PRODUCTION NOTE

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Urbana-Champaign Library
EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED
WITH ANNOTATIONS

R  Recommended

Ad  Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.

M  Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.

NR  Not recommended

SpC  Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.

SpR.  A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

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New Titles for Children and Young People


A little book, a pleasant tale, and tidy, precise drawings, with humor in both illustrations and story. Lisa begs Gramma for a story, and says she'd like the one about Ivan and Lisa and the green humming cat . . . the one in which Lisa buys a green cat-shaped balloon which unfortunately breaks (picture of Ivan, the real cat, smugly smiling at the clawed balloon which has been taking all attention away from him) . . . and, having told the whole story, Lisa sits in happy anticipation as Gramma obligingly prepares to tell it. The routine is a familiar one, the story (and the story within it) are at just the right level for the very young read-aloud audience, and the illustrations add to the book's appeal with a bright-eyed brown child and a cat whose expressions range from malevolent to angelic.


For years Karen Kraymer has been titillated by the mystery, half a century old, of a murder and a lost necklace in the old Kraymer brownstone. Now, coming to New York with her actress mother, she falls in love with the city (her dead father's city) and with her cousin Drew. Together they track down the answer to the puzzle, always trailed by two criminals who have heard about the necklace by sheer chance. Chance accounts for too many aspects of the story, in fact; there are also notes of contrivance throughout, and an unconvincing relationship between Karen and her mother. The story does have suspense and plenty of action, mild love interest, and a background drawn with affection; despite the weaknesses of plot and characterization, the writing style is competent enough to incorporate both into an adequate mystery story.


In commemoration of the centennial of the death of Robert E. Lee, a poetic text that describes briefly the progress of the Army of Northern Virginia and interprets the beliefs of Lee—who was against secession and slavery but devoted to the South. The many photographs are ornamental rather than illustrative, and the plethora of scenes (often fuzzy) of hills and fields adds little to the value of the book. The last portion
of the book quotes Lee's farewell message, a few lines on each page, with the author's interpretation of Lee's thoughts below: "With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country . . ." and below, this: "Furl the weary, spangled banner. For freedom did they mean to fly it; in anguish now, we view its role in causes so abhorrent." At the bottom of each page in this section is a caption for the photograph on the facing page. Sympathetic but tenuous, more a mood piece than anything else.


An oversize book, the simple style and large print making it appropriate for children in the middle grades and the accuracy and dignity of presentation for older children who have reading difficulties. The author traces the history of theories and experimentation in plant physiology that led to the present understanding of the complicated process of photosynthesis, and he mentions some of the areas in which there will undoubtedly be research in the future. Scientific terminology is used—but not used more than it is needed, and the explanations of chemical or physical phenomena are clear. An index is appended.


Like the Ruskin book, reviewed below, this is adapted from a magazine series, "Discovering Art," handsome books amply illustrated with reproductions in full color, many full-page. Although much of the material is interesting and informative the book is weakened by poor organization of material and by uneven writing. The table of contents is not adequate: a chapter entitled "Picasso and Rouault" discusses at some length other artists, Bonnard and Braque for example; some of the other chapters have similar titles, but others have more general titles, so