1937

Books for Young Americans, Past and Present

Olive K. Funk

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/grtheses

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/grtheses/248

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Scholarship at Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Thesis Collection by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact omacisa@butler.edu.
BOOKS FOR YOUNG AMERICANS, PAST AND PRESENT

By
Clive K. Funk

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
BUTLER UNIVERSITY
INDIANAPOLIS
1937
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author of this thesis wishes to acknowledge the helpful criticism and advice of Dr. Albert Mock, under whose guidance this study was made.

Grateful appreciation is also expressed to all those who have in any way aided her in securing a number of the books of the previous centuries. Thanks are due especially to Miss Florence Bass for the use of her many interesting school readers; to Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Russo for their many services and for the use of their valuable collection of fiction and verse; to Miss Carrie Scott and Miss Miriam Atkinson of the Indianapolis Public Library for information and transportation of books; to Miss Gorgas for the use of early American books; to Miss Kate Dimmow and assistants in the Teachers' Special Library, and to Mr. Arthur Carr, Curator of the Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

It is a pleasure to thank friends for their kindly suggestions and for proof reading the manuscript.
INTRODUCTION

When the writer of this dissertation was a little girl she was much intrigued by a gift given her, a small red volume of "Poems for Children," dated 1793. That together with stories and poems which her grandfather and grandmother well remembered from their few childhood books, and related many times, created an intense and lasting interest in books for children, particularly those dealing with the various forms of literature. Being conversant with children's books of today and knowing that they differ greatly in content and mechanics from the children's books of past centuries, prompted the investigation of materials dealing with books from 1620 to the present time. Thus the great curiosity of the writer to know the stages in development of children's books, was satisfied.

The compilation of the results of this investigation was made with the hope that it might form an interesting and enlightening review of the evolution of books for American children from 1620-1937.

The books used were exceptionally interesting and the collecting of them from various sources was a pleasure. Contributions made by friends, books loaned from our own city and state libraries, as well as from city libraries in Chicago,
and the University of Chicago Library, Cleveland, Columbia University, Greeley, Colorado and Terre Haute, purchases made in antique shops and second hand book stores as well as a rich find in an old trunk in an attic at Greensburg, Indiana, formed the sources of the several hundred books used.

All through the centuries books written for adults as well as those written for children, have mirrored the political, religious or secular powers in force at the time of their writing. In this study the books used were critically examined as to content and mechanics in order to determine their correct placement within one of the periods indicated in the chapter headings. Also an attempt was made to show that the gradual improvement in children's books through the centuries was a slow but steady one and paralleled the changes in thought and attitude regarding the child as an individual entity rather than as a "small adult."

The writer has found this work a pleasant task and as she closes these little books, wonders when again they will come from out the past to serve the present.

C.K.F.
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter I. -- EARLY ENGLISH BACKGROUND 1300-1750

1. Historical Development of Children's Books
   - Toy Books
   - The Horn Book
   - The New England Primer ... 15

### Chapter II. -- EARLY AMERICAN BOOKS 1620-1776

2. Noah Webster's Spelling Book
3. Noah Webster's Elementary Reader
4. Pierpont's National Readers
5. Cobb's Readers
6. Cobb's Toy Books
7. Toy Books

### Chapter III. -- THE TRANSITION PERIOD 1776-1840

8. Goff's Readers
9. Goff's Toy Books
10. Toy Books

### Chapter IV. -- SECULAR PERIOD OF AMERICAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 1840-1880

11. McGuffey Readers
12. Primer
13. First
14. Second
15. Third
16. Fourth
17. Willson's Readers
18. First
19. Second
20. Third
21. Fourth
22. Fifth
23. Monroe First
24. Monroe Second
25. Miscellaneous
26. Age of Literary Content 1880-1937
27. Factual Content
28. Use of Morals in Character Building
# TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VII.</th>
<th>POETRY, OLD AND NEW</th>
<th>126</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

EARLY ENGLISH BACKGROUND
1300 - 1750

When we consider the important place and large share which children's books are given in the book world of today it is almost impossible to accept the fact that one John Newberry the most authentic founder of trade in juvenile literature, published and perhaps wrote the first real book for children about 1744. It was called "A little Pretty Pocket Book."

During the several centuries previous to this time the child knew only such tales as his elders deigned to tell him, or that he was permitted to glean from such books as there were for adults. The few books then available had been written to give his knowledge or to train him in courtesy. Consideration of the "child mind" was slow in developing although the monks in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, had found a way of appealing to the natural instincts of children.

They taught Latin by means of imaginary conversation, and put the raw material of wonder tales into their instructive "Elucidarium" a sort of primitive
"Child's Guide" which told of fabulous beasts, and gave miraculous accounts of heaven and earth. 1

Following the Elucidarium came one of the most popular books of the Middle Ages, the Gesta Romanorum, a book designed for parents and children.

It was first compiled in Latin by an unknown author at an unknown date. It consists of stories of all kinds drawn from many sources, a large number far back, from Eastern tradition. Each story has a moral, which was for generations considered to be at least as important as the tale. 2

Many changes took place in the manner of relating these tales as dictated by changes in customs and religious usage. Numerous editions were printed both by well known printers of the day, as well as by some who were more obscure.

The "Gesta" were themselves deeds of a fantastical synthesis of history, myth and religion. Their basis is enduring. But once education passed from the Church's hands, the original purpose of the book declined. 3

The Gesta Romanorum carried in its tales many of the plots found in writings of a later date. "The Three Caskets" and "The Found of Flesh Bond" motives were later used by the immortal Shakespeare in his "Merchant of Venice."

1 Florence V. Barry, A Century of Children's Books, p. 2. New York: George H. Doran Co. (No Date)


3 Ibid., p. 27.
Another book of this period from which traditional material is still drawn is "The Beastiary," a book of natural history. Darton says that

... many of its strange details go back to Pliny and beyond that to Aristotle and Herodotus. Many facts such as the ostrich's head-hiding habit or the bear's custom of licking its cubs into shape, which were found in the Beastiary, have become proverbial.4

In the latter part of the fifteenth century Caxton, on his wooden printing press printed Sir Thomas Malory's "Noble Historie of King Arthur" as well as legends of the Saints and many of his own translations of the romances. He also printed versions of the popular "Assops Fables" and "The History of Reynard The Fox," which were three centuries later prescribed as books suitable for children by John Locke, philosopher. Caxton however did not intend them to be used by children, for

... the Fables showed men their follies, and Reynard was then a satire that ridiculed unjust rulers under the guise of beasts. For children he printed the kind of books their parents would buy.5

Caxton chose fables for to shaw all manner of folk what manner of things they ought to enume and follow. And also what manner of thing they must and ought to leave and fles for fable is as much to say in poetry as words in theology.

No one has achieved a straightforward purpose in better English.6

5Florence V. Barry, op. cit., p. 3.
6F. J. Harvey Darton, op. cit., p. 10.
These fables have undergone many revisions both in prose and poetry. Here is the fable of the "Fox and Grapes," in verse, done by Mrs. A. Behm about 1689.

The Fox who longed for grapes beholds with pain
The tempting clusters were too high to gain.
Grieved in his heart he forced a careless smile,
And cried, "They're sharp, and hardly worth my toil."  

Moral

Young debauchess to Beauty thus ingrate,
That virtue blast they cannot violate.

The Fables were recommended by the best writers of the times because they filled a very definite place in the lives of the people.

From the time of Charles the Great till Martin Luther the material used in schoolbooks or the Abecedarian of that period included the alphabet, and ab, eb, ib, eb, ub, columns, the Credo and Paternoster. The secular began somewhat to invade this province. There were many primers all of which were dominated by the church or the king. When the Reformation began many unauthorized primers came into circulation. These were condemned and their makers severely punished. During the reign of Henry VIII all primers were condemned and he caused to be printed one called "The Primer of Henry VIII." The contents of this primer were such as to keep the teaching of Catholicism in the foreground. Later when he changed his favor toward the mother church he commanded that the "Reform Primer" be printed, and that it must
show his people what they should believe. This primer appeared under many interesting titles such as, "The Catechism For Young Children," "The Child’s Instruction," "Primer and Catechism," etc. The real author and the first date of the primer have never been authenticated. These primers were the forerunners of the famous New England Primer later to make its appearance in America.

There were no real books for children in England before the seventeenth century. There were, however, many guides to conduct and courtesy but none which allowed a child to enjoy himself with no thought of duty nor fear of wrong. The "Book of Courtesy" printed by Caxton was addressed to "Lytyl John" in "tender enfeuncye."

Wynken de Worde, successor to Caxton, gave his child readers, "A Wyse Chylde Of Three Year Old" that could answer the fearful question, "Sage enfaunt, how is the sky made"? He also gave them the enchanting and splendid romance of "Bevis Of Southampton."

During the sixteenth century, however, the child could see strolling players giving such thrilling romances as "Robin Hood" or "Saint George and The Dragon," on the village greens. If the Elizabethan child could not have the old stories to read he could hear them sung by wandering minstrels.

One of the outstanding figures in this great age of romance was the "pedlar" who sang as he travelled along the
road. He had ballads of "Two Children in the Wood," "Chevy Chase," and other chap-books of the day. With the coming of Puritanism all books of gay adventure were condemned and the "pedlars" carried tracts which were indicative of the gloomy times. Some of the more courageous merchants and "pedlars" surreptitiously preserved and offered some of the older ballads to those brave enough to buy, altho they paid the penalty of the pillory if apprehended.

Books written for children during the reign of Puritanism were written with a sincerity and with the thought of making children happy but their idea of happiness is foreign to us. Ironical ideas were established with no thought of child nature. The beauty of heaven or the torture of hell were the ultimate and presented to influence the child in the way he should go.

George Fox, the great Quaker, wrote at this time that the "telling of Tales, Stories, Jests, Rhimes and Fables" was a grievous sin, not only on doctrinal grounds but because of their un-truth and their lack of sincerity.

---

8 Chapbooks were small, cheap books, in a paper binding, popular in England and the American Colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, containing tales, ballads, lives, tracts, etc. They were sold by "chapmen," i.e. peddlers, hucksters.

7 Florence V. Barry, op. cit., p. 6.
The greatest book perhaps that came out of this period was John Bunyan's "The Pilgrim's Progress." He, like Caxton, was thinking of grown-up children when he wrote this allegory although children read the book and were thrilled with the deaths by fire and water, by the Pilgrim's difficulties in the Slough of Despond and by the cheerfulness of Mr. Great Heart's courage. Later, Bunyan also wrote a little book entitled "A Book for Boys and Girls; or Country Rhymes for Children; By J. B. Licensed and Entered according to Order." According to Mrs. Field in "The Child and His Book," the following lines set forth Bunyan's threefold purpose:

The Title-page will show if there thou look,  
Who are the proper Subjects of this Book,  
They're Boys and Girls of all Sorts and Degrees,  
From those of Age, to Children on the Knees.  
Thus Comprehensive as I in my Notions,  
They tempt me to it by their Childish Notions,  
We now have Boys with Beards, and Girls that be  
Big as old Women, wanting Gravity.

To show them how such Pingle-fangle,  
On which they doting are, their souls entangle,  
As with a Web, a Trap, a Gin or Snare.  
And will destroy them, have they not a care.  
While by their Play-things, I would then entice,  
To mount their Thoughts from what are childish Toys  
To Heaven, for that's prepar'd for Girls and Boys,  
Nor do I so confine myself to these  
As to shun graver things, I seek to please,  
Those more compos'd with better things than Toys:  
Tho' thus I would be catching Girls and Boys.

John Bunyan had the moral aim and used barn-yard animals to make analogies as absurd as those found in the old

---

*In the possession of the British Museum.*
Beastiaries. These "Emblems," as he called them ranged from the sublime to the ridiculous. "On one page may be found the "Lord's Prayer," on the next,

**Meditations Upon an Egg**

The Egg's no Chick by falling from the Nest;
Nor man a Christian, till he's born again. . . .
The Hypocrite, sin has him in possession,
He is a rotten Egg, under Profession.

In each of the seventy-four Emblems comprising this book Bunyan who had written the greatest and most direct allegory now "torments his mind" to make a comparison which points the moral of which the following Emblem is representative:

**Upon The Frog**

The Frog by nature is both damp and cold,
Her mouth is large, her belly much will hold,
She sits somewhat ascending, loves to be
Creaking in gardens, the unpleasantly.

**Comparison**

The hypocrite is like unto the frog;
As like as is the Puppy to the Dog.
He is of nature cold, his mouth is wide
To prate, and at true Goodness to deride.

Many writers have used the "bee" to point a moral in industry and thrift but Bunyan alone conceived of the insect as immoral; as the following lines show:

---


Upon the Bee

The Bee goes out, and Honey home doth bring;
And some who seek that Honey, find a sting.
Now wouldst thou have the Honey and be free
From stinging, in the first place kill the Bee.

Comparison

This Bee an Emblem truly is of Sin,
Whose Sweet, unto a many Death hath been.
Now wouldst have Sweet from Sin, and yet not die,
Do thou it in the first place mortify.10

We cannot leave this era of Puritanism in England without mention of a little book which had a profound hold upon "grown-up" as well as children. The author was James Janeway and the full title of his book is,

A Token for Children: being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives, and Joyful Deaths of several young Children, To which is now added, Prayers and Graces, fitted for the use of Little Children."

James Janeway was a young minister and claimed to be "one that dearly loves little children." Yet he said plainly that children were "brands of Hell," and that they must be born again because "Hell is a terrible place that's a thousand times worse than whipping."

This book like many others of the period was adorned with crude woodcuts meant to be very moral. One cut shows children praying for their parents; another, several boys


*Date Uncertain
"whipping" a top (a grave offense) while another boy kneels in prayer for them; in a third a little child gashes at a corpse in a coffin. Children described by Janeway were quite obnoxious. A typical example is that of

A "Certain Little Child," whose mother had dedicated him to the Lord in her womb, when he could not speak plain. This forward infant died when he was five or six years old, but during his short lifetime he was very fearful of wicked company, and would often beg of God to keep him from it... He abhorred Lying with all his soul... He loved to go to School, that he might learn something of God.\textsuperscript{11}

These books were meant to give children the highest pleasure, that of enjoying the will of God. Janeway exhorted parents to eternal vigilance of their children through such appeals as,

Are the Souls of your Children of no value?... They are not too little to die, they are not too little to go to hell, they are not too little to serve their Great Master, too little to go to Heaven.\textsuperscript{12}

Janeswy's Book went through many revisions and left its mark on countless thousands of children.

In the interval between 1709-1744 two books appeared which were to have a marked influence in children's literature for years to come. Isaac Watts gave to the world his divine and moral Songs in 1715. He wrote to give children pleasure.

\textsuperscript{11}Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, Early American Children's Books, Introduction. Portland, Maine: Southworth Press, 1933.

\textsuperscript{12}J. Harvey Darton, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 56.
Of his own verse he said,

I have endeavoured to sink the language to the
level of a child's understanding, and yet to keep it,
if possible, above contempt, so I have designed to
profit all, if possible and offend none. 1

Four years later Defoe's Robinson Crusoe appeared. It
became popular at once nor has its appeal lessened with the
years. There were many imitations of this book, even the
great Rousseau using it as a model for his Émile in 1762.

John Locke revolutionized a nation's attitude toward
the administration of children's books. He advocated that
reading "be never made a task," but rather that children
"be cozen'd to it." He tells parents that as soon as a child
knows his alphabet he should be led to read for pleasure,
though not in so doing "to fill his head with perfectly use-
less trumpery." The following excerpt (Section 136) from
Locke's book "Some Thoughts Concerning Education," shows the
favor in which he held "Aesop's Fables" as an aid in child
education.

To this purpose I think Aesop's Fables the best,
which being stories apt to delight and entertain a
child, may yet afford useful reflections to a grown
man; and if his memory retain them all his life after,
he will not repent to find them there, amongst his
manly thoughts and serious business. If his Aesop
has pictures in it, it will entertain him much the
better, and encourage him to read when it carries the
increase of knowledge with it; for such visible objects
children hear talked of in vain, and without any satis-
faction, whilst they have no ideas of them; those ideas

17F. J. Harvey Darton, op. cit., p. 108.
being not to be had from sounds, but from the things themselves, or their pictures. And therefore, I think, as soon as he begins to spell, as many pictures of animals should be got him as can be found, with the printed names to them, which at the same time will invite him to read, and afford him matter of inquiry and knowledge. Reynard the Fox is another book, I think, that may be made use of to the same purpose. And if those about him will talk to him often about the stories he has read, and hear him tell them, it will besides other advantages, add encouragement and delight to his reading, when he finds there is some use and pleasure in it. These baits seem wholly neglected in the ordinary method; and it is usually long before learners find any use or pleasure in reading, which may tempt them to it, and so take books only for fashionable amusements, or impertinent troubles, good for nothing.

Locke was no doubt the first educator to consider the "whole" child, body, soul and mind. He advocated the beneficial effects of air, sunshine, daily bathing (in cold water), regular diet and the establishment of good habits of conduct. After this physical side was cared for, development of the mind should follow. He placed much stress on physical education of the child even advocating dancing, much to the horror of the parents. In his book "The Child's New Plaything" he made a real connecting link between the primer of the old days and the fiction book of the future. His idea of rationalisation in presenting new material to children has come down through the ages.

Thus at the close of the seventeenth century the greater number of children, if they amused themselves with anything read the chap-books which doubtless came under Locke's ban as "perfectly useless trumpery."

\[14\] Florence J. Barry, op. cit., p. 11.
Brighter days are dawning for the children however, and about 1744 John Newbery deliberately set out to provide amusement for them. He published and perhaps wrote the first real book for children, entitled "A Little Pretty Pocket Book." The frontispiece is delightful showing a mother with her two happy children, a boy and a girl and bearing the title "Delectando Nonemus" or "Instruction with Delight."

This book was intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly, with an agreeable letter from Jack the Giant Killer, as also a Ball and a Pincushion, the use of which will infallibly make Tommy a good Boy, and Polly a good Girl, . . . Price of the Book alone, 6d; with a Ball or Pincushion, 8d.15

Not even with this book are the children free, for the objects mentioned had one side red and the other side black. Every good deed done by the children was marked by sticking a pin into the red side, every bad deed by one in the black.

The book contains woodcuts of children playing alphabet games. A letter of the alphabet heads each game but with no relevance to the game at all. There is the "Great A Play;" the "Little a Games," etc., but under the "Little s Game" is the verse

Here's great K and L
Pray Dame can you tell,
Who put the Pig-Hog
Down into the Well?

The following admonitions to parents might well be used today with good effect:

Would you have a virtuous Son, instill into him the Principles of Morality early. . . . Would you have a wise Son, teach him to reason early. Let him read and make him understand what he reads. No Sentence should be passed over without a strict Examination of the Truth of it. . . . Subdue your children's Passions, curb their Temper and make them subservient to the Rules of Reason, and this is not to be done by whipping, chiding or severe Treatment, but by Reasoning and mild Discipline.\textsuperscript{16}

Newberry and his successors wrote many other books setting up codes of behaviour. As a publisher of books he became acquainted with many authors and mutual benefits resulted.

Dr. Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith wrote for Newberry. It was he, who first printed Goldsmith's, "Goody Two-Shoes."

There were now a number of people who were writing books for children. Maria Edgeworth's works were very popular. Rosamond and the "Purple Jar" is loved by children of today. Mrs. Barbauld wrote her fireside stories which were enjoyed both by parents and children. She also wrote the popular "Easy Lessons" which aimed primarily to give children pleasure while learning the elements of reading.

Many of these books were brought by colonists to America and thus formed the basis for the development of books for American children.

Summary

In this chapter the development of children's books in England has been traced from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. This was a period of extreme religious domination.

The history of early books in America (1620-1776) shall be given in the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{16} Florence V. Barry, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 61.
CHAPTER II

EARLY AMERICAN BOOKS
1620-1776

The story of children's books in America is naturally more bound up with the history of the juvenile literature of England than with that of any other country. Not only were books exported from England to the American colonies, but, no doubt settlers seeking homes on this side of the Atlantic brought with them copies of various books from the countries from which they came.

These Pilgrims seeking freedom of faith, directed their earliest efforts toward establishing their religion in the colonies which they founded. There had been no softening of their conception of life as it should be, nor in their manner of training children through fear of Hell's fire to follow these traditions. Thus, the books from which children were taught helped to perpetuate the religious ideals of their stern puritanical parents.

They perhaps did not realize that under the stern and narrow minded Mathers that the religion they were establishing was as intolerant as that from which they had fled.
It was built upon the Bible and the Catechism. As there were many Catechisms, dissensions soon arose in the colonies as to which one should be taught. In 1641 the "General Corte" was called and commanded the elders to make a catechism for the instruction of youth in the grounds of religion." A little volume by John Cotton, grew out of this edict. In it, in place of the one hundred seven questions of the "shorter Catechism" there were but sixty-four, some of which could be answered by one word, while the longest required only eighty-four words. As nearly as can be ascertained this book was printed at Cambridge by Daye sometime between 1641 and 1645 under the title of "Milk for Babes. Drawn out of the Breast of Both Testaments. Chiefly for the spiritual nourishment of Boston Babes in either England: But may be of like use for any children."\(^1\) In the Council of 1647 it was decreed

That every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall write and read,\(^2\)

The pastors joined the teachers in drilling the children in the Catechism and the alphabet. Parents also were enjoined to train children by means of the fear-filled Catechism. It is to be hoped however that occasionally they forgot their

---


"Puritanical" teachings and delighted the little ones with the adventures of "Bevis of Southampton," "Tom Thumb" or "Babes in the Woods" which stories had brightened their lives in England. 

Children in America in the seventeenth century were taught that they were to be "seen" and not "heard." If they were to attain any notice whatever it must be through "dyeing" rather than living. To be "ready" when the hand of death came was the ultimate end. According to Judge Sewall's 

diary even little two-year-old babies learned to say such mournful lines as these,

I, in the Burying Place may See
Graves Shorter than I;
From Death's Arrest no age is free
Young Children, too may die;
My God, may such an Awful Sight
Awakening be to me!
Oh! that by Grace I might
For Death prepared to be,

One of the rarest of early books is to be found in the collection of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach. It was printed at Boston in New England for Mary Avery in 1682 by one Samuel Greene. It is called "The Rule of the New Creature to be

---

3Judge Sewall one of the early Judges of the colonies and a religious leader. He kept a detailed diary which has been of great value to writers on the early history of colonial life. His stern Puritanism colored the record kept.

*To be found in the Public Library in Philadelphia.
Practised every Day, "in all the particulars of it, which are
ten." The author (anonymous, of England 1644) begins his
book with this cheerless advice to the children,

"Be sensible of thy Original Corruption daily, how
it inclines thee to evil and indisposes thee to good;
groan under it and bewail it as Paul did, Rom. 7:24.
Also take special notice of your actual sins, or daily
infirmities in Thought, Word, Deed. Endeavour to make
your peace with God for them, before you go to bed."

