

tion.—But A. C. Armstrong & Son outstrip all competitors in this line in their *On Special Service*, by Gordon Stables, C. M., M.D., R.N., etc.; upon the cover of which both paint-pot and invention must have been exhausted. True, the story is sufficiently extravagant, dealing as it does with a boy's enthusiasms, with naval cadets, Portuguese slaves, buried treasures, shipwrecks, earthquakes, etc.; but with all its extravagance it is not a dime novel, and it ought not to be so gotten up as to resemble one.—From the National Society's Depository, London, come two books equally gay in dress, with Thomas Whittaker's imprint upon the title-page—*Uncle Ivan*; or, *Recollections of Fifty Years Back*, by M. Branston, a prettily written story of an English family with Russian relatives and affiliations, and, consequently, with a due allowance of Russian spies and fervid patriotism; and *Scapegrace Dick*, which gives the adventures of a willful boy who found his pleasure and his hard trials as well in running away from an unjust guardian to serve in the English navy under Blake, in Cromwell's day. The author, Frances Mary Peard, has had experience in novel writing and has told the story of her young hero in a very pleasant fashion.—From the same publisher, T. Whittaker, comes an American story by that popular writer of boys' books, Edward A. Rand. Mr. Rand usually finds something worth talking about when he goes down to the sea, and this time in his *Fighting the Sea*; or, *Winter in the Life-Saving Station*, he tells the boys much about the work of the Life-Saving Service.

—*Who Saved the Ship* and *The Giant Dwarf* are two new books by J. A. K. The first of these volumes contains two stories, sensible, homely and practical, although the young hero of one of them has more of the Midas' touch than is given to most of our young men who go West. This author, who calls himself J. A. K., has written a goodly number of books for boys in which he encourages them in studying natural history, in making collections and forming village museums. The scene of *The Giant Dwarf* is laid in Germany, and the hero, strolling through German woods sees a rattlesnake coiled to spring and "shaking its ominous rattles." The agility of the youth who leaps upon this ugly reptile and crushes it is graphically depicted in both text and accompanying wood cut to the utter bewilderment of the simple reviewer who never looked to find rattlesnakes outside of America except in a menagerie. This snake belonged in the "Riverside Museum," but strayed into "The Giant Dwarf" by mistake. Barring the snake episode, the story is readable and clever. The books are published by T. Y. Crowell & Co.—Lee & Shepard publish three excellent books for boys. The first, *Peter Budstone, the Boy who was Hazed*, by J. T. Trowbridge, is better as a boy's book, if that be possible, than most by the same successful writer. Added to the life and action of the characters in which Mr. Trowbridge excels, there is in this little book a finer humor, a deeper pathos, and a sharper moral than he usually indulges himself in, though he could hardly write a story that should lack these three important elements. *Burnham Breaker*, the second of these publications, is by Mr. Homer Greene, of Honesdale, Penn., who won the prize in the *Youth's Companion's* competition for stories, with his "Blind Brother." *Burnham Breaker*, like the "Blind Brother," is a story of the coal mine, the scene being laid in Scranton, Penn., and the tale is well told, bright, fresh, and worth the telling. The third of these volumes is a new edition of *Persverance Island; or, the Robinson Crusoe of the Nineteenth Century*, by Douglas Frazer. This story, though absurdly extravagant, is just the sort of book from which a boy would learn, in spite of himself, how to make the most of things, and above all to obtain a "compendium of useful arts and sciences," and to study it faithfully.—Howard Pyle's *Rose of Paradise*, now brought out in book form by Harper & Brothers, is as full of adventure as a nut is of meat. This manifoldly gifted author has, as usual, drawn his own illustrations, and has told his story in a quaint, artistic fashion. It may also be due to his artistic sense that the covers of the book are severely plain. The same publishers bring out Thomas W. Knox's adaptation of Henry M. Stanley's "Through the Dark Continent," under the title of *The Boy Travellers on the Congo*. In this volume Colonel Knox makes his boy travelers read aloud, day after day, interesting extracts from Stanley, and so the cream of the two volumes is skimmed into this, for the benefit of young readers. The closing chapters give some in-

formation as to Bishop Hannington, Thompson, who wrote "Through Masai Land," Paul du Chaillu, and other travelers in Africa.—Another story of life and adventure among the savages is issued by Dodd, Mead & Co. The title reads *Ran Away from the Dutch; or, Borneo from South to North*, by M. T. H. Perelaer, late of the Dutch Indian Service. Translated by Maurice Blok and adapted by A. P. Mendes. The book is beautifully printed and freely illustrated and it reeks with all the horrors of the Dutch Service—wild beasts, bon-constrictors, poisoned arrows, cannibalism, head hunting, and blood-brotherhood. However, the runaways escape all these dangers, and win home at last; and the boy reader who has accompanied them in imagination through all their perils, can only thank the goodness and the grace which has prevented him from running away from the Dutch in Borneo.—The last of these boys' books is a wild romance by Frank A. Munsey, published by Cassell & Company, New York, *Afloat in a Great City. A Story of Strange Incidents*. The reader would have to go far to find worse illustrations or a more extravagant plot.

## BOYS' BOOKS.

It would be hard to find a more tawdry set of covers than those that inclose the books of boys' adventure sent out this year by some of our best publishers. The books are gay with silver, black and gold, designed to represent ships and sailor-boys, ropes and cannon, snow-shoes and light-houses, and splashed upon reds, greens and blues that are vulgarly obtrusive. Even H. H. Boyesen's delightful collection of short stories, *The Modern Vikings*, which he dedicates, in some very sweet rhymes, to his three little Vikings, is not wholly exempt from this charge. It is too good a book for so flashy a cover, and on the outside looks quite unlike what it is—a Scribner publica-