BULLETIN OF THE CHILDREN'S BOOK CENTER
Published by The University of Chicago Library - Center for Children's Books

VOL. V June, 1952 No. 10

BULLETIN of the Children's Book Center.
Published by the University of Chicago Library, Center for Children's Books. Mary K. Eakin, Librarian.

The book evaluations appearing in this BULLETIN are not the advice and assistance of members of the faculty of the Graduate Library School, the Department of Education, and the University Laboratory School.

Published monthly except August. Subscription price is $1.75 a year. Checks should be made payable to the University of Chicago Library. Correspondence regarding the BULLETIN should be addressed to the Center for Children's Books, University of Chicago, 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois.

New Titles for Children and Young People

Alker, Dorothy F. Stars and steeples; rhyme for the very young; illus. by Curt Witt. Exposition Press, 1951. 48p. $2.

Mediocre verse that is intended to give a very young child an appreciation of the world around him. The rhymes are uneven and awkward. Many of the poems will be meaningless to young children and, because they are poorly written, will not even have the appeal of rhyme and rhythm that children enjoy. Not recommended. (K-gr.2)


Simple experiments designed to explain the basic principles of sound. Contents include: Sound is vibration; Sound travels; Making sounds louder; Sound bounces; Ruining sound; Low tone, high tone; It suits me (finding key-notes); and Two instruments to make (monotones). Directions for conducting the experiments are clear and easy to follow. The results of the experiments are not always indicated so that the reader would have to actually perform the experiment before he would know exactly what to expect. The somewhat slangy style gives the writing a condescending tone that older readers may find objectionable. (Gr.4-6)


Fictionalized account of an actual episode from the Revolutionary War. While Colonel Ludington was serving in the American Army, his daughters, Sybil and Ricky, tried to care for the home farm in York Colony. The hardest part of the work for Sybil was keeping twelve-year-old, tomboyish Ricky under control. Although Sybil was not as adventuresome as her younger sister she proved herself equally courageous the night she rode thirty miles to warn the neighbors that the British were coming. The style is somewhat uneven in that Ricky is the main character through the major part of the book and then the focus changes abruptly to Sybil and her ride. Satisfactory as supplementary reading for units on American history. (Gr.5-7)


The Tompkins family of Radio Tam are back with more strange experiences with the supernatural. This time their adventures are centered around a television set that has been altered by a gypsy so the viewers are allowed to see around corners and into people's minds. The fantasy is somewhat less skillfully handled and the writing is more difficult than in Radio Tam but the appeal of the book will be much the same. (Gr.6-8)


A companion volume to Bowies New Testament stories published in 1951. These stories from the Old Testament are told with dignity and in an idiom that is suited to modern readers. In some sections, particularly the Psalms, Song of Solomon, and Proverbs, the older Biblical language has been retained. The book should have a wide use in libraries and homes. (Gr.4-8)


Fictionalized biography of van Gogh in which each chapter is supposedly written by one of his friends or a member of his family. The result is a disjointed story that will have little appeal or meaning for young readers. The format of the book is that of a picture book and the series is designed for younger readers but the writing is too difficult for readers below the sixth grade. Unattractive color illustrations by Kallem and poorly done black and white reproductions of some of van Gogh's works. Not recommended. (Gr.6-8)


Simple repetitive verse about well-known animals - the cat, squirrel, fish, bird, etc. The book will be fun to read aloud to young children who will enjoy the humor of some of the verses and the repetition of phrases and sounds. Delightful illustrations by Barbara Cooney. The small size of the book (5 x 5") will add to its appeal. (K-G r.1)


The boyhood of Dan Morgan in the frontier settlements of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The writing is uneven and the characters never come alive. The last chapter in which two communities are quarreling over which shall be the final burial place of Morgan is meaningless and bears little relation to the rest of the book. Not recommended. (Gr.3-5)

Bundesen, Herman N. Toward manhood. Lippincott, 1951. 175p. $2.95. (D47;D115)

