

Ouachita Baptist University

## Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

---

Honors Theses

Carl Goodson Honors Program

---

1975

### The Development of Children's Literature

Judy Hughes

*Ouachita Baptist University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors\\_theses](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses)



Part of the [Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons](#), [Education Commons](#), [History Commons](#), and the [Reading and Language Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Hughes, Judy, "The Development of Children's Literature" (1975). *Honors Theses*. 329.  
[https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors\\_theses/329](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses/329)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Carl Goodson Honors Program at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact [mortensona@obu.edu](mailto:mortensona@obu.edu).

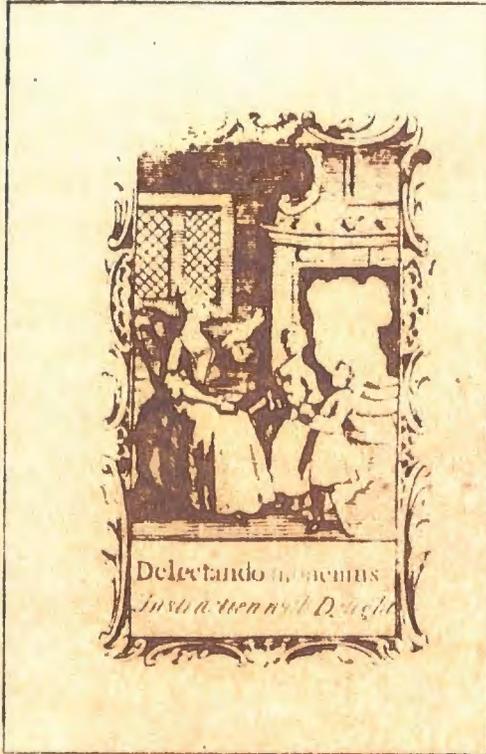
H 098.9  
FD  
11

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

by

Judy Hughes

Ouachita Baptist University  
Arkadelphia, Arkansas



A Little Pretty  
**POCKET-BOOK,**  
 Intended for the  
**INSTRUCTION and AMUSEMENT**  
 O F  
**LITTLE MASTER TOMMY,**  
 AND  
**PRETTY MISS POLLY.**  
 With Two Letters from  
**JACK the GIANT-KILLER;**  
 AS ALSO  
**A BALL and PINCUSHION;**  
 The Use of which will infallibly make *Tommy*  
 a good Boy, and *Polly* a good Girl.

---

To which is added,  
**A LITTLE SONG-BOOK,**  
 BEING  
 A New Attempt to teach Children the Use of  
 the *English Alphabet*, by Way of Diversion.

---

L O N D O N:  
 Printed for J. NEWSBURY, at the *Bible and Sun*  
 in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, 1767.  
 [Price Six-pence bound.]

( 78 )

His fragrant Breath perfumes the Ev'ning  
 Skies,  
 And tun'd to him the *Sylvan* Strains  
 arise;  
 A pointed Javelin in his Hand he bears,  
 And on his Head a Golden Helmet  
 wears,  
 For then begins the stern *Bellona's* Rage,  
 And hostile Realms in bloody Wars  
 engage:  
 His calm Approach revives the peaceful  
 Plain,  
 But leads on Death where Discord holds  
 its Reign.

II. S U M.

( 79 )

II. S U M M E R.

IN silken Garb array'd of cheerful  
 Green,  
 Was sportive *Summer* next advancing  
 seen;  
 A gilded Quiver at his Shoulder  
 hung,  
 And in his Hand he trail'd a Bow unbent  
 along.

His

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

- I. Earliest books
  - A. Lesson Books
  - B. First Encyclopedia for Children
- II. Results of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries in Europe
- III. Middle Ages
- IV. Renaissance
  - A. First English Printer
  - B. Hornbook
  - C. Broad­sides
- V. First Picture Book
- VI. Chapbooks
- VII. Three Ideas on Education and Their Influences
  - A. John Locke
  - B. Charles Perrault
  - C. Jean Jacques Rousseau
- VIII. John Newbery
- IX. Grimm's Folktales
- X. Master of Literary Fairy Tale
- XI. History of Children's Verse

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The earliest books for children were designed to inform, instruct, and improve rather than to awaken, enlighten, and enlarge the heart and mind.

As far back as the 600's A.D. in the Anglo-Saxon period, monks and other learned men wrote "lesson books" for children.

Aldhelm, the abbot of Malmesbury and bishop of Sherborne, was probably the first man to write lesson books for children. His De Septenario, de Metris, Enigmatibus ac Pedum Regulis contained a lengthy essay on the meaning and use of the number seven in the Bible. Aldhelm set the pattern of writing for children until the fifteen hundreds. All books of instruction used the question and answer form or were written in verse.

