able to make the life of the twentieth century boy and girl as glamorous and as fortunate in adventure as the authors of these four books tell us life was for our predecessors? In the first and the fifteenth centuries, whether in England or Italy, the dangers of existence lent an excitement which the contemporary youth hardly appreciated, but even in nineteenth century Boston there was the romance of clipper ships and the hazards of slave smuggling and the dreams and temptations provided by the rich stories out of California.

"Eric the Red" we pounced on eagerly, for Eric Linklater's very adult "Men of Ness" recently reminded us that the Viking saga never dulls, and besides here were striking illustrations in a clear, handsome line by the Scandinavian artist, Ernst Hansen. But though the author has dug deep into the Icelandic sagas and been meticulously faithful to the historic findings she has been less faithful to the spirit of the Vikings. Here is an ever good tale that should be shouted through the house told in a dull, one-keyed mumble, and with a use of cliché which is particularly alien to the nature of her subject.

Ivy Bolton, on the other hand, writes a fine, contemporary English in her story of Damory's lord in bitter woe who conquers Damory's fiercest foe. The story is laid in the last years of the Wars of the Roses when Rex Damory served well the young princes who were eventually to be murdered in the Tower. The vividly conveyed historical background is adroitly dominated by the story of Rex, a fictional character through whom Miss Bolton succeeds, and admirably, in her intention of presenting "a picture of the conditions which would surround a Red Rose lad who had fallen into captivity to the house of York." Again the author of "The Shadow of the Crown" has written a book that boys and girls can read and reread, and again Henry C. Pitz has pictured it for her.

Anna D. Kyle also chooses the fifteenth century for her new book, but her story is laid in Florence, the teeming, rich, and dangerous medieval city at the height of its glory, before the dissolution of the guilds, and the Medicis. Columbus as a youth appears in these pages, but it is Neno, a young boy from Fregione, around whom the tale revolves and Neno is one for getting himself quite innocently involved in the most threatening escapades. Through his apprenticeship to Messer Bardo, the silk merchant, which results in his service in a Constantinople besieged by the Turks, and his friendship for Vanni, who may be the Unknown Florentine of a painting still to be seen in a Florence gallery, the author gives a lively picture of the life of any Neno of those days. Yet somehow it is the picture which becomes crowded, too much so, rather than the life portrayed; and once again we meet here with an ancient and unhonorable habit of seasoning paragraphs with genuine, not-to-be-doubted Italian words, and allusions which require parenthetical explanation or footnotes. The illustrations are by Erick Berry.

For a picture of Italy at the time of the great merchants we should deny ourselves "The Apprentice of Florence" in favor of "Swords on the Sea," by Agnes Danforth Hewes, a tale of Venice's heyday. Now Mrs. Hewes presents us with "Glory of the Seas," a story of Boston in the days when Donald McKay was launching his clipper ships. John Seagrave, a young shipping clerk, is the book's plausible hero—a shipping clerk who sees more than

dull routine in his job, who itches for a try at the California that is speeding the *Sea Witch* and the *Flying Cloud* on their way. But there is adventure in Boston itself, as he discovers when he shields a fugitive Savannah slave from the alert and conscientious minions of the Fugitive Slave Law. Mrs. Hewes's books are among the most distinguished for older boys and girls, and "Glory of the Seas" is her best, a story which is of, as well as in, the American tradition and which no one is too adult to enjoy. Read "Glory of the Seas" and then go back and discover Mrs. Hewes's earlier books if you haven't already had that pleasure.

## "Five and Ten" Music

**ROUNABOUT BOOK.** By Bob and Ted Maier. Boston: Riker, Brown & Wellington. 1933. \$1.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

WHILE the future of American music engages the speculations of theorists, the sons of Guy Maier, the distinguished pianist, have gone more practically to work. At the age of five (Ted) and six (Bob), they wrote their first book, "Song-Cargo," words, music, and pictures by themselves. Now they have published "Roundabout Book." "Roundabout Book" is so called because, as the preface sagely tells us, you always go 'round and back again from the pictures and the stories (about the pictures) to the music." The authors point with modest pride to their achievement: "We didn't want to put words to this music, like in 'Song-Cargo,' our other book, because music can talk without words. (And besides, we wrote 'Song-Cargo' when we were 5 and 6 years old. We are 7 and 8 now.)" Artistic progress could not be more succinctly expressed.

Those who saw "Song-Cargo" will recall that it was a deeply philosophical volume, even running to mysticism. For example, the song entitled "A Whale-Stone," with its eerie tune (to be played "Thoughtfully"), presents the interpenetration of all things:

There is a stone in our backyard that looks like a whale swimming in the snow.

Well, shades of the prison-house close around all of us, and it is too much to expect that "Roundabout Book" should not mark a change. It is not unphilosophical, but it is mostly filled with Gore and Conflict. The motif of the volume is predominantly a struggle between a tribe of unnamed Bad Men, and various stupendous (but delightful) animals. There is, for example, the Stone-Throwing: "Spinning like a top, he magnetizes stones out of a pit which bound off him and strike his enemies." The terrific picture which illustrates his activities on p. 29 also presents an anonymous behemoth with "a trunk like the nozzle of a gun which blows his enemies to smithereens," and the following page introduces the reader to the Boat-Eater, from whose back bombs "just bounce off." The Bad Men haven't a chance.

Lest the reader become absolutely terrified, there are more peaceful scenes and creatures. The Moon-Polies "have no bodies, or arms, or legs, but . . . just roll up and down the mountains." And there is a charming and fantastic circus parade, and a highly realistic football game.

The music (as in the previous volume) is fresh and delightful, though possibly a bit more sophisticated than in "Song-Cargo." There are various technical advances and inventions which will delight the musician. I like "Watching the Rain" and "A No-Name Piece" especially. The pieces are all thoroughly usable for children learning to play the piano.

As Guy Maier says in the preface, "If strife and violence seem to be much stressed, one knows that this is natural in many boys of this age." There is too much merely pretty-pretty stuff written for children's instructions, and "Roundabout Book" is nothing if not vigorous. It will be curious and instructive to see what phase the next volume by the young poet-composers will present.