An excellent discussion of the sexual and emotional sides of life for the maturing male. Although the biological aspect of the male and female reproductive systems are explained clearly and frankly, this aspect of the book is not the major one. In two chapters, Dr. Bundesen traces the physical and emotional development of a child from birth to maturity; a discussion which will be of value to the teenager from the point of view of looking at his own sexual life, of understanding younger children around him, and later, of understanding his own children when he is a father. Other topics given forthright attention include: Boy and girl relations as they should be; Why sex must be controlled; Perils of incontinence; Veneral disease; Threats to continence; Things you may encounter; Aberrations of sex; The well-rounded life; and Looking toward sex fulfillment. Many topics are discussed which would be of value for use in physical education classes or other classes in which sexual education is taught. (Gr.9-12)


Simple tricks, stunts, and skits suitable for parties, camp stunt nights, and similar occasions. Few of the suggested activities are new or original but the range is wide, the directions are clear and easy to follow, and the book will have many uses. (Gr.4-6)

Clark, Ann (Nolan). The boyhood of Dan Morgan in the frontier settlements of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The book will have appeal both for its account of Lincoln's boyhood and as a good picture of frontier life at that time. (Gr.5-7)

Clark, Ann (Nolan). Secret of the Andes; with drawings by Jean Charlot. Viking, 1952. 130p. $2.50. (D28;D59)

Beautifully written story of a modern Indian boy's growth in understanding the history and beliefs of his people. Cusi is reared in the seclusion of the high Andes where he helps Chuto care for the sacred llama herd. When the time comes for him to visit the towns below and decide how his life will be spent he decides in favor of his people and the guarding of their culture. The story is too introspective to have much meaning or appeal for the general reader but it will have strong appeal for the imaginative reader. Charlot's drawings are a perfect complement to the text. (Gr.7-9)

Crampton, Gertrude. Further Pottleby adventures; illus. by Anne Herriman Peck. Aladdin, 1951. 35p. $1.75.

More doings of the scatterbrained Pottleby family. The first book lacked the originality but by now the reader knows what to expect in the way of Pottleby difficulties and solutions. The humor is forced and the stories lack the spontaneity of the first book. Not recommended. (Gr.3-5)


Rather dull account of the activities of two boys, Stephen Smith and Jonas Cattell, who served as scouts for Washington from the siege of Boston to the Battle of Trenton. The style is more that of a history textbook than a story. The format suggests a book for younger readers but the information is too detailed and the style too difficult for readers below the junior high school level. Not recommended. (Gr.5-8)


Fictionalized account of an episode from Virginia's history that has seldom been written
about in children's books. When his father, Jonathan Irvin, was captured by the Indians, twelve-year-old Hugh escaped to Thomas Hansford's plantation where his uncle worked as estate manager. It was while living with his uncle and awaiting news of his father that Hugh began to involve himself with the settlers who took part in Bacon's Rebellion and fought first the Indians and then the troops under Governor Berkeley. The book makes exciting reading as an adventure story and gives a good picture of Virginia in 1676. (Gr.7-9)

A collection of cartoons chosen by the boys and girls of 9-14 years of the Plandome Road School at Manhasset, Long Island. The selections are well made and have a range of appeal from the very juvenile to adult sophistication. (Gr.3-) Fiedler, Jean. The green thumb story; pictures by Barbara Latham. Holiday House, 1952. 40p. $1.75.
Young Peter wanted a garden but neither of his parents felt capable of helping him start one. Finally a next-door neighbor offered his help and through his guidance Peter learned the real meaning of a "green thumb". An important story that is too mild to have much appeal but can be used where there is great need for easy reading material. (Gr.2-4)

Full-page, full-color illustrations with brief text describing some of the customs and ways of living of the Plains Indians about the time the white men first began moving into the West. Size 9½"x13". (Gr.5 reading level; X-6 interest level).

