



BOOKS OLD AND NEW

WITH the high tide of children's books in the fall and again in the spring we are apt to neglect the older books that have stood the test of one or more generations of boys and girls and that will be happily read for many years to come. The re-issue in a new edition with new format and illustrations of the Macmillan Children's Classics is an important event in the world of children's books—important to the children, to their parents, and to public and school librarians. If a parent or a teacher or librarian wants to measure the comparative value of the older books each has only to consult authorities such as Anne Carroll Moore in her "My Roads to Childhood" or Anne Thaxter Eaton in her "Reading with Children" or, for a quick and practical guide, the Compton list called "Seven Stories High."

There has recently been published by the American Library Association an invaluable guide to the reading of teen-age boys and girls. It is by Amelia Munson and is called "An Ample Field." Miss Munson brings to her subject a deep, instinctive love of good literature, a fresh, honest approach to young people, and a fine sense of values in her selection. Her book is not only very readable, written with charm and a lively sense of humor, but it has the value of experience and the frank, objective approach of a book lover who believes in giving young people a freedom of choice and through her own contagious enthusiasm leads them to the best.

Following the notes on some new editions we give a few of the new books, including Merritt Allen's review of the book that won the *New York*

Herald Tribune prize for books intended for older boys and girls
—MARY GOULD DAVIS.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER. Retold by Alfred J. Church. Illustrated by John Flaxman. New York: The Macmillan Co. 186 pp. \$2.

THE ILIAD OF HOMER. Retold by Alfred J. Church. Illustrated by John Flaxman. The same. 191 pp.

**RIP VAN WINKLE AND THE LEG-
END OF SLEEPY HOLLOW.** By Washington Irving. Illustrated by Maud and Miska Petersham. The same. 105 pp.

THE PRINCESS AND THE GOBLIN. By George MacDonald. Illustrated by Nora S. Unwin. The same. 249 pp.

THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO. By C. Collodi. With illustrations after Attilio Mussino. The same 206 pp.

THE REISSUE of the Children's Classics at a very moderate price should be noted by everyone who is interested in books for boys and girls. The paper is good, the type clear, the margins wide. The new pictures are uniformly satisfying. We confess to a special approval of Nora Unwin's drawings for "The Princess and the Goblin." She has captured the very essence of this story in her conception of Irene and Curdie and the Grandmother. We feel that George MacDonald himself would have liked them.

HOP, SKIP, AND FLY. By Irmengarde Eberle. Pictures by Else Bostelmann. New York: Holiday House. 62 pp. \$2.

A new edition of a valuable book for little children. The story of the snail has been added and several of the stories have been revised.

HOW BIG IS BIG?: From Stars to Atoms. By Herman and Nina Schneider. With illustrations by Symeon Shimin. New York: William R. Scott. No paging. \$1.75.

This book for little children was first published several years ago. This is a revised edition with new illustrations.

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSE. By Robert Louis Stevenson. Illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen. New York: Simon & Schuster. 76 pp. \$1.50.

This color printing in a new edition of Stevenson's poems for little children is so beautiful that the book will have a strong appeal for art lovers as well as for the children. The drawings have humor and vitality in addition to beauty of design. There could hardly be a nicer gift for a small boy or girl who is beginning to form his own library.

THE FAIRY CARAVAN. By Beatrix Potter. New York: Frederick Warne. \$2.50.

Beatrix Potter's story for older boys and girls than the "Peter Rabbit" books has six full-color drawings and many black-and-white ones by the author-artist, who means so much to childhood. This reviewer has always treasured the book for the old folk tale of the strange spinner which old Habbetrot tells to the sheep. The children love it for two of its characters—Alexander, the dog, and Pony Billy.

TEN SAINTS. By Eleanor Farjeon. New York: Oxford University Press. 124 pp. \$3.

This is a new printing of Eleanor Farjeon's beautifully worded story of ten saints with the full-page drawings in color by Helen Sewell. It is available in both the Catholic and the Protestant editions.

THE FIRST ELECTRICAL BOOK FOR BOYS. By Alfred Morgan. Illustrated by the author. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 263 pp. \$3.

This is a complete revision of one of the very best "first books" on electricity. A new chapter analyzes the latest developments in electronics, radar, and television.

AMERICANS BEFORE COLUMBUS. By Elizabeth Chesley Baity. New York: The Viking Press. 256 pp. \$4.

THE SCOPE of this book and the masterly way the subject is handled is unusual in books for young people. Without dragging in by main force a single "historical" fact or date or character the author has given a vivid picture of the people who lived in North and South America long ago—some of them very long ago, for she accepts without question the possibility that Asiatic tribes were crossing Bering Strait at least twenty thousand years before Christ. Some archeologists believe the Sandia Men were living in Southwest America even earlier. They were followed by the Folsom Men who occupied a large part of North America until about 10,000 B.C., when they either disappeared or changed the style of the stone weapons by which



—From "Americans Before Columbus."

they were identified. These people were contemporaries of the mastodons and mammoths and, possibly, of the horses and camels that faded out during those ages.

