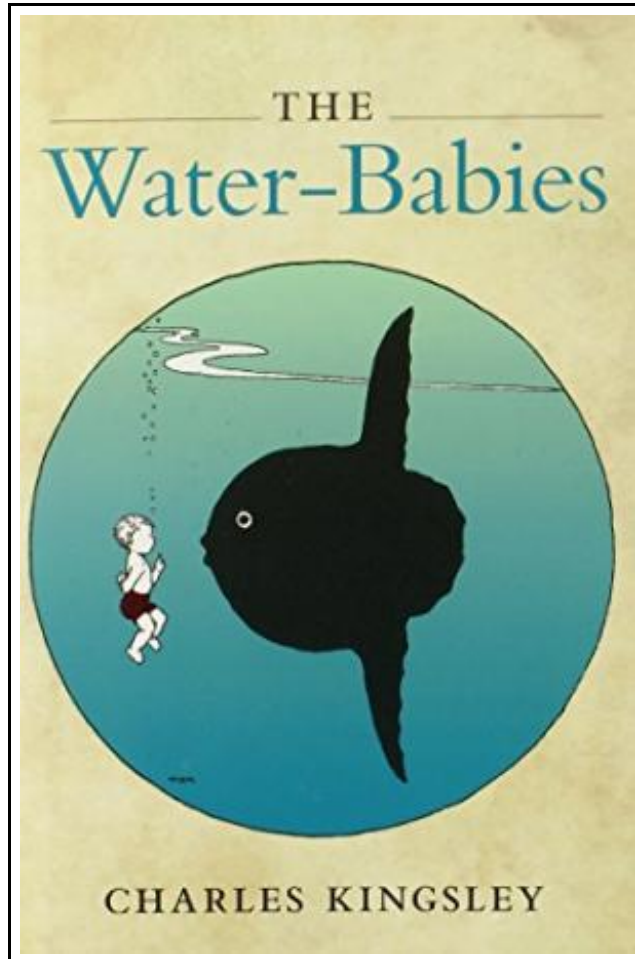


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Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 2013. Hardback. Book Condition: New. Reprint. 200 x 132 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. The Water-Babies (1863) is one of the strangest and most powerful children s books ever published. Written by an Anglican clergyman with an insatiable love of science, the story combines an uplifting moral about redemption with a crash course in evolutionary theory, and has an imaginative exuberance equalled only by Lewis Carroll. Young Tom is a chimney-sweeper s boy who one day falls into a river and drowns, only to be transformed into a water-baby. Through his encounters with friendly fish, curious lobsters, and characters such as Mrs Doasyouwouldbedoneby, he sloughs off his selfish nature and earns his just reward. Tom s comic adventures are constantly interrupted by Kingsley s sideswipes at contemporary issues such as child labour and the British education system, and they offer a rich satiric take on the great scientific debates of the day. The story s linguistic and narrative oddities make it an unclassifiable fantasy that is both a naturalist s handbook and an aquatic Pilgrim s Progress, and its vibrant symbolism also reveals some of Kingsley s more private obsessions regarding cleanliness and sanitation reform. This new edition reprints the original complete text and illustrations, and includes a lively introduction and notes that reveal the full richness of this bizarre but compelling fairy tale.



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