

Children's Books

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that it was decided to publish them. The book is illustrated with many drawings and photographs from original sources. Belonging to approximately the same period is L. Lamprey's "Children of Ancient Rome," but here fancy has been allowed more rein, and the aim has been to recreate a possible life picture of the days of Romulus and Remus and the companions with whom they grew to manhood. It is absorbing reading and sure to interest boys and girls in the early teens or just before that important age (Little Brown). Another L. Lamprey book is "Days of the Colonists," in her series Great Days in American History (Stokes). She has a faculty for making history fresh and attractive, for humanizing it, for bringing out the essential thing and being neither prosy nor superficial. She is very good indeed in these pictures of our beginnings in a number of isolated communities, and she tells a great deal that will be new to practically every one. The volume is an octavo illustrated in color by Florence Choate and Elizabeth Curtis.

A particularly handsome book is Virginia Watson's "With La Salle the Explorer" (Holt), in its fine cover, with its rubricated title page, its box, its excellent paper. No wilder life than La Salle's can be imagined, and it is told here with full relish for its magnificent opportunities. A boy is associated with the hero to add to the interest of young readers. There are exquisite illustrations in color and line by Henry C. Pitz. A fine present for boy or girl, and good reading for every one.

Dillon Wallace, himself an explorer of Labrador and a writer of many books on his chosen country, has done a fine thing in his boys' life of Dr. Grenfell, "The Story of Grenfell of Labrador" (Revell). It is a stirring, a wonderful story and it leaves the Doctor still at work among his people, carrying on with courage and humor and human sympathy, a man among men. This is a book boys deserve to have.

W. C. Jackson is the author of "A Boy's Life of Booker T. Washington" (Macmillan), which is written, as the preface tells us, "with the single aim of interesting boys" in the life of this remarkable negro. It is simply and directly done and it tells a heroic story. Washington did more than any other man in the world has yet done to educate the negro and his success was based on a long and hard apprenticeship. The book is meant for boys of eight or ten.

Of course there are fairy tales in this last roundup of Christmas books. There is one volume full of stories coming from Russia, Russia of the old days before the Bolsheviks killed fairies with everything else. Birds and beasts and butterflies and other insects are the persons of the tales, told with a delicious quaintness by Mamin Siberiak, translated by Ray Davidson and illustrated by Boris M. Artzybasheff. The book is most attractive, with decorations in blue, amusing initial letters and a fine red and gold cover. The stories are delectable and every child who gets them will be happy (Dutton). Also from foreign parts comes "The Japanese Fairy Book," rendered into English by Yei Theodora Ozaki. This is a new edition of a great favorite, with a new frontispiece by Tako Sato, a glorious thing of brilliant colors and lovely design. The stories are delightful, told with a freedom that belongs to tales for children who are not interested in technical folk lore but in a good yarn. Some of them date from ancient days, all are true Japanese, but the author has given herself some liberty in adapting them to Western understanding (Dutton). A new edition of an old favorite is the fine big octavo with illustrations by Arthur Rackham, Hawthorne's "Wonder Book" (Doran).

"Blackbeard, Buccaneer" (Penn Publishing), can hardly be called a fairy tale, but it belongs as well here as anywhere. Ralph D. Paine writes it, Frank E. Schoonover makes the pictures, and every boy and girl who gets it will give a shout of joy. A boy is captured by this terror of the seas, and his subsequent adventures aboard the pirate ship, his final escape and the revenge taken make a capital yarn full of color and go.

Two books of verse must not be overlooked. "Fifty New Poems for Children" is a small anthology selected from books recently published by Basil Blackwell, Oxford, and is a charming collection of true poetry (Brentano). "Rhymes of Early Jungle Folk," by Mary E. Macy (Charles H. Kerr & Co.), is a series of songs and poems on prehistoric facts and folk and is illustrated with a great many fascinating woodcuts by Wharton H. Esherick. It is an octavo and is admirably made.

Next for a bunch of books for small people ranging from before reading age to 15 or 16. "Peter Rabbit and Jack the Jumper" is the new volume in the Peter Rabbit series (Aitemus), by Linda Stevens Almond. The youngest readers love these booklets, and so do the babies who only look at the pictures. For older ones is the new Burgess book, "Whitefoot the Woodmouse," in the Green Forest series (Little Brown). It is as good as the rest, and what more can one ask for? These books have already become classics, and each new one is awaited by thousands of children with eager interest.

Jack London comes with a volume of short stories selected by Mrs. London from a number not before published in book form, "Dutch Courage." There are ten, each likely to give much joy to young readers, as well as to older ones. Here is the first story he ever wrote, "Typhoon Off the Coast of Japan," lost for years in an old issue of the San Francisco Call, where London won a prize for it at the age of 17. This is the last collection that will be published, Mrs. London says. It is a good one, and it is remarkable to find how strongly London impresses one after not having read anything of his in some while (Macmillan). His style is beautiful, his dramatic sense vigorous and his character drawing vivid.

Translated from the Italian of Alfredo Baiocco by Walter S. Cramp, "He Who Steals" proves to be a story of unusual charm (Dutton). It is thorough Italian, and to read it is to be introduced into Italian customs, Italian thought and feeling, though its appeal to youth remains paramount. It is the account of a small boy who steals money to buy food for his mother after being refused work from those who might have given it to him. The child's conscience is troubled, however, and he feels that the whole world knows him for a thief. The study of youthful remorse is beautifully done and lends a poignant note to a tale that ends happily.

"Shakespeare and the Heart of a Child" (Macmillan) is really an introduction to the great dramatist as well as a mighty interesting story. Little Barbara loves Shakespeare and revels in his plays. She reads them first in Maine, by the tumbling sea; then she goes through Italy, France and England on his trail, having charming adventures and mingling his days with ours in a most engaging manner. A real treat for any boy or girl, written most cleverly in a way to attract youthful minds. Gertrude Slaughter is the author and the illustrations are by Eric Pape.

A new idea is put into original form by Eliza Buffington in "Star Dust Fairy" (Baker & Taylor Co.). It is a book for little children too young yet to read, and its story is told in jingles that haunt the ear merrily. A dance goes with the songs fit for small persons to perform, and in addition there is a puzzle plaything, a small group of boy and girl and fairy to be put together, making a little statue. All comes in a big box safely packed. The idea underlying the whole is that rhythm is the base of art and of life, that children take to this readily, expressing themselves with beautiful unconsciousness if only they are shown the way. A most interesting and unusual present for a little child, or group of children. Music accompanies the verses.

The last book on our long, long list is by that arch-magician, Raymond Dixie, "The Boy Magician" (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard). It is simply jammed with information that will help any lively lad to the doing of all manner of strange and puzzling tricks, some extremely simple, others delightfully elaborate. A book, indeed, to conjure with and which will be welcomed by boys with the greatest satisfaction. An index and heaps of diagrams and illustrations assist the text.

If you cannot find Christmas joy in what the publishers have for your choosing this season then joy is not for you. Surely this year might be called the wonderful year of books!

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