This is followed by many admonitions of religious nature to
be practiced every day.

The mournful Puritan spirit is well exemplified by this
early example of the juvenile funeral elegy in which an
address was made to the "Mournful Relatives" of the deceased,
one to the "Children of The Town," and the "Sermon" itself,
being a

Devout Contemplation on the meaning of Divine
Providence, in the Early Death of Fios and Lovely
Children. Preached upon the Sudden and Lamented Death
of Mrs. Elizabith Wainwright, Who Departed this Life,
April the 6th, 1714. Having just compleated the
Fourteenth Year of Her Age.3

That the printers of the Colonial Period were aware of
the good dividends to be collected from sales of books is
evidenced by the vast number of volumes which flooded the
market. Since there were few if any copyrights many books
of English origin were printed under the printer's own name

---

3A. S. W. Rosenbach, Early American Children's Books, p. 3.
Portland, Maine: Southworth Press, 1933.

4Ibid., pp. 7-8.
and with only minor changes but sometimes with additions.

Thus use was made of James Janeway's famous "Token for Children" to which was added, by the Reverend Mr. Mather, a, Token for the children of New England, or some examples of children in whom the fear of God was budding when they dyed; in several parts of New England. Preserved and published for the encouragement andPiety in other Children. With new additions.+

(Reprinted and sold by Benjamin Franklin and D. Hall in Philadelphia 1749.) This work opens with a letter to all Parents, School Masters and School Mistresses that have a hand in the Education of Children. The directions to children follow,

You may now hear (my dear Lambs) what the good children have done, and remember how they wept and pray'd by themselves, how earnestly they cried out for an Interest in the Lord, Jesus Christ. Do you do as these Children did? Did you ever see your miserable state by Nature? Did you ever get by yourself and weep for Sin?

In Cotton Mather's "Token" he relates the history of one Elizabeth Butcher who as a babe of two years old, would ask herself, as she lay in her cradle, "What is my corrupt Nature? And would make answer to herself, "It is empty of Grace, bent into Sin, and only to Sin, and that continually."

One of the most highly desired books of the morbid kind

\*\*See Introduction.
\*\*This book reached America first in 1700.
\*\*Or. cit., pp. 18-19.
was entitled


Dr. Rosenbach who owns a copy of this exceedingly rare book quotes the following verbatim,

"She was very Importunate, in requesting her Parents to give her up to the Will of God, saying, It would be better both for them and her, so to do; And when she thought to have prevail'd, Now (said she) I am Easy in Mind. Then asked her Father for a piece of Silver (which he gave her) and after she had held it and looked at it a little while returned it to him again, saying, Now I give it to thee freely, for it was mine because thou gavest it me. Therefore Intimating herself God's Gift to them and her Example therein for their Resigning her to Him again Cheerfully."

Our hearts go out to the countless little children of this era of American history when we think of them reading, learning and digesting these morbid accounts of illnesses and "dying speeches." Many of the chapbooks written in England found their way to children of America either through importation or reprinting. Thomas Fleet, publisher, printed in 1736 a book such as every Puritan should buy for his family. Entitled, "The Prodigal Daughter." It told in verse of a proud, vain girl, who because her parents would not indulge her in all her extravagances, bargained with the devil to poison them. The parents were warned by an angel of her

---

wicked intentions:

One night her parents sleeping were in bed
Nothing but troubled dreams run in their head,
At length an angel did to them appear
Saying awake, and unto me give ear.
A messenger I'm sent by Heaven kind
To let you know your lives are both design'd;
Your graceless child, whom you love so dear,
She for your precious lives hath laid a snare.
To poison you the devil tempts her to.
She hath no power from the snare to go.
But God such care doth of his servants take,
Those that believe on Him, He'll not forsake.

You must not use her cruel or severe,
For though these things to you I do declare,
It is to show you what the Lord can do,
He soon can turn her heart, you'll find it so.

True to this forecast the daughter, discovered in an attempt
to poison their food was reproached by her mother and swooned
and all efforts failed to "bring her spirits to revive."

Four days they kept her, when they did prepare
To lay her body in the dust we hear,
At her funeral a sermon then was preach'd,
All other wicked children for to teach.
But suddenly they bitter groans did hear
Which much surprized all that then were there,
At length they did observe the dismal sound
Came from the body just laid in the ground.

True to form the Puritan pride in funeral display is shown
when "she in her coffin sat, and did admire her winding
sheet," before she related her experiences "among lonesome
wild deserts and briary woods, which dismal were, and dark."

But immediately after her description of the lake of burning
misery and of the fierce grim Tempter, the Puritan matter-of-
fact acceptance of it all is suggested by the concluding lines:
When thus her story she to them had told
She said, put me to bed for I am cold.8

A little later we come to the popular and much esteemed story of the Fairchild Family. The children were raised on death bed scenes. One day the little Fairchilds, Tommy and Lucy having lost their tempers and slapped each other were taken as a means of punishment to see the body of a man hung in chains on a gibbet. The time was evening and the children silent and fearful walked through the dark gloomy woods with their father. Suddenly, as they came near the opposite side of the wood they saw the body swinging in the wind. The children were terrified at the sight as well as at the tale of horror which their father told. Mr. Fairchild having accomplished his shocking object lesson, finally kneeled and prayed long and earnestly over the sins of his little children. As they walked home he told them that he hoped they would remember the sight they had just seen all their lives and that they must know that wrong doing was severely punished. Then, having followed the dictates of his heart as well as those of the times in which he lived he kissed the children and told them that they must always love each other with perfect and heavenly love.

Since freedom of worship was the great objective in the

Puritan mind naturally the Bible took a foremost place among the "Chap Books" and "Tokens" used by the American Colonials. "The early reading books were accordingly designed to lead into the Bible, to serve the church and to further the cause of religion." It is difficult to determine just how much the Bible itself was forced upon the children. In 1765 Andrew Stewart of Philadelphia published a Little Bible for Children. If rarity bespeaks popularity this little book must have had hard usage for only a few volumes are extant. Following this publication there were many abridgements which were made particularly attractive for children by virtue of woodcuts. One little Bible, in size about one and one-fourth inches square, was very popular and was known as the Tom Thumb Bible. The original of this little Bible was a metrical version written by John Taylor, Rosenbach says, "it was very popular and is now extremely rare." The example of the book of Genesis is typical of the whole Bible.

Jehovah here of nothing all things makes
And man, the chief of all, his God forsakes.
Yet by th' Almighty's Mercy, 'twas decreed,
Heav'n's Heir should Satisfy for Man's misdeed.

Men now live long, but do not act aright,
For which the flood destroys them all but eight,

---


*A copy of the Tom Thumb Bible may be seen in the Lenox Library in New York City.
Noah, his wife, their sons with those they wed.
The rest all perish'd in the wat'ry bed.\textsuperscript{10}

Later the teaching and reading of the Bible were made to appeal to children by means of puzzle pictures. One very quaint volume was known as the "Hieroglyphrick Bible with Emblematic Figures," in which were about five hundred tiny pictures set in with the print, which helped to tell the story, after the manner of an illustrated rebus.

Although no great books were written for children through all these years three of the greatest books\textsuperscript{+} of the world written with deep purpose for grown up readers were calmly appropriated by the children. This fact would seem to justify the feeling that children are good critics.\textsuperscript{11}

Oliver Goldsmith's, "Goody Two-Shoes" one of the best beloved of children's books taught English as well as American children of the earlier centuries many lessons of patience and service. Excerpts of this story may be found in some of the more modern children's books.

John Locke's dissertation on "Thoughts Concerning Education,"\textsuperscript{a} was evidently accepted in the colonies for "Aesop's Fables" went through many reprintings and was widely


\textsuperscript{+}Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress (1678); Defoe's, Robinson Crusoe (1714); Gulliver's Travels (1726).


\textsuperscript{a}See Introduction.
distributed and used in the schools.

That a bit of levity occasionally came to those little boys and girls of long ago is proven by a tiny volume that lies before me as I write. Only two and one-half by three and one-fourth inches and containing twenty-four pages this little book of fun came across the ocean from Glasgow with some seeker of freedom, and no doubt helped some child to better stand the long, tiresome sea voyage. On the dull, tan paper cover I find that this book is called

The Fairing or A Golden Toy
for
Children of all
Sizes and Denominations

In which they may see all the Fun of the Fair
And at Home be as happy as if they were there.

Adorned with A
Variety of Cuts from Original Drawings

Glasgow:
Printed and Sold by J. and M. Robertson
and J. Duncan, Booksellers 1794
Price Three Pence.

On the inside sheet is printed;

To the True and genuine Lovers of Noise
This Book
Which was Calculated for Their Amusement
and
Written for Their Use,
is
Most Humbly Inscribed
By
You Know Who?

The Preface is most interesting, the author being somewhat cynical of critics as this excerpt will show.
To the Critics of the 16th Century. Ha! ha! ha! ha! Who do I laugh at? Why at you Mr. Critic. Who should I laugh at? A Critic is like a Curry comb, and gives pleasure before he occasions Pain. This book you say is written without either Rule, or Method or Rhyme or Reason. Pray Sir give me leave to ask you, What Rule is there for Roting? What method is there in Confusion? What Rhyme in a Battle Trap? Or what Reason in a Round-A-Bout? Why none! And yet there are the Essentials, Sir if I understand the matter, and as Mr. Alderman Bridlegoose says, "If I don't understand it nobody does." I say Sir, if, I am upon the Matter (for we are upon the matter) 'tis no matter how soon the matter is done. A Metaphore is a Simile, and a Simile is Kind of a Description. • • • • • • • • Sir, I am sure I am right. You may even take my Word for it; and that will put an end to the controversy; and I heartily, with all our Controversies about nothing (which indeed is the subject matter of the most Conversations) were determined in this manner.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

Pray put this book in the front of your library, and take care you don't rub off the Gold on the Cover.

Then follow descriptions of the various diversions which the "fair" affords.

On page twenty-one we find little quips or jests known as "Battledores" of which the following are typical,

Industry and Indolence were born on the same day and died on the same day, which was just at the age of sixty; yet Industry lived fifteen years longer than Indolence.

(How could this be, pray?)

Early to bed and early to rise,
Is the way to be hearty and wealthy and wise.
Ans. He got up each morning before Indolence.

On page twenty-two; Battledores to be worn on the Breast Button of the Waistcoat next the heart.

1. No title or employment is honorable which has not its foundation in virtue.

2. In cases of humanity and mercy, consult your heart, and in cases of justice, your head.
3. Where the public weal is concerned, consult your understanding, and if you have none, borrow.

In another book of mine, entitled, "Sweets for Leisure Hours or Flowers of Instruction" a tiny toy book printed in New Haven in 1800 by S. Babcock I find lines

To a New Born Babe
I'll watch thy dawn of joys and mould
Thy little heart to Duty,
I'll teach thee words as I behold
Thy faculties, like flowers unfold
In intellectual beauty.

Can life hold much for leisure enjoyment for this little babe?

In America the rise of the bookseller and printer was rapid. Outstanding among these men, whose vision extended into the future were Hugh Gaine, Thomas Fleet, Isaiah Thomas, William Charles and Benjamin Franklin. These men gave to colonial children many of the books enjoyed by their little English cousins.

In connection with these famous printers much could be written of the illustrations of early American children's books. Those of us today who are interested in these little books find the illustrations ludicrous as well as pathetic but what joy they must have given to the children whose Bibles and Catechisms had made little appeal to the eye.

Most of the illustrations had been made by the copper-plate method of which one Alexander Anderson was the outstanding master. Isaiah Thomas who reprinted most of Newberry's books gave impetus to the woodcut. He introduced into
America the woodcuts of the famous brothers Thomas and John Bewick of England. Later on we find John Bewick himself in America working in collaboration with our beloved John James Audubon. Printers were not particularly scrupulous in the use of these woodcuts and numerous anachronisms developed in the eighteenth century. Many of the costumes of biblical figures are those of the eighteenth century in America.

Even in such a well known subject as "Christ delivering the Sermon on the Mount to the Multitude" the principal figure is represented as a New England preacher, clad in gown and bands, addressing from a church pulpit a multitude, consisting of three Puritan men and three Puritan maidens. We also find Columbus of fifteenth century fame dressed in eighteenth century garments.

William Charles was the first printer in Philadelphia to realize that colored plates gave charm to his books and added materially to their sales. In some of the books in my collection such as "The Burial of Cock Robin" and "Punctuation Personified" all pages have colored plates.

The coloring was done by hand by young children in their early teens. Each child was given a paint brush and a supply of paint of a certain color together with a pile of printed sheets on which were the illustrations in outline, and a colored copy which served as a guide. He was then

---

responsible for applying his color on each copy where it belonged. This probably accounts for the variation in intensity of color appearing on different pages in the same book.

Many books on "Courtesy" written for children of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England and reprinted in America contained a code of manners which was excellent and thorough. In the preface of one these little books the author said that "due allowance is made for human weakness." The preface indicates the wide scope covered in the book.

PREFACE

The School of Good Manners

1. Twenty mix't Precepts
2. One hundred sixty-three Rules for Children's Behaviour
3. Good advice for the Ordering of Their Lives; with a Baptismal Covenant
4. Eight Wholesome Cautions
5. A Short, plain and Scriptural Catechism
6. Principles of the Christian Religion
7. Eleven Short Exhortations
8. Good Thoughts for Children


The one hundred sixty-three rules for Children's behaviour relate to manners at the Meeting House, at School, at Home, at Table, in Company, in Discourse, when Abroad, when among other Children. Under the Caption,

*This book is in Dr. Rosenbach's Collection in the Public Library in Philadelphia.
When in Company, the following rules are found:

If thou can't not avoid yawning, shut thy mouth with thy hand or handkerchief before it, turning thy face aside.

Spit not in the Room, but in the Corner and rub it well with thy foot, or rather go out and do it abroad.

At the Table:

Drink not nor speak with anything in thy mouth.

Stuff not thy mouth so as to fill thy cheeks, but be content with smaller mouthfuls,

Smell not of thy meat nor put it to thy nose, turn it not the other side upward to view it upon thy plate.

Gnaw not bones at table, but clean them with thy knife (unless they be small ones) and hold them not with a whole hand but with two fingers,

Grease not thy fingers or napkin more than necessary.

Lean not thy elbows on the table nor on thy chair.

Dip not a greasy knife in the salt.

When helping your superior to an article he may ask for throw it not at him.

The following rules helped children to listen well:

When any speak to thee, stand up. Say not I have heard it before. Never endeavour to help him out if he tell it not right. Snigger not, nor question the truth of it.

At School:

Take off thy hat before entering and bow to the teacher. Rise up and bow at the entrance of any stranger,

Bawl not in speaking.

Walk not cheek by jowl, but fall behind and always give the Walk to Superiors.
On the Street:

Run not hastily in the Street nor go too slowly.

Throw not ought in the Street.

If thou meetest the scholars of another school jeer not nor affront them but show them love and respect and quietly let them pass. *

Judging from the above quoted admonitions everything in the child’s life was made to tend to the preservation and relations of civility. Children had a wholesome respect for their church, school, home and the law.

Special punishment was given the child who failed to show the proper respect for the aged, the poor or to any persons whatever whom God had visited with infirmities. 12

John Bunyan in "A Book for Boys and Girls, or Country Rhimes for Children" 1686 says, *+

To those who are in years but Babes I bow
My Pen to teach them what the Letters be;
And how they may improve their A.B.C,
Nor let my pretty Children them despise.
All needs must there begin, that would be wise,
Nor let them fall under Discouragement,
Who at their Hornbook stick, and time hath spent,
Upon that A.B.C, while others do
Into their Primer or their Psalter go.

*These rules are compiled from those mentioned by various authors as found in the "School of Good Manners" (1796), "The School of Manners" (1701), "The Boke of Curtisy" (1460).


*Introduction.
With the advent of the Pilgrims there came into America along with various toy books two great little books which formed the backbone of the school book of the future.

The road to education in the colonies was the same as that travelled in England by means of Hornbook, Primer, Psalter, Testament and Bible.

The Hornbook of which few copies are extant today was not really a book. A thin piece of wood, usually four or five inches long and two inches wide, had placed upon it a piece of paper a trifle smaller, printed at the top with the alphabet in large and small letters below which were simple syllables such as ab, ob, ib, ob, ub. Then came the Lord's Prayer. Over this page was a cover of thin yellowish horn, which permitted the letters to be seen through it. The edges were bound with strips of brass. At the lower end of the hornbook was a little handle with a hole pierced near the end through which a string was tied. In this way the book could be carried around the child's neck or hung by his side. Sometimes the hornbook was known as the horn- bat, battle-dore book, absey-book, and horn gig. Some horn books were worked in needle point, some were stamped on tin, some carved in wood. According to Reeder the hornbook was in use through the eighteenth century. There are only three
The book which succeeded the hornbook in general use was the New England Primer. This little book was as stern as Puritanism itself. The way to knowledge and salvation was a bleak, hard one. Its stiff oak covers were symbolic of the contents. Little children whose task it was to learn the primer were morally responsible for their own salvation.

The earliest Primers contained Devotions for the Hours, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, some Psalms and other matter pertaining to information or instruction in Christian knowledge. As the knowledge of the art of printing spread the production of books became less expensive. The desire for learning probably always manifest in the people, was, in centuries back, mainly confined to the desire to be able to read the Bible. Soon an alphabet was included in the Primer to help them to realize their ambition.

The New England Primer had its inception in one of a long line of primers printed in England during the seventeenth century, namely "The Protestant Petition" written and published in 1681 by Benjamin Harris in London. At that time Catholicism was dominant and since this little book was written "to bring children up with an aversion to Popery" Harris was condemned to suffer the pillory. His business ruined, America offered refuge and in 1696 we find him established in Boston. The real authorship of this famous little book has

---

never definitely been established but there are many evidences giving that honor to Harris. That he was quite astute is proven by the fact that he called the book "The New England Primer: For the more easy attaining the true Reading of English. To which is added "Milk for Babes." This title made a great appeal to the people as the shrewd Harris knew it would. Great care was taken that the "Cross" or oldest religious emblem now worshipped, did not appear in any of these primers, due to the Puritan fear lest the people become idolators. The fact that three million copies were sold over a period of one hundred fifty years shows what a profound influence this wee book had on the people of America.

Although each printer of the New England Primer changed title and text to suit his taste or business interests, certain unmistakable emblems . . . serve to mark beyond question the various editions of the Primer, however titled or altered.14

Every primer had a page devoted to the alphabet, followed by a page of word elements ab, eb, ib, ob, ub; ca, ea, ci, ce, cu, etc., which were called "Easy Syllables for Children." Then there came pages of words grading up from those of one syllable to words of five and six syllables such as, A-bom-in-a-tion, Ben-e-fi-cial-ly, Fu-ri-fi-ca-tion, etc. The rest of the book is almost entirely of religious

and moral verse and prose.

Dr. Watt's Cradle Hymn was usually included in the Primer as well as the "Apostles' Creed," "The Lord's Prayer" and the little evening prayer whose authorship is unknown—but which has been used for several centuries and is still heard in the nurseries of today.

Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord, my soul to take.

The Catechism in one of the various forms was always to be found. No New England Primer was ever printed without the well known rhymed alphabet. This alphabet however was changed often according to the sentiments of the time. "It is a curious fact that of all these twenty-six stanzas only the first one relating to Adam, escaped change."15

"In Adam's Fall
We sinned all."

In the earliest edition of the Primer extant (1727) illustrating the letter "J" is a picture of the Crucifixion, with the stanza

"Sweet Jesus He
By'd on a Tree."

Since the Puritan would not tolerate even the suggestion of the "Cross" the picture was changed to conform to the

15Ibid., p. 58.
following stanza:

"Job feels the rod
Yet blesses God."

The letter "K" perhaps went through more transformations than any other letter. Originally the rhyme read

"King Charles the Good
No Man of Blood."

When Charles died and William III came to the throne the verse was changed to:

"K, William's Dead
and left the throne
To Ann our Queen
of great Renown."

Then came this generalization

"Our King the good
No man of blood."

When the Americans began to question the goodness of the monarch the printers easily changed praise into admonition,

"Kings should be good
Not men of blood."

After the Revolution:

"The British King
Lost States Thirteen."

or

"Queens and Kings
Are gaudy things."

Paul Leicester Ford says that between 1740 and 1760 great changes were made in the verses. Many of them had an earthly quality and some New England printers evangelized those
particular couplets but did not change the illustrations. The result was rather startling as the following stanzas will show,

C  "Christ curcify'd For sinners dy'd."
D  "The Deluge drown'd The earth around."
E  "Elijah hid By ravens fed."
F  "The judgement made Felix afraid."
K  "Proud Korah's troop Was swallowed up."
L  "Lot fled to Zoar Saw fiery Shower On Sodom pour."
M  "Moses was he Who Israel's Host Led thro' the Sea."

Robert W. G. Vail, Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society found the following interesting letter in "The Boston Gazette and Country Journal," Monday, September 24, 1759. (Page 1, Columns 1 and 2.)

This letter written in protest against the use of woodcuts portraying religious subjects as illustrations for mundane verses, or vice versa, surely expresses the minds
of those who took their books of instructions seriously.

To the Publishers of THE BOSTON GAZETTE, &c.

