

**TROPICAL READING  
BOOKS, INTENDED FOR  
USE IN THE WEST  
INDIES AND ELSEWHERE**

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Tropical Reading Books, Intended for Use in the West Indies and Elsewhere by E. C. Phillips

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**E. C. PHILLIPS**

**TROPICAL READING  
BOOKS, INTENDED FOR  
USE IN THE WEST  
INDIES AND ELSEWHERE**



TO  
**The School-Children of Jamaica**

THESE BOOKS ARE DEDICATED

BY  
THE AUTHOR.

## PREFACE.

HITHERTO the children in English schools in tropical countries have never been supplied with Reading Books specially adapted for their use. None of the school books in common use, however carefully written, however desirably popular in England, are well suited for them. For the objects which surround the children of the tropics—their homes, their occupations and amusements, their talk, their thoughts and ways, and many of the various occurrences of their daily life—are widely different from those with which English children are familiar. The books put into the hands of our young beginners speak to them a strange language. While as yet their unformed minds are very imperfectly acquainted even with what ordinarily presents itself to their observation, they are abruptly introduced into a new world. They cannot

picture to themselves what they read, and some of their teachers are almost equally ignorant. They have never seen ice, or snow, or Christmas holly; they know nothing of the chimney corner, of daisies and buttercups, of newly-mown hay, or of the sheaves of wheat. They understand not the use of a spade, and have never tasted an apple. Much pains have been taken to render an English child's First Reading Book attractive, by selecting for the subjects of the daily lessons only those things with which the children are previously acquainted, and in which they have already become interested. And the more thoroughly this is done, the more foreign, uninviting, unintelligible, unsuitable are these books for our unfortunate tropical children.

Now our *First Tropical Reading Book*, being composed upon the same principle, ought in details to differ widely from all English books; and a cursory inspection will suffice to show that it does so.

The *Second Tropical Reading Book* will be found to exhibit a corresponding difference. It is composed on the same principle as that which ought to be followed in an English Second Book — that of leading on the young learners by gradual steps from the familiar to the unfamiliar; teaching them to observe more closely the actual world in which they live, giving them information concerning its productions and its industries, or enforcing

moral lessons by means of tales, the incidents of which they can easily realize.

Thus they are prepared for the Third Book, which takes them out of the tropics, and in which the authoress, never forgetting that England is to them a foreign country, has minutely described much that to English children is matter of the most familiar experience, proceeding then to describe what it is most interesting or most useful to know concerning remarkable things either in England or in any other foreign land. In describing what is done, or what is to be seen, in India, for example, or in China, our *Third Tropical Reading Book* sometimes admits of comparison, and comes into competition, with other school books; but I venture to think it will not lose thereby.

The authoress was highly qualified for the work which she undertook. The popularity of some of her tales for the children of England proved that she understood and could sympathize with them; and on visiting the West Indies she soon became a welcome guest in the humblest cottages, gained an insight into the peculiarities of the character of the inmates, and found the way to win the attention and develop the minds of the children in a Sunday School.

The design for a series of Tropical Reading Books, which the writer of this Preface had had in contemplation for years, would perhaps never have been carried out but for



his good fortune in meeting with the authoress, and discovering her singular aptitude for a task which unless thoroughly well executed would be of little use. He regards its completion with the liveliest satisfaction. From the circumstances under which it was written it is especially suited for West Indian children; but still it justly merits the more general title which has been given to it, and is better suited than any other book yet written for use in elementary schools; in tropical or sub-tropical lands, in which the wide-spread English tongue is spoken and taught.

REGINALD KINGSTON.

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