Getting into comparatively modern times, the author has pieced together fascinating pictures of the Pueblo Indians, who cultivated a quarter of a million acres of corn, the Mound Builders, who were at their peak in the Mississippi and Ohio valleys between the ninth and the fourteenth centuries, and of the Vikings, who quite possibly did not confine their explorations to Greenland and New England. There are also details about the Eskimo, Iroquois, and the tribes of California and the Northwest Coast.

Perhaps the best chapters of this excellent book deal with the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas. Without literary style being sacrificed, the compression into less than one hundred pages of the history, art, and achievements of those great empires is a masterly piece of work. The people are brought alive by intimate glimpses of their everyday lives. Through it all runs the influence of environment on tribal development—"You are what you are because you are where you are." The book concludes with a sincere tribute to the Indian people and a prophecy of the part they may play in future events.

The splendid, authentic drawings by C. B. Falls and the many well-chosen photographs from museums and anthropological collections ably supplement the text. All in all this is a complete, well-balanced book which should be of high interest to students of pre-Columbian times, whether they are young or old. —MERRITT P. ALLEN

THE STORY OF MANKIND: A New and enlarged edition. By Hendrik Willem Van Loon. New York: Live-right. 608 pp. \$2.98.

The first edition of this unique history of the world was printed in 1921. The text ended with the close of the First World War and its author's statement that the United States of America had "come of age." In this new edition the author's son Gerard Willem Van Loon has carried it through the years intervening between the two wars, through the Second World War, and to the founding of the United Nations, the trouble between Russia and the Western Allies, and the war in Korea. When it was first published Charles Beard said of it: "He has written a great book, one that will endure." No one who has shared it with the children and seen its great success in many countries can doubt its enduring value. It has a new and very full index.

CHARIOT IN THE SKY. By Arna Bon-temps. Illustrated by Cyrus Leroy Baldridge. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co. 234 pp. \$2.50.

THIS ADDITION to the Land of the Free Series deserves thoughtful attention. It is the story of the Jubilee

Singers, especially of one of them named Caleb Willows. He was a slave boy who had the usual storybook adventures of running away, being caught, and passing under the auctioneer's hammer. Comparatively speaking he was not badly treated and managed to learn to read and write. The end of the Civil War found him, like thousands of other Negroes, wholly unprepared for freedom. A plausible series of incidents brought him to the attention of Northern educators who had recently started Fisk University in Tennessee for colored people. He was accepted as a pupil and given a part-time job teaching a rural school that was soon broken up by the Klan.

By this time Fisk was down to its last dollar and would have collapsed if George L. White had not been on the staff. It was he who saw the possibilities of introducing the beautiful slave songs to the world and he who trained the eleven best voices at the university for the work. He financed the first tour by pawning his personal belongings and led the little group North. They suffered bitterly from hunger, cold, and cheap lodgings, and the tour barely met expenses. But they tried again and went home finally with twenty thousand dollars, for in New York Johann Strauss and Henry Ward Beecher turned the tide. Then they toured Europe, especially captivating Queen Victoria. The future of Fisk University was assured.

From beginning to end it is Caleb's personal story and, like him, has a simplicity and strength that appeal to the reader. The illustrations are excellent. —M. P. A.

NINE LIVES: Or The Celebrated Cat of Beacon Hill. By Edward Fenton. Illustrated by Paul Galdone. New York: Pantheon Books. 64 pp. \$2.50.

THIS chronicle of Moumouth, the famous cat of Boston's Louisburg Square, is freely adapted from a French story called "La Mère Michel et son Chat" by Emile de la Bedollière. The Boston background is not only very effectively drawn in the story but is vividly pictured in the distinguished black-and-white drawings.

Moumouth began life as an alley cat, then was adopted by the wealthy and aristocratic Mrs. Roger Quincy Grenville III and tenderly cared for by her housekeeper, the kindly and

affectionate Mrs. MacMichael. Unfortunately, there was an enemy in the Grenville household—the butler O'Boyle. His hatred of Moumouth was



—From "Nine Lives."

based upon jealousy and greed, and if Moumouth had not possessed the nine lives given to cats O'Boyle's evil design would have prevailed. The story reads like a very well-written melodrama, and in the end good triumphs, O'Boyle is exposed by the boy Smidgin, flees from Boston, joins a ship bound for Australia, is shipwrecked, and finally is eaten by the natives of the Sandwich Islands—a fitting end for a wicked man. Moumouth, amply provided for by Mrs. Grenville's will, went on to live a long, respected, and tranquil life with Mrs. MacMichael and Smidgin.

This is an unusual story and the illustrations, beautifully reproduced, are unusual, too. It is for older children than most picture books, and we have an idea that fathers and mothers, also, will enjoy it immensely.

HENRIETTA, THE FAITHFUL HEN.

By Kathleen Hale. New York: Coward-McCann. 32 pp. \$2.

