



MORE BOOKS FOR SPRING

NOW that the war boom in children's books is over, it is interesting to note that book sellers as well as children's libraries are begging for fewer and better books. The large, flat picture books that were published in such quantities, many of them imitative, most of them of little permanent value, have already become "remainders," and are overstocked in even the second-hand book stores. Today grown-ups who select books for the younger generation are thinking long and carefully about each purchase. In other words books, as well as other luxuries and necessities, are finding their normal level. The publishers' lists this spring are especially good. This is partly because many of the books of last fall have been carried over. In almost all the classifications there are books that are far too good to miss. It would be tragic if book stores, overstocked with less important things, should fail to order them.

The jury for the *Herald Tribune* Spring Book Festival had a hard time making its decision. That the first three prizes went to one publisher is to be regretted. And yet, what could the judges do when, after deep thought and lively discussion, they found these three highest in value? All three are original, exciting, and distinguished in format and illustration. They make the spring of 1947 a memorable one.

MARY GOULD DAVIS.

THE ENCHANTED EVE. By Madeleine Lay. Illustrated by Edy LeGrand. New York: Howell, Soskin. 1947. No paging. \$3.50.

THIS Flemish story of a miracle on St. Sylvain's Eve was first published in Paris ten years ago. The original plates were destroyed in the Second World War and this book was produced from a single copy. The translation from the French is by Willard Trask. It is a beautiful book, printed in black and white with touches of color on paper that is on some pages a soft blue and on others a dull rose.

It is the story of Barbara, the crippled daughter of Judocus, the painter. She is given the power of running, dancing, skating like other

children on one night in the year, and she chooses St. Sylvain's Eve, the night of the great Ice Carnival. The miracle is wrought by a strange man dressed as a jester, or wandering player, who comes to Barbara when she is sitting alone in a meadow. When that one night of freedom, with its marvel of flying over the black ice on skates under the stars and its encounter with the pirate ship and the captain, is over the man comes again to Barbara and gives her the choice of repeating the adventure on St. Sylvain's Eve or of becoming a normal, healthy girl. She chooses the latter—and Jean des Brulots and his ship, laden with treasure, returns "to the country of imagination and of dreams."

The story not only takes us into another country but into an atmosphere that is strange and fascinating. It is the artist, however, who gives this book its great value. The use of a heavy white ink on the pastel pages is unusual and very effective, especially in the drawing of the tall pirate ship against a soft blue sky that is bright with great white stars. The figures of the skaters in the Ice Carnival are in brown ink against rose with a line of blue sky at the top of the page. A difficult book to plan and manufacture, it leaves a deep impression and is a lovely thing to own.

JOSEPH: The King James Version of a Well-Loved Tale. Arranged by



—From "Joseph."

Elizabeth Yates. Illustrated with Wood Engravings by Nora S. Unwin. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 72 pp. \$2.

Elizabeth Yates is particularly successful in presenting the story of Joseph and his father and brothers through a short foreword that gives the main outline and an arrangement of the exact wording of the Old Testament that gives it clarity and continuity. The book is set in an especially beautiful type—English Monotype—and Nora Unwin's wood engravings have great distinction.

LITTLE BROTHER OF THE WILDERNESS. By Meridel La Sueur. Illustrated by Betty Alden. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 68 pp. \$2.50.

This is the story of Johnny Appleseed, told in a prose so rhythmic that it is like blank verse when you read it aloud. It is set in a large type with many drawings in black and white and in color. It tells how Johnny Appleseed followed the sun every day, lying down in the fields at night befriended by the little animals and by the birds, rising, walking west with the sun, sprinkling his seeds in the rich soil west of the Ohio River, creating his living memorial through the healthy young apple trees that he left in his wake. It is an American legend told for the younger boys and girls.

PARTY SHOES. By Noel Streatfeild. Illustrated by Anna Zinkeisen. New York: Random House. 1947. 333 pp. \$2.25.

The fifth of Miss Streatfeild's "Shoe" series is laid in an English village during and just after the Second World War. It might well have been called "Pageant Shoes," because the action centers on a pageant planned and given by the delightful family of the village doctor ably assisted by the son of the "squire" who is a wounded veteran and a theatre director. A dainty white party dress and some satin shoes, sent as a gift from America, are the inspiration for the pageant; but before it actually takes place the entire village and the United States Army are involved. It is a gay, courageous story with many amusing scenes and interesting characters.

THE WISE MEN OF HELM AND THEIR MERRY TALES. By Solomon Simon. Illustrated by Lillian Fischel. New York: Behrman House. 1947. 136 pp. \$2.50.