Very slight but amusing story of a little black calf whose adventuresomeness almost brings disaster when he runs away from home and is caught by some gypsies. Lively and humorous illustrations that catch the spirit of the text. Insubstantial binding and stitching. (Gr.2-4)

A useful collection of games for teen-agers. Included are icebreakers, party themes, parlor games, mental games, outdoor and picnic games, simple dramatics, and auto games. Although the book is directed toward teen-age groups many of the games are suitable for younger children. (Gr.3-12)

Sympathetic biography of Hillman and his work in establishing the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. By presenting Hillman as a man without faults or weaknesses the author has failed to make him seem completely real. This becomes, however, a minor point when compared with the excellent picture of the growth of one of the most important labor movements in America. (Gr.8-10)

An interesting and very readable account of Mrs. Vining's four years in Japan where she served as tutor to the Crown Prince. The author brings to the reader a real understanding of and liking for Japan and the Japanese people that should help develop a similar liking and appreciation in American young people. (Gr.8-12)

The story of a small Dutch boy who sailed as a "sea mouse" on one of the fishing vessels that operated in the Zuyder Zee in the early 1900's. The writing is introspective and the book's appeal will be primarily for the mature imaginative reader. (Gr.9-12)

Follows the same pattern as the earlier titles in the series. Part I gives a brief overall view of the Great Plains region, touching lightly on the history, the land, the climate and seasons, the people, the crops, the natural resources, the industries, the education and arts, recreation, and the future of the Plains. Part II deals briefly with the individual states: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. As in the earlier volumes the treatment of the region is too superficial to have much value. The photographs are interesting and useful. (Gr.5-7)

Exciting adventure story of Alaska and of an eight-year-old skinner Kerawh who spends several months with an Eskimo family in their winter home. There are hunting expeditions, blizzards, a near tragedy when Pete and several hunters are trapped on floating ice pans, and the problem of dealing with a renegade Eskimo to make the winter a memorable one for the boy. Good picture of life in the far north. (Gr.7-9)

Moomins are a species of trolls living in Finland. Unlike common trolls, the Moomins are smooth and sleek and prefer sunshine to darkness. They sleep through the long Finnish winter and appear again, full of fun and mischief, when spring returns. The book has humor and originality but is marred by an excess of coyness. Some of the episodes would be fun to read aloud or use for storytelling. (Gr.4-6)

(Everyday adventure stories). $1.50.
Another story in the series designed to help young children learn about their community resources and services. Jerry is a small boy who has recently moved to a large city. Before he makes friends with any of the children in the neighborhood he is lone some so he goes out to talk with the Department of Sanitation men. From them he learns all about how a city is kept clean and how the city's refuse is used to reclaim land. The story is too contrived to have much interest for the general reader. It is easy reading and could be used in classes studying the community and community services. (Gr. 9-12)

Neurath, Marie. Rocket a Jet. Lothrop, 1952. 80p. $.50. Clear, simplified explanations of the basic principles of flight. (Gr. 9-12)

Scotland with children who row up and down the coast of England. Not recommended. (Gr. 5-7)

Lyon, Elnor. The house in hiding; a mystery. Coward-McCann, 1950. 218p. $2.50. Medio cre mystery involving a hidden house that can be approached only from behind a waterfall or across a brook. Two incredible children who row up and down the coast of Scotland with great ease and miraculous speed. The children are given permission to live in the house - to get them out of their parents' way - and while there discover its owner and find a treasure that saves the house from being sold. Both situations and characters are contrived and unrealistic. Not recommended. (Gr. 5-7)

McCloskey, Robert. One morning in Maine. Viking, 1952. 24p. $2.50. Another, and in many ways an even more enjoyable, story of Sal, young heroine of Blueberries for Sal. This time Sal wakes up one morning to the startling discovery that a tooth is loose. After being reassured by her mother that this is a normal part of growing up, she proceeds to enjoy the experience and looks forward to putting the tooth under her pillow and making a wish. Her pleasure is almost ruined when the tooth is lost, but a gull's feather and some ingenious reasoning on Sal's part save the day. A lilting story and, as usual, McCloskey's illustrations are enchanting in their detail and humor. (K-Gr. 2)

