

MARGARET TURNBULL'S "W. A. G.'s
TALE"*

This is a wholesome little tale that youngsters will enjoy, with illustrations which are like Sherlock Holmes's *Dancing Men*, and which every child who ever drew with a crayon has invented for himself. W. A. G., otherwise William Ainsworth Gordon, called them "Zob-zees," and peoples the pages of his book with their quaintly leggy shapes crossing bridges and going into houses, and riding in boats, and otherwise disporting themselves in truer accord with the text of the book than most illustrators, and finer skilled ones, manage to compass.

"I have been sick," begins W. A. G. in the great blank book provided for him after the anti-toxin has killed the diphtheritic germs, and he is slowly convalescing from the double attack. He is an orphan and his father's chum is his guardian, but Uncle Burt, being about to depart for the Philippines, hands W. A. G. over to his sister Edith and his sister's chum May, for a summer in Pennsylvania. There is nice local colour plucked

*W. A. G.'s Tale. By Margaret Turnbull. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

from the Pennsylvania station, the Pennsylvania porters, the changing of cars at Trenton, all precisely the sort of thing a small boy the size of W. A. G. would be likely to notice. He likes particularly old Mr. Taylor's cats, seven of them, all of them named Teddy—after whom, children?—named universally thus because when he wanted to feed them, "Here, Teddy," brought them all, and when he wanted their room, "Shoo, Teddy," dispersed them!

There is an Indian boy in the story and a nice canal boy who drives his mule with aplomb, and there is an island on which W. A. G. is stranded for hours, and learns more about Robinson Crusoe than the book ever taught him. There is a black and yellow snake to make things exciting for his nice young aunts, and a hay barn that is fired and burned to the ground.

If once in a while, such a book, so naïvely written, might be written without the "love interest" so unchildlikely plastered on it. Boys ten years of age do not observe so sagely the psychology of reluctant sweethearts or the cause and effect of a passing change of colour on a cheek. Otherwise W. A. G. tells his story of his eleventh summer with much effect of sincerity and reality.