THE WANDERING BEGGAR: Or the Adventures of Simple Shmerel. By Solomon Simon. Illustrated by Lil-

lian Fischel. New York: Behrman House. 1947. 118 pp. \$2.25.

These are the Jewish folktales told by the people of Helm who are foolish folk, betrayed by their dreams, impractical but amusing and lovable. Simple Shmerel is the town fool who is able to solve his problems through his simplicity, gullibility, and kindness. Like all folktales, these are most effective when they are told. The drawings, printed in green and black, give a good sense of background and of the characters. Especially recommended to storytellers.

HOW THE UNITED NATIONS WORKS. By Tom Galt. Illustrated by Norman Tate. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. 1947. 218 pp. \$2.

This is a history of the forming of the United Nations organization and an analysis of how it functions. It is by the author of a fascinating book called "Volcano." He tells the story directly, as though he were talking to us, and he uses parallels in everyday life to illustrate his points. There is a list of member nations, of special agencies, and the full text of international agreements like the Atlantic Charter. The manner of presenting it and the lively and amusing cartoons that illustrate it make it a book that will probably appeal to young people. It is an excellent reference book for schools.

THE MIDDLE SISTER. By Miriam E. Mason. Illustrated by Grace Paull. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 160 pp. \$1.75.

When Sarah Samantha Glosbrenner's family moved West she insisted upon taking along her favorite apple tree, which she called "Miss Appleseed." Her uncle wore a lion's tooth on his watch chain which he said he would give to her when she overcame her natural timidity and showed real initiative and courage. How she protected the fruit of Miss Appleseed from the depredations of good-natured but greedy Indians and made an apple dumpling for Uncle Romeo, thereby winning the lion's tooth, make an appealing story. Grace Paull's drawings are fresh and amusing.

SUSAN AND THE BUTTERBEES. By Ralph Bergengren. Illustrated by Anne Vaughn. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1947. 176 pp. \$2.

Susan, whose mother was always busy with one sort of club meeting or another, might have been a lonely little girl had it not been for her forty-seven uncles. These uncles were originally sand-pipers—until Fairy Maud put her spell upon them. From then

on whenever Susan needed anything—there were the uncles to make her wish come true. Susan is a wide-eyed child who accepts politely and without question the mysterious comings and goings of the forty-seven uncles. Their efforts to entertain her, often in verse, sometimes seem a bit silly to Susan.

This is delightful nonsense, written with a sure, light touch and illustrated with line drawings that are in complete harmony with the story.

BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS. By Nancy Stonestreet. New York: Coward-McCann. 1947. 154 pp. \$2.50.

This story of Deborah's ninth year is a record of the awakening of a sensitive, spirited child to the strange contradictions in human nature. Al-



—From "The Secret of the Porcelain Fish."

ways Deborah had loved beauty, had lived in the world of Nature; but in this year she became aware of people—and rebels at human cruelty and injustice. All children, in one way or another, come to a time when they rail against the injustice that seems a part of life. Deborah, with her precocity, her sensitive conscience, her passion for right had friends who fostered these qualities in her.

An idyllic story in its simplicity, its lovely interpretation of the country through the cycle of the seasons, this is also a haunting reminder of the joy and the sorrow that we experience in the fierce intensity of our growing years. Deborah is a living person who will long remain with the reader. A charming, thoughtful book, this will probably appeal to older children and to grown-ups.

THE YOUNG BARBARIANS. By Helen R. Sattley. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1947. 212 pp. \$2.

Barbara's junior year in high school

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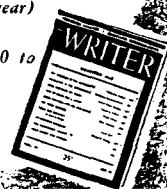
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was complicated by the necessity of adjusting herself to a stepmother. It was some time before she realized that there were other adjustments, that the high-school crowd was not altogether easy to take. This is an understanding story of modern young people, although the methods chosen as a basis for working out their problems are not very original. The characters are interesting and very real. We all have met them in real life.

THE RAIN FOREST. Text and Illustrations by Armstrong Sperry. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 190 pp. \$2.50.

The story of Chad Powell's trip through the jungles of New Guinea to join his father, who is seeking the rare King of Saxony bird of paradise. In background and action it is an exciting record. Any boy will envy Chad the trip although it held great discomfort and, often, danger. The illustrations, printed in a clear green, make the forest and the mountains, the houses and the people of New Guinea vivid. The jacket and end-papers are in deep, rich color.

THE SECRET OF THE PORCELAIN FISH. By Margery Evernden. Illustrated by Thomas Handforth. New York: Random House. 1947. 150 pp. \$2.25.