Messrs. Edes and Gill,

It being my lot to be placed in a small parish within this province, where the poverty of the people prevents their hiring persons to teach the children any other Books than those which is chiefly the business of a School Mistress: I have to my great surprise, discovered lately several things which may have a bad tendency, that has crept into the New-England Primer. And altho' it may be look'd upon by many at first view, a trifling affair, yet, with reference to the little tender ones who are to receive the first information of their duty to God and man from that little book; in my humble opinion, cannot be tho'it so by those, who have a due regard for their offspring.---What I principally intend to take notice of, are the little Pictures, beginning with Adam's Fall, and ending at Zaccheus climbing the Tree: Which I suppose were at first put in for some good purpose to make children more intent on their book, it being a good means for that end; if this was not the Design it would be difficult to give a good reason why they are inserted. These little Pictures go thro' with the alphabet, and against each letter there is a representation, with two lines of verse to interpret them: But I remember a few years ago the late Rev. Mr. Prince of Boston, thinking some of them too trifling, had many of the lines with the pictures alter'd to something of more importance, which was tho'it to be for the best; for one instance,---instead of the Cat doth play, and after saying against the letter C, it was a representation of the crucifixion of Christ, with these words, Christ curily'd, for Sinners dy'd: But to my great surprise, these new pictures have now the old verses against them; and thus the representation of our blessed Saviour's going to the cross, when darkness was over the whole earth, has for its meaning the destruction of mice by a cat: What! Are the children to be told that the death of their Redemser is of no more importance than the death of a mouse! Which is the consequence if there be anything in representations---This is certainly the worst of them, for which reason, it being so shocking, that I am obliged to disfigure the picture with my pen, as much as if it was a Graven Image. Some other representations are very ridiculous, which if you have room you may insert, to show their folly. I shall put them as they stand, alter'd in the alphabetical order---omitting those
letters, which are agreeable to the old primers—
Letter D, is the representation of the deluge, with these words, a Dog will bite a Thief at Night. E represents Elijah in a cave, fed by the ravens; and has for its interpretation, The Eagle's Flight is out of Sight. F represents Felix trembling at St. Paul's preaching; with this interpretation, The idle Fool is whip'd at School. When we come to K, it represents the rebellious Korah and his company swallowed by the opening of the earth, and this has for its meaning, Our King the Good, no Man of Blood! As for the King, I cannot tell who it must mean; but certainly it does not deserve to be in a Book, which is to be taught the children of the Loyal New-England People. L represents Lot running from the destruction of Sodom; with this interpretation, The Lyon bold, the Lamb doth hold. M represents Moses leading the children of Israel thro' the Red-Sea; and has against it, The Moon gives Light in Time of Night. N represents Noah viewing the new world after the deluge, and has against it, Nightingale's song in time of Spring. O represents three young pious men, as Obadiah, &c. and has against it, The Royal Oak it was the Tree, &c. P represents Samuel at Prayer, against it, Samuel anoints whom God appoints. Q represents a young man running away from what I cannot tell, but was design'd for sin, and has the looks of it, being without a body, and an odd figure to be sure it makes; against it is, time cuts down all, both Great and Small. V represents Vashti for her pride being set aside;—the interpretation is, Uriah's beautiful Wife, made David seek his life. The other alterations are immaterial;—I would now ask, What parent would choose to let their children be instructed in things so erroneous, as some of the above, and neglect troubling themselves, with what is taught them?—Surely it is of great concern, if they prize a good education!—As for the occasion of this imposition, I am ignorant; whatever it be, it ought to be inquired into, and a stop put to it; or perhaps we may still be further imposed on; and soon have fixed over, The Picture of the Man with Spears, the Pope or Man of God, and so many Virtues pointed to, as there are Spokes; Nay, they may still go further, if this is allowed in, and give us the title page of the Spelling Book and Psalter, and the same book contain part of the mass-book, with prayers to the virgin Mary and other saints. But I hope, by your publishing this, it will be a means of preventing any farther designs, and put a stop to those that have gone so far already.
I send it to you, as I have not found any erroneous Primers with your names thereto, and hope for the Benefit of the rising generation, you will not omit publishing this, however your business may be incommoded by giving offence, to any of your brother Printers or book-sellers.

---A parent of one of my pupils, informed me, That altho' Mr. S. Kneeland's Name was in the title page of these erroneous Primers; yet he knew from the character that good Gentleman sustained in Boston, he could not be guilty of such a base method to get off his book; but that some young men of that Name in his office, whom he understood the fraternity of book-sellers had set for work, must have done it; whether thro' ignorance or design he could not tell; but however it be, should be glad you would advertise where the Good Primers are to be sold, and whenever the other is published, to advertise that by the name of The Wicked Primer.

Your's, Ec.

Sept. 11, 1759 A CHILD'S INSTRUCTOR

The picture of the martyr, John Rogers; burning at the stake, while "his Wife with Nine small Children, and one at her Breast" looked on, must have burned itself into the hearts of the little New Englanders and filled them with fear. This picture appeared in all primers together with this "Exhortation Unto his Children."

Give Ear my Children to my words when God hath dearly bought,

Lay up His Laws within your Hearts, and Print them in your Thoughts.

I leave you here a little Book, for you to look upon,

That you may see your Father's Face, when he is Dead and Gone.

---John Rogers, minister of the Gospel in London, was the first martyr in Queen Mary's reign; and was burnt at Smith field, February fourteenth, 1554. He died courageously for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
"No better description of the New England Primer itself, could be penned."

As the century advances more and more the secular influence prevailed in the later editions of the primer. No longer was salvation promised to the good and hell's fire to the bad, but the saucy girl was to have no oranges, apples, cakes or nuts and the good boy was promised "credit and reputation."

The true Puritan would have turned over in his grave if he could have read this little poem, for instead of teaching that letters were to be learned that the Bible might be read and that figures were necessary to find chapter and verse in that Book, it said:

He who ne'er learns his A, B, C
Forever will a blockhead be,

But he who learns his letters fair
Shall have a coach and take the air.*

The last couplet quoted would be one about which a child could dream and which he would choose to read rather than

Good children must
Fear God all day, Love Christ alway,
Parents obey, In secret pray,
No false thing say, Mind little play
By no sin stray Make no delay,**
In doing good.

*From an 1812 edition which it has been my privilege and pleasure to examine.

**Ibid.
"A Dialogue between Christ, Youth and the Devil" which appeared in nearly all editions, is justly characterized by Reider as:

A tragic scene in which Youth, after alternately listening to the admonitions of Christ and the solicitations of the Devil, weighs his destiny, vacillates, and finally chooses the evil and goes to hell. 16

The New England Primer as such, never quite recovered after this attack of secularizing. Sales of the book increased however and parents found that their children were more interested and learned more readily from it. Very quickly these facts were seized upon and "illustrated primers, made to please rather than to torture" multiplied. For two hundred years this little book had been a mighty power.

Paul Leicester Ford very aptly says:

The New England Primer is dead, but it died on a victorious battle field, and its epitaph may well be that written of Noah Webster's Spelling Book, "It taught millions to read and not one to sin." 17

As we go along toward the close of the eighteenth century the great struggle of 1776 had a marked effect on the book life in America. Reprinting of English books was under ban as well as was the importation of book making materials. Many printers ceased their work either because of lack of


materials or because they were Royalists and knew that England offered a safer haven. As books became scarcer children loved and cherished what books they had and true to the spirit of the times suffered the loss of new books without complaint.

After the Declaration of Independence the gradual development of patriotism and the elimination of material of English and European origins from children's books in America is very noticeable. Many books of Washington and Franklin were published in a patriotic effort to teach this virtue to children.

A new awakening is at hand and the writing of both pictorial and instructional books for the children of America has gained a great impetus.

SUMMARY

In this chapter the writer has endeavored to show that juvenile literature for young Americans was largely reprinted from books of English origin. During this time the books were of a gloomy religious nature. Two books, "The Horn Book" and the great "New England Primer," had much to do with building Puritanical instincts in children.

Chapter III shall deal with books after the Revolutionary War and up through 1840 when the secular began to supplant the religious, Noah Webster's "Old Blue Back" Speller was making its great contribution during this period.
CHAPTER III

THE TRANSITION PERIOD
1776 - 1840

The slow development of the American child’s story of the nineteenth century will inevitably be made through the school books written previously.

During the period of 1775--1825 subject matter in books for children became widely diversified. Before this time the toy books, largely reprints from the English, together with the Bible and the famous New England Primer were the sources of reading material. The religious element was paramount. Puritanic literature then began to give way and a more complete juvenile literature was evolved in which much secular material was introduced. The child and his book were being considered worthy of the thought of writers of the day. It had taken a century for the liberalizing ideas propounded by Locke, Rousseau and Pestalozzi to spread to America and influence these changing conceptions of what a child should have to read. This influence to some degree dictated the policy of the school books which were to be written and used during the nineteenth century.

(45)
The many jealousies existing among the various religious sects were partially responsible for secularization of books for children. Even the use of the Bible declined greatly. In 1795 the New England Primer appeared under the name of The Boston Primer and for the first time showed a marked departure from religious content which previously had distinguished it. A survey of the content of the Boston Primers of that date as well as one of 1808 confirms this statement and shows the following data: Only 52 per cent of the pages is given to catechisms and 3 per cent is devoted to animals, birds and the introduction to Watt’s Cradle Hymn. In 1808 a revision of this same book shows the following division: 27 per cent of its literature is of a religious nature, 24 per cent is made up of catechisms, while 25 per cent is given to literature concerning birds, animals and nature study; 7 per cent is devoted to Biblical stories about such men as Moses and David; 4 per cent is devoted to talks to young readers on proper conduct; and the remaining portion deals with the alphabet and phonetics.

As the New England primer declined the spelling book took its place. Prior to 1782 Dilworth’s Speller the most popular English speller of the century was used extensively in America. It was very religious in its make up.

*See Chapter II, p. 55.*
In 1782 Noah Webster began to write his spelling book called by the ponderous title "The First Part of A Grammatical Institute of the English Language. Later the title was changed to "The American-Spelling-book" and still later to the name which it bore during the remainder of its famous career, "The Elementary Spelling-book."

Webster planned his book somewhat after the Dilworth speller but substituted moral and secular for much of the religious material. Webster in his speller made two outstanding contributions through countering many vulgarisms\(^2\) in pronunciation, and in standardizing the spelling of words. Prior to this time even men of high education spelled the same word in many different ways. The people became spelling minded and spelling "been" were a favorite recreation of winter evenings.

Johnson says

Webster's speller was the chief textbook in the earlier days of the Republic. Not only was it primer and spelling-book combined, but there was a formidable introduction containing an "Analysis of Sounds in the English Language," to be learned word for word. The Analysis begins with this definition:--"Language or speech is the utterance of articulate sounds or voices, rendered significant by usage, for the expression and

---

\(^2\)This volume was followed by two other books, namely; a grammar and a reader.

**asparagus** not **sparrowgrass**
**resin** not **rozum**
**chimney** not **chimbly**
**library** not **liberry**

**dandruff** not **dander**
**nervous** not **nervous**
**potatoes** not **taters**
**rheumatism** not **rheumatis**
communication of thoughts."¹

After the introduction there are Roman and Italic alphabets both large and small. Then following the fashion of the times there are pages of word fragments consisting of the vowels as the first letter, followed by a consonant such as ab, ob, ub, ub; ad, od, id, od, ud, etc. Then follow columns of words, first three syllables, then four, etc. Frequently there are short reading lessons showing the use of the words in context. The sentences comprising these lessons are very unchildlike but are often picturesque and entertaining. Later editions contained four illustrated fables and three pictured paragraphs describing respectively "The Dog," "The Stag," and "The Squirrel." That Webster wrote his book not only for the purpose of teaching people of all ages how to spell, but also to guide them in life situations is proven by his lessons of "Precepts concerning the Social Relations." To the young man seeking a partner for life he gives this staid counsel:

... Be not in haste to marry and let thy choice be directed by wisdom.


Table 1.
1. Of the Boy that Stole Apples
2. The Country Maid and her Milk Pail
3. The Two Dogs
4. The Partial Judge.
Is the woman devoted to dress and amusement? Is she delighted with her own praise...? Is she given to much talking and loud laughter? If her feet abide not at home, and her eyes rove with boldness on the faces of men—turn thy feet from her, and suffer not thy heart to be ensnared by thy fancy.

But when thou findest sensibility of heart joined with softness of manners and an accomplished mind and religion united with sweetness of temper, modest deportment, and a love of domestic life—such is the woman who will divide thy sorrows and double the joys of thy life. Take her to thyself; she is worthy to be thy nearest friend, thy companion, the wife of thy bosom.

To the young woman the following counsel is recommended:

Art thou a young woman wishing to know thy future destiny? Be cautious in listening to the addresses of men. Art thou pleased with smiles and flattering words? Remember that man often smiles and flatters most when he would betray thee.

Listen to no soft persuasion till a long acquaintance and a steady respectful conduct have given thee proof of the pure attachment and honorable views of thy lover. Is thy suitor addicted to low vices? Is he profane? Is he a gambler? A tippler? A spendthrift? A hunter of taverns? Has he lived in idleness and pleasure? Has he acquired a contempt for thy sex in vile company? And above all is he a scoffer at religion? Banish such a man from thy presence; his heart is false, and his hand would lead thee to wretchedness and ruin.

Then after marriage:

Art thou a husband? Treat thy wife with tenderness and respect. Reprove her faults with gentleness, be faithful to her in love.

Art thou a wife? Respect thy husband; oppose him not unreasonably, but yield thy will to his, and thou shalt be blest with peace and concord. Study to make him respectable; hide his faults...*  

*From an 1831 edition of Webster's Spelling-book.
The above "Moral Catechism" disappeared from later editions as did many other phases which were not adapted to the comprehension of children.

In order that children might read words before they had had instruction in the spelling of such words certain ingenious devices were employed. One learned to spell the word "Arithmetic" by memorizing the sentence "A rat in the house may eat the ice cream." The initial letters of the words in the sentence spell "Arithmetic." Other examples are:

George Eliot's Old Grandmother Rode A Pig Home Yesterday

Paul Rice Eats Fish and Catches Eagles

To give an additional gymnastic twist, it was sometimes operated backward, thus for "Preface":

Eagles Catch Alligators. Father Eats Raw Potatoes

Advice intended to bridge over the difficulty of very long words was to spell them one syllable at a time, each syllable being repeated as the spelling of it was completed:

Constantine, P-L-E, plo -- Constantinople.

Noah Webster's "Old Blue Back" as it was and is lovingly called was the most outstanding book of the nineteenth century. Up to 1880 more than eighty million copies had been sold and thousands of men who became leaders in America attributed their success in part at least to the fine

principles which were inculcated through this little book. It, like the New England Primer, "Taught millions to spell and read and not one to sin."

Noah Webster also compiled the first reader in America, following closely on the publication of his spelling book. It was called "The Elementary Reader to accompany Webster's Spelling Book." In the preface of the book before it was published in 1835 the compiler says,

I claim little credit for originality as most of the material being selected from writings of other laborers in the field. (Mrs. Barbauld, Watts, Edgeworth, Jane Taylor, etc.). Although a great variety of anecdotes, tales, fables, dialogues, poetry, etc, have been selected to give interest to the lessons, the most scrupulous pains have been taken to admit nothing having in the slightest degree any other than a moral or religious tendency. On this subject, the compiler feels that all who have anything to do with education, must resting on them a very great responsibility. Our republican institutions are based on the moral and social virtues of the people, and the importance of these great principles should be early impressed upon the infant mind.

The first lesson in the book is called the "Introduction." It would be most interesting to know whether the little boys and girls of a century ago accepted and carried out these admonitions.

Be sure your hands are clean before handling your book.

Be sure to read slow, so that you may understand every word. Mind your stops and avoid reading with a whining and drawing tone. Speak so loud, that all in the room may hear you.
Do not skip about for there are none but good pieces in it and you will do well to read every word from beginning to end.

Little boys and girls should never be idle, for idle children generally grow up to be poor and unhappy.

Never play in school because your teacher loves you and wishes you to learn.

Love your friends.

Obey your parents, avoid everything that is wrong and do what is right at all times and in all places. Then you may expect that your Creator will bless you.

Webster also says that "To read without understanding, is like eating nuts uncracked. The words are the shell. The meaning is the meat. So you must be sure to crack the shell. Twenty pages of lessons follow in which definitions of "animate" and "inanimate" objects are given. Each object is illustrated with a crude cut; the picture of a "hen" having this definition "The hen is a domestic fowl. She lays eggs and hatches chickens--They run under her wings for protection."

At the bottom of each page is a list of definitions. The remainder of the book contains many selections by American statesmen and patriots. There are lessons in geography describing the Western States, the New England States, the Southern States, mountains, the ocean, etc. There is a fair representation of Biblical material in stories of Moses, Joseph and the parable of "The Good Samaritan." Dialogues, together with narrative and descriptive pieces in prose and verse serve to inculcate moral and religious sentiments.
Webster's reader did not meet with such great success as did his spelling-book. At this time a series of three English readers by Lindley Murray won in competition for favor in America. Of the three books the Introduction "was calculated to improve the younger classes and imbue them with love of virtue, to which are added rules and observations for assisting children to read with propriety." Directions are given for observing the use of punctuation marks.

A comma marks the shortest pause, the semicolon a pause double that of the comma; the colon double that of the semicolon; the period double that of the colon.

The English Reader was the middle book. This book aimed to inculcate the principles of Pity and Virtue. The book is divided into the following chapters: Narratives, including Bible stories and others of moral content; Didactic, under which are lessons upon gratitude, forgiveness, gentleness, "Mortification of vice," "Comforts of religion," etc. Argumentative, including brief dissertations upon virtue and piety, "The Immortality of the Soul," etc.; Descriptive, consisting of such selections as "The Beauties of the Psalms," "Creation," "Character of King Alfred," etc. Then there were "Dialogs" and "Public Speeches."

---


4 From a copy of 1846. (Indianapolis Public Library)
The "Sequel to the English Readers" was the third book and was written for older learners. It hoped to establish a taste for just and accurate composition, and to promote the interests of piety and virtue.5

This series of books contained the best prose and poetry of such English writers as Addison, Cowper, Milton and Wordsworth.

American writers resenting the use of this English Reader made a great plea for the purchase and use of such books as contained material eulogizing our native land. They recommend that contributions be drawn freely from statesmen, scholars, and poets, of America, from Jefferson, Webster, Irving, Bryant and many others.

Feeling at this time was strongly American, which fact is well shown in a pleasing and convincing manner in the preface of the National Reader (1836) one of the series by John Pierpont:

This country has political institutions of its own, institutions which the men of succeeding generations must uphold. But this they cannot do unless they are early made to understand and value them. It has a history of its own of which it need not be ashamed—fathers, heroes and sages of its own, whose deeds and praises are being sung by even the mighty 'masters of the lay,' and with whose deeds and praises by being made familiar in our childhood, we shall be not the less qualified to act well our part as citizens of a republic. Our country both physically and morally has a character of its own. Should not something of that character be learned by its children while at school? Its mountains and prairies and

5Reader, op. cit., p. 40.
and lakes and rivers and cataracts; its shores and hilltops that were early made sacred by dangers and sacrifices and deaths of the devout and the daring; it does seem as if these were worthy of being held up as objects of interest to the young eyes that from year to year are opening upon them, and worthy of being linked with all their sacred associations to the young affections which sooner or later must be bound to them, or they must cease to be what they now are—the inheritance and abode of a free people.  

Fierpont used what he considered the selections of the best American and English writers. He declined however to decide upon the relative values of selections from English literature as compared to those by American writers and felt that the world must decide for itself. His readers were used over a long period which may be attributed to the fact that his judgment in selecting the material in them, was good.

In 1831 Lyman Cobb, author of school textbooks began to publish a series of five school readers called Cobb's Juvenile Readers. This was perhaps the first carefully graded series of readers produced in the early part of the nineteenth century. In the preface of the fourth book "Cobb's North American Reader," Part IV, 1844, he makes a very strong appeal nationalistic in character, in which he pleads that the children and youth be imbued with the social and political institutions of our country. Of his books he says--

The pieces in this work are chiefly American. The English reader, the book most generally used by the

---

schools of our country does not contain a single piece or paragraph written by an American. Is this good policy? Is it patriotism? Shall the children of this nation be compelled to read, year after year, none but the writings and speeches of men, whose views and feelings are in direct opposition to our institutions and our government? Certainly pride for the literary reputation of our own country if not patriotism and good policy should dictate to us the propriety of inserting in our school books specimens of our own literature; and it is certainly no disparagement to English books to assert, that they are not adapted to American schools. The United States have political and civil institutions of their own; and how can these be upheld, unless the children and youth of our country are early made to understand them by books and other means of instruction?*

Cobb is consistent and in this volume he has inserted the Constitution and The Declaration of Independence. Many selections are of a political and patriotic trend. A number are by Senators, Presidents and statesmen of the United States. Very little American poetry is found but Shakespeare, Shelley, Byron and Mrs. Hemans are represented.

It is interesting to note that a hundred years ago Lyman Cobb was saying the very thing that we stress today. In the preface of the little volume before me called "Juvenile Reader, No. 1" he says that work designed for Children's reading should be within their comprehension and within range of their experience. He also says it must be chaste. He did not believe in using the 'fable' and says,

The practice of giving children dialogues between wolves and sheep, cats and mice, etc. etc.; often met

* C. Cobb's 4th Reader, Preface, 1836.
with in the elementary Reading-Books, containing statements and details of things which never did, and which never can take place, is as destructive of truth and morality, as it is contrary to the principles of nature and philosophy. 7

Then follow a well graded series of lessons. In Book three the stories were more difficult. Before each lesson words are listed which did not appear in the previous lesson; division of the word, pronunciation, accentuation and definition are noted.

In 1836 there was issued a series of Cobb's celebrated Toy Books, size two and one-fourth by three and three-fourths inches. They were a composite of hornbook, battledore and primer. The various numbers contain alphabets, syllabaries and reading-easies, all fully illustrated with wood cuts. The readings consist of stories on natural history subjects and common objects. This little volume is divided into six chapters dealing respectively with fish, birds, wild animals, etc. 8 The popularity of these books is shown in the sale of six million copies by 1844.

The period following the Revolutionary War to about 1850 saw a transition in literature as well as in school books for children of America. English books were still

7Lyman Cobb, Cobb's Juvenile Reader No. 1,Preface, Indianapolis, Ind.: 1837.

being pirated, although in a lesser measure by American publish-
ers. Mrs. Barbauld's "Easy Lessons for Children from Two
to Five Years Old," was considered as perfectly adapted to
helping American children gain knowledge and amusement as it
was for little English boys and girls for whom it had been
written. The American publishers simply changed a few words
and considered their offering a good one.

The rare book before me is such a volume composed of
"Parts I and II" and was printed in Boston by Munroe and
Francis, 1833. It is a small book five and one-half by four
and one-half inches and its mellowed, marbled cover must have
brought joy to the heart of some small child of long ago. Mrs.
Barbauld had adopted a small nephew, Charles, for whom these
easy lessons were written. That she knew what improvements
were needed in books for little children is made apparent in
the preface:

It was found, that, amidst the multitude of books
professedly written for children, there is not one
adapted to the comprehension of a child from two to
three years old. A grave remark, or a connected story,
having simple, is above his capacity; and nonsense is
always below it; for folly is worse than ignorance.
Another great defect is want of good paper, and a clear
large type. They only, who have taught young children,
can be sensible how necessary these assistances are.
The eye of a child and of a learner cannot catch, as
ours can, a small, obscure illformed word, amidst the
number of others all equally unknown to him. To supply
these deficiencies is the object of this book. The
task is humble, but not mean; for to lay the first stone
of a noble building, and to plant the first idea in a
human mind, can be no dishonor to any hand.
Part One deals with all the associations in the home; sleeping, arising, eating, setting the table, foods good for little boys, etc. Domestic pets as well as insects, and animals found, while on a walk, snails, mice, bees are used in giving nature lessons. The book is filled with such good advice as, "If you learn a little every day, you will soon know a great deal"; "No good boy wears a hat in the house"; "Good boys do not cry."