Venerable Bede (673-735) used more imagination than Aldhelm. One of his most famous works was De Natura Rerum. It contained information on natural science, history, astronomy, and botany. De Natura Rerum served as an English textbook for over three-hundred years. Much of the content of Bede's works is the recapitulation of the scholarly treatises of Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, and others.

Aelfric, a leading educator of the A.D. nine hundreds, wrote Colloguy in question and answer form. Aelfric took his subjects from everyday life and experiences. In Colloguy he uses dialogue to ask and answer his questions.

The first encyclopedia for children was probably written by Anselm (1033-1108). The title was Elucidarium.

Results of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Europe are the rise of towns and the middle class, and the return of Aristotle to Western culture. Education is dependent upon industry, commerce, and urban prosperity. With the recovery of classical learning and the humanistic movement came the great impetus to develop schools and a quest for knowledge. This was a movement which sought self-realization and self-expression.

Reading Gesta Romanorum is like straying into a similar lumber room of the literary past. One sees many of the beginnings and basic situations of books, stories, and drama of a later time and world. It came from Europe into the monasteries of England as a collection of tales written in Latin that the monks were able to use in the pulpit. It was once supposed to be an account, in story form, of important events in Roman history. It provided an allegorical interpretation, sometimes very loosely attached, but preserving the character of a book used by holy men.

Before the invention of the printing press, the illuminated manuscript books of the Middle Ages were owned only by the very wealthy. They were written in Latin and only the highly educated could read them. The Middle Ages in England was a period with books on instruction on manners and morals.

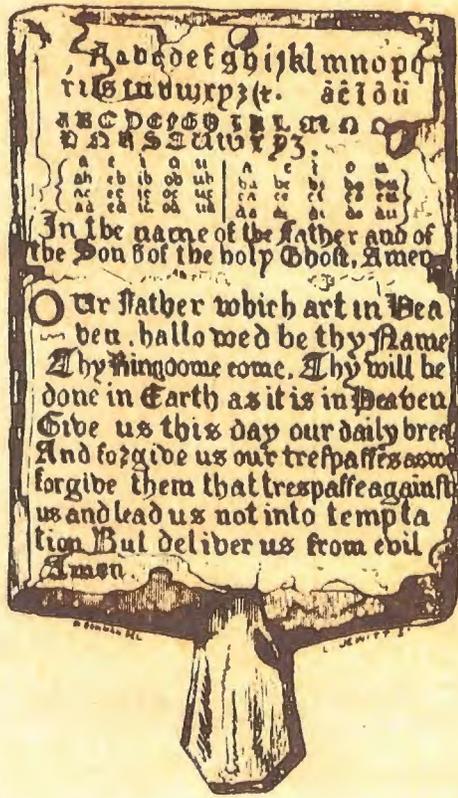
William Caxton (1421-1491) was the first English printer. His books for children were lesson books and courtesy books, only available to a small number of children. He printed many moral and didactic or teaching works to educate and instruct his readers. One of his courtesy books was the Book of Curteseye. In 1484 Caxton translated Aesop's Fables.

Aesop was supposed to be a Greek slave living in the sixth century B.C. A small, mishapened man with an extraordinary nimbleness of wit, he was always getting his master out of comic difficulties. In this way he was able to win his freedom.

Scholars say Aesop was not one man, but several. The stories have their origins from many sources; some from ancient Egyptian and Oriental sources. In the fifteenth century they were collected by Stainhowel, a German, and later translated into French by Jules Machault, a monk of Lyons. As mentioned above Caxton translated them into English in 1484.

The fables give a reflection of the instinctive friendship between man and animals, with a cheerful presentation of human weakness.

During the Renaissance, the first book used by a large number of children, the Hornbook, appeared. The Hornbook was a printed page pasted on a square piece of wood with a handle at one end. The surface was about three inches by four inches and covered with a transparent horn for protection, hence its name. Across the top were the small and



The Bateman Hornbook, believed to have been made in England in 1649

capital letters followed by the vowels and their combinations with consonants. This was followed by the Lord's Prayer. The small handle of the Hornbook often had holes in it that a string might be placed through it and a child could tie the book to his belt or around his neck. The printing of the Hornbook came about in the late fifteen hundreds. It was almost the only children's book during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Renaissance, with its broadening of views and extending enterprise of spirit, had produced little for young readers.

