

critères et de références linguistiques. Hormis quelques évocations rapides des critères de lisibilité traditionnels (vocabulaire, structure des phrases, usage de métaphores), on ne trouve rien de pertinent sur la rencontre de l'enfant avec le texte comme forme globale de l'expression écrite.

Les références ne manquent pourtant pas dans le domaine. Depuis au moins dix ans, psychologues, linguistes et psycholinguistes (W. Kintsch et B. Meyer notamment) cherchent à établir des taxonomies textuelles et à comparer l'impact sur la lisibilité des divers types de textes incluant les diverses formes que peut revêtir le texte documentaire. Près de nous, à l'Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, des propositions intéressantes ont été faites pour mettre en relation le développement de l'enfant et les différents types de textes qui lui deviennent progressivement accessibles. L'intérêt de ces travaux pour l'apprentissage et la didactique de la lecture, nous apparaît certain. Il aurait été normal que, dans un document sur le documentaire pour enfant, on en fasse au moins mention.

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GOLDEN STORIES, GOLDEN AGE

A garland from the golden age: an anthology of children's literature from 1850 to 1900, ed. Patricia Demers. Oxford University Press, 1983. 508 pp., \$13.50 paper. ISBN 0-19-540414-9.

A garland from the golden age is the welcome sequel to Patricia Demers' and Gordon Moyles' *From instruction to delight: An anthology of children's literature to 1850* (Oxford, 1982, reviewed in *CCL*, 29 [1983], 43-45). This later volume concentrates on the second half of the nineteenth century, the "golden age" of children's literature characterised by a rich variety of genres aimed at the enjoyment of the reader rather than, as had largely been the case previously, his moral instruction (preface, xii). Demers' preface underlines that the scope of her anthology goes beyond those acknowledged literary masterpieces of the period, such as Hughes' *Tom Brown's schooldays*, Wilde's "The happy prince," and Stevenson's *A child's garden of verses*. Also included are "the jewelled descriptions of Browne's *Granny's wonderful chair*, the terrors of Clifford's *Anyhow stories*, and the perils of Stretton's destitute orphan, 'Little Meg,'" from less familiar works which also deserve our attention. Representative selections from new genres of the period, such as school and adventure stories, "penny dreadfuls" and "shilling shockers" are also present in the an-

thology, as are excerpts from stories preoccupied, like their period, with the role of women, such as Angela Brazil's *The third class at Miss Kaye's* (1908) and Bessie Marchant's *All girls' story book* (1924). (Demers extends the boundary of the anthology to include such later selections.) Finally, students and teachers of North American children's literature will welcome the inclusion of American writers such as Helen Hunt Jackson (*Nelly's silver mine*, 1878) and Joel Chandler Harris (*Uncle Remus, his songs and his sayings*, 1880). In addition, "the inclusion of formerly prominent Canadian authors — James De Mille, Margaret Murray Robertson, Norman Duncan, W.A. Fraser, and Catharine Parr Traill — should dispel the notion that praiseworthy and internationally recognized stories for children did not originate (or were not set) in Canada until the first decades of the twentieth century" (preface, xiv).

As well as a selection which is comprehensive in scope, Demers' anthology, like its predecessor, has an attractive and orderly layout which enhances the accessibility of its helpful background information and sound literary observations. The contents, mostly excerpts, are divided into eleven sections (I include examples in parentheses): 1) the fairy tale (Dickens' "The magic fish-bone"); 2) the allegorical narrative (George MacDonald's *At the back of the north wind*); and 3) evangelical writing (Maria Louisa Charlesworth); 4) the children's novel (Edith Nesbit's *Five children and it*); 5) nursery fiction (Kenneth Grahame's *The golden age*); 6) school stories (Hughes' *Tom Brown's schooldays*); and 7) adventure stories (G.A. Henty's *With Wolfe in Canada*); and 8) shilling shockers and penny dreadfuls (Samuel Bracebridge Hemyngh's *Dick Lighthouse, the scapegrace of London*); 9) the animal story (Anna Sewel's *Black beauty*); 10) children's periodicals (*The Child's Own Magazine*); and children's poetry (Carroll, de la Mare, etc.). Each section of the anthology has its own introduction and bibliography; each individual excerpt also has an introduction, and reproductions of over sixty original illustrations adorn the whole.

The variety and scope of the larger sections of the anthology reappear within the sections themselves. In the sixth section entitled "Manly boys and rosy girls," for example, Demers reminds us that Hughes' *Tom Brown's schooldays* is the best known of those school stories which instead of preaching, "presented expertly detailed scenes of school life . . . as a means of conveying certain educational principles" (254). In contrast with Tom's passage from new boy to gentleman, the "Evangelical fervour" of the following selection, from Frederic Farrar's *Eric; or, little by little* (1858), portrays the hero's moral declension at a corrupt public school. A passage from Kipling's *Stalky & Co.*, (1899), the third selection, parodies Farrar's pious story when Stalky invites the laughter of his peers at passages of *Eric* which he reads aloud. Demers' illuminating juxtaposition of these three selections culminates in the last two excerpts of the section, from girls' school stories: Angela Brazil's portrait of schoolgirls in *The third class at Miss Kaye's* (1908), and Jean Webster's of her heroine's college days in the epistolary novel, *Daddy-long-legs* (1912). The contents of the sec-

tions thus provide a variety rich with a sense of context and mutual illumination.

Demers' anthology excels, then, in scope, arrangement, illustration, and apt commentary. While these characteristics make this reasonably priced book very attractive for the teacher or student of children's literature of the golden age, the excerpts in the book also more broadly provide wonderful reading for anyone interested; and my review would perform a disservice if it failed to close with a small taste of the splendid variety of primary works within. The reader may happen on the dénouement of Wilde's "The happy prince," when the Swallow, who out of love for the statue Prince has not flown south for the winter, bids him farewell:

"Good-bye, dear Prince!" he murmured, "will you let me kiss your hand?"
"I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, little Swallow," said the Prince, "you have stayed too long here; but you must kiss me on the lips, for I love you."
"It is not to Egypt that I am going," said the Swallow.
"I am going to the House of Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?"
And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips, and fell down dead at his feet.
At that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue, as if something had broken.
(97)

Or one might follow the gray wolf hunting to ward off his and his pregnant mate's starvation in *The kindred of the wild* by Sir Charles G.D. Roberts:

He had travelled long, till the direction of the moonshadows had taken a different angle to his path, when suddenly there came a scent upon the wind. He stopped, one foot up, arrested in his stride. The gray, cloudy brush of his tail stiffened out. His nostrils, held high to catch every waft of the new scent, dilated; and the edges of his upper lip came down over the white fangs, from which they had been snarlingly withdrawn. His pause was but for a breath or two. Yes, there was no mistaking it. The scent was moose — very far off, but moose, without question. He darted forward at a gallop, but with his muzzle still held high, following that scent up the wind. (429)

Or, last, I leave with you the image of Thomas Mayne Reid's hero Will in *Ran away to sea*, overboard and watching with horror as a log turns into a crocodile, moving slowly but inexorably toward his screaming, flailing form:

Once more I raised my self in the water, and looked back. It was an appalling sight. The black head of the crocodile glittered within ten feet of me. I could see the jaws extended, — the long, irregular tusks, — the strong, scaly limbs, as they paddled the water — (320)

To discover the outcome, you might buy this fine anthology.

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