Part Two is designed to add to Charles' information and to give him new experiences. Through 'doing' he learns about the electricity which results from stroking his cat the wrong way; that a piece of amber when rubbed until warm acts as a magnet; etc. He is given more information concerning true facts of life about him; "that hawks and kites kill chickens"; "spiders make webs in which they catch flies"; "owls fly at night"; etc.

The work of the carpenter, shoemaker, butcher and baker are discussed. After learning the names of the days of the week and the months, a long descriptive paragraph is devoted to each month of the year.

No doubt Charles acquired the ability to read and spell well from this little book for in concluding Mrs. Barbauld praises him and says "Now let us go to Monroe and Francis' book store and buy two more parts of the same book, written by the excellent Mrs. Barbauld. Farewell! Good night."
The works of one of Mrs. Barbauld's contemporary writers also reached a high place in America. Maria Edgeworth wrote extremely moral stories for children in which retribution always overtook the child who disobeyed or who erred in judgment. The story of "The Purple Jar" one of a series dealing with a little girl named Rosamond has never failed to make boys and girls of our generation hate the mother, because they think she took unfair advantage of Rosamond who could not possibly have known that the purple jar contained only colored fluid instead of being what it looked to be, a jar of lovely purple glass.

Other stories of Miss Edgeworth's which gained fame in America were, "Waste Not, Want Not"; "Simple Susan," a story of a clean and industrious girl as contrasted with Barbara, who was very conceited and lazy and a "lady" with all, who could descend without shame from the height of insolent pride to the lowest measure of fawning familiarity.

While books of the above mentioned English writers were being adapted to the needs of the American child several famous authors were putting their books on the market. Mr. Jacob Abbot's "Rollo Books" and Peter Parley's "Tales of Peter Parley" became intensely popular if the quantity of books sold is any indication of popularity. The tendency in these books was to instruct as well as to entertain.

In the "Rollo Book" of which there were twelve Mr. Abbot
attempted to put and answer questions which all children ask. Each story taught how to do a certain kind of work and each pointed a distinct moral. His stories might well be called stories of domestic relationships.

Samuel Griswold Goodrich, the original Peter Parley was born in Connecticut in 1793 and had his beginning education in the dame schools, imbining the puritanical spirit from the "New England Primer," "Goody Two Shoes" and "Mother Goose." Later he found "Red Riding Hood," "Jack the Giant Killer," "Puss in Boots" and "Blue Beard" revolting and shocking because he believed them to be true. He was more horrified when he found that they were untrue and said:

"The general impression remained on my mind, that children's books were either full of nonsense, like "his-diddle-diddle" in Mother Goose, or full of something very like lies, and those very shocking to the mind, like Little Red Riding Hood." 9

He became a voluminous writer of books for American children. One of his most famous books was "Tales of Peter Parley about America." Having read much of Hannah Moore's work for English children and being fascinated with her style, he too, wrote with great detail in his descriptive writings.

In this book the life and adventures of a boy hero are told. The child, on a journey through the country had adventures

---

with Indians on the frontiers and saw places of historical significance.

Peter Parley's books were much pirated by certain writers in England. In both England and America the sale of his books was enormous reaching seven million copies before admiration of their style diminished.

Occasionally books appeared written in verse. These were to be used to fix certain essentials of the English language in a pleasant way. In 1825 appeared a book of this kind called, "The Infant's Grammar or a Picnic Party of the Parts of Speech." On the first page is this "Explanatory Introduction."

One day, I am told, and as it was cold,
I suppose it occurred in cold weather,
The Nine Parts of Speech, having no one to teach,
Resolved on a Pic-nic together.

On each leaf there is a verse dealing with a personified part of speech. A typical verse is

The Pronouns
At this moment a bustle was heard at the door
From a Party of Pronouns, who came by the score,
And what do you think? Why I vow and declare
They would pass for the Nouns, who already were there.

And their boldness was such as I live it is true,
One declared he was I, and One called Himself You,
This, That and the Other, They claimed as Their own,
But Who They are really, will shortly be known.

---

10 In Rosenbach Collection, p. 245. Written by F. Lucas, Jr., 1825, and printed in Baltimore.
Children of course must have enjoyed this deviation from the regular type of school book. Writers ever alert to catch the feeling of that which was successful were soon writing other books in the same vein. It has been my good fortune to find one of these little books entitled "Punctuation Personified or Pointing Made Easy" by "Mr. Stops" published by S. King in New York in 1831. The following inscription on the fly leaf tells of a custom regularly in vogue a century ago:

To Henrietta Maria Brown
Presented by her teacher for her good behaviour and improvement in reading.

Susan D. Parks.

Although having a dull tan paper cover with a hand sewn dull cloth binding this little book is filled with gaily hand painted illustrations. The leaves are only printed on one side and contain the illustration and a verse descriptive of some one of the punctuation marks. Children are admonished to count one for a Comma; two for a Semicolon; three for a Colon; four for a Period; the Interrogative Point and the Exclamation Point.

A COLON, marked thus:

The Colon consists of two dots as you see;
And remains within sight whilst you count one, two, three:
'Tis 'twas where the sense is complete the but part
Of the sentence you're reading, or learning by heart.
As "Gold is deceitful: it bribes to destroy,"
'Young James is admired: he's a very good boy."

*See Chapter II, p. 28.
A CARET marked thus:

YOU

DON'T SEE

The usp of me

If you a letter are indisputing
And make an error in your writing,
By leaving out a word or two,
The CARET may be us'd by you:

As

This book to Charles I send,

And hope to please, my dearest friend.

Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney wrote poetry for children much of which was used in the school books during the middle and latter part of the century. Most of it was of a highly religious nature. All of her writings both prose and poetry were designed to lead children into the paths of righteousness; to train them in habits of thrift and industry; to teach them to obey the "Ten Commandments" and to be of service to those about them. Often the last stanza of the poems promised heaven as a reward for life well lived.

And mark me as a child of heaven
That I may enter there. 11

Christ is thy Ark, my love,
Thou art the timid dove,—
Fly to His breast. 


#War--Book pages not numbered.

†The infant's Prayer for "A Sick Child,"
So Lilly lived,—but not where time
Is measured out by woes; 

In the preface of her "Book for Boys" she says,

The present volume has been prepared, containing
lessons of republican simplicity,—of the value of time—
the rewards of virtue,—of the duties of this life, as
they take hold of the happiness of the next. These ob-
jects have been kept in view, in the composition both of
its prose and poetry, and throughout the varied forms of
narrative, biography and didactic essay.

Her "Book for Girls" followed in which the author set
up about the same objectives. Both of these books met with
great favor. Mrs. Sigourney's poems and stories are found
in all of the compilations of early and middle decades of the
nineteenth century.

The Expositor is one of the most interesting types of
book in vogue during this period. It is an all embracing
volume as "The Juvenile Expositor" of which I write testifies.

The title page in part says

Improved and Enlarged
Embracing Radical and Derivative
Orthography,
With Concise and Appropriate Definitions,
Designed
To aid youth in acquiring the art of reading fluently
and understandingly; together with
A grammar,
In which the principles of the English language are methodically
digested in plain and easy rules.
Illustrated By Examples
Explaining the terms of grammar and improving its use.
The long four page preface, printed in the most minute
type, is filled with educational truths and bears attentive
and intensive study. Mr. Pickett decries word teaching and

△ The Dove. (Poem of the dove which came to Noah's Ark.)
Words, says Dr. Johnson can have no definite idea attached to them when by themselves, and it is not sufficient to look the word out in a dictionary; it is the situation and tract in a sentence which determines its precise meaning."

The Juvenile Expositor, judged by standards set up for various reading levels of children of today would be far too difficult particularly in comprehension. It is to be remembered, however, that the earlier books were ungraded and their content covered a field of wider range than do current books. However Mr. Pickett was much concerned because of the difficulty of reading matter, for he states at the beginning of the preface,

To everyone acquainted with the business of education it is well known, that a book which should be sufficiently easy and intelligible to young persons, has long been much wanted by teachers. In common with his brethren, the author has found the inconvenience, and it has been his principal object to obviate the evil complained of, by laying before youth a set of instructions and lessons suited to their capacities."

The index which is in the back of the book shows that there are four main divisions—thirty-two pages given to Spelling, accent, prefixes, derivations and keys; one hundred pages to prose selections; twenty-five pages to poetry; forty pages to elements of natural philosophy (of the universe, the solar system, air, rivers, on attributes of the Deity) and

---

*Preface

**Ibid.
one hundred twenty pages to English Grammar.

The boy or girl who really knew his "Juvenile Expositor" had an excellent background for future studies.

One of the great contributions to children's literature was made during the period from 1835-1850 in the form of juvenile magazines, largely filled with contributions from literary Americans. These magazines contained, besides prose and poetry, articles of historic interest; one contained a discussion of President Washington's will.

Sarah J. Hale who wrote the famous poem "Mary Had a Little Lamb" also established a magazine called the "Juvenile Miscellany for the Instruction and Amusement of Youth." This contained biographies of national heroes instead of incidents relative to rulers in Turkey, etc. The Youth's Companion was issued during this period and had a long and successful career.

Peter Parley also published a magazine in which were given descriptions of manners, customs, countries, travels, voyages and adventures in many lands. This magazine, issued bi-monthly over a period of six or seven years was very popular.

The Sunday School had come into its own and many tracts of a religious nature were prepared for children. Contributions were invited and finally resolved themselves into two types of stories. The one type extolled the good child, who attended Sunday School regularly and who died young. The second group concerned the youth who turned away from the
counsel of the home and church and consequently fell into evil ways and no doubt died an unregenerate.

So we come to the middle of the nineteenth century during which time efforts in writing books for American children had marched steadily on, improving in content and mechanics and paving the way for better things to come.

SUMMARY

This chapter has shown that subject matter in books for children had become widely diversified. The child and his book were coming into their own. The more liberal viewpoint of people in general and writers in particular forecasts a great change in schoolbooks during the latter part of the nineteenth century. This phase is discussed in Chapter IV.

The publication of children's books, however, remained relatively small until the Sunday schools and home companions with their change. Nationalism was quite apparent in books which had been written conventionally, John Farnsworth, Susan Abbott, and Daniel Carter Beard (Hero开业), to all the national hero, songs books, which formed into the New England and eastern states which, by this time were thirty well established.

The writers were of civilizers during the American this made the use in their progress.Thumbnail of essay
CHAPTER IV

SECULAR PERIOD OF AMERICAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

1840 - 1880

The second half of the nineteenth century was particularly noted for the production of school books for the American child. It was during these years that graded series of readers were written and compiled.

During the transition or formative period the great step from the religious to the secular had been taken in the preparation of children's books. However, a rapidly changing national life demanded schools and books commensurate with this change. Sectionalism was quite apparent in books which had been written previously. John Pierpont, Lyman Cobb and Samuel Griswold Goodrich (Peter Parley), all New England born, wrote books, which fitted into the New England and Eastern States which, by this time were fairly well established.

The western trek of civilization through the beautiful Ohio valley was in full progress. Peoples of many

*Chapter III. 1776-1840.
**Chapter III. John Pierpont; p. 54; Lyman Cobb; p. 55; Samuel Goodrich; p. 61.
nationalities, bringing with them their religion and social culture comprised this new population of Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois. Here was a great melting pot of thrifty Scotch, witty Irish and practical Germans from which must emerge a cosmopolitan group.

The church and school, then as now were important social agencies and sprang up with great rapidity wherever settlements were made. Leaders in many lines were developed during this period; but in the field of education William Holmes McGuffey was the most dominant personality. He had vision and the fortitude to carry it out. His plea was for the education of the whole community.

To this end he wrote his famous series of six McGuffey Readers. He has the distinction of having made the first recorded experiments in child psychology in America. To prove his theories and because he was a lover of children he gathered about him the children of the settlers of his neighborhood at Oxford, Ohio, and tried out his plans in the great out-door school. He was making up his books as he went along. Each day he arranged his children in groups and tested their capacities to read and learn by his prepared lessons. He watched their progress carefully, often changing his lessons from day to day to meet the varying needs and abilities of the groups. His carefully kept records of these classes were the guiding principles used in making his readers. The students
tested, ranged in age from "five years to the rather high
college age of those days." However, the numeral which des-
ignates the place of these readers within the series does
not indicate grade level as numbered readers of today largely
do. These readers held much human interest and helped to
make the educational history of the Ohio valley. Katherine
Wood has aptly said,

They taught several generations to read, gave them
moral instruction, brought real riches of language and
literature to bookless millions and helped to weld poly-
glot and pioneer communities into a common Americanism.
They were native and genuine, of their time and place.
They grew from the soil which, in turn, they abundantly
nourished. They fixed standards and formed tastes and
lived in memory.¹

These books in a measure released the child from the
severe Puritanic spirit of a century just passed in which
little children argued with God against their fate,

Children: God, great Creator, why was our Nature
deprieved and forlorn?
Why so defiled and made so vil’d
whilst we were yet unborn?

God: You sinners are, and such a share
as sinners may expect,
Such you shall have; for I do save
none but my own Elect.

A crime it is, therefore in bliss
you may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow
the easiest place in Hell.²

¹A Fourth Reader served grades as high as the eighth.
²Katherine Woods, "William McGuffey: His Readers,"
²Harvey C. Minnich, William Holmes McGuffey And His
Although much that was somber was still to be found in McGuffey, children were told of the joys of life and beauty in all things by such poems as,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Come, come, come} \\
\text{The summer now is here.} \\
\text{Come, call the pretty posies,} \\
\text{The violet at and roses.} \\
\text{Come, come, come,} \\
\text{The summer now is here.} \\
\text{The skylark, when the dews of morn} \\
\text{Hang tremulous on flower and thorn} \\
\text{Bucant with joy, and scars and sings.}
\end{align*}
\]

The religious element taught was universal in tone, as typified by "The Lord's Prayer," the "Psalms" and the "Ten Commandments."

Ten Commandments in Verse

1. Thou shalt have but me.
2. Re-form no idol bend the knee.
3. Take not the name of God in vain.
4. Do not the Sabbath day pro-fane.
5. Give to thy parents honor and due.
6. Take heed that thou no mur-der do.
7. Abstain from words and deeds un-clean.
8. Steal not, for thou by God art seen.
9. Tell not a will-ful lie, nor love it.
10. What is thy neigh-bor's do not cov-er.

SUMMATION

With all thy soul love God above,
And as thy-self, thy neigh-bor love.

---

When William McGuffey finally came to the printing of his books, all material used in them had been tested and the decision made as to the proper percentage of humor, pathos, love, adventure, and sorrow to be used. Perhaps there is a little too much accent on death and preparing to die. Throughout the entire series of readers McGuffey chose lessons which taught love of country, truthfulness, integrity, temperance, courage and industry.

Not only were these readers designed to teach reading but they furnished the material conducive to oratory which was highly advocated by McGuffey. The "Fifth and Sixth Readers" particularly, contain many poems of this nature. No doubt the woods and halls resounded to the impassioned speech. Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote," or

And once again, --

Hear me, ye walls, that echoed to the tread
Of either Brutus! Once again, I swear,
The eternal city shall be free.

At the beginning of this poem McGuffey says, "This lesson is marked for inflection, emphasis, and modulation, and is an admirable exercise for them all,"

Pathos is expressed by such stories as, "Mary, The Maid

---


7 McGuffey, Sixth Reader, p. 140, (1868). From Rienzi's Address "To The Romans" by Miss Mitford.
of The Inn" who as a beautiful young woman takes a dare and goes to the haunted Abbey at night. While there she sees two men who carry a corpse between them. Later one murderer is identified as her betrothed and is hanged on a gibbet near the Abbey. Mary becomes insane.  

According to Dr. Harvey Minnich, a Primer was written by McGuffey of which only one copy is extant. It was a very small book of only thirty-one pages. In 1857 it became the First Reader. McGuffey's code of ethics is given to the children for the first time stressing, honesty, goodness, prompt obedience, kindness, etc. This little book contains an illustrated alphabet as well as an illustration for each lesson. McGuffey makes spelling function in a concrete way by saying at the beginning of each lesson, "Let the child spell each word in the line, then read the line."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spell</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is it an ox?</td>
<td>Do we go up?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do we go up?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure:
- i-s is, i-t it; a-n an; c-x, ox
- D-o do, w-e we; g-o go; u-p, up

This little book taught its lessons largely through stories dealing with children and their pets, chickens, birds,

---

74


cats, dogs, etc.

It stressed early rising and made procrastination an evil to be shunned. Thousands of little children learned this poem.

The lark is up to meet the sun,
The bee is on the wing;
The ant its labor has begun,
The woods with music ring.

Shall birds, and bees, and ants, be wise,
While I my moments waste?
O let me with the morning rise,
And to my duty haste.  

In a revision of this First Reader printed in 1887 and called the "McGuffey's First Alternate Reader" the poetical method is chosen to fix words which sound alike but have different meanings. It seems as if so difficult a distinction in words of this type might have belonged much farther along.

Sow, sew, so
So they sow and sew;
S, and C, and W,
This is what the farmers do;
Put an E in place of O,
This is how the mothers sew,—
So they sow and sew for you;
So without the W,
So, so, so,  

In the last lesson the illustration shows a mother presenting a book to her little girl and encouraging her by saying,

What! the last lesson? Have we come to the last

---

A lesson in the book? A few months ago you could not even spell. Now you can read all the lessons in the First Reader. Now you may have the "New Second Reader." Appreciation to parents and teachers is expressed and we close this little book destined to become famous, by reading the last line, "And now, my little friends, we must bid you all a kind good-by."  

In the preface of the Second Reader (1857), McCuffey says, The lessons are short, the language simple, the subjects interesting and especially attractive to childhood. At the same time, it has been made an important object to append valuable instruction, and to exercise a healthy moral influence upon the mind of the learner. 

It is in this reader that McCuffey for the first time adds a moral clearly stated in didactic words at the close of many of the lessons. In the story, "A Place for Ev-er-y Thing" careless little Mary learns a lesson of keeping things tidy as the moral shows, "I will have a place for ev-er-y thing, and keep ev-er-y thing in its place."

Words of more than one syllable are divided by the hyphen into their proper parts, (suf-fer) thus "very much facilitating instruction." Longer words of two syllables in my first readers are not so divided.

Many selections used in the Second Reader became Classics.

---

and were printed in practically all revisions: "The Lame Dog"; "Mary's Lamb"; "The Starling"; "The Lark and The Farmer"; and, "Three Boys and Three Cakes."

Many stories in natural history were used perhaps in their original form as written by McGuffey: "The Horned Owl"; "The Humming Bird"; "The Beaver"; How to Catch a Pony," etc. These stories dealt with animate things of daily life, many of which could have been witnessed by the master and his pupils as they conducted their lessons out of doors.

The illustrations, which seem crude and quaint to us today, were really excellent ones for that period. Many of them portrayed children's activities.

The style of the Third Reader is much more formal than that of the First and Second Readers. Although called a Third Reader the material is quite difficult enough for a child in the Junior High School today. McGuffey makes use of much material from the English writers in this volume, and in the edition before me (1853), says in the preface,

The Compiler has drawn from the purest fountains of English literature, and has aimed to combine simplicity with sense, elegance with simplicity, and piety with both, so far as these qualities can be combined with that which is transferable to a printed page.

He also apologizes for not having more liberally transferred to his pages, "the chast simplicity, the thrilling pathos, the living descriptions, and the matchless sublimity of the sacred Bible."
The material is classified under three heads: (1) "Stops"; "Articulation and Suggestions for Teachers"; (2) Prose Lessons; and (3) Poetical Lessons. Each lesson is preceded by "Remarks" -- or directions for reading the lesson. Following each lesson is a long list of questions, which serve to summarize the selection read. Much space is given to rules for correct reading such as, "Rule. -- Be careful and give a full sound to the vowels. Regard to this rule will correct the common flat, clipping and uninteresting way in which many read."

The material in this book is difficult in content and of a highly moral nature, and the reader must get its import through deduction. No child in any school could fail to grasp the lessons taught by the story of George and Charles. McCaffey sets these forth in the "The Consequence of Idleness" as contrasted with "The Advantages of Industry." In the former George the indolent is in terror of being called upon in class. So idle does he become that he is forced from college and despised by everyone. He becomes a dissipated wanderer without money or friends. "Such are the wages of idleness." The reader is admonished to take warning from this story and "stamp improvement on the wings of time."

In the same school is Charles who does not equal George in "natural powers of the mind," but who, through diligent application, received his degree. His mother, father,
brothers, and sisters came on commencement day to hear him speak and loved him more than ever. He of course became an intelligent man, loved and respected by all. "Such are the rewards of industry."

In another lesson the author Abbott, says,

Does God notice children in school? He certainly does! And if you are not diligent in school your heart is not right with God. If you do not improve the advantages you enjoy, you sin against your maker,

With books, or work, or healthful play,
Let your first years be past,
That you may give, for every day
Some good account at last. 13

This reader contains much material on dying or preparing to die and is in this respect more like the earlier readers. "Passing Away" by Mrs. Hemans shows how fleeting is life, "The Dead Mother," (Anonymous) is a dialogue between the father and the child as they stand at the casket of the mother. No comfort is offered to the heartbroken little boy, the father saying,

Thy father too, soon shall sleep.
Thou wilt be deserted upon earth;
None will regard thee;...
An orphan, abandoned to the wiles of wicked men. 14

Mrs. Sigourney true to form, wrote the poem "The Dying Boy." He was only seven and while dying bequeathed his

14 Ibid., p. 126.
earthly possessions, his rose tree and his garden to his brother and sister. Through nine verses he counseled his family and friends. To his sister he made this request:

Sister, my young rose tree,
That all the spring has been my pleasant care,
Just putting forth its leaves so green and fair,
I give to thee;
And when its roses bloom,
I shall be far away, my short life done;
But will you not bestow a single one
Upon my tomb?

Near the conclusion of his farewell speech he offers these consoling words, "Nay, do not weep. You'll all come soon."

McGuffey's Fourth Reader completes the series of Eclectic Readers. It involves the same principles as those in the first three readers. In the preface of the Third Reader the author decries the fact that he has not used excerpts from the Bible more frequently, while in the preface of the Fourth Reader he justifies his use of biblical literature in prose and poetry by saying, "In a Christian country that man is to be pitied who at this day can honestly object to imbuing the minds of the youth with the language and spirit of the word of God." The earliest edition contained twenty-nine lessons which were biblical or religious.