By the sixteenth century printing became cheaper and many broadsides, single sheets of paper with printing on only one side, were issued. By this time there was a large amount of literature for the common people in France. Before printing with movable type was developed, wood engraving was used to reproduce both text and pictures.

Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616) was an editor, a collector, and a recorder of data. Hakluyt's writings, the most important being Hakluyt's Voyages, grow more authentic and more interesting as he approaches his own time. He has only one view in mind, to show the prowess of English discovery. There is a need for re-editing for our own time and for young readers; however, few narratives are more valuable for the study of geography and to show the real facts of the first voyages which made known the shape of the world. His writings

were not consciously written for children, but there found an attentive and interested audience.

John Amos Comenius, bishop of Moravia, combined mysticism and individualism with optimistic overtones and in 1658 presented children with their first picture book, Orbis Pictus or World in Pictures. Comenius's greatest contribution to education and children's literature was the emphasis he placed on the importance of teaching the young by using concrete objects or pictures. He believed both men and women should receive some education. He wanted to unite all nations in a common system of education.

Orbis Pictus was translated into English by Charles Hoole in London in 1664. He translated the title to Visible World: or A Picture and Nonenclature of all the Chief Things That Are in the World. The text was Latin in one column and English in a parallel column. The woodcuts in the English translation were by Michael Endter.

During the sixteen hundreds one sees the development and growth of Puritanism and its effects on children's books and the educational process. The gloomy books of the period reflected the outlook that the fear of God is more important than the love of life. The ultimate and laudable reason to learn to read in the seventeenth century was to be able to read the Bible.

Orbis Sensualium Pictus,  
A World of Things Obvious to the  
Senses drawn in Pictures.

Invitation.

I.

Invitatio.



*The Master and the Boy.*

*Magister & Puer.*

M. Come, Boy, learn to  
be wise.

M. Veni, Puer, disce sa-  
pere.

P. What doth this mean,  
*to be wise?*

P. Quid hoc est, *Sapere?*

M. To understand right-  
ly.

M. Intelligere recte,

## Grinding.

XLIX.

## Molitura



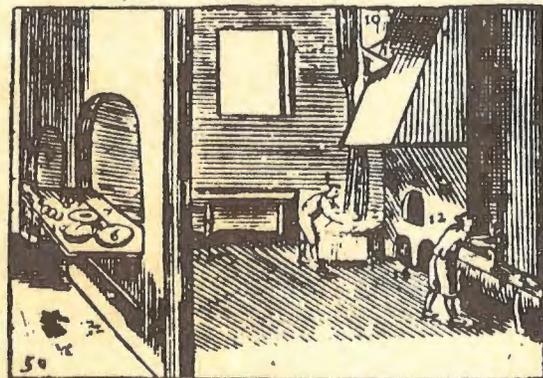
In a *Mill*, 1.  
 a *Stone*, 2. runneth  
 upon a stone, 3.  
 A *Wheel*, 4.  
 turning them about  
 and grindeth Corn poured  
 in by a *Hopper*, 5.  
 and parteth the *Bray*, 6.  
 falling into the *Trough*, 7.  
 from the *Meal* slipping  
 through a *Bolter*, 8.  
 Such a *Mill* was first  
 a *Hand-mill*, 9.  
 then a *Horse-mill*, 10.  
 then a *Water-mill*, 11.  
 then a *Ship-mill*, 12.  
 and at last a *Wind-mill*, 13.

In *Mola*,  
*Lapis*, 2. currit  
 super lapidem, 3,  
*Rota*, 4.  
 circumagente, et  
 conterit grana infusa  
 per *Infundibulum*, 5.  
 separatque *Furfurem*, 6.  
 decidentem in *Cistam*, 7.  
 à *Farina* (Polline)  
 elabente per *Excussorium*, 8.  
 Talis *Mola* primùm fuit  
*Manuaria*, 9.  
 deinde *Fumentaria*, 10.  
 tum *Aquatica*, 11.  
 & *Navalis*, 12. tandem,  
*Alata* (pneumatica), 13.

## Bread-baking.

L.

## Panificium.



The *Baker*, 1.  
 sifteth the *Meal*  
 in a *Rindge*, 2  
 and putteth it into the  
*Kneading-trough* 3.  
 Then he poureth water  
 to it and maketh *Dough*, 4.  
 and kneadeth it  
 with a *wooden slice*, 5.  
 Then he maketh  
*Loaves*, 6. *Cakes*, 7.  
*Cimnells*, 8. *Rolls*, 9; &c.  
 Afterwards he setteth  
 them on a *Peel*, 10.  
 and putteth them thorow  
 the *Oven-mouth*, 12.  
 into the *Oven*, 11.  
 But first he pulleth out  
 the fire and the Coals with  
 a *Coal-rake*, 13.

