1943

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Recommended Citation
Stewart, Lois (1943) "For The Christmas Stocking," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 23 : No. 5 , Article 9.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol23/iss5/9

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For The Christmas Stocking

Lois Stewart recommends the newest books as suitable gifts for all members of the family.

WARTIME Christmas shoppers, dismayed by the lack of nylon and the shortage of metal jewelry, will be encouraged by the gift potentialities of a good book. Problems of priority and rationing have not yet seriously handicapped publishers, who offer a wide variety of gifts for every member of the family.

The only book to outsell Wendell Willkie’s One World is the tenth edition of Irma Rumbauer’s Joy of Cooking (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.50). This result of long practical experience combines reliable recipes which emphasize meat extenders and sugar savers with an occasional culinary chat. Written simply enough for beginners, the book contains practical and novel suggestions for experienced homemakers as well.

Women now assuming important roles in American society will find Nathaniel Fishman’s Married Woman’s Bill of Rights (Liveright, $2.50) a valuable basis for self-assertion. A lawyer seeks to tell in simple terms some elementary legal facts which everyone may need to know at one time or another.

For father and other history-loving members of the family, James Truslow Adams, widely-known American historian, offers The American (Scribner’s, $3). This story of the John Does and Richard Roes crowds dates, battles and presidents into the background as the author traces the geographical, historical and social forces which have made America a distinct and individual group.

Those who enjoy keeping up with the times will welcome John Roy Carlson’s Under Cover (Dutton, $2.50), sensational expose of so-called American Fascists. Threatened libel suits have pushed it into the best-seller class.

Another up-to-the-minute thriller is Etta Shiber’s Paris Underground (Scribner’s, $2.50). This authentic account of the experiences of two American women who initiated a French “underground railway” for war prisoners is based on actual experience.

The lover of martial music will revel in Songs of Many Wars, edited by Kurt Allen (Howell, $3). This memorial to the spirit of liberty and freedom includes many songs which have never before appeared in print. Among them are the anthems of the fighting Chetniks, the Norwegian underground forces and the Spanish International Brigade.

The members of the family who enjoy the classics will find a guide to music appreciation in Leopold Stokowski’s Music for All of Us (Simon and Schuster, $2.50). The famous conductor adopts an original approach to the age-old problem of interpreting the musical masterpieces.

One of America’s best-loved composers is memorialized in Ewen David’s Story of George Gershwin (Holt, $2.50). Based on the author’s personal acquaintance with the composer of “Rhapsody in Blue,” the biography contains lists of musical comedies, revues and films for which Gershwin wrote the music.

The serviceman who wants to forget the war for a while will move back 2,000 years in Sholem Asch’s historical novel, The Apostle (Putnam, $3). The life of St. Paul provides the theme for the book which numbers most of the early Christian leaders among its characters.

Small sister, struggling with her first coffee cake, will find help in Let’s Cook (Knopf, $1.75), by Nancy Hawkins. Designed for beginners of all ages, this practical handbook features pictures of cooking implements and careful explanations of their use.

The younger members of the family who are scientifically inclined will appreciate Katherine Britton’s What Makes It Tick (Houghton, $2.50). The author illustrates the basic principles of science through clear explanations of snow plows, elevators, fire extinguishers and other features of everyday life.

For the first time, the humorist James Thurber has turned his talents to a children’s book, and Many Moons (Harcourt, $2) is the result. This fantasy about the little Princess Lenore who wanted the moon and the Court Jester who got it for her will find favor with younger boys and girls.

Children of all ages can have fun with magic, and Joseph Leeming’s book Magic (Stokes, $2) may well provide a starting point for several year’s Christmas presents.

Readers from eight to eighty are numbered among the admirers of Flicka, heroine of a novel and a movie. Now Mary O’Hara adds Flicka’s colt, Thunderhead, to the McLaughlin family. Not a sequel to the first book, Thunderhead (Lippincott, $2.75) stands on its own feet as a moving story of the making of a racehorse.

Amateur psychologists will enjoy Phyllis Bottome’s Survival (Little, Brown, $2.50), a novel of mental strains under the stress of war.