McPhail, Mary Laura. A child's treasure of holiday poems. Exposition Press, 1951. 112p. $2. Poorly written poems designed to "help in directing young minds toward such subjects as patriotism, the glories of nature, and the value of the Golden Rule." Some of the poems are parodies on well-known works, most of the holiday poems are of greeting card style and quality, and many are filled with platitudes that are neither poetic nor interesting. Not recommended. (K-Gr. 4)

Mand, Ewald. The right job for Judith. Messenger, 1951. 164p. $2.50. Career novel about a young girl who is hailed as a second Schumann-Heink in her hometown, tackles New York, and makes the heart-breaking discovery that her voice is only mediocre and will never be good enough for concert work. She then turns to social work and - with the inevitable young man - plans a future combining music and settlement house work. An interesting setting (a New York settlement house) and a real problem (Judith's acceptance of her lack of talent) but the characters are completely unrealistic and the writing mediocre. Not recommended. (Gr. 8-10)


Brief account of the history, geography and present political set-up of Yugoslavia with the emphasis on the importance her geographical location has had on her history and the history of surrounding areas. Double-page maps at beginning and end of text. (Gr. 7-9)

Kroll, Francis Lynde. Young Sioux warrior; illus. by Charles H. Geer. Lantern Press, 1952. 189p. $2.60. Little Bear, a twelve-year-old Sioux Indian boy, goes with his grandfather to help recover some stolen horses and in the process proves himself to be a real warrior. Not outstanding writing since none of the characters ever becomes real but the book does give an interesting and unsensational picture of Indian life in the early days of this country. (Gr. 5-7)

Loolhans, Colin. Triple play. Crowell, 1952. 238p. $2.50. Willi Baedecker, whose family has recently come to this country from Germany, faces the double problem of persuading his father of the value of playing baseball and of overcoming the prejudice of the coach and some of the team members. Neither situation is convincingly handled nor do any of the characters ever come alive. Not recommended. (Gr. 5-7)

Lyon, Elnor. The house in hiding; a mystery. Coward-McCann, 1950. 218p. $2.50. Mediocre mystery involving a hidden house that can be approached only from behind a waterfall or across a brook. Two incredible children who row up and down the coast of Scotland with great ease and miraculous speed. The story gives some interesting light on the problems of displaced persons in this country but it is so obviously written for that country but it is so obviously written for that small group of people that there is little reality to either the characters or situations. The style is didactic and the book is further weakened by the author's bringing in social problems which have no direct relationship to the plot and serve only as a vehicle for his preaching. Not recommended. (Gr. 9-12)

Miller, Donald G. Conqueror in chains; a story of the Apostle Paul; illus. by Albert DeMee Jousse. Westminster, 1951. 271p. $2.50. (2102)

A scholarly, dignified biography of the Apostle Paul "designed for senior young people." The story, which covers the period from the stoning of Stephen until Paul's own martyrdom in Rome, moves slowly and will have more appeal for the serious student of church history than for the usual reader. The reviewer has several pages in which the inking from one side has come through the page making the text on the opposite side impossible to read. (Gr. 9-12)

Neurath, Marie. Rockets and jets. Lothrop, 1952. 32p. $.50. Clear, simplified explanations of the basi-
principles involved in the operation of rockets and jets, beginning with simple fire works and ending with proposed space ships. Many of the illustrations are of tools made forty or fifty years ago and no longer available except in antique shops. Some of the terms used are equally old-fashioned and the entire tone of the book is condensed. The lettering for the illustrations is poorly done and at times difficult to read. Not recommended. (Gr. 8-9)

Oakley, W. The boy's workshop companion; illus. by the author. Greenberg, 1952. 218p. $2.75.

A book designed for use in acquiring and using a home workshop. Many of the illustrations are of tools made forty or fifty years ago and no longer available except in antique shops. Some of the terms used are equally old-fashioned and the entire tone of the book is condensed. The lettering for the illustrations is poorly done and at times difficult to read. Not recommended. (Gr. 8-9)


A misleading title for the book is really an account of several episodes from the author's childhood in Norway. Some of his misdeeds are similar to those of Peck's bad boy and might have been humorous but for the extremely poor writing of the translation. Not recommended. (Gr. 5-7)

Piper, Watty, ed. Stories that never grow old; illus. by George and Doris Hauen. Platt, 1952. 101p. $2.50.