*Pistor*, 1.  
 cernit *Farinam*  
*Cribo*, 2. (pollinario)  
 & induit *Mastræ*, 3.  
 Tum affundit aquam.  
 & facit *Massam*, 4.  
 deponitque  
*spatha*, 5. lignea.  
 Dein format  
*Panes*, 6. *Placentas*, 7.  
*Similas*, 8. *Spiras*, 9. &c.  
 Post imponit  
*Palæ*, 10.  
 & ingerit *Furno*, 11.  
 per *Præfurnium*, 12.  
 Sed priùs eruit  
 ignem & Carbones  
*Rutabulo*, 13.

Humphrey Smith, a Quaker, declared to all parents upon the face of the earth in 1660 that "in many tender Babes and young Children, there is a meek, innocent, harmless Principle from God, who willeth not the Death of any; and they have a Light from Christ, that Lighteth every man that cometh into the World, which Light is in them."<sup>1</sup>

One of the major influences on the Puritan movement was John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, an allegory on the development of the human soul. Bunyan lived from 1628 till 1688. The best years of his life were spent in one prison after another. His turbulent, self-searching mind cut off from preaching, turned to writing to make life endurable. He scourged himself with repentance for his early misguided early life.

In his theology and his deepest thinking Bunyan was a Puritan. The simplicity of Pilgrim's Progress appeals to children, because it is a simplicity that has its foundation in the deepest truths of which human beings are conscious.

Pilgrim's Progress finds its universal qualities through reason. The first part was published in 1676; the second part came out in 1678. Every child who reads it thinks of

---

<sup>1</sup>James S. Derby, 7th Earl of, Papers for son. 1867 (in Remains, LXX, Stanely Papers, Part III, vol. III.)

it in terms of an actual and vivid journey. A journey moving from place to place, covering real miles of changing landscape and ever renewed adventure.

In a new land the Puritans, knowing that they were not to survive long, were determined that their children should first know how to die, and if live they could, they should live by the Puritan faith and in the sight of God. Intense people, sifted out and winnowed by hardships and persecution, only those of the strongest will survived. It is little wonder that literature turned toward admonishment and improvement of children. They hoped to make young minds strong and inflexible that they might withstand all the temptations and hardships. Out of this came such books as James Janeway's A Token for Children published in 1671. It is the story of thirteen model children and how they bravely faced death. It is probably the most notable of all collections of holy lives for children.

There were many volumes in which the dead were memorialized in collections of elegies and versified epitaphs. These almost constituted a biographical fashion from 1550-1650. The most famous of the martyrologies of the English Renaissance is John Foxe's Actes and Monuments published in 1559. It was a polemic against the persecution of the Protestants by Roman Catholics.

In this period biography has two main purposes. The first of these is for instruction on good conduct or how to live and die as a Christian. The second purpose was to provide a convenient center to group a narrative of historical events.

A proper book for the seventeenth century child should have preaching on such topics as divine judgement of sinners, stories of early piety and edifying deaths, poetry, and suggestions for further reading.

In the first half of the seventeenth century the Anglican church produced few religious books. In the second half however they used some of the Puritan tactics for indoctrinating their young.

Probably the first book printed for children in America was The New England Primer in 1683. The standard lesson book in America was three inches by four and a half inches with about one hundred pages. These small lesson books were bound in boards.

The most extensive study of courtesy literature and related topics centers around the period of 1531 through 1774. Books of courtesy picture the ideal members of a class. There were four types of courtesy literature: those of polite conduct, those of policy, those of civility, and those of parental advice.

The most influential civility book in its own time and the following centuries was Erasmus's De Civilitate morum Rurilium

published in 1526. It was translated into English by Robert Whittington in 1532 as A Lytell Book of Good Manners for Children. Many parents left a dying legacy to their children giving advice and instruction which was often published for and read by other children.

As mentioned earlier, by the sixteenth century printing had become cheaper and a larger amount of literature for the common people of France was available. Crude translations were made in English and became very popular. These were often sold by chapmen, peddlers, carrying small, inexpensive books, usually folded instead of stitched. Ribbons and laces were frequently inserted by owners. These small books came to be called chapbooks after the chapmen. They usually contained from thirty-two to sixty-four pages. For the most part they were linguistically and aesthetically poor in quality.

Chapbooks dealt with a variety of subjects -- religious, diabolical, supernatural, superstitious, romantic, humorous, legendary, historical, biographical, and criminal.