There are many rules, rules which would serve well today, about inflection, articulation, emphasis, etc. At the end of each lesson there is a series of questions which were to be answered by the children. Many moral and good civic lessons were taught from this book. The famous story Waste Not, Want Not" is in this reader and so strong was its appeal that many boys and girls became string savers. The kite flying story which taught perseverance to Lucy and John precedes the poem which teaches the same lesson and which will never die.

Try, Try Again

'Tis a lesson you should heed,
Try, try again,
If at first you don't succeed,
Try, try again.

All that other folk can do,
Why with patience, should not you?
Only keep this rule in view:
Try, Try Again.\(^\text{18}\)

While the books from the First through the Fourth Readers were written mainly to teach moral precepts those which followed for older pupils were remarkable for their high literary quality.

The first Fifth Reader was compiled in 1844. As I open the worn leather cover of one of these books, I find that it

\(^{17}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 63.\)

\(^{18}\text{Op. cit.}, \ p. \ 95.\)
was called "McGuffey's Rhetorical Guide" containing, "Elegant Extracts in Prose and Poetry." This book together with the Sixth Reader were really books of elocutionary exercises, designed to give to the youth of this land a comprehensive survey of the best literature in the English-speaking world. They contain definite instructions on reading, explaining articulation, inflection, monotonous accent, modulation, gesture, etc.

Pupils had much guidance in applying these suggestions through the medium of oral reading and reciting poems. In the Fifth Reader the pupils became acquainted with the various uses of description, narration and argumentation. In the Sixth Reader he learns of some of the great orators in England and America; Walpole's "Reply to Pitt"; 20 Patrick Henry's "Speech before the Virginia Convention"; 21 Webster's "Speech on Trial of a Murderer"; 22 etc., are speeches that will live forever.

The great poets are brought together in this Sixth Reader also; Shakespeare, (quoted most often) Longfellow,

---


21. Ibid., p. 118.

22. Ibid., p. 416.
Scott, Addison, Dickens, Holmes and Whittier. The poems selected showed McGuffey's judgment to be unerring for they are accounted as literary gems today after three quarters of a century of critical review. Some of the best known and best loved poems are "Psalm of Life"; "The Raven"; "Break, Break, Break"; "Abou Ben Adam"; "Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers"; and "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."

Hugh Fullerton, who as a boy used and loved the McGuffey Readers says:

Some of the selections may appear stilted and severe now, and the moral tone may seem Victorian, but I'll defy any man or group of men to choose from all the range of English literature an equal number of selections that will maintain as high a moral and literary tone, give the same proportions of humor, pathos, tragedy, comedy, love, and human interest, give as many lessons in history and natural history and be as closely associated with the great historical events, as are in these readers. . . . They probably exerted a greater influence consciously upon the literary tastes and unconsciously upon the mortality of the United States than any other books, excepting the Bible. In my edition of the Sixth there are seventeen selections from the Bible, and no one could make seventeen better choices from a literary and poetical standpoint, nor seventeen that would give less cause for complaint from any creed that might oppose Bible reading in the Schools.

The McGuffey Readers had a phenomenal circulation and a long life. They made a profound and lasting impression upon the youth of our country. No school readers will ever again exert the influence that the well beloved McGuffey Readers possessed; but a revival and acceptance of their ideals of courage, faith, and service would not only make the world a better place in which to live but would be a fitting tribute to a great American educator.
Until about 1860 literature had been the basic foundation of school books. Specialization presented a new outlook to one educator, Marcus Willson. Beginning about 1863 he compiled a series of five readers which he called the "School and Family Readers." On the back outside cover of the "First Reader" he sets forth clearly his ideas of his books, of which he says,

The natural sciences and especially the department of animal life are here presented in a new and attractive light, divested of useless technicalities, enlivened by incident and anecdote, adorned by prolific selections and illustrated in a superb manner. No other series of readers makes any approach to this in extent, variety, beauty and utility of illustration.

In general the information along the lines of science began in the first books with things near at hand and gradually approached the more remote as the series progressed. Here and there were lessons on conduct and morals.

The First Reader (1860) is similar to those of other series. It contains an illustrated alphabet followed by simple words of two, three, and four letters and a few words of two syllables. The stories are about things familiar to children, dogs, cats, hens, goats, the wind, the trees and water. Many lessons and poems are of a religious nature and some of them are read or sung in schools of today.

shows the form in which poems were printed and marked so that teacher and child might know where to place "rising and falling inflections."

When I'm qui-est; when I'm rude;
When I'm naugh-ty; when I'm good;
When I'm hap-py; when I'm sad;
When I'm sor-ry; when I'm glad;
When I pluck the scent-ed rose;
That in my neat gar-den grows;
When I crush the tin-y fly;
God is watch-ing from the sky.\footnote{Rising inflection is denoted thus/. Falling inflection is denoted thus/\textsuperscript{,}}

The \textit{Second Reader} (1863) deals with the subject of fowls, cows, dogs and fish in the natural science selections. It has a number of moral stories. The following is designed to lead children to see the evils of laziness through the adventures of a boy aptly called "Slokins." The titles tell the story. In "Lazy Slokins, the School-boy," he does not learn his lesons and the stupid look on his face marks him as a dull, lazy, boy. In "Lazy Slokins, the Young Man," the last sentence, "If he does not use his money to buy a hat or shoes" what does he do with it" forecasts the third part, "Lazy Slokins, the Drunkard"; and finally "Lazy Slokins, the Thief," who steals and goes to prison. The last paragraph tells what the Bible says about strong drink.

Wine is a mocker; strong drink is raging. \textsuperscript{25}Who hath

Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the
wine. Look not upon the wine when it is red. At last
it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Then the question is asked, "But what became of his poor
wife?" "Turn to page 114th, and you will see." Being so in-
trigued I turn to page 114th, and see the picture of a dis-
tressed looking woman sewing by candlelight and at the same
time rocking Lazy Stokins' baby in a cradle. 24

Beginning with the Third Reader (1865) the books become
more highly specialized as to Natural Science content. "Book
Three" is divided into three parts.

Part I containing Bible Stories
Part II Moral Lessons
Part III First Division of Animal Life, -- Quadrupeds,

The Fourth Reader (1866) besides that portion dealing
with the Elements of Elocution has,

Part I Human Physiology
Part II Second Division of Animal Life -- Ornithology,
or Birds

Part III First Division of Vegetable Physiology, or
Botany

Part IV Miscellaneous
Part V First Division of Natural Philosophy
Part VI Sacred History

The *Fifth Reader* (1870) is increasingly difficult and like other readers of its time would need to be advanced several years if it were used today.

Part I: Elocutionary

Part II: Herpetology, or Reptiles

Part III: Second Division of Physiology and Health

Part IV: Second Division of Botany

Part V: Ichthyology or Fishes

Part VI: Civil Architecture

Part VII: Natural Philosophy continued

Part VIII: First Division of Physical Geography

Part IX: First Division of Chemistry

Part X: First Division of Geology

Part XI: Ancient History

Having studied these "Tables of Contents" it will be readily seen that the "Wilson Readers" were in a class by themselves. They were often known as "Harper's Readers," taking this title from the name of the publisher. While they had a fairly large circulation they did not make the human appeal which would keep their memory green, as did the McGuffey Readers.

Closely following the Wilson series many other sets of readers were running in close competition with the McGuffey books. One set which was used for forty years or more was written in 1873 by Lewis B. Monroe, Dean of Boston University School of Oratory. The "Primer," or first book of the series
was accompanied by a large wall chart. It is interesting to note that sixty-five years ago Monroe was advocating in his "Hints to Teachers," that the various letters of the alphabet be presented only when a need for that letter arose. This method is in common practice today. Monroe's Primer was built scientifically and met the demands which he set forth. The alphabet was presented very gradually and not in sequence. About ninety per cent of the words used were one syllable words. Each little lesson had an interesting illustration. He urged the teacher to pay strict attention to the voice, ear and eyes of the child. He strikes a modern note again when he says that children should not read before they are really ready. Today we call this "reading readiness."

The First Reader contains the well remembered and well beloved "Kate and John" stories. Monroe's "Talks to Teachers" at the beginning of "The First Reader" contain suggestions relative to the presentation of the reading lesson which offered a new approach.

Tell enough of the story to arouse interest of the children before they open their books. Introduce in your talk any new words which may occur and explain their meaning. . . . Having aroused the class to an eager interest, let them turn to the lesson. . . . Do not allow . . .


An interesting fact came to light in the "First Reader" before me, in that the Table of Contents is exactly like that of the "Second Reader" but the contents of this reader are entirely different.
word calling . . . but urge child to read in a pleasant, natural voice putting his words together.

This approach does not pre-suppose a reading background already acquired as do some of the readers.

This little book is divided into two parts, part one "Plays and Talks of John and Kate" are stories by Monroe relating the experiences of these two children with their pets; on trips, in the garden.

In part two John and Lizzie are the two children. The stories are built around the happy home life of these children and their parents. The stories teach politeness, service and kindness.

The content of the Second Reader shows an excellent gradation in difficulty of subject matter. The adventures of Kate and John are continued, often in the form of dialogue. In addition Mr. Monroe has included a few lessons on scientific phenomena such as the lesson on the "Sun" demonstrated to Kate by her father, through the use of a candle and an orange. "Henry and The Echo" and "The Well" also taught scientific facts. A few fables are included but very little material of a religious nature.

In the Third Reader Mr. Monroe devotes a few pages to inflection, articulation and phonic analysis. Long stories

appear but are broken up into two or three parts. Poetic
selections, many of them narrative in nature make up a gener­
and The Cricket" were favorites.

We come to the end of this series and find the beautiful
poem,

A Farewell

I

My fairest child, I have no song to give you;
No lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray;
Yet, ere we part one lesson I can leave you
For every day.

II

Be good, dear child, and let who will be clever;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long;
And so make life, death, and that vast forever,
One grand, sweet song.

Although this period (1840-1850) is essentially outstand­
ing because of the rapid development in readers for children
it also produced writers of a new type of fiction. In accord­
ance with the spirit of America, children were being given
more freedom. Gradually but surely they were learning to enjoy
and not fear the world about them. Writers, realizing this
fact, knew that books written for children should be based
upon experiences and things in which children were interested.
Childish escapades were being written into books much to the
horror of the home, school and church, but much to the delight
of children. Mark Twain's delightful "Tom Sawyer" (1876) no
doubt, will endure forever because his interpretation of the
"boy mind" will never change as long as there are normal boys.

The Nick Carter dime novels appeared, and because of their appeal to adventure loving youth, had a large sale. It would be interesting to know whether boys of this period, who must still have had much of the Puritanical in their blood, were greatly influenced to follow in the footsteps of Nick Carter's heroes.

Bootblacks, newsboys and other poor boys were raised to positions of affluence and success through their own initiative and perseverance in overcoming all obstacles in a series of books by Horatio Alger, Jr., a Unitarian minister (1860).

Louisa Alcott wrote "Little Women" for girls. It is still popular because the truth and sincerity of the four sisters in the story appeal to youngsters of today. That this story retains an affectionate place in the hearts of "grown-up's" is attested by the great success of film picture of this story.

"Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates" by Mary Mapes Dodge, never fails to make its appeal for service, honesty, kindness and unselfishness to children of this century just as it did to children of the last century.

There were "The Little Pepper," series; "Dotty Dimple," series; "Little Prudy," series; which were so popular for Christmas and birthday gifts. They were filled with soft sentimentality but their large sales over a period of years
showed that children liked them. They have not survived the test of time, however, and have passed into oblivion with hundreds of other children's books which met only an immediate need.

During this period some of the most beloved stories of childhood were coming to American children from friends across the sea. In England as in America children were being considered as such and not as "little adults," and books were being written especially for them. With the waning of Puritanism and the knowledge that literature need not always be moralistic, new types of books which appeared in England were destined not only to reach our shores but to be received with acclaim. Of these one of the most delightful was and is "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." Through this story "Lewis Carroll" who understood the delight which children received from the fanciful tale, opened a new field in literature which has brought untold joy to children of the world. Harvey Darton calls it "the spiritual volcano of children's books."26

Not until 1846 were those most charming "Fairy Tales," by that inimitable writer, Hans Christian Andersen, translated into English. What joy they bring to children and what excellent philosophy for those adults who are finely

attuned to their delicacy.

One story which never fails to hold the breathless interest of little children, and which shall always be a part of nursery lore is the story of "The Three Bears" by Southey.

The books mentioned are typical and show the trend in literature abroad as well as at home. They block out forever the dismal, depressing, moralistic types of literature.

Summary

The middle decades of the nineteenth century were marked by a rapid rise in the field of readers for children. There was a sharp decline in the use of religious material and a great increase in the use of the secular.

Compilers of these series, although they really tried to fit the material to the child turned out books which were highly moralistic and lacking in humor. They strove to educate the masses through giving information in different subjects and acquiring "knowledge both for its own sake and its uses." There was a surprising amount of good literature and a fair amount of American writing. The famous McGuffey series was the most popular.

The next chapter shall deal briefly with the modern period of children's books.
CHAPTER V

AGE OF LITERARY CONTENT

1880 - 1937

This modern period may be designated as the age of literary content in children's books. Professor Huey says that,

Since about 1880 the subject matter of readers has been taken from the field of literature and the problem has been one of selection, arrangement and adoption within the field, the tendency being toward the use of literary wholes, instead of being made up of literary scraps.¹

This change is particularly noticeable in the schoolbooks written for children during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and up to the present. A brief account of one or two sets of the best readers will show the modern trend. Here no "morals" are appended, but the subtle influence of the contents of these books is great in building character.

The Heart of Oak series is a fine example of the book in which all other features are subordinated to literary excellence. These books lead the child through the realm of the development of literature, fables, myths, and fairy tales

into the field of literature, especially poetry. The first book is composed entirely of nursery rhymes and jingles.

Titles of books in the early part of this era were indicative of their contents and the trend of the times; "Lights to Literature," "Stepping Stones to Literature," "The Literary Readers," "The Graded Literature Readers," all have significant titles. The author of the Fifth Reader of "Lights to Literature," series states in the preface that,

"The creation of an ideal, its ennobling by a constant growth of thought, power and a sentiment that cultivates respect of self, love for one's fellowman, and reverence toward God -- all these are ends served by reading of good literature."

Nothing but literature, which has survived the test of time, can be found in the excellent series of five readers called "The Child Classics" (1909). Essay, poetry, biography, fable, myth and fairy tale bring to the child who has read all of these books a wealth of the world's best classical literature. The selections chosen were from the pens of the greatest writers both in America and abroad. The Fifth Reader is particularly interesting and instructive, dealing with the biographies of great men.

As great men truly furnish the 'very marrow of the world's history,' a vivid personal impression, especially glimpses of their childhood when ideals were forming, outvalues many dates and other encyclopedic details."

---

2Lights to Literature, Fifth Reader, preface, pp. 1-2.


*Child Classics, Fifth Reader, preface, p. 1.
Care has been taken to present a variety of appeal through the heroic, the imaginative, the humorous, the ethical and the realistic.

While it is true that the presses have turned and are turning out much material of mediocre and sometimes very poor caliber, at the same time the greatest minds are producing literary gems to meet the requirements of children of all ages.

What child is not thrilled by the wonder child "Mowgli" in Kipling's, "The Second Jungle Book"? What better lessons could be taught than were given in the wise council of the bear and panther to their little charge? The children are fascinated by this modern beast tale, which had its counterpoint in the earliest folk lore. There is a wide range in Kipling's stories from Mowgli through, "Captains Courageous," and "Puck of Pook's Hill."

In 1885 came that delightful book, destined to live eternally in the realm of childhood, Robert Louis Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verse."

The Herbartian philosophy was still dominant at the beginning of the twentieth century and because of the emphasis which it placed on folk lore there was a great revival in this field. Folk lore literature of the world was modified and brought within the reading ability of children.

With new emphasis on the experimental side of education,
the realistic has come to be of great importance to the store of desirable reading material for children. John Dewey's philosophy on current educational practice is, in a large measure responsible, for the writing of books which are more truly representative of children's tastes.

Emelyn E. Gardner suggests that "the writing of these modern books based upon the Dewey philosophy parallels the work of those writers of the eighteenth century who tried to apply Rousseau's educational theories."

It is now a recognized fact that children are not miniature adults but rather, that they live in a world of their own in which the social relations are of the greatest importance.

Books of certain types are written today to meet definitely the child's needs and to help him to live amicably in his little world, until he is ready to live in the complex social world of the adult.

Stories of how children live at home and abroad give him vision. Lucy Fitch Perkin's "Twin" series, each story of which is written against a background of a different country is one of the most outstanding contributions to children's literature.

Schools no longer confine reading activities entirely to so called readers but use the many books which are legion.

containing factual material. Hendrik W. Van Loon’s charmingly written, "The Story of Mankind" is read avidly by both boys and girls. His "Wilbur, The Hat" brings much fun at the same time giving good advice. "Peter Pan" and "Peter and Wendy" delicate, whimsical stories take children into the realm of fancy and who of us shall say what they see and hear while there?

We realize today that books serve many purposes, other than giving content knowledge, among which is the important one of producing in the little reader sheer, unalloyed joy. Can you picture the young child of past centuries enjoying as the modern child does, Hugh Lofting’s dearly beloved "Dr. Doolittle"? He would have been in danger of hell’s fire had he been so sinful as to have laughed at the slap-stick comedy of Dr. Doolittle’s old white horse kicking the stable boy into the pond, because he had been treated to a mustard plaster instead of spectacles.

Children are keen to sense the humor in the absurd seriousness with which Carl Sandburg tells some utterly impossible tale in his "Rootabaga Stories."

How they love and laugh at Kipling’s story of "The Elephant’s Child," particularly where the delightful reversal of a situation common to childhood is told, as when the Elephant’s Child finds out what his trunk is for and spanks his mother and his father; his uncle and his aunt. That is a situation in which almost every child should like to
participate, at times.

The Thornton Burgess stories, in which animals do and say the same things that are associated with children's activities are dear to the hearts of the smaller children while Ernest Seton Thompson holds the attention of the adolescents with his charmingly written animal tales.

Books which tell of the life of the pioneer child always awaken within the American boy or girl, that kindred feeling of relationship which is his through inheritance. Lately there have been numerous stories akin to the real pioneer story in which dolls or toys come to life and tell of their adventures. Such an one is "Hitty: Her First One Hundred Years" written by Rachel Field, she who understands the child heart. Hitty is a little wooden doll which Miss Field found in an antique shop. Since no one knew her age or history the author decided that Hitty, herself, should tell of her travels o'er land and sea during the last hundred years.

The informational or factual type of book is in great demand today among children. The eternal why is ever in evidence. Some of the most skillful authors are writing books along this line. Katherine Gibson has written "The Goldsmith of Florence"; Jeanette Eaton, "Young Lafayette"; Lewis Hines, "Men at Work"; Henry E. Lent, "Diggers and Builders," which are a few among others of equal rank.

The beautiful Petersham books bring to little children,
on their own levels, books which give them stories of things closely related to everyday life, homes, transportation, clothing, food, cotton, silk, wool and linen. Now just off the press come two books written presumably for children but their appeal will be just as strong for adults. The first, "Mickey Mouse and His Friends" by Walt Disney and Jean Ayer is a gay charming story of the adventures of Mickey, Minnie, Donald the Duck and all the rest of their friends. The clever illustrations are in color that will gladden the heart of every child.

"The Quin's Book" by Jean Ayer depicts the daily life of those charming, little Canadian girls, Yvonne, Emelie, Marie, Cecile, Annette, Dr. Dafoe and their nurse are shown with them in many activities. We see them at play, at dinner, while playing music, at games and in bed. Actual photographs illustrate this appealing book.**

Another forward looking development in children's literature is shown in the practice of printing the creative work of children themselves. David Binney Putnam's "David Goes Voyaging," Deric Husebaum's "Deric in Mesa Verde" and Nathalia Crane's "Book of Poetry" all show strong creative power.*

---

** New York: Thomas Nelson and Son, 1937.

*Creative poetry of children will be treated in the chapter on that subject.
Along with the efforts to intrigue interest the older and more serious aim has not been forgotten. The more thoughtful authors as well as those interested in children's magazines are holding up ideals of courage, fair play, and wholesome living. They are not adding "a moral" as such but are causing the child to form "sound moral judgements, rightly approving or condemning the actions of the characters, without the author's adding one word of obvious moralizing."\(^5\)

Artistry of expression is not enough in children's books for the child needs the aid of illustration to help him visualize the detail of a story. This fact was realized back in the fifteenth century or earlier before the technique of illustration had been mastered. Before me are some of the earlier books with their dull colored, warped backs, cheap paper, extremely fine print and very crude woodcuts.\(^6\)

It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that definite trends in illustrations for children's books in America were shown. Today, it sometimes seems as if the illustrations of some books are too profuse and detract from the text.

Outstanding among the many illustrators of children's books...

\(^5\)Esenwein.

\(^6\)Discussed in Chapters II and III.
books are Hande and Miska Petersham whose creations are a fine contribution to childhood.

A table or shelf of modern books for children presents a very gay and pleasing sight. The lovely colors and decorations lure children to the reading table, just as the gay, sweet scented flowers lure the bees.

The entire mechanical perfection of book making is genuinely pleasing. The excellence of binding, the distinctness of type, the color of the paper on which it is printed, the spirit of the drawing -- these strike our senses, but these may also be the subterfuges of the publishing trade, these the artistic features which often hide shallowness beneath.\(^6\)

Today children's books are improved through receiving greater attention and critical appreciation.

The Bookman and the Horn Book among magazines and the New York Herald-Tribune among newspapers are showing that regular publication of serious criticisms concerning children's books is filling a great need.

So we trust that our twentieth century shall make some definite and lasting contributions to children's literature.

Summary

This brief overview of twentieth century shows that minds equipped for the task, are dealing with problems of criticism and evaluation peculiar to children's literature.

There is a fair balance between the books which are good and those which are mediocre and poor.

A more general recognition of the significance of children's books has grown up.

Chapter VI shall treat of the moral aspects of books, particularly during the last century.

From the very earliest times books for children were written with diametrically opposite and excluding purposes. The religious view has been treated previously.

It has always been a commonly accepted fact that a story or selection is moral to the utmost one of the ways if it be written enough to be put into the hands of children. In this study, however, I shall use the word "moral" to denote those stories written in honor of or in memory of, helped along, sustained, improved, and clarified, stories of this type that have such vitality and have such force through the age in the textbooks and tables, that have played an integral part in the crystallization of humanism since writing the books and teachings of over certain people from those days and have established the fact that the

"immoral" stories have lived through ages of the race experiences.

Thus on wise title sight of the teachings of the

(102)
CHAPTER VI

USE OF MORALS IN CHARACTER BUILDING

From the very earliest times books for children were written with distinctly moral and religious purposes. The religious side has been treated previously.