Revised edition of a book first published in 1936. The book contains twenty familiar stories, some of them folk tales and some by well-known authors. Author credit is not given except for materials that are still in copyright. The versions used are acceptable although not outstanding and the same stories are available in other sources. The illustrations do not always match the text and some contain objectionable stereotypes. Not recommended. (K-Gr. 2)


An entertaining account of modern developments in scieneces based on the television program, "The John Hopkins Science Review." Contents include the new X-ray camera; the Magnificent Microscope; aerial camera flights in rockets; grinding diffraction gratings; health problems from the battle against flies to the control of schistosomiasis; human engineering; isotopes; trace elements; cattle diseases; restoring art objects; Carbon 14 as a key to the past; and future research. The author has made difficult subjects understandable for the layman and has managed to convey some of his own interest and enthusiasm for the work of modern scientists. (Gr. 6-12)

Renick, Marion (Lewis). Pete's home run; illus. by Pru Herrio. Scribner's, 1952. 117p. $2. (D92)

Pete wanted to play ball with his older brother's gang but he was not quite ready at first to accept the fact that becoming a good player means hard work and practice. Eventually he realized that there is no easy way to baseball success and before the summer was over had improved to the point where the boys were looking forward to the next year when he would be old enough to join their Little League team. Good baseball for readers who are approaching, or have just reached, Little League age. (Gr. 3-5)

Richardson, Myra Reed. Finders keepers; illus. by Don Freeman. Viking, 1951. 190p. $2.50.

Three boys, four dogs, three bears, and a mean man who mistreats dogs combined in a story that has many possibilities but fails to achieve any of them. The characters are not realistic and so much happens that the action becomes confused and disjointed. Not recommended. (Gr. 5-8)


Story of twin monkeys living in the jungle of Africa. The setting is interesting but the animals are so highly personified they have lost all reality. Not recommended. (Gr. 4-6)


A refreshingly new approach to the boy and horse story. Cliff Barry was unhappily when his family moved from Philadelphia to the small town of Macon and the last thing in the world he wanted was a horse. Motorcycles were his chief interest in life. It was no pleasure then to find that his uncle had sent him a thoroughbred hunter, Cinnamon; nor did he realize at first that Cinnamon was truly happy when Cliff was around. The boy's growing interest in and response to the horse make an absorbing story that will delight all horse story fans. (Gr. 7-9)


Ten different jobs in baseball are described showing for one each its importance to baseball and the training and characteristics needed to do the work. The jobs included are: scout, newspaperman, player, radio announcer, publicity man, television producer, umpire, statistician, general business manager, and team manager. The writing is somewhat uneven but the subject has interest and will also be useful as career material for guidance classes. (Gr. 9-10)


Brief story of a two day experience Whitey has in which he is lost in a blizzard and uses his experience and knowledge to save himself and a neighbor and his two boys. This is actually no more than a short story but it will satisfy readers who want a "thin" book. The page set-up and large type make the book look deceptively easy. It can be handled with ease at the sixth grade level and will not be too difficult for good readers at the upper fifth grade level. (Gr. 6-8)


Washable cloth book with a hand-puppet washcloth attached. The text is obviously written to match the pictures and is unnecessary in a book for the age youngsters who like
cloth books. Mediocre illustrations. (Ages 1-3)


First published in 1901. Eight short stories about various animals, wild and tame. The animals included are a cat, a dog, a pigeon, a jack rabbit, a lynx, two wolves, and a reindeer. The extremely fine print and discouraging many readers would otherwise find the stories interesting. Illustrations are poorly reproduced black and white drawings. (Gr.7-9)


Re-printing of a book first published in the early 1900's. In spite of the title, most of the stories in the collection have little in either subject or style to appeal to modern children. The tone throughout is didactic and didactio. The illustrations are not Jessie Willoox Smith's best work and are poorly reproduced. Not recommended. (Gr.2-4)


More about Jennifer Hill and her family. Both plot and characters have worn thin and Jennifer is not only unrealisti but entirely too precocious to have much appeal. The story lacks the warmth and naturalness of the first two books. Not recommended. (Gr.4-6)

Steiner, Charlotte. The little train that saved the day; story and pictures by Charlotte Steiner. Wonder Books, 1952. 26p. $.26.