In the late seventeenth century is found one of the major influences on literature for children and on education made up till this time. In 1690 John Locke wrote Thoughts on Education. Locke was one of the first to believe and state that the mind at birth is a blank page. Children are not born either good or bad. Their first impressions come from things not words.

Locke believed that reading should never be made a task, but that children should be given illustrated books for entertainment. Although he believed children should read for pleasure, he did not wish the child's head to be filled with "perfectly useless trumpery."

With Locke, for the first time a truly great mind speaks with authority on children as children, and tells parents how they should behave toward them.

"Children should be treated as rational creatures."<sup>2</sup>

Fables were espoused by Locke as excellent reading material. He considered the fable a vehicle in which children could entertain and delight themselves, but would still offer food for intellect.

"They should be allowed their liberties and freedom suitable to their ages... They must not be hindered from being children, nor from playing and doing as children; but from doing ill."<sup>3</sup>

Locke believed character and virtue are more important qualities to be developed than the mere acquisition of learning. To Locke elementary education for the masses could cease when children learned to read the Bible. The teaching of the

---

<sup>2</sup>John Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, (In Works, Vol. IX, 1690), p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, Vol. IX, p. 53.

Scriptures were expounded to children by means of catechisms, one of the most numerous classes of writing in the seventeenth century.

"They love to be busy, change and variety are what delight them ... curiosity is but an appetite after knowledge, the instrument nature has provided to remove ignorance."<sup>4</sup>

Locke felt all children from the ages of three to fourteen should attend "working schools" to learn a livelihood.

We do not suppose that children of three years old will be able at that age to get their livelihoods at working school, but we are sure that what is necessary for their relief will more effectually have that use if it be distributed to them in bread at that school than if it be given to their fathers in money... care be taken that they have each of them their belly full of bread daily at school, they will be healthier and stronger than those who are bred otherwise.<sup>5</sup>

Locke's ideas about "working schools" were misused and used as an excuse for putting children to work in factories.

With Locke a turning point is reached and the real needs of children are regarded.

Some people from the time of William Caxton had regarded romance and fairy tales as suitable for the young, but not until the eighteenth century were they regarded as just for the young.

---

<sup>4</sup>Locke, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>5</sup>John Locke, cited in Adams, About Books and Children, p. 205.

Until about 1550 both the upper and lower classes read the surviving medieval romances. Little other fiction was available. From the middle sixteenth century with the importation of Spanish and French romances, the Italian novelle, and the rediscovery of the Greek and Roman classics, cultivated readers left the medieval tales to the uneducated and the old fashioned.

The growth of science and rationalism in the seventeenth century and the rapid growth of literacy in general helped to change the fairies and other supernatural beings into mere amusing playthings for children.

"Fables are stories to teach children what they should do, 'by showing them what may happen to them if they do not act as they ought to do.'"<sup>6</sup>

The fact of animals being able to speak, a falsity of nature, bothered the early authors and translators. It was explained that Aesop said what he thought the animals would say in order to teach a lesson.

The folktale is a very old story of unknown authorship handed down orally from generation to generation. Peoples in far removed lands and widely different times, told the same stories, with just details differing. As an example there are over three hundred variants of "Cinderella."

---

<sup>6</sup>Cornelia Meigs, Elizabeth Nesbitt, Anne Eaton, and Ruth Viguers, A Critical History of Children's Literature, (New York, The Mac Millan Co., 1953), p. 89.

There are two theories on the origin and transmission of folktales. One is that all have a common origin in India. They were transmitted by migrations. The second view is that they arose independently. There is a universality of humanity and a sameness of human nature and emotion everywhere and this accounts for the similarity. When the tales were put into books, they became the possession of children. "The folk tale knows no frontiers," Paul Hazard stated in his Books Children, and Men.

The Jataka Tales are perhaps the oldest and largest body of fables. They originated from ancient Buddhist sacred literature. The time of origin is not definitely known. Jataka, a Buddhist name for story, depicts Buddha reincarnated as various animals. Imbedded in these fables are universal truths in one brief, dramatic incident using few characters, typically animals.

The English or Anglo-Saxon stories are direct, compact and forthright. They deal with things of the imagination, but for the most part do so in a comfortable and eminently practical way. The head and front of English magic lore is Robin Goodfellow. The early folktales picture him as broad faced, big eared, hairy and the soul of wit and resource.

The English fairy tale often show a certain rude disregard for human life. But there are a number of them which are pure nonsense and impossible to imitate. In the Celtic stories

one sees Scotch, Irish, Welsh, and Cornish; all differing yet with all of the narratives turning to the land of Faery.