It has always been a commonly accepted fact that a story or selection is moral, in the broader use of the word, if it is wholesome enough to be put into the hands of children. In this study, however, I shall use the word "moral" to denote those stories written to teach definitely such virtues as honesty, helpfulness, obedience, temperance, and kindness. Stories of this type date back into antiquity and have come down through the ages in the fairytale and fable. They have played an integral part in the dissemination of knowledge concerning the beliefs and teachings of these ancient peoples from whom they came and have established the fact that the various races have lived through many of the same experiences.

Today we have lost sight of the teachings of the Elucidarium and the Gesta Romanorum, but we may still profit through the teachings of the fairy-tales and fables.

*Note Chapter I, p. 2.
Barring the lack of agreement among educators regarding the fitness of fairy tales as reading material for children, we do know that they love them and profit from the morals of such fairy tales as, "Little Red Riding Hood"; "The Barning Needle"; "The Ugly Duckling"; "What The Old Man Does Is Always Right" and others too numerous to mention. The moral taught by the Red Riding Hood story is perhaps of greater significance today than it was when Perrault wrote it.

This Story demonstrates that children discreet, Should never confide in each Stranger they meet; For often a Knav, in an artful disguise, Will mark out an innocent prey for his prize; Take warning, dear Children, before 'tis too late, By Little Red Riding-Hoods tragical fate.

Aesop's Fables were among the first writings of an earlier antiquity to attract marked attention. Although they were written as the results of special events and designed at first to meet special circumstances, are so admirably constructed as to be filled with lessons of general utility, and of universal application. The moral which they invariably point, is usually plainly marked. The fables written at first in Greek were translated into Latin and in 1475 were printed in Latin. About 1485 Caxton translated them into English and printed them on his press in Westminster Abbey.** Caxton says in his preface that whether the morals are specifically stated or not it is evident that they were intended to teach

---

**One of these rare editions may be seen in the British Museum.
some particular lesson concerning human behaviour. The prologue in this Caxton edition states the purpose clearly.

... Esopo man of grece/subtill and Ingenious/teacheth in his fables how men ought to kepe and rewle them well/ and to the ende that he shold shewe the lyf and customes of al maner of men/ he induceth the byrdes/the trees and the beastes spekyng to the ende that the men may know wherefore the fables were found/In the whiche he hath wretan the malyce of the byllle people and the argument of the Improbes/He teacheth also to be humble and for to use wordes/And many other fayr Examples rehearsed and declared hereafter/for the whiche I Romulus have translated oute of grekes tongue in to latyn tongue/ the whiche ye thou rede them/ they shalle aguye* and sharpe they wytte and shalle gyve to the cause of Joye/1

Fables have come down to us as an inheritance. It is interesting to note their influence upon books written for children not only during the years immediately following their translation and printing,* but also upon those books which were compiled and printed after an interval of about two centuries. During this time books were highly moral in the broad sense of the word but the church, which dictated policies at that time, did not condone teaching through the specific type of moral only as it affected the religious element. Then followed a period of transition in which the religious declined and the secular became paramount. With this change the moral again assumed a prominent place which

---

*To make acute.


*Note Chapter I, pp. 8-9.
it retained for many years.

Then as now, however, an issue could be more or less successfully evaded. In England a new form of story writing became the vogue. "The Life and Adventures of a Lap Dog" by F. Coventry (1751) became a model for stories in which an animal telling the story of its life, acts as an observer and critic of human conduct.

Nature lovers and humanitarians liking this form produced many stories of birds and animals. These creatures had an immense influence on the nursery and no one could really reject so engaging a tutor as a Mr. Robin or Mr. Mouse.  

Mrs. Trimmer \(^1\) \(^2\) (1766) wrote "Fabulous Histories," designed for the instruction of children in teaching them how to treat animals. Later it was called "The History of the Robins."

The moral was used in many ways by writers of stories. Sometimes it was stated definitely at the close of the story as in the lesson taught by the fable of, "The Kid and The Wolf." "Time and place often give the advantage to the weak

\(^1\) Today we have its counterpart in "Donald the Duck" and "Mickey and Minnie Mouse."

\(^2\) Sarah Trimmer (1741-1810) was important in that she made herself, in respect of her writings for and about children, completely the non-political, undoctrinaire English upper middle class. She introduced humane treatment of animals.
over the strong." Again it was merely implied as in the fable of, "The Wolves and the Sheep." Morals stated positively are used almost exclusively, but occasionally one is found stated negatively as in the fable of, "The Bee and Jupiter," "For if you use your sting, it shall remain in the wound you make, and then you will die from loss of it."

In England, during the period from 1743-1851 a group of writers of didactic stories flourished; Laetitia Aiken Boulton, (1743-1825); Thomas Day, (1748-1789); Maria Edgeworth, (1767-1849); Martha Mary Sherwood, (1775-1851).

Thomas Day wrote the highly moral story of Sandford and Merton, designed to disseminate and exemplify a particular philosophy of education."³ Martha Mary Sherwood is best known by her book "The History of the Fairchild Family." Many of these books reached the printers and booksellers on our side of the Atlantic and since children are much the same the world over their moral lessons influenced child life in our country as it did in England.

In America at this time much attention was being given to school books. The New England Primer no longer filled the

---

¹Note Chapter II, pp. 58-59.
²Note Chapter II, p. 60.
⁴Note Chapter IV.
need and was supplanted by Webster's famous "Blue Backed Speller," as Lyman Cobb, John Pierpont and Samuel Goodrich were compiling readers of a highly moral tone. Jacob Abbot was writing his "Rollo" books, the morals of which, if acquired, would have made such good children that only heaven could possibly have been their home.

It remained for the McGuffey series of readers to become famous over the whole of the United States of America, as shown in the previous discussion. Their greatest influence was accomplished through the direct teaching of morals, found in the Primer and the First to Fourth Readers, which were designed for younger pupils with more impressionable minds. Mark Sullivan says in his excellent book, "Our Times,"

These books were, to the average American, the storehouse of the fables, stories, mottos, proverbs, adages and aphorisms which constituted the largest body of ethical teaching he had, excepting the Bible, and the teaching of the Bible was overlapped by that of the Readers. In these books many a mature reader will find phrases, words associated in familiar couplets and passages, that have become standardized parts of his personal vocabulary. It was from McGuffey's Fourth Reader* that Roosevelt got the devastating epithet he once hurled at some self-starting proponents of plans alternative to his own, "Nedlesome Mattie." Because allusions to characters in McGuffey's were as quickly grasped, or quicker, than allusions to Biblical characters, everybody recalled the little girl who, overcome

**Chapter III, pp. 47-53.
*Note Chapter IV.
by an over-mastering intellectual curiosity could not obey the ban put upon opening her grandmother’s snuff-box, and suffered a retribution described in the couplet:

In vain she ran about for ease;
She could do nothing else but sneeze.

Many another reader will find in McCaffrey’s, to his surprise, the origin not only of phrases, but of sentiments, tastes, standards of conduct, and inhibitions, which in his pride he supposed were indigenous to himself, the native evidences of his own superiority of inner grace. 4

While it is true that McCaffrey did not set up a definite code, his “long list of lessons with moral purpose covers a moral code of broadest scope.” His social teachings, many of which remained in the minds of boys and girls who used his books, helped to develop some of our greatest leaders in national affairs, 5 distinguished in politics, industry, invention, education and in the field of literature. McCaffrey covered a wide range, not only in the morals which he wished to teach but in the sources from which they were chosen. The earliest fables written; the Bible, literature and nature all furnished excellent material for moral lessons. In his Primer and First Readers morals were used very sparingly. McCaffrey must evidently have been a believer in early rising for he stresses it in almost every book. In the Primer we

---


5 Taft, Harding, McKinley, Glenn Frank, Beveridge, Henry Ford, Edison, Ado, Darrow, Zona Gale, Lorado Taft, Mark Twain, Gene Stratton Porter, Robert LaFollette, Lew Wallace, James Whitcomb Riley.
find the oft quoted poem,

The lark is up to meet the sun,
The bee is on the wing;
The Ant its la-bor has be-gun,
The woods with mu-sic ring.

Shall birds, and bees, and ants, be wise,
While I my moments waste?
O let me with the morn-ing rise,
And to my duty haste.

Then there was the story of little Lucy who at six o'clock in the morning was admonished thus,

Get up, Lucy. Up, up, Lucy. Get up Lucy and go out to Mary.

It is said that the boys changed this version to "Double up Lucy," and always had fun about it.

"Do not stop to play on your way to school. Do not play with bad boys. They will lead you into harm." In this lesson poor little Frank Brown listened to "a bad boy" and while playing near a pond, fell in and was drowned. Let us hope that all other little McCuffyites heeded the above moral.

The moral to the story of the bad boy who laughed in school and had to wear the dunce-cap was, "God loves those who are good. If you would please Him you must al-ways be good and kind."

"McCuffy, First Reader, p. 67.

Ibid., p. 77.
Beginning with the Second Reader and continuing throughout the series the morals naturally fall into such specific classifications as idleness, lying, kindness, obedience, honesty, conscience, deceiving, intemperance.

The second lesson, "The Idle Boy Reformed" in the second reader, illustrates the psychological effect of good associations and examples. It is the story of a little school boy who, ("if he had been bigger, he would have been wiser") asked a bee to play with him. The bee replied "No I can not play; I must make honey; I must not be idle." In turn he asked a pony and a dog to play. Each replied as the bee had done, thus impressing the lesson; "No I must not be idle." The closing paragraph put the moral in words that could not be missed by the reader of the tale.

What is nobody idle? Then little boys must not be idle. So he made haste, and went to school, and learned his lesson very well, and the teacher said he was a good boy.

Hugh Idle and Mr. Toil exemplify the futility of running away from work. Hugh runs away from school and thinks he can travel the world over and indulge his laziness. After seeing that the farmer, carpenter, and even the musicians had to work Hugh decided that "Diligence is not a whit more toilsome than sport or idleness," and from that time forward he learned to be diligent at his task and became a fine boy."

*McGuffey, Fourth Reader*, p. 236.
McCaffrey abhorred lying or deceit of any kind and not unlike his contemporaries and the writers of centuries previous, made use of stories which caused children and those of credulous minds to be too conscience stricken over minor matters.

A little boy took a larger piece of cake than he was allowed to have, when his mother chanced to leave the room. He ate a bit and kept the extra piece. He felt very guilty. The author tells us that although his mother did not discover his theft, God saw him all the time. He deceived his mother for a bit of cake. If that little boy had one bit of feeling in his bosom he would feel unhappy whenever he thought of his meanness. At the close of the story these questions are asked.

Do you think the angels will want a little liar to enter the kingdom of Heaven and be associated with them? No! No liar can enter the kingdom of Heaven.

A little boy upset the ink bottle on the table. His mother on entering the room saw the accident but gave the boy a chance to confess. The boy, however, denied that he had spilled the ink, whereupon his mother said:

A child that lies, no one will trust,
Though he should speak the thing that's true;
And he that does one wrong at first
And lies to hide it, makes it two.5

The moral of the fable of "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" is easily understandable and often quoted:

The truth itself is not believed,
From one who often has deceived.  

"How to Catch a Pony" teaches that even animals should not be deceived. Coco, the pony was grazing in a field. His little master William had tried in many ways to catch him but without avail. Finally he filled his cap with luscious grass, which so tempted Coco that he came up to eat the grass. William gently took hold of his bridle. A mean boy said, "An empty cap would have done as well"; to which William replied, "I will not cheat even my pony, for if I did, he would not come again."

In all of the earlier readers as well as books of fiction kindness as a social trait played an important part. McGuffey in his readers especially stressed "kindness" to children, aged people, animals, and all who were helpless. Minnich says that,

Kindness is a later discovery by the race, than honesty related to property, and truth related to evidence in temple and court; it is a trait exercised almost exclusively by the mature.

---


Children from time immemorial have been inherently cruel. McGuffey whose works are psychologically sound tried to establish habits of kindness in children and youths through the moral story. He made his characters personally responsible for those in distress and often tried to drive home the important moral through several stories of wide variation.

The moral is implied in "Peter Pindar's Story," of the good monks and their dogs and their service to travellers lost in the snowy Alps:

So the good monks took the boy into their home and cared for him until he was well and the snow was gone. Then they sent him home.*

The foundling grows up into a sweet child in the story of "Mr. Post and Mary" and shows her gratitude to her beloved benefactor: "When Mr. Post grew too old to work, Mary took good care of him."**

Societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals and Audubon societies had not been organized a hundred years ago but McGuffey included many lessons on kindness to animals and birds in his readers. Dogs and cats were mentioned most often because they were domesticated. Children were admonished to

---

*McGuffey's Second Reader, p. 69.

**Ibid., p. 53.
treat them well, to feed them regularly and "to learn faithfulness" from them. Bird and insect stories abound as well as those of animals not domesticated.

"Mary's Little Lamb" has stood the test of time and is still beloved by little children. McCaffey's version of the poem adds the moral in a sixth verse:

And you, each gentle animal,
To you, for life, may bind,
And make it follow at your call,
If you are always kind.  

Of Fido who saved his master from being crushed by a falling wall, McCaffey says,

Fido was hurt by some of the rubbish, but his master had him kindly taken care of, until he got well."

Robert and Samuel have a turtle which Robert turned on his back; Samuel quotes the "Golden Rule." Then Robert turns the turtle right side up."

Kindness to birds is dealt with both in prose and poetry, the morals teaching that nests should not be robbed; wild birds must not be caged; no harm must befall them because "God sees the sparrow should it fall."

---

** Ibid., p. 143.
+ McCaffey's Third Reader, p. 109.
The Bible furnished much material for morals directly and indirectly stated. "Honor thy father and thy mother" was an exhortation made in many selections in the books of an earlier period. That it was heeded is proven by numerous examples.

The elders of a Hebrew synagogue wished to buy some jewels for the priest's ephod. The jeweler's son declined to show them the jewels although they offered money in large amounts. Having left the store in anger and with a feeling of frustration, what was their surprise to have the boy bring the jewels an hour later saying,

My father who had the key to the chest in which the diamonds are kept, was asleep. At his age a short hour of sleep does him a great deal of good, and for all the gold in the world, I would not be wanting in respect to my father, or take from him a single comfort.

That his conscience was very much alive and that devotion to his mother was instilled in his heart is shown in "George's Feast."

George, the son of a poor widow, gathering wood in the forest, two miles away from home, found some fine ripe strawberries. "How good these will be with my bread and butter," thought George. So he lined his cap with cool leaves and picked the luscious berries. Just as he was about to eat one

*McSorley's, Fourth Reader, p. 54.*
he thought of his mother. "I will divide them into two parts and eat half and take the other half to her," But the heap looked so small, that he put them together again, "I will taste just one." He could not do this either, so he covered them with leaves and trudged home anticipating the great joy he would give to his mother.+

Retribution travelled swiftly on the heels of the evil doer and the punishment was unusually severe as compared to the offence committed.

In the "Tricky Boy" or "The Boy and the Milk Maid" George Norton, a great tease, caused the little milkmaid to spill her pail of milk. The milk made the ground soft and the bad boy slipped and broke his leg. No one was sorry for him but everyone said,

So much the better. The lesson will do him good, and he will be out of mischief for three months.

Sometimes the stories written to teach a moral held children's attention by the dreadfulness of their portrayal as shown in this unusual one depicting deadly retribution;

+ McGuffey's Third Reader, p. 92-94.

"McGuffey's Third Reader, pp. 77-78.
A STORY WITH A MORAL

Three German robbers found a bag of gold.
One ran into the town where bread was sold;
He thought, 'I will poison the bread I buy,
And seize the treasure when my comrades die.'
But they, too, thought, 'Then back his feet have hied,
We will destroy him, and the gold divide.'
They killed him, and, partaking of the bread,
In a few moments all were lying dead!
O world! behold what here thy goods have done!
Thy gold has POISONED two, and
MURDERED one!

MORAL. — A society composed of none but the wicked, could not exist. It contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and, even WITHOUT a flood, would be swept from the earth by a deluge of its own iniquity. The moral CEMENT of all society is VIRTUE. It unites and preserves, while vice separates and destroys. Nothing is so blind and suicidal as the selfishness of vice.†

That virtue was always well rewarded was shown in the story of "The Little Chimney-Sweep," who stole a gold watch.

He soliloquized thus,

If I take this watch I shall be a thief, Yet nobody sees me. Nobody? Does not God see me? Could I be happy again? Would God hear my prayers? Oh! what should I do when I come to die?"

So saying, "he trembled with fear and felt cold all over."

Then came this noble outburst, "I would rather be a sweep and always be poor than steal." The lady of the house who had seen what the boy did let him stay at her house and educated him.

He grew up to be a fine man.

This moral from the Bible he never forgot; "Thou shalt not steal."*
Little Edward starting out to spend his gift of two dollars for a much coveted book, meets a poor family of immigrants. He gives them his two dollars for food and receives their blessing. His father, unobserved had watched the whole transaction and when Edward reached home:

"My dear son," said his father "here is a whole bundle of books. I give them to you more as a reward for your goodness of heart, than as a New Year's gift."†

Although a National Prohibition Amendment was not passed until 1919 a definite movement against intemperance had begun in the previous century. Mark Sullivan⁷ says that numerous ways of interesting children and the teen age, in the crusade against intemperance, were devised at that time. They were asked to wear a blue bow, symbol of temperance, at all times. Signing the pledge was urged through the lines --

COME, SIGN THE PLEDGE

Young man, why will you not sign the pledge,
And stand with the true and the brave?
How dare you lean over the dangerous ledge
Above the INEBRIATE'S grave?

Again the evils of strong drink were thus pictured:

Five cents a glass, does anyone think
That that is really the price of a drink? . . .

---

†McGuffey's Third Reader, p. 62.
The price of a drink, let him decide
Who has lost his courage and his pride,
And who lies in a scrougling heap of clay,
Not far removed from a beast today.

The girls were supposed to help too, as told in such ditties as:

The lips that touch liquor
Shall never touch mine.

No matter what anyone says;
No matter what anyone thinks;
If you want to be happy the rest of your life
Don’t marry a man if he drinks.

Both McGuffey and Wilson urged temperance in their famous series of readers.

Wilson uses allegorical illustrations to show the danger to be apprehended from the habit of temperate drinking—a habit which leads the young onward so gradually toward the rapids of Intemperance that they see no danger until they are on the very brink of destruction. He illustrates by telling the story of some young men whose boat was drifting perilously toward Niagara Rapids. They refused to heed warnings given until it was too late. Then this drastic description:

'Up with the helm!' 'Quick! quick! quick! Pull hard for your lives boys.' So they pulled till the blood started from their nostrils, and the veins showed like whip-cords upon their brows; 'Set the mast in the socket! hoist the sail!' Ah! ah! it is too late! too late! Shrinking, howling, blaspheming, over they went.

MORAL:—Young men, thousands go over the rapids of Intemperance every year, just in this way, through self-confidence and the power of habit, crying out all the
while, 'When I find that temperate drinking is injuring me, I will give it up.'

Following this is a companion piece, called "The Pleasure Party."

A terrific whirlpool in Norway, called the Maelstrom is the danger which signifies the circle of pleasure surrounding the path of the temperate drinker. The one sucks down the boat with all aboard, the other draws young men into its horrible depths of drink.**

McGuffey begins in his Third Reader to use lessons on temperance. The morals are obvious in the stories bearing the titles: "Beware of the First Drink,"*** "Touch Not -- Taste Not -- Handle Not."*

Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Town Pump" is included in the McGuffey compilations on temperance. In this selection, Town Pump speaks of its own virtues over those of intoxicating drinks by saying:

Walk up, walk up, gentlemen, walk up, walk up. Here is superior stuff! Here is the undiluted ale of father Adam! better than Cogniac, Hollands, Jamaica, strong beer or wine of any price; here it is by the hogshead or the single glass, and not one cent to pay. Walk up gentlemen, walk up and help yourselves. ... Make way for that fellow who seeks my aid to quench the fiery fever of last night's potations, which he

---

*Willson's Fourth Reader, pp. 89-91.
**Ibid., pp. 92-94.
***McGuffey's Third Reader, p. 118.
****McGuffey's Fifth Reader, p. 53.
drained from no cup of mine. Welcome most rubicund sir! 
Mercy on you, man! The water absolutely hisses down your 
red-hot gullet, and is converted quite into a steam in 
the miniature Tophet, which you mistake for a stomach. 
Tell me on the word of an honest toper, have you ever 
... spent the price of your children's food for a swig 
half so delicious? Good by. Whenever you are thirsty 
recollect that I keep a constant supply, at the Old 
Town Pump.

It was intolerable to McGuffey with his deep emotion 
about rum, that the State should license anyone to sell liquor,
He states his feeling emphatically in these lines:

Licensed -- to do thy neighbor harm;
Licensed -- to kindle hate and strife,
Licensed -- to nerve the robber's arm;
Licensed -- to whet the murderer's knife.

Licensed -- like spider for a fly, 
To spread thy nets for man, thy prey;
To mock his struggles, crush his soul,
Then cast his worthless form away.

In 1825 there appeared a little toy book, written for 
children from five to eight years, which carried several 
interesting presentations on the subject of temperance. In 
one, called "The Glass of Whiskey" the child read:

There is a bottle. It has something in it which 
is spelled "W-h-i-s-k-y," whiskey. Little reader, I 
hope you will never taste anything like it as long as 
you live. It is poison, So is brandy; So is rum; So 
is gin; and many other drinks. They are called strong 
drink. They are so strong they knock people down and 
kill them. ... (Here, the good taste was dwelt on at 
length). Hugh was once given something to drink when 
he was a little boy. When he grew bigger he remembered

that pleasant taste and drank more and more. Hugh eventually became a drunkard.

MORAL. Look not upon strong drink in thy youth.

In the same book is a dreadful tale of a child drunkard.

A little boy went to a closet where there was a jug of rum. He tasted it. He liked it. He tasted a little more. Then he drank a great deal. At last he became drunk, and fell over, and lay there until he died. He was found dead by a jug of rum. But he would not be kept out of Heaven because he did not know what he did.

The question following the story asks:

Oh how shall I keep from being a drunkard? I will tell you. Never drink a drop of anything that makes people drunk.⁹

Many moral lessons were based upon the familiar adage, "Open confession is good for the soul." This was particularly true in lessons dealing with obedience to parents, and teachers.

Dire penalties followed disobedience, with forgiveness granted only after confession. The story of George Washington and the cherry tree is a good example of this type of moral.

The story of the brave Casabianca shows blind obedience without judgement. The story of his faithful stand while the ship burned is too well known to comment on at length. However, the picture which this story brings makes us applaud

---

the act of the boy. Children are much impressed by;

Still this noble hearted boy would not disobey
his father. In the face of blood, and balls, and fire,
he stood firm and obedient. He called, again and
again, 'Father may I go?' But no voice of permission
came... and there the boy stood... and perished in the flames.  

