

## NOW THAT IT'S WINTER

BY LIDA L. GREENE

Now that winter is here, there are pleasures to be indulged. Hunt up that book you've been promising yourself to read. If there's a lounge chair by the window, claim it. It's likely to prove a box seat for watching the bird tribe at the feeder. A hint, discreetly placed, will undoubtedly result in kitchen stirrings and spicy baking odors. There's nothing like a plate of Grandma's molasses cookies to increase the satisfactions of the printed word.

On the other hand, if you are a February farmer, arm chair variety, you may want to stop at the Historical Library to browse through the contents of the box of books Mrs. Curtis Lamb brought us last summer. Any racing blood in your veins will stir to *The Trotting Horse in America*, written by Hiram Woodruff, published by J. B. Ford and Company, 1871. That was the era when a fast horse was a man's pride and every town's main street was a race track on trading days.

If you are the contemplative type and fancy yourself walking through an orchard in autumn, *The Apples of New York*, in two volumes, will delight you. Written by S. A. Beach, horticulturist, as a report for the New York Agricultural Experiment Station in 1903, and published in 1905, it is a roster of tempting names and toothsome pictures. There's a spray of golden apples on the cover and in the frontis picture a solemn, golden-haired child stands dwarfed among the trees. Don't stop looking. If you have time for nothing more, turn the pages and read the names. How would you like a *Black Gilliflower* on the plate beside Grandma's cookies? Or a *Roxbury Russett*? Some man with a household of children must have christened *Boy's Delight*. You will wander through the pages as though you were walking in a storehouse with barrels of *Dutch Mignonne*, *Lady Sweet*, *Northern Spy*, *Yellow Belleflower*. Stop and look at the *pippins*, please. It's a saucy name and may intrigue you as it does me. An old English word, says Beach, or the French *Pepin*, meaning a seed or seedling in contrast to the budded or grafted tree. He repeats a quotation from Leonard Mascall who, in 1572, wrote, "Then

shall you cover your seedes or pepins with fine earth so sifting al over them" and "when the winter is past and gone . . . ye see your Pepins rise and growe." *Golden Pippin* . . . golden seedling.

Have we made you a horticulturist? Good! For a long time we've been hoping to see someone in the Library with a zest for the Iowa apple. Begin with Tesson and the orchard near old Montrose. Spend some time in Salem with Henderson Lewelling and the seedlings that traveled to Oregon. Browse through the reports of the Iowa State Horticultural Society, beginning with the year 1868. Stop for awhile in Madison County with Jesse Hiatt and the seedling that became the Delicious. It will be a rewarding experience.

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If you are still not a convert to green-tree growing and consider apples strictly for eating, we could recommend *The Gathering of Zion*, by Iowa-born Wallace Stegner. It is the story of the Mormon Trail, published by McGraw-Hill as one of the The American Trail Series in 1964. The Mormon migration is one of the truly great epics of the American West, and Stegner has written with warmth and understanding of the land and the people. Since Iowa and Iowans played their own role in the movement of the *Saints*, this too may be rewarding reading.

Borrow the book from your neighboring library if you can. If not, stop by. We will not only bring out *The Gathering of Zion*, we will ply you with some of the original sources that Stegner mentions in his bibliography. You will enjoy *William Clayton's Journal*; Kane, *The Mormons*; De Voto, *The Year of Decision, 1846*; Piercy, *Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake City, 1855*. By the time you are through browsing it will be spring and the seedlings will be stirring under the sifting of "fine earth."

You say you're snow-bound now? Enjoy it! Remember Whittier did rather well with a snow storm.

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