In 1697 one of the most famous collections of tales in literature appeared in France. It was titled Contes de Ma Mere l'Oye (Tales of My Mother Goose). These tales were collected by Charles Perrault. The frontispiece of the book showed three children around an old woman, Mother Goose, listening to her tales. The original book contained eight tales. They are "Little Red Riding Hood," "Sleeping Beauty," "Cinderella," "Puss in Boots," "Blue Beard," "Toads and Diamonds," "Riquet with the Tuft," and "Hop o' My Thumb." Translations of these tales into English were published separately in chapbooks. Mother Goose was later associated with rhymes.

It is believed by some scholars that Perrault or his son wrote "Blue Beard," "The Three Witches," "The Sleeping Beauty," "Puss in Boots," and "Little Red Riding Hood."

Perrault (1628-1703) was a scholar, member of the French Academy, and the assistant superintendent of public works under Louis XIV's great minister, Colbert. One of his last official acts was to make sure that the gardens of Tuileries were kept open to the public especially for the children. Perrault's books were published without the author's name attached. It was considered beneath an author's dignity to write children's books.

The English translations of Perrault's stories were the first fairy stories written down and printed just for British children.

A Thousand and One Nights Entertainments arrived in England by way of the French version by Monsieur Galland (1704-1717). "Aladain" is the most famous of these tales. They originated from Mohammedan and Arab.

Jean Jacques Rousseau lived from 1712 till 1778. Rousseau stressed a return to nature. He believed that formal education for children should not start till age twelve. Children should be able to grow naturally, according to free play of nature. He stressed the importance that experience be in harmony with physical and mental development. Children should not be forced to learn to read till age eleven. Rousseau advocated that children should be taught about real things and the world they lived in. Most of children's books should be devoted to practical education.

For Rousseau children should not be led in their search for knowledge, but accompanied by the wise preceptor and friend always near to supply information when it was asked, and to make things clear at a critical moment when self-instruction tends to turn into confusion.

For Rousseau life needs to be simple and unadorned, free from luxuries of elaborate costume. Due to the misunderstanding of Rousseau's theory there came a growth of didactic or teaching school of writing.

In imagination and spirit Rousseau superintended the education of Emile and rendered him a delightful and spirited youth in his book Emile.

Such books as Thomas Day's Sanford and Merton, the story of a good little boy, Harry Sanford, and his tutor, Mr. Barlow, who try to reform bad little Tommy Merton with no success, is a good example of the didactic school of writing.

Although folklore was frowned on by the Puritans, it remained popular. In England folklore appeared in print with the translation of Perrault's tales after seventeen hundred. The idea of the child's need for recreation through books was gaining ground. However, it remained for John Newbery (1713-1767), a London bookseller, to recognize the unpalatable nature of mental food for children.

John Newbery brought a new era to children's literature, and ended the era in which chapbooks furnished the literature for children. He is usually considered the father of children's literature. He was the first publisher with the idea of publishing books just for children.

Newbery published about two-hundred books. They were illustrated with numerous, but crude drawings. They were attractively covered with flowery, gilt paper. Best of all Newbery's books had vitality and quality. He captures the readers's attention by easy directness. He mingles fun, friendliness

and high spirits with necessary prudent advice and admonitions to be good.

Newbery had received only a local and limited schooling. He was the second son of Robert Newbery, a farmer. John spent most of his leisure time in reading. He was a natural scholar.

John Newbery was a large, practical, sensible man. His generosity was always at the service of his friends. He was a simple, jolly, resourceful man journeying through England in a flurry of business. According to Goldsmith books were his main interest. Even his deep interest in literature and writers is not enough to explain what he did for children. It took a deep and sincere love for children and a fantastic gift for friendship. His ideas on teaching a child were gentle and understanding. He used the term naughtiness instead of sin.

The basis of Newbery's literary philosophy: "good, solid English trade and the highest ideal of success and honor in commercial life, all this held out to children well flavored with plumb cake and the whole bound in gilt and flowered boards for sixpence."<sup>7</sup>

It took this farmer's son to have the sufficient energy and judgement to make a success in the regular production of books for the young.

---

<sup>7</sup>Cornelia Meigs, Elizabeth Nesbitt, Anne Eaton, and Ruth Viguers, A Critical History of Children's Literature, (New York, The Mac Millan Co., 1953), p. 89.