Personal adornment was a vice of the devil and only
very wicked people were vain. In one of the old, old books
is a story entitled "Death at the Toilet." It recalls the
story of a girl who was stricken dead while in the very act
of artificially beautifying herself, was found by her family
in her room with the implements of deplorable decoration in
her hands:

Grasping a pair of curling irons, various paraphernalia of the toilet lay about -- pins, brooches,
ribbons, gloves, etc. Each of her wrists was encircled
by a showy gilt bracelet... The glass reflected
with frightful fidelity the clammy fixed features,
daubed with rouge and carmine, the traces of a smirk
of conceit which even the palying touch of death could
not wholly obliterate. Poor creature! Struck dead in
the very act of sacrificing at the altar of female
vanity! Never have I seen so startling a satire upon
human vanity, so repulsive, unsightly, and loathsome
a spectacle as a 'corpse dressed for a ball.' The
ghastly visage of death thus leering through the
trimsels of fashion -- the 'vain show' of artificial
joy -- was a horrible mockery of the fooleries of life.

---

8 McGuffey's Fourth Reader, p. 130.
10 Mark Sullivan, op. cit., p. 30.
The story of "The Vain Peacock" teaches that beauty is only skin deep and counts for nothing unless the heart is humble. The moral states:

Little boys and girls, be not like the peacock, proud and vain, on account of your beauty and fine clothes, for humility and goodness are always to be preferred to beauty.

Although the writer has barely touched this most interesting field of morals, the fact is indicated that perhaps children accepted and said things which they could not believe. Perhaps these readers would not be wholly acceptable today but Harvey G. Minnich makes this interesting prediction:

Unless the traits of character which these lessons established in the alumni of this great course of moral instruction; unless resistance to the deteriorating forces of society be raised to a power greater than the strength of the organized forces of crime, immorality, and disrespect for law and order, America may not expect to be exempt from the decadence which befell the great dynasties of history.\textsuperscript{11}

Summary

In this chapter the writer has attempted to show the influence of the moral on the social life of the people a hundred years ago, by citing examples which insculpted such virtues as honesty, helpfulness, obedience to parents and teachers and faith in God.

A comparison of poetry "old and new" shall form the content of Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VII

COMPARISON OF CHILDREN'S POETRY OLD AND NEW

Poetry for children has followed practically the same line of development as has the prose literature written for them. Through the earlier centuries children assimilated what they could from adult poetry just as they had from such prose writings as Robinson Crusoe and Pilgrim's Progress.

Types of poems from the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show that the sombre poetry of those days was written largely from a religious point of view. Trying to teach children to be "good" or suffer hell's fire was a dominant note.

Walter de la Mare has compiled an anthology including poems from the thirteenth century to modern times. It is a notable collection, but upon examination bears out the well known fact that (with one exception\(^1\)) little if any English poetry was really written for children before the time of William Blake in the middle of the eighteenth century. The

---

\(^2\)Note Chapters I and II.

\(^*\)Anthology, Come Hither, 1923.

\(^1\)Dr. Isaac Watts, Divine and Moral Songs For Children, 1715.
same is true of poetry for children in America.

The varying abilities of comprehension, the natural differences in personalities and aptitudes rather than the chronological ages, must be considered as we think of poetry for children.

When the true poet tunes his 'slender pipes' to childish ears he neither forgets his art nor loses his magic. He composes in a key and a range adapted to immature thought and emotion, but he continues to exercise his high creative powers and to employ most of his own particular skills.2

The first of the poets who actually wrote for children and whose poems have come down through the years was Dr. Isaac Watts. His "Divine and Moral Songs" written in two sections was printed in 1709. In the preface to his "Divine Songs" Dr. Watts wrote,

Verse was at first designed for the service of God, though it hath been wretchedly abused . . . . There is something so amusing and entertaining in Rhymes and metre that will incline children to make this part of their business a diversion. . . . There is great delight in learning truths and duties this way. . . . What is learned in verse is longer retained in memory and sooner recollected . . . . And as I have endeavoured to sink the language to the level of a child's understanding, and yet to keep it, if possible above contempt, so I have designed to profit all, if possible, and offend none.3

The Puritanic spirit is much in evidence in his "Moral Songs" which were written in protest against "current vice"


These poems teach universal lessons which are as good for children of today as yesterday. In introducing his "Moral Songs" Dr. Watts clearly states the thought back of the writing of them, when he says,

Here the language and measures should be easy and flowing with cheerfulness, with or without the solemnities of religion, or the sacred name of God and holy things; that children might find delight and profit together. 4

An admonition against laziness and its ultimate results is typified by

THE SLUGGARD

'Tis the voice of the sluggard; I heard him complain,
"You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again,"
As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed,
Turns his sides, and his shoulders, and his heavy head.

"A little more sleep, and a little more slumber;"
Thus he wastes half his days and his hours without number:
And when he gets up, he sits folding his hands,
Or walks about sauntering, or trifling he stands.

I pass'd by his garden, and saw the wild brier,
The thorn and the thistle, grow broader and higher;
The clothes that hang on him are turning to rags;
And his money still wastes, till he starves, or he begs.

I made him a visit, still hoping to find
He had took better care for improving his mind;
He told me his dreams, talk'd of eating and drinking
But he scarce reads his Bible, and never loves thinking.

Said I then to my heart, "Here's a lesson for me;
That man's but a picture of what I might be;
But thanks to my friends for their care in my breeding,
Who taught me betimes to lowe working and reading." 5

5Ibid., p. 356.
The poems, "Innocent Play" and "A Summer Evening" paint lovely pictures in the first stanzas but definitely point a moral at the end, which fact is definitely typical of most of his poems.

**INNOCENT PLAY.**

Abroad in the meadows to see the young lambs
Run sporting about by the side of their dams,
With fleeces so clean and so white,
Or a nest of young doves in a large open cage,
When they play all in love, without anger or rage,
How much we may learn from the sight!

If we had been ducks, we might dabble in mud,
Or dogs, we might play till it ended in blood,
So foul and so fierce are their natures;
But Thomas, and William, and such pretty names,
Should be cleanly and harmless as doves or as lambs,
Those lovely sweet innocent creatures.

Not a thing that we do, nor a word that we say,
Should injure another in jesting or play;
For he's still in earnest that's hurt;
How rude are the boys that throw pebbles and mire!
There's none but a madman will fling about fire,
And tell you, 'Tis all but in sport.'

**A SUMMER EVENING.**

How fine has the day been! how bright was the sun,
How lovely and joyful the course that he run!
Though he rose in a mist when his race he begun,
And there followed some droppings of rain;
But now the fair traveller's come to the west,
His rays are all gold, and his beauties are best;
He paints the skies gay as he sinks to his rest,
And foretells a bright rising again.

Just such is the Christian: his course he begins,
Like the sun, in a mist, while he mourns for his sins,

6Thid., pp. 350-359.
And melts into tears; then he breaks out and shines,
And travels his heavenly way;
But when he comes nearer to finish his race,
Like a fine setting sun he looks richer in grace,
And gives a sure hope at the end of his days
Of rising in brighter array.7

Watts uses the ant as a symbol of industry, as well as
for forethought for a rainy day. In, "The Ant or The Emmet,"
he pays high tribute to the ant, but has scant praise for the
human being, who needs not the ant's lesson, as is shown by
the third verse;

But I have less sense than a poor creeping ant,
If I take no due care for the things I shall want,
Nor provide against dangers in time;
When death or old age shall stare in my face,
What a wretch shall I be in the end of my days,
If I trifle away all their prime!8

In his well known poem on "The Bee" he introduces in his
last two lines an oft quoted adage which fits the present as
well as the eighteenth century. This poem is in direct con-
trast with Bunyan's, emblem, "Upon The Bee," in which he
regarded it as an immoral insect.9

THE BEE

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower

7op. cit., p. 365.
8op. cit., p. 362.
9Note Chapter 1.
How skilfully she makes her cell,
How neat she spreads the wax!
And labors hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labor or of skill,
I would be busy too;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do. 9

"Little birds in their nests" show harmony and love;
"Lambs and doves" gentleness and cleanliness; but little dogs
are used as examples of bad behaviour. The following poem
was one of the most popular for school entertainment and is
found in most anthologies today.

Let dogs delight to bark and bite
For God has made them so;
Let Bears and Lions growl and fight,
For 'tis their Nature, too.

But Children, you should never let
Such angry passions rise;
Your little hands were never made
To tear each other's Eyes.

Let Love thro' all your Actions run,
And all your Words be mild,
Live like the blessed Virgin's Son,
That sweet and lovely child,

His Soul was gentle as a Lamb;
And as His Stature grew,
He grew in Favor both with Man,
And God his Father too.

Now Lord of all he reigns above,
And from his heav'ly Throne,
He sees what Children dwell in Love,
And marks them for his own. 10

Mothers have a heritage in the meaningful words of Isaac Watt's "Cradle Hymn" and while they may not actually repeat the words, no doubt every mother breathes them as she looks upon her sleeping child.

Rush, my dear, lie still and slumber; 
Holy angels guard thy bed;
Heavenly blessings without number Gently falling on thy head.11

Following Isaac Watts there were no poets of note until 1789. At this time William Blake's "Songs of Innocence" was printed. Children and all young things appealed to him as is shown in his exquisite poetical writings. He loved the fields, the stars, the whispering winds. Natural phenomena filled his sensitive soul with the awe, and reverence which sings in his poems. He had the gift of making beautiful engravings for his poems. Of him Swinburne says,

Critical language is too ponderous to express the dainty simplicity and the poising lightness of his verses. His poems are unequalled of their kind. Such verse was never written since verse writing began. Only in a few of those faultless fragments of childish rhyme which float without name or form upon the memories of men shall we find such pure, clean cadence of verse, such rapid ring and flow of lyric laughter, such sweet and direct choice of the just word and figure, such an impeccable simplicity; nowhere but here such a tender wisdom of holiness, such a light and perfume of innocence.12

Children today love to hear Blake's poems because they are attuned to the rhythms of childhood. One poem, never to be forgotten once it has been heard is the one often quoted as "The Piper," but that is not its title nor its strict connotation. It is the first poem in "The Songs of Innocence" which are usually treated as if they were songs for "Innocents" whereas they are nothing of the kind. The poem is their

INTRODUCTION

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb":
So I piped with merry cheer,
"Piper, pipe that song again":
So I piped; he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read"
So he vanish'd from my sight;
So I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake craved freedom not only for himself but for all other living creatures. That the suffering of animals or children was abhorrent to him is shown many times.

A Robin redbreast in a cage,
Puts all heaven in a rage.
Each outcry of a hunted hare
A fibre from the brain doth tear.
A skylark wounded in the wing
A cherubim does cease to sing.

He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be beloved by men. 13

Blake continued to write in this happy strain of children,
of shepherds and their fleecy lambs, of seasons and of flowers
and birds. What faith must unknowingly come to the little
child, not only from the words but from the cadence of

THE SHEPHERD

How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot!
From the morn to the evening he strays;
He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,
And he hears the ewe's tender reply;
He is watchful; while they are in peace,
For they know when their shepherd is nigh. 14

One poem which shows that great strides were being taken
in the writing of poems for children is his mirthful,

LAUGHING SONG

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

When the meadows laugh with lively green,
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scenes;

13 Annie Moore. op. cit., p. 283.
14 William Blake, Songs of Innocence, p. 17. London: John Lane, 1902. (Compiled by Geraldine Morris.)
When Mary and Susan and Emily
With their sweet round mouths sing, "Ha, ha, ha!"

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,
When our table with cherries and nuts is spread;
Come live, and be merry, and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of, "Ha, ha, ha!"

The laughter which came to children two centuries ago
with these rollicking lines is still being echoed with the
Marys and Susans and Emilys of today.

Annie Moore says that Blake differed in style from
other poets in that he made poetic forms which fitted his
moods and used his own particular rhythms and stanza patterns.

SPRING

I

Sound the flute
Now 'tis mute;
Birds delight,
Day and night—
Mourningal,
In the dale,
Lark in sky
Merrily,
Merrily, merrily to welcome
in the year.

II

Little boy,
Full of joy;
Little girl,
Sweet and small;
Cock does crow,
So do you;
Merry voice,
Infant noise;
Merrily, merrily to welcome
in the year.

15Ibid., p. 35.
"Infant Joy" is one of the choicest selections.

"I have no name;
I am but two days old."
What shall I call thee?
"I happy am;
Joy is my name."
Sweet joy befall thee:

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while;
Sweet joy befall thee! 17

All of Infinity is expressed in four lines.

To see the world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

It is a temptation to quote more of these lovely poems,
but we must leave the sweet singer of songs to the apprecia-
tions of the coming generations.

Poems by Ann and Jane Taylor followed at the beginning
of the nineteenth century. Their poems were quite didactic
and had much the same moral quality as the poems of Isaac Watts.
They were original in an entirely new way, in that the writers
seemed to be talking directly to the children whose natures
they knew so well. The experience related in "Washing and
Dressing" has been and always will be part of childhood.

If the water is cold, and the brush hurts your head
And the soap has got into your eye,
Will the water grow warmer, for all that you've said?
And what good will it do you to cry?

It is not to tease you and hurt you, my sweet,
But only for kindness and care,
That I wash you, and dress you, and make you look neat,
And comb out your tanglesome hair.

I don't mind the trouble if you would not cry,
But pay me for all with a kiss;
That's right---take the towel and wipe your wet eye,
I thought you'd be good, after this.

Nearly all of the poems of the Taylor sisters turn upon
the "whole duty of children," "Careless Matilda" doesn't
finish her sewing, loses her thimble and thread, is untidy
and has torn her frock. In spite of her promises to reform,
her mother sends her to "Austere Hall" whose mistress is
"Lady Rigid." Poor Matilda has a hard time until "Order"
comes to help her. At last it is time to go home and when
she is given a choice of gifts

Matilda clasp'd sweet Order to her heart,
And said, 'From thee, best friend, I'll never part.'

"Negligent Mary," "Dirty Jim," "James and The Shoulder of
Mutton," "Little Girls Must Not Fret," all deal with simple
everyday occurrences in children's lives.

These sisters also wrote about flowers, birds, stars,
the moon and the trees. Most of these poems close with some
admonition as to conduct. Their poems have not the lilting,
singing quality which marks the poems of Blake.

Many of the poems by the Taylors were incentives to less

18 Jane and Ann Taylor, Little Ann and Other Poems, p. 44.
London: Frederick Warne and Co., No date. (Illustrated by
Kate Greenaway.)
able writers who attempted to copy their style. This was
especially true of the poems by Ann Taylor, "My Mother"; and
"My Father." The poem, "My Mother" was much admired, and in
the sixties was acclaimed "one of the most beautiful lyrics in
the English language."

MY MOTHER,

Who fed me from her gentle breast,
And hushed me in her arms to rest,
And on my cheek sweet kisses press'd?

My Mother.

When sleep forsook my open eye,
Who was it sang sweet shushaby,
And rocked me that I should not cry?

My Mother.

Who sat and watched my infant head,
When sleeping on my cradle bed,
And tears of sweet affection shed?

My Mother.

When pain and sickness made me cry,
Who gazed upon my heavy eye,
And wept for fear that I should die?

My Mother.

Who dress'd my doll in clothes so gay,
And taught me pretty how to play,
And minded all I had to say?

My Mother.

Who ran to help me when I fell,
And would some pretty story tell,
Or kiss the place to make it well?

My Mother.

Who taught my infant lips to pray,
And love God's holy book and day,
And walk in wisdom's pleasant way?

My Mother.

And can I ever cease to be
Affectionate and kind to thee,
Who was so very kind to me,
My Mother.

Ah no! the thought I cannot bear,
And if God please my life to spare,
I hope I shall reward thy care.
   My Mother.

When thou art feeble, old, and gray
My healthy arms shall be thy stay,
And I will soothe thy pains away.
   My Mother.

And when I see thee hang thy head,
'Twill be my turn to watch thy bed,
And tears of sweet affection shed.
   My Mother.

For God, who lives above the skies,
Would look with vengeance in His eyes
If I should ever dare despise
   My Mother. 19

Since the metre of these poems was an easy flowing one,
there sprang up over a short period of time many imitations.
Some of these were far fetched and children of today would,
justly, think them very silly.

The Rosenbach* collection contains various books of the
same period from which these gleanings were taken.

From lines to a puppy we find,

**MY TIPPOO**

When first a puppy, Tippoo came,
Companion of each childish game,
Who,- on my heart held stronger claim?
   Than Tippoo.**

---

*Note Chapter I.
**Published and sold by William Charles, 1817.
These are the concluding lines of a long poem based on the thought of the Bible as a great comforter:

What can support my drooping head,
When I am laid on my Death-bed?
My Bible,

The author of this poem was perhaps wise to remain anonymous.

OUR SAVIOUR

Who was it, that (high heav'ns degree)
Brought Wise men from the East to see,
The Son of God - in Galilee?
Our Saviour.

Who form us laid (sic) up his breath,
Seem'd by all nature mourn'd in death!
While lightnings rent the earth beneath?
Our Saviour.

One poem, "My Childhood" written by a Mr. Upton (unknown) and published in Philadelphia in 1824, offered a diversified form of this type of poem, in that it deals with various episodes in a child's life. Each episode appears on a page by itself, with its own descriptive heading.

PERFECT INNOCENCE

When first my eyes discovered day,
And quite a senseless lump I lay,
What did my wond'ring looks display?
My Childhood.

FEARFUL OF CORRECTION

When first the rattle charm's my ear,
Or rod, but nam'd, created fear.

*Published by American Tract Society, 1830.

What was it caus'd the glist'ning tear? 
My Childhood.

GAINING KNOWLEDGE

When nursery tales, 'bout "Buggaboo," 
Have made me shrink and startle too, 
What made me think such nonsense true? 
My Childhood.

This poem runs along through a number of interminable verses.

Most of these poems fell far below the standard of Ann Taylor's famous verse, as did this one entitled, "My Son" written in 1816 by Gregory Richards. A father's confidence is expressed in this poem.

MY SON:

Who never did (as says report) 
Unite in any cruel sport, 
Or with mischievous boys resort? 
My Son.

When sick, my old Domestic, lay, 
Who did a kind attendance pay, 
And read to sooth his Grief away? 
My Son.

Great tribute was paid to the teacher through lines

THE SAMPLER

Who made the Scholar proud to show, 
The sampler worked, to friend and foe, 
And with Instruction tender grow? 
My Governess.

THE GIFT

Who first fine work and needle gave, 
And learnt me many an hour to save, 
And told of Heaven and the early Grave? 
My Governess.
Evidently the rhyming of words was the outstanding thing in these incongruous lines.

Mary Elliott wrote a book of verse in 1817 in which there were seven poems of this type, dedicated to various members of the family; (mother, father, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, mammy). These poems were published under the title "Grateful Tributes," A spirit of companionship is shown in.

MY FATHER

Who in my Childhood's earlier day,  
Before my tongue could one word say,  
Would let me with his watch-chain play?  
My Father.

When seated on my mother's knee,  
Who used to play at peep with me,  
Hiding, where Baby could not see?  
My Father.

And when my kite I wished to try  
Who held the strings to make it fly,  
While pleasure sparkled in my Eye?  
My Father.

Little if any of this kind of sentimental verse was written after 1824, but in that year Richard Gregory wrote,

MY DAUGHTER

Who'll mournfully attend my Bier?  
Who shed the sympathetic Tear?  
Who'll faint'ring cry, "My Bliss lies here"?  
My Daughter.

Who faithful as the tender Dove,  
Will treat my memory with love,  
And hope to meet in Heaven above?  
My Daughter.

Rhymes and Pictures for Nursery and School" was the
title of a volume of "Cautionary Verse," by the Taylors, which stressed by means of cautioning safety, obedience, and cleanliness. Contrary to admonition a little girl would eat the forbidden fruit, with the following result,

They went on a little, but Anne complain'd
Of a pain in her stomach and head,
And very soon follow'd most terrible pains,
She shriek'd out with anguish and dread.
She died from not doing what Ma had desired,
And eating the fruit of the wood.

Jack Parker was a cruel boy and teased animals;

But all such boys unless they mend,
May come to an unhappy end;
Like Jack who got a fractured skull,
Whistl bellowing at a furious bull.

A vain little girl who thinks she is much superior to the servants of the household is cautioned thus,

"Sgentility, Charlotte," her mother replied,
"Belongs to no station or place;
And nothing's so vulgar as folly and pride,
Though dress'd in red slippers and lace.

Not all the fine things that fine ladies possess
Should teach them the poor to despise;
For 'tis in good manners, and not in good dress;
That the truest gentility lies."

"Chronic anxiety" marked the poems of the early part of the nineteenth century and there were numerous books of cautionary verse. Several series appeared under such "sugar coated" titles as "The Daisy" and "The Cowslip." Each rhyme is a warning, and great fear is expressed concerning

---

22Ibid., pp. 44-45.
anticipated naughtiness on the part of children. "Drest or
Undrest" will serve to show the trend.

When children are naughty and will not be drest,
Frail what do you think is the way?
Why, often I really believe it is best
To keep them in night-clothes all day!

But then they can have no good breakfast to eat,
Nor walk with their mother and aunt;
At dinner they'll have neither pudding nor meat,
Nor anything else that they want.

Then who would be naughty and sit all the day,
In night-clothes unfit to be seen!
And pray who would lose all their pudding and play
For not being drest neat and clean.23

"Little Nancy, or, the Punishment of Greediness," relates
this story. Little Nancy was invited to a party, and her
mother who knew her fault of greediness cautioned her:

Not to greedily eat
The nice things at the treat;
As she much wished to break her of this.

Nancy played games and

At length was seated,
With her friends to be treated;
So determin'd on having her share,
That she drank and she eat,
Ev'ry-thing she could get,
Yet still she was loth to forbear.

Her disregard of her mother's caution brought its own
retribution and the moral states;

My young readers beware,
And avoid with great care
Such excesses as these you've just read;

23Rosalie V. Halsey, Forgotten Books of The American
For he sure you will find
It your interest to mind
What your friends and relation have said. 24

That there is nothing new under the sun is proven in this
lesson on safety in Elizabeth Turner’s book "The Daisy." 25

Miss Helen was always too giddy to heed
What her mother had told her to shun;
For frequently over the street, in full speed
She would cross where the carriages run.

And out she would go to a very deep well,
To look at the water below;
How naughty to run to a dangerous well,
Where her mother forbade her to go.

One morning intending to take but one peep,
Her foot slipp’d away from the ground;
Unhappy misfortune! the water was deep,
And giddy Miss Helen was drowned.