A well-worn plot in which the unappreciated freight train rescues the picnickers after the fancy streamlined breaks down. The story lacks originality; the illustrations are incongruous. The freight engine is of early 1800 vintage and the excursion train is a late model streamliner. Not recommended. (K-Gr.1)


Re-print of a book first published in 1933. The title is misleading in that the story is of the events leading up to Amarantha's decision to become a doctor. It is, however, a good picture of the period following the Civil war and of life in one of the first colleges for women in this country. The author has drawn on histories of Smith College for her description of the setting and for some of the characterizations. There are some unfortunate stereotypes in the text that could have been omitted or changed without altering the story. (Gr.8-10)

Stong, Philip Duffield. Hirna, the hillbilly; pictures by Kurt Wiese. Dodd, 1961. 104p. $2.75.

This is a story of an Ozark mule who outwits two city slickers the author has attempted to reproduce the idiom of the Ozarks without any real feeling on his part for either the people or their way of talking and acting. Much of the conversation is in formal grammar while the author's descriptive passages are exaggeratedly didactic. The result is a contrived story that fails to capture the real charm of the people or their language. Not recommended. (Gr.5-7)


A book of verse designed to give city children an understanding of nature and outdoor life. The writing is of poor quality and the tone too coy and didactic to have appeal or interest. Not recommended. (Gr.2-4)

Wall, Gertrude (Wallace). Gifts from the forest; photography by John Calvin Towle. Scribner's, 1952. 96p. $2.50.

Absorbing account of modern lumbering operations. In brief text and excellent, full-page photographs the entire process is shown from the marking of the tree for cutting to the building of a frame house from the finished boards. The emphasis throughout the book is on modern conservation practices which get the maximum good from lumber without destroying forests. Size 9x10. (Gr.4-8)


Slight and exceedingly coy story of Suzie and her pets - a Big Dog, a Little Dog, three Cuddly Kittens, and a Fuzzy Little Duck. Unattractive illustrations. Not recommended. (K-Gr.1)


Brief biographies of twelve outstanding American engineers of today. The areas represented by these men are: engineering educator, mechanical engineer, civil engineer, electrical engineer, mining engineer, agricultural engineering, industrial engineering, consulting, petroleum engineer, research engineer, automotive engineer, and radio and television engineer. In addition to its biographical information the book will have value as vocational guidance material and is especially useful for the emphasis which many of these men place on the need for a liberal arts background for engineers. (Gr.8-10)

Instructional Materials. Supplementary Reading and Sources of Materials

The materials listed here are not available from the Center for Children's Books. Orders should be sent to the publishers of the individual items.


Suggested Titles for Use in Grades 2-4


Bendick, J. All around you. Whittlesey House, 1951.


Bradbury, B. One kitten too many. Houghton, 1952.


Caudill, R. Up and down the river. Winston, 1951.


Clark, M.E. The poppy seed cakes. Doubleday, 1924.


Fatio, L. Anna the Horse. Aladdin, 1951.


Flack, W. Walter, the lazy mouse. Doubleday, 1937.


Haywood, C. Hatay and Billy. Harcourt, 1941.


Hurd, E.T. Old Silverheels. Lothrop, 1951.


Johnson, M.S. Randy and the Queen of Sheba. Morrow, 1951.


-. Christopher and his turtle. Morrow, 1950.


McColiskey, R. Lentil. Hale, 1940.


-. Little Leo. Scribner's, 1950.


-. Pogo's sky ride. Holt, 1943.

-. Pogo's train ride. Holt, 1944.


-. You among the stars. Scott, 1950.

-. You among the stars. Scott, 1950.

-. The 500 hats of Bartholomew. Hale, 1956.
Miss V.H. Nooy
H. M. N. M. I.
Faculty Exchange