Newbery wrote A Pretty Little Pocket Book, a book for pleasure. He translated and published Perrault's Tales of Mother Goose. Newbery was the one to publish a collection of favorite nursery rhymes and call them Mother Goose's Melody. His books were well printed and illustrated. Realizing what children need and want, he made his books gay and charming. In 1765 he published The Renowned History of Little Goody Two Shoes by Oliver Goldsmith. This was the first English novel for children. In 1751 Newbery was also to publish the first children's magazine, The Lilliputian Magazine.

Two years after Newbery's death, Benjamin Collins, one of his helpers, originated battledores, a folding three leaf pamphlet of cardboard. It contained numerals, easy reading lessons, the alphabets, and little woodcuts. The earliest of the battledore was covered with gilt, embossed Dutch paper. The lesson side of these was varnished. They contained no religious instructions. They were entertaining, instructive, and cheap. They remained popular till about 1850.

Many of John Newbery's books and advertisements were reprinted in America by Isaiah Thomas (1749-1831). Thomas is often called the Newbery of America. Thomas was a printer, publisher, and bookseller in Boston and in Worcester. He did for American children what Newbery had done in Europe. He wrote no books of his own. Thomas imported and sold English versions of children's books. It was not until after the

American War for Independence that he began publishing on his own. He used many of Newbery's methods of advertizing.

Due to the trend Newbery set, by the end of the seventeenth century Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver's Travels were being published for and read by children.

Daniel De Foe (1659-1731) spent a long term in Newgate Prison. He had keen observation and interest in people and politics. He also possessed an excellence of timing. While in jail he wrote the satire, Hymn to the Pillory. In 1719 Robinson Crusoe, the book that made him immortal, appeared. It contained a form directly natural for children's liking. It had no confusing complications of structure. There is an effortless unity of place and character with a vividness of dealing with natural things and adventure. Exactly what children had looked for so long in vain.

In 1726 Jonathan Swift wrote Gulliver's Travels, the record of far journeys, of a shipwreck and strange lands. It is a story of the contrivances for survival and comfort. Gulliver's Travels was a satire written for adults, but it came to be a children's classic. One is able to find a lot of similarity between Swift's works and De Foe's; however, it is unlikely that this was intentional.

Swiss Family Robinson by Johann Wyss was published in 1813. It is one of the most famous books following De Foe's Robinson Crusoe. It is full of moralizing and lecturing. It contains

It contains complete unreality pertaining to natural facts. This was the first "domestic" book for children in Germany.

In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century Charles and Mary Lamb believed that children could be helped to appreciate larger beauties which adults had made no effort to give them. In 1806 they wrote their version of Shakespeare, Tales from Shakespeare. They managed to capture the spirit and essence of each play and give one a strong sense of the central character and his problems. One gets an immediate unity of impression to carry away with him until he read the play and sees it in its own form.

In 1808 Charles Lamb translated the Adventures of Ulysses. It was the first time since the translation of Plutarch into English that anyone had introduced a great figure of classical literature remotely within the reach of children.

In 1809 Charles and Mary Lamb wrote Mrs. Leicester's School and Poetry for Children to give pleasure to the children that read them.

In the early eighteenth hundreds the Grimm brothers collected the German folk stories. Their main objective was to record and to preserve the German folklore scientifically. These tales were translated into English from 1823-1826 and called Household Stories. The Grimm brothers have been credited with having been the originators of the modern science of folklore. The Grimms were painstaking about their sources.

They wrote verbatim as they heard them from the lips of old storytellers whom they sought out. The stories have become children's favorites. However, the Grimms did not have children in mind, their chief interest was in the roots and the development of the German language.

The first picture book for children in the modern sense was Edgar Taylor's translation of Grimm's Popular Stories in 1823. It was illustrated by George Cruikshank (1792-1878). Up until this time pictures had been included in children's literature almost entirely for driving home a moral. Cruikshank was a genius as a caricaturist. His pictures were full of grotesque and lively humor which delights children. His works were done in black and white. Most of the colored illustrations during the period were poorly drawn and crudely colored. Cruikshank often caricatured his beloved city, London, and its inhabitants with exaggerated style and warm humor. He had bold imagination and originality.

Walter Scott wrote Ivanhoe in 1819, and from 1828-1830 he wrote Tales of a Grandfather. In Scott's stories, the real and the remote have reached just the balance that young readers love. There is not great complication of plot or subtlety of character that are difficult for young minds to follow.

Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) was the first artist to devote his time exclusively to the illustration of books. It was due to his artistry that woodcuts regained popularity for

the illustration of books. His woodcuts reveal integrity, humor, and sensitivi to beauty.