It is evident from materials quoted that the "moralistic"
in poetry paralleled the prose writings of the eighteenth
century, and were the literary diet of children in America
and England.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Charles Lamb
voiced his objections to this brand of literature. He cried
against the "sore evil" which had beset children’s minds asy-
ing that all the poetry of life and all the imaginative powers
of a child had been ignored and that such sweet tales as
"Goody Two-Shoes" were no longer in prominence in book shops.

24 Ibid., p. 178.
25 Elizabeth Turner, The Daisy, (adapted to children from
four to eight), Philadelphia: J. Adams Publisher, 1808.
Charles Lamb and his sister Mary wrote in collaboration but left little in the line of poetry. Of their book "Poetry For Children," he says:

"Our little poems are but humble, but they have no name. You must read them remembering they are "task-work"; and perhaps you will admire the number of subjects, all of children, picked out by an old Batchelor and an old Maid. Many parents would not have found so many.

The Lambs wrote poems about children, not for children. They believed in wholesome discipline and the inculcation of traditional virtues. Sometimes their poems were marked by great simplicity as is this one on "Cleanliness."

Come my little Robert near --
Fie! what filthy hands are here --
Who that ever could understand
The rare structure of a hand,
With its branching fingers fine,
Work itself of hands divine,
...
Who this hand would choose to cover
With a crust of dirt all over,
Till it look'd in hue and shape
Like the fore-foot of an ape?

Keen insight into some childish joy occasionally showed
Lamb's humor.

Joy to Phillip he this day
Has his long coats cast away
And (the childish season gone)
Puts the manly breeches on,
Officer on gay parade,
Red-coat in his first cockade,
Bridgroom in his wedding trim,
Birthday been surpassing him,
Never did with conscious gait,
Strut about in half the state,
Or the pride (yet free from sin)
Of my little Manikin,
Never was there pride or bliss,
Half so rational as his,
Sashes, frocks, to those that need 'em --
Phillip's limb have got their freedom --
He can run, or he can ride,
And do twenty things beside,
Which his petticoats forbade:
Is he not a happy lad?26

THE WIND.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you;
But when the leaves hang trembling
The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I;
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

Perhaps only one other writer, William Blake, could have
written about this natural phenomenon as simply and beautifully
as did Christina Rossetti. She was really his successor in
"type of writing" and possessed much of the spiritual quality
which is found in Blake. Her work naturally falls into two
groups, poems for little children and those for adults. The
book, "Sing-Song," for young children bears this dedication
"Rhymes dedicated without permission to the baby who suggested
them." She writes of every-day events in the lives of little
boys and girls; of the lowly frog and snail in the garden; of
wind, flowers and birds. As we read we know the experiences
related are those of herself, when a little girl. Almost every

child has wept over some beloved bird's death and its burial
under the lilacs or in the blue-bell patch. Christina Rossetti,
who knew tragedies of the child expressed it thus,

Dead in the cold, a song singing thrush,
Dead at the foot of a snowberry bush, --
Weave him a coffin of rush,
Dig him a grave where the soft mosses grow,
Raise him a tombstone of snow.27

Some of her verse fairly sings of its own accord --

Love me, -- I love you,
Love me, my baby
Sing it high, sing it low
Sing as it may be
Mother's arms under you,
Her eyes above you;
Sing it high, sing it low,
Love me -- I love you.28

She paints a vivid picture of contentment in these lines--

When the cows come home the milk is coming,
Honey's made while the bees are humming,
Duck and drake on the rushy lake,
And the deer live safe in the breezy brake;
And a timid, funny, brisk little bungy
Winks his nose and sits all funny.29

Nothing lovelier has ever been written than this imagina-
tive poem:

Boats sail on the rivers,
Ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

28Ibid., p. 97.
There are bridges on the rivers,
As pretty as you please;
But the bow that bridges heaven,
And overtops the trees
And builds a road from earth to sky
Is prettier far than these.\(^\text{30}\)

A new note in poetry was sounded in the middle of the nineteenth century by Edward Lear in his "Book of Nonsense." He is the master craftsman in nonsense verse and the inventor of funny, highly descriptive words. He did not regard his work as a task but wrote to give pleasure and delight. What pleasurable flights of fancy children experience when they sail away with "The Owl and The Pussycat" until they come to "the land where the Bong-tree grows. There they dined on mince, and slices of quince, which they ate with a runcible spoon."

His first "Book of Nonsense" published in 1846 consists entirely of limericks, which form of poetry has remained popular.

In America Celia Thaxter was writing her bird poems, the best known of which "The Sandpiper," shows a sensed relationship between people and the "birds of the air."

Comrade where wilt thou be tonight,
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
To what ware shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth

\(^{30}\)op. cit., p. 27.
The tempest rushes through the sky;
For are we not God's children both.
Thou, little sandpiper and I?

Other of her bird poems which have never been excelled are
"wild Geese," "The Sparrows" and "Chanticleer."

Celia Thaxter loved children. Her narrative poem,
"Little Gustawa" not only gives pleasure in reading but also
 teaches a fine lesson on care of pets.

Sound, color, sight and feeling of movement all of which
are part of a child's being are used as bases for her poems.
Her imagery is appealing and simple and easily seen by children;
a little owlet is described as a "handful of feathers and two
great eyes"; the waning moon is "a thin shell, pearly and pale."

No poet can hold quite the same place in children's litera-
ture as does the beloved Robert Louis Stevenson. However, judg-
ing by today's standards, poems which previously had been
selected as suitable for very young children would now be placed
with those to be enjoyed by children of ten and older. He
writes in the imagery of the child and creates simple pictures
making his childhood experiences live again. Children who
have lost or who never had fear of the dark love the word
picture in;

NORTHWEST PASSAGE

All around the house is the jet-black night;
It stares through the window panes;
It crawls in the corners, hiding from light,
And it moves with the moving flame.
Then comes the fear of the little boy going up the long, dark stairs, his little heart beating almost audibly with fear of the unknown terror:

-- And my little heart goes a-beating like a drum,
-- With the breath of the Bogie in my hair,
And all around the candle, the crooked shadows come,
And go marching along up the stair.

"Windy Nights"; "Travel" and "Foreign Children" are vivid pictures to the child with imagination.

For the little child are such lilting poems as

**AUTUMN FIRES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the other gardens</td>
<td>Pleasant summer over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And all up the vale</td>
<td>And all the summer flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the autumn bonfires</td>
<td>The red fire blazes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See the smoke trail!</td>
<td>The grey smoke towers!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rhythmical cadence and word pictures of such poems as "The Rain"; "A Good Play"; "Bed in Summer" and "From A Railway Carriage," bring joy to the hearts of children in all lands.

Of the beloved children's poet, Riley, little need be said. His poems are known in the households of the rich and the poor. As judged by children's poetry of today many of

---

Riley's poems are a bit too reminiscent and too introspective. However, "Little Orphan Annie," and "The Raggedy Man" must be the heritage of every child.

With the beginning of the twentieth century a decided change came in the writing of poetry just as it did in the writing of prose. The child, his play, his emotions and his reactions became the important phases to be written about. He is accorded his own definite place in a child's world in which his rights, thoughts and actions are duly respected. This is true of all countries especially America and England.

In England, Walter de la Mare, published "Songs of Childhood" in 1901. Since that time he has given to children of the world "A Child's Day"; Peacock Pie," in which he whimsically says of one of his diminutive child characters

It's a very odd thing --
As odd as can be --
That whatever Miss T. eats
Turns into Miss T.,

and "Down-a-Down Derry: A Book of Fairy Poems," published in 1922. De la Mare seemed to have been the first to open the gate way to the real world of the child.

In "A Child's Day" he gives us a composite picture of all the little children in the world as they go through the ritual of rising, of being bathed, combed and buttoned up. The story of Elizabeth Ann shows De la Mare's ultimate acquaintance with child life.
... just what she did one long, long day,
With her own little self to play with only,
Yet never once felt the least bit lonely.

Children are guided and their attention intrigued, rather
than threatened as was true in the earlier days. Her bath
is compared to that of certain animals—

Seal and Walrus
And Polar Bear
One green icy
Wash-tub share

So the day progresses, each phase expressed in musical
words and phrases, or varied rhythms. Poetic imagery is abun-
dant. Is not the "awakening" of a baby beautifully shown in
"Softly, drowsily, Out of sleep"? As evening approaches the
child hears distant music in the garden—"Happy, happy it is
to be, Where the greenwood hangs o'er the dark blue sea." Into
the land of dreams she goes when the Dustman comes, guarded
by a queer old phantom called "Lob-Lie-by-the-Fire," of whom
De-la-Mare graciously says,

Who would think, now, a throat
So lank and so thin
Might make birds seem to warble
In the dream Ann is in.31

He writes entrancingly of fairies but not the "airy, fairy
sprites" wearing ballet skirts. His fairies are wholesome
hill fairies who know where the berries are thickest, and the
honey most abundant; who are always generous and kindly with
the human neighbors.

There is much laughter and fun in his poems as well as much fantasy and magic. What an appeal must the poem "Alas, Alack!" make to a little child.

```
Am, Am!
Come! quick as you can;
There's a fish that talks
In the frying pan,
Out of the fat
As clear as glass,
He put up his mouth
And moaned, "Alas!"
Oh, most mournful,
"Alas, alack!"
Then turned to his gizzling,
And sank him back.32
```

A. A. Milne brings to us his poems about his little son, Christopher Robin, in his charming books, "When We Were Very Young" (1924) and "Now We Are Six" (1927).

Of his book "When We Were Very Young" he says

```
We have been three years writing the book, . . . so some of it seems rather babyish. On page whatever-it-is, there is a thing which is simply three-ish, and when we read it to ourselves just now we said, "Well, well, well," and turned the page rather quickly.

These books met with instant appeal. He writes with great delicacy. There is a singing musical quality to his verse about children. These poems read along as he meant them to do -- A simple, childish act of climbing a hill calls forth JOURNEY'S END.

Christopher, Christopher, where are you going,
Christopher Robin?
```

"Just up to the top of the hill,  
Upping and upping until  
I am right on the top of the hill,"  
Said Christopher Robin.

Christopher, Christopher, why are you going,  
Christopher Robin?  
There's nothing to see, so when  
You've got to the top, what then?  
(Just down to the bottom again)"  
Said Christopher Robin.  

It is difficult to picture what little children who
lived a century ago in a "moral ridden" world would think of

FURRY BEAR
If I were a bear,  
And a big bear too,  
I shouldn't much care  
If it froze or snow;  
I shouldn't much mind  
If it snowed or friz—  
I'd be all fur-lined  
With a coat like his!

For I'd have fur boots and a brown fur wrap,  
And brown fur knickers and a big fur cap,  
I'd have a fur muffle-ruff to cover my jaws,  
And brown fur mittens on my big brown paws,  
With a big brown furry-down up to my head,  
I'd sleep all the winter in a big fur bed.

Those same little children whose thinking was done for
them and who were subject to Divine will would be much
astonished to read of the little boy who said,

So here I am in the dark alone,  
There's nobody here to see;

---

33 A. A. Milne. Now We Are Six, pp. 44-45. New York:  
Dutton and Co., Inc., 1927.

34 Ibid., pp. 46-47.
I think to myself,
I play to myself,
And nobody knows what I say to myself;
Here I am in the dark alone,
What is it going to be?
I can think whatever I like to think,
I can play whatever I like to play,
I can laugh whatever I like to laugh,
There's nobody here but me.

I'm talking to a rabbit . . .
I'm talking to the sun . . .
I think I am a hundred—
I'm one,
I'm lying in a forest . . .
I'm lying in a cave . . .
I'm talking to a Dragon . . .
I'm BRAVE,
I'm lying on my left side . . .
I'm lying on my right . . .
I'll play a lot to-morrow . . .
I'll think a lot to-morrow . . .
I'll laugh . . .

(a lot . . .
to-morrow . . .)

(Heigh-ho!) good-night.

Milne coined many words which bring a sparkle to the eye and laughter to childish lips. He does this when he wants to increase rhyme effects. In the "Three Little Foxes" he rhymes foxes with soxes, shopses and copses, prizes and pieses.35 Wonderful animals, unheard of before are to be seen at the Zoo,36 such as "buffalo-buffalo-bisons," a "mosserus" and "badgers, bidgers, bodgers" and a "wallaboo."

36 Ibid., pp. 46-47.
Little folks the world around have a rich heritage through Alan Alexander Milne and his little son Christopher Robin whom we shall now leave at his evening prayer,

Little Boy kneels at the foot of the bed,
Drops on the little hands little gold head.
Mush! Mush! Whisper who dares!
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.

Rachel L. Field is an American writer who has done much to foster literature for children. She knows the city child well and has written many poems about prosaic people, and events that enter into the child’s daily life. So she brings to the children stories of taxis, of wet streets at night, of the flower-shop man, and of skyscrapers. Of taxis she says,

**TAXIS**

*Ho, for taxis green or blue*
*Hi, for taxis red,*
*They roll along the Avenue*
*Like spools of colored thread!*

*Jack-o’-Lantern yellow,*
*Orange as the moon,*
*Greener than the greenest grass*
*Ever grew in June.*

*Gayly striped or checked in squares,*
*Wheels that twinkle bright,*
*Don’t you think that taxis make*
*A very pleasant sight?*

*Taxis shiny in the rain,*
*Scudding through the snow,*
*Taxis flashing back the sun*
*Waiting in a row.*

*Ho, for taxis red and green,*
*Hi, for taxis blue,*
*I wouldn’t be a private ear,*
*In sober black, would you?*

---

Towering skyscrapers call forth this thought,

**SKYSCRAPERS**

Do skyscrapers ever grow tired
Of holding themselves up high?
Do they ever shiver on frosty nights
With their tops against the sky?

Do they feel lonely sometimes,
Because they have grown so tall?
Do they ever wish they could lie right down
And never get up at all?

She recognizes children's interests in their objective world.

Her imagination has added charm even to the vegetables that
little folks should eat but sometimes reject. This vegetable
poem can help greatly.

**VEGETABLES**

A carrot has a green fringed top;
A beet is royal red;
And lettuces are curious,
All curled and run to head.

Some beans have strings to tie them on,
And what is still more queer,
Ripe corn is nothing more or less
Than one enormous ear!

But when potatoes all have eyes,
Why is it they should be
Put in the ground and covered up--
Where it's too dark to see?39

Pine forests, the ocean, lighthouses and islands all
share in Rachel Field's poetry. Her own deep love of nature

---

38 Ibid., p. 792.

shows through to little children. She never commits the
unpardonable sin of writing down to them. Her word pictures
are simply painted but each word is necessary to complete
the thought.

RAIN IN THE CITY
All the streets are ashine with rain
The other side of my window pane.
Each motor car unrolls a truck
Of red or green on the asphalt's black.
Beneath umbrellas people ply
Like giant toad stools stalking by.

Whimsical fairy poems flow from her pen but her elves
and fairies do not frighten children.

Rachel Field's first book "Pointed People" was published
in 1924. Since that date she has produced "Taxis and Toadstools"
and "An Alphabet for Boys and Girls" beside several books for
children and a number of plays.

Under the Puritan rule fairies and elves disappeared from
the child's world. Two centuries later they are back again.
Verse written in all seriousness in the eighteenth century could
well be used as nonsense verse in the twentieth century. James
Janesway in his "Token for Children" wrote --

When by spectators I am told
That beauty doth adorn me,
Or in a glass when I behold
How sweetly God did form me,
Hath God such comeliness bestowed
And on me made to dwell,
What pity such a pretty maid
As I should go to Hell.

40 Ibid., p. 176.
41 Note, Chapter I (1670-1720).
Ann Taylor writes in "Idle Mary"

The little girl who will not sew
Should neither be allowed to play;
And then, I hope, my love, that you
Will take more pains another day.

Belloe writes in his "New Cautionary Tales;" (1931)

I call you bad, my little child
Upon the title page,
Because a manner rude and wild
Is common at your age.

Perhaps in another century the poetry of today may be called old fashioned, but at the present time it offers a happy singing world to the children.

That the love of poetry is inherent in children is proven by the creative verse written by them. The following poems were the outgrowth of experiences in the classrooms and were written there. Creativity tends toward emotional stability, and provides an emotional outlet, thus reducing emotional tension; it must come from a spontaneous impulse created through contacts with fine poetry, pictures and music. Once a child has expressed himself poetically, he is better attuned to those experiences which seek expression through poetry.

A little book before me, written and compiled by second grade children while working on a boat unit, contains some

---

beautifully expressed ideas. Many poems telling of the sea and things related to it had been read to these children. Hasfield, Rachel Field, Vachel Lindsay and Robert Louis Stevenson were their daily companions.

Jimmy aged eight writes

Toot-toot-toot!
The boat moves away.
Toot-toot-toot!
Mars's noise in the bay.
The water splashes white.
The deck is out of sight.
Toot-toot-toot.
The boat is on her way.

Longing for far-off places is expressed in,

**THE SAIL BOAT**

Little sail boat far at sea
Won't you please sail back to me?

With your sail as white as snow
Take me where you want to go.

Sea life in all forms was studied and the following verses were written:

**BARNACLES**

Barnacles, barnacles,
Click, click, click,
Close your little shell doors,
Quick, quick, quick.

**THE DIVER**

Diver in your suit so queer,
Are you scared when sharks come near?

**MR. DIVER**

Down, down, down
To the bottom of the sea;
Please Mr. Diver
Bring a pearl to me.
THE BELL BUOY

Ring, ring, ring!
Ting-a-ling-ling!
Hear the bell buoy ring,
I heard him ring the other night
He seemed to say "Watch out! Watch out!"

THE BAY

Fog horns,
Bells,
Whistles blowing,
Engines throbbing,
A great splashing in the bay
The freighter moves away.

(Two little boys wrote this poem.)

Tommy started this poem but had to have some help from his classmates

THE DIVER

Diver, diver, oh so brave,
When you go beneath the wave,
You must see so many things
Whales and sharks and fish with wings,
It must be great fun to be
A diver down beneath the sea.

STARFISH

Starfish, starfish,
In the ocean deep,
Starfish, starfish
How do you sleep?
You seem so very wise to me
Won't you tell me how you see?
Starfish, starfish,
In the ocean deep.

So the writer leaves this fascinating subject with the hope that every child may be imbued with a love for poetry and that the Muse shall forever inspire poets to follow
William Blake's example,

Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read,

And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

Summary

The greatest change in poetry for children during the last centuries has been one of attitude toward children as individuals. Poetry is written today to give pleasure, to paint word pictures, to help the child to see the beauties around him rather than to moralize as did the poetry of yesterday.

Some of the finest minds are at work writing for children and surely the child's world is, in the words of Stevenson --

The world's a very happy place
Where every child should dance and sing
And always wear a smiling face
And never sulk at anything.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The principles and factors affecting children's books have changed many times during the last three centuries.

I

From 1300-1750 books in England were of a deeply religious nature, their policies and content being under the domination of the church or the king.

There was no real writing for children until the middle of the eighteenth century, prior to which time they absorbed what they could, from literature written for adults.

Locke, Pestalozzi and Herbart played an important part in shaping educational principles in Europe.

II

America with a brief history of three centuries has advanced boldly. Her books for children point the objectives of the many changing periods in her history.

From 1620-1776 all books written for children were of a highly religious nature. The New England Primer and the Bible were the guiding lights.
Most of the books used in America during this period were reprints from the English.

After the Revolutionary War the secular begins to be in evidence and for some years shares honors with the religious objective.

During the period from 1776-1840 juvenile literature began to evolve and the subject matter became widely diversified.

Spelling books and readers met the growing demands of education. Secular interests such as war, statesmanship and patriotism dominant at that period were selected as material for these books.

From 1840-1880 there was a rapid rise in the field of readers for children. A definite decline in the religious was noticeable.

Books were lacking in humor and were highly moralistic.

The McGuffey readers were instrumental in giving lasting training in such virtues as faith, honesty, helpfulness and temperance, through the use of the moral.

The teachings of Pestalozzi and Herbart influenced the literature of this period.

Literature is favored very definitely as content material for children's readers during the period from 1880-1937.

Poetry and fiction play an important part in books for children.

Some of the best writers of modern times are devoting
their time and abilities to the writing of books both in prose and poetry for the youth of the nation.

Humor has come into its own.

The child's interests and abilities furnish the bases for children's books of today. The ideal modern story causes the child to form sound moral judgments, without the author's adding one word of obvious moralizing.

There has been a marvellous change for the better in all of the mechanics of children's books today.

Great attention is being paid to the creative interests of children.

Recommendations

The presses are pouring out millions of books for children, many of which are poor.

In the face of this fact these recommendations are made:

1. That there be a more critical analysis and evaluation of the content of children's books in America.

2. A closer supervision should be made in selecting books to be given children.

3. In schools of today there should be large numbers of well selected books to meet the many levels of children's abilities.

4. An outstanding objective of those having anything to do with child training should be the training of children to appreciate the various types of literature and to be able to discriminate when making their own selections.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Poetry


(167)


Prose


Barry, Florence V. *A Century of Children's Books*. New York: George H. Doran Co. (Not dated)
BIBLIOGRAPHY (CONTINUED)


BIBLIOGRAPHY (CONTINUED)


Van Antwerp, Bragg and Co. 1877 - 1890
American Book Co. 1890 -

Mr. Dillman, President of the American Book Company, estimates the combined sale of McGuffey's books between 1836 - 1920 at 122,000,000. Sales for two years in the late eighties at:

1888 -- 2,082,624
1889 -- 2,172,413

McGuffey received a royalty of 10 per cent until one thousand dollars was reached, after which the Readers became the absolute property of the publishers. The contract was mutually satisfactory and remained so. For his work in the various revisions McGuffey was paid a fee. After the Civil War the publishers gave him a voluntary annuity until he died.""


APPENDIX
HISTORY OF THE MC GUFFEY READERS

1836  McGuffey compiled First and Second Readers
1837  McGuffey compiled Second and Third Readers
1841  William McGuffey and his brother Alexander compiled
      the Fifth Reader, known as "The Rhetorical Guide."
1851  The first four readers were made into a series of
      six readers.
1853  Entire series of readers "Newly Revised"
1857  Radical changes in gradation and redistribution of
      material with much new material, under caption of "NEW"
      This 1857 edition was reprinted by Henry Ford.
1879  Up to this time bindings for each book were different,
      but at this date books were completely remade; uniform
      bindings in brown.
1901  Recopyrighted, slight changes
1920  Recopyrighted, slight changes

The seven parent publishing houses of the McGuffey Readers
are as follows:

Truman and Smith       1834 - 1843
W. B. Smith            1843 - 1852
W. B. Smith and Co.    1852 - 1863
Sargent, Wilson and Hinkle  1863 - 1868
Wilson, Hinkle and Co.  1868 - 1877

(171)