

NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND OTHERS

NEW VANDERDECKEN

Up-to-date Flying Dutchman Features Novel of Piracy in Pacific

H. de Vere Stacpoole has written exciting thrillers in the best style of the adventure magazine. Believing that there also is a large clientele which admires fast-moving stories of daring and adventure when topped off by at least a modicum of literary effort, he planned and essayed "Vanderdecken" (McBrides).

Two young San Francisco clubmen decide to start in search for a mysterious present-day pirate who has been holding up yachts of millionaires on the Pacific Coast. The pirate hides under the "nom de mer" of Vanderdecken, being almost as elusive as the Flying Dutchman. At the last moment they are joined by a third man, who turns out to be the pirate himself. This does not crop out until the three have made a thrilling rescue of a beautiful girl from the clutches of bloodthirsty Chinese whiteslavers. The rescued maiden fails to give effusive thanks because the heroes have interrupted a perfectly good movie rehearsal.

Then all four go in search of the lost Vanderdecken had buried. They get it, but lose it to another set of pirates and at last buy the "Prizes" for the company having endings.

Mr. Stacpoole started off to write a series adventure story in a plane higher than his wont—then switched off to near burlesque and finally decided to stick by the tricks of his trade that have stood him in good stead for years. Despite the quiet changes of pace, it is a story that will baffle a couple of hours even for the most fastidious.

SHARP-EYED, SHARP-TONGUE NOVEL OF "FEMINISTICS"

"The Room" (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.) is the newest of G. B. Stern's sharp-eyed and sharp-tongued novels of modern English life, especially the side of feminism. Her thesis is said to be that women of today are losing their capacity for self-deception faster than men.

This presupposes, of course, a theory that both men and women are fundamentally self-deceivers. Women were deceivers ever, the poet observes. Was it men? and what of it? The results are apt to be disastrous, one another, not on themselves, on possibly one cause of civilization has made deceit central instead of incidental. With enough heroines like Miss Stern's Ursula is to turn the trick, the world in due time will become un-self-deceived.

Ursula Barrison is certainly a modernist among maidens, a feminist among women. She says herself, "I'm strong as the wind and not afraid of anything except to be crowded." And this is pat to the story and pert to her character. That it's adopted as a slogan on the sleeve-cuff to show what kind of girl Ursula is.

For that's the kind of girl she is. One feels a bit sorry for her family, for tabbed Aunt Lavy and for Doug, her undoubtedly tickle husband. He's a bit of what T. R. would call a nature faker, with his pose air of the operas, the big spaces and far horizons, and his frequent talk of the same; worse, he's a philanderer. Ursula knows Doug is a bore, but she watches the fact. In spite of her poise and her assurance, she's a femininely quixotic sort of old thing and has ideals of sacrifice, if not of its twin, service.

Miss Stern goes deeply and even overtly into the character of her personages. One wonders if such folk are altogether worthy of such acute psychologizing. The book seems ill-proportioned and a bit aimless, but its author has been praised by such as Francis Blackett, the New Republic, Rebecca West, Wilson Follett and the London Times.

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM EXPLAINED FOR LAYMEN

There would seemingly be little excuse for professing ignorance concerning the intricacies of the country's banking system after reading "Development of Federal Reserve Policy" (Houghton Mifflin Company), by Harold Reed. There is perhaps no other machinery of the Government less understood by the average laymen than that pertaining to financing. Mr. Reed has handled his subject with great skill and presents an analytical and critical discussion easily understandable by any one of average intelligence.

While Mr. Reed is disposed to criticize some of the provisions of the acts and to extend the scope of the operations of the system, he does not detract from the significance of the fact, however, that the system stood the severe test of the recent World War. It has been demonstrated very conclusively because of the wise provisions of the system the country is virtually panic proof. Despite the extreme tension of the war conditions and the accompanying inflation and speculation the perfect working order of the system which Mr. Reed fully covers in his discussion leaves no tangible absence of the high tension in the country's money markets witnessed in former times of stress.

After giving a comprehensive and intelligent description of the workings of the regional system, Mr. Reed takes up various important matters and policies closely allied with the machinery of the entire Federal Reserve system. His explanatory remarks concerning redounds should entirely eliminate the many misunderstandings concerning this important function of the Federal Reserve. As a matter of fact, dollar advances, agricultural credit, bank acceptances, trade acceptances, note issues and other subjects usually Greek to the average layman are made plain as A. B. C. Especially interesting will be found the review of developments since the inception of the system to the present time.

FRIGHTFUL PLAYS FOR SOPHISTICATED READERS

Charles S. Brooks, author of "Chimney Pot Papers" and other volumes of essays in the manner of Charles Lamb, has invented a manner of his own in "Frightful Plays" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.). The book contains two burlesque plays, "Wappin' Wharf" and "At the Sign of the Greedy Pig," and a long explanatory introduction. This introduction is a humorous satire on the art of playwriting and on the peculiarities of theatrical managers. Its genial manner is continued in the stage directions of each play. "Wappin' Wharf" is a pirate play with a plot to wreck a ship by some retired pirates and a prince in disguise, and a kidnapped child brought to young pirates who have forgotten their identity. It is evidently designed for acting by children, and it accordingly has all the youthful theories about pirates worked out in the action. Whoever is in the mood for chipples will find the book to his taste.



H. DE VERE STACPOOLE
Who has written a thrilling tale
of a hunt for pirates

FOR THE SMALL FRY

Fairy and Folk and "Animale" Stories for the Littlest Ones

Hints for forthcoming Christmases are found in half a dozen or so volumes just off the publishers' presses and intended for the youngsters who have to read to or who are just now getting the perplexities of the printed page and setting their earliest taste of bodily joys.

Gertrude Crownfield is the author of "The Shadow Witch" (E. P. Dutton & Co.), and Anne Merriman Peck has made characteristic illustrations simply full of originality and distinction and humor.

BERTHOLD.—By Ernest Thompson Seton

A new story by the author of "Wild Animals I Have Known," which will be liked by children of all ages from ten to seventy, anyhow. It is the biography of a keen squirrel whose adventures will be keenly relished. In addition the book is an interpretation of nature and can be highly recommended as a gift to children who are interested in them, or whose parents wish to interest them. The author's clever pencil has furnished four full-page illustrations and a number of characteristic marginal drawings.

AN OLD WOMAN'S FAVORITE.—By Sir Robert Louis Stevenson, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.

"Animals I Have Known," the distinguished British author who is both a general and a basset-hound, this interesting book. As the founder of the English Boy Scouts, he is widely known here also. He gives entertaining personal anecdotes of his experiences with animals in many parts of the world.

UNIQUE IN ITS MANY FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS IS "The Pussycat Princess" (Century Company), which has a series of the drollest, most delightful lifelike photographic studies of real cat life by Harry Whittier Frost, creator of "The Animal Mirror" series. The illustrations, some of them in color, are by Johnnie Gruelle, who is known for his pictures for "Ragged Ann" and "Ragged Andy."

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