The master of the literary fairy tale is Hans Christain Andersen. Andersen was born in Odense, Denmark of a respectable poor family. His father was a self-educated cobbler. His mother surrounded him with warm affection and security. Andersen's home always remained a place of golden memories to him. Many of his childhood memories are found in his stories. He was a dreamer. He read with a passionate eagerness anything he could get hold of. He even tried at acting, but failed.

In 1829 at the age of twenty-four Andersen's first book was published. It was a fantasy he called A Walking Trip From Holmens Kanal to the East Point of Amger. His fairy tales were to bring him his greatest fame. Many of his plots and incidents were drawn from folklore, but he wove about them a wealth of imaginative detail in language so beautifully that they became his own creation. Andersen meant for his tales to be enjoyed by the young and the old alike. His tales think and talk as the child does. Children see the world as he sees it and are thus completely understood by him. In 1846 Andersen's tales were first translated into English by Mary Howitt. She entitled them Wonderful Stories for Children. Andersen was the first person to author a group of fairy tales.

## The History of Children's Verse

Not until the early 1700's did poetry definitely intended for children appear. In 1715 Dr. Isaac Watt's Divine and Moral Songs for Children came out.

Early verse for children was written for the education of youth. Nathaniel Cotton in 1751 wrote Visions in Verse for the Entertainment of Younger Minds. Cotton combined entertainment with wholesome precepts on right thinking and right doing.

William Blake was an exception to the rule during this period. In 1789 one finds his Songs of Innocence, an expression of true poetic genius. His verse often contained haunting tenderness. His introduction to Songs of Innocence, "Piping Down the Valleys":

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.

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.<sup>8</sup>

may explain how Blake came to write verses for children.

---

<sup>8</sup>William Blake, cited in Walter Barnes, The Children's Poets, (New York: World Book Co., 1925), p. 97.

Though Blake may not have meant his poetry for children, his poems portray the innocence and youth before they reach maturity. His poems seem to meet children "where they live."

Ann and Jane Taylor were the first poets to write only for children and about children. In 1804 they wrote Original Poems for Infant Minds.

Edward Lear (1812-1888) was the first poet to set out to deliberately conjure up gaiety, fun, and laughter in his verse. Lear's works can not be explained in terms of any influences of the time in which he lived; though, of course nonsense needs no explanation. Most juvenile books of the period contained morals and practical lessons. Lear's Book of Nonsense in 1846 sent children and grownups alike into gales of laughter. An example of his work is

There was an Old Man with a beard,  
Who said: "It is just as I feared!--  
Two Owls and a Hen,  
Four Larks and a Wren,  
Have all built their nest in my beard!"<sup>9</sup>

Lear was one of twenty-one surviving children of a wealthy family. He had two misfortunes in his life which might have stifled a less buoyant spirit. He lived throughout life with a mild form of epilepsy. When Edward was thirteen, his father was put into debtor's prison, and his mother was left to deal with poverty. Other works of Lear include, More Nonsense, Laughable Lyrics, and Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany and Alphabets.

---

<sup>9</sup>Edward Lear, cited in Arbuthnot, Children and Books, p. 121.

English verse had been read contentedly by American children in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. American children did not seem to miss the presense of poets of their own. In 1822 with Clement Moore's A Visit from St. Nicholas one finds the first American poem of importance. Since it was originally written there have been changes made. This is a long poem that Moore wrote for his own children. The rhythm is perfect for the poem.

There are many more important factors in the development of children's literature. However, unable to cover everything in a short essay paper, I have tried to pick out the high points in both prose and poetry till about 1850. I also tried to show how the trends and ideals of different ages influenced at least some of children's literature.

## Bibliography

- Adams, Bess Porter. About Books and Children. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1953.
- Anderson, William Davis, and Groff, Patrick. A New Look at Children's Literature. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1972.
- Arbuthnot, May Hill. Children and Books. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1964.
- Barnes, Walter. The Children's Poets. New York: World Book Co., 1925.
- Gillespie, Margaret C. History and Trends. Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co. Publishers, 1970.
- Hollowell, Lillian (ed.). A Book of Children's Literature. 2cd ed. New York: Holt, 1950.
- Huber, Miriam. Story and Verse for Children. New York: The Mac Millan Co., 1965.
- Meigs, Cornelia, and Others. A Critical History of Children's Literature. New York: The Mac Millan Co., 1953.
- Newbery, John. A Pretty Little Pocket Book. Edited by M. F. Thwaite. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967.
- Sloane, William. Children's Books in England and America in the Seventeenth Century. New York: King's Crown Press, Columbia University Press, 1955.