In this importation from England the pictures are made directly on the plates and printed in color. They are striking and original.

Henrietta belonged to Mrs. Fowler, who was very poor and lived in a miserable, tumble-down house. For some reason Henrietta refused to lay eggs, but she scratched and dug vigorously in the front yard until she had scratched up a treasure—an ancient Roman jar. This led Professor Burrows and his assistants to excavate an old Roman city that lay deep under Mrs. Fowler's front yard. Henrietta became famous as its discoverer. New houses were built for her and for Mrs. Fowler to their own design, and Henrietta became "the happiest hen in the poultry world." This is an amusing picture book.

PEOPLE ARE IMPORTANT. By Eva Knox Evans. Illustrated by Vana Earle. Irvington-on-Hudson: Capitol Publishing Co. 86 pp. \$2.50.

In an attractive little book with large type and black-and-white illustrations the author brings out the likenesses that exist between the two billion inhabitants of the earth. The differences, often based upon climate, food, and dress, are explained, but it is the many common traits that are emphasized. The story is so simply told that even a very little child could understand it.

THE PICTURE STORY OF ALASKA.

By Hester O'Neill. Pictures by Ursula Koering. New York: David McKay Co. No paging. \$2.50.

Following the picture stories of Hawaii, the Philippines, China, and Holland, Hester O'Neill now tells of the land and the people of Alaska, beginning with Fairbanks, which, she tells the children, is the North American "land of the midnight sun." Marginal drawings printed in dark blue, yellow, and red make a colorful setting for a simple, interesting story.

THE WORLD

(Continued from page 12)

thorities from the universities and the national administration, they present a most useful portrait of Parliament, the Cabinet, and contemporary aspects of law and administration. Whether or not it is true, as Sir John Anderson claims, that "every aspect of the subject has been fully treated, so that no student or general reader need look elsewhere for any information he may require," certainly the richness of this little book is very great.

What it makes utterly clear is above all the vast complexity of the British system. Most familiar and perhaps most engaging to the general reader will be the discussion of Parliament and the party system, where Campion brilliantly sketches their recent history in the light of that "Parliamentary spirit" which is the best guarantee against the threat latent in a condition where "there is . . . nothing to prevent Parliament by a majority vote putting an end to legal opposition and introducing the single-party system." The development of the Cabinet as it constantly changed in size and authority over the past thirty years or more, the problems of centralization, the growth of administrative law, the nature of "quasi-government" bodies, and the structure and functioning of local government—all these are traced incisively and with a good deal of interest.

The essays are not even, and the distribution of space will not please everyone. But the total effect is as enlightening as could be imagined for the American no less than for the Englishman.

—JOHN C. CAIRNS.

HERBERT HOOVER'S LATIN-AMERICAN POLICY. By Alexander DeConde. Stanford University Press. \$3. Mark this down as another book that attempts to resuscitate Herbert Hoover's reputation as a skilled and able President. Mark it down also that in its genre this is one of the best. For Professor DeConde deals here in scholarship, not partisanship. He works on the novel premise that what may bring credit to Mr. Hoover's Administration need not detract from the substantial accomplishments under Roosevelt.

Mr. Hoover himself has complained on occasion that it was he who set a tone of good neighborliness toward Latin America, while FDR was still administering to the needs of New York State. As dredged up by Mr. DeConde the record shows the validity of the Hoover contention. Perhaps both the former President and his expositor overstress the Great Engineer's pre-inaugural tour of Latin America as a friendship builder. But there is no question that when Mr. Hoover and Secretary of State Henry Stimson assumed office they did profoundly alter



the policy drift of big-stick and dollar diplomacy practised by their predecessors. After 1928 we reclaimed the Marines bestowed upon Nicaragua by Calvin Coolidge; we offered ourselves as good-will arbitrators and negotiators in several explosive boundary disputes; and we took an adult, neutral view of the revolutions which swept the banana belt to overturn a favored dictator here or a U. S.-owned plantation there. When depression came and Latin-American bonds were defaulted in mournful obligato to our own collapsing stock market Messrs. Hoover and Stimson stolidly kept our gunboats at home in their berths and our troops in their barracks.

But just possibly Mr. DeConde pleads his case too hard. One Congressional Act concurred in—albeit reluctantly—by Mr. Hoover came near undoing all the neighborly overtures. That was the Smoot-Hawley tariff of 1930, which posted a notice to Latin America that the Yankee market was an unwelcome place to sell their goods. Since this only deepened the Depression outside our territorial waters all the soothing words of the President and his State Department produced little bread. The fact seems to be that Mr. Hoover was a better neighbor than his Congressional majority. And on that score Professor DeConde deserves commendation for calling the fact to our attention.

—PETER R. LEVIN.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S
DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 903)

M. K. ARGUS:
MOSCOW-ON-THE-HUDSON

We try to prove to our green compatriots that America is a wonderful country and that even American food—who would ever have suspected us of such weakness—is not actually bad; it may be tasteless, but it is really very wholesome.