Thomas Handforth's drawings would make this book memorable. But the story, too, is a good one. The scene is a city in China famous for its pottery, the hero is Yuan Fu, a boy who wears around his neck a piece of green jade. There is a mystery in his origin. There is mystery, too, in the white porcelain bowl that, when it is filled with water, shows on its side an exquisite blue fish. It is an exciting plot, and some of the phrasing in the story is a joy to read. Well designed and printed, it should reach a wide age-range.

JANE. By Jean Gould. Illustrated by Jean Stahl. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 248 pp. \$2.50.

This story of Jane Austen's life reads like a novel—and a very charming novel at that. It begins in the vicarage where Jane lives with her father and mother, her five brothers and one sister, Cassandra. Jane was born in December in the year 1775. Following the life in that happy and devoted family one understands how an eighteenth-century girl, the daughter of a clergyman, could depart from tradition and become a popular and beloved figure in the English literary world. Through all the village and country life, the trips to Bath and the later years in London, Jane moves—

alert, humorous, capable, very lovable. This is sure to be a biography that will become popular. One wonders if it will not add many readers to Jane Austen's long list.

THE OWEN BOYS. By Hazel Wilson. Illustrated by William Sharp. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. 1947. 192 pp. \$2.

Steve and Thad lived near the Kennebec River in the State of Maine. The family moved from the farm at Solon to the little town of Elmwood where Mr. Owen had bought a grocery store. They have their troubles but they meet them with such humor and good sense that they melt away like snow before the sun. Steve is like his father—solid and responsible. Thad is like no one—but himself. Hazel Wilson knows how Maine people think and work and speak. Rosy-cheeked, capable Mrs. Owen has her counterpart in hundreds of New England villages. And how she could cook! Here are a good story and lovable, amusing characters. Here is food that makes your mouth water.

ADOPTED JANE. By Helen F. Daringer. Illustrated by Kate Sereby. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1947. 225 pp. \$2.

The James Ballard Memorial Home was a fairly good orphanage, as orphanages go; but Jane Douglas wanted a home of her own, a family, and a dog who would be her constant companion. She dreamed dreams about them and made up wonderful stories. Then two letters came, one from Mrs. Thurman in Danbury and one from Mrs. Scott in Cherry Valley. They both wanted a little girl to spend a month with them in the summer. Jane decided that she was the luckiest girl in the world when the matron let her accept both invitations, spending July with Mrs. Thurman and August with Mrs. Scott. It did not turn out quite like this, because Miss Fink at the orphanage fell down and strained her arm, and Jane had to go back and take care of the babies. But Jane had had five blissful weeks as the member of a family. Everyone liked her because she had courage and humor and intelligence. No reader will be half so surprised as Jane was when she found that both Mrs. Thurman and Mrs. Scott wanted to adopt her. Her reason for selecting Mrs. Thurman is sensible and logical—as is everything that Jane does. This is a refreshing story, told skillfully and with a flair for creating amusing and interesting people. Kate Sereby's drawings make the period around 1900. But wherever and whenever Jane lived, she would be well worth knowing.

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(Continued on page 38)

PERSONALS

(Continued from page 37)

ENGLISH FOR FOREIGNERS: American woman, experienced teacher will give private instruction English conversation grammar. Box 640-T.

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LIKE THE COUNTRY? Come to Graymont, an old colonial farmhouse. Good food, H.D. 2, Middlebury, Vermont.

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YOUNG WRITER, 23, serious, personable, trained at upstanding writing school, seeks position with traveling author or literary journal. Box 653-T.

MATURE, INTELLIGENT, well-educated man, varied educational, industrial experiences seeks position, opportunity for development of visual education in connection with college level comprehensive survey courses. Box 654-T.

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PERSONALS

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COLLEGE ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR, feminine, 27, competent secretary, desires work. Can drive car. Available after June 15. Box 642-T.

ROOM AND BOARD IN COUNTRY, commuting distance New York City, desired by two business women weekends summer autumn. Box 643-T.

YOUNG WOMAN, 28, experienced researcher, editor, secretary, wants job for July and August. Can speak French. Excellent references. Box 644-T.

INTELLIGENT, young professional woman and student desperately needs room or small apartment. Would consider sharing. Good references. Box 645-T.

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PERSONABLE YOUNG WOMAN seeks field of endeavor; one that offers real challenge. Background: sales promotion, managerial, also some public relations. Box 656-T.

PERSONALS

EX-MARINE, adventurous, foot-loose, with artistic interests, desires correspondence. Box 671-T.

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER wants employment, beginning fall 1947 experienced, Columbia University graduate, \$2,400 minimum. Box 658-T.

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

When the column headed WORDS is filed in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

[illegible]

Solution of last week's Double-Croctic will be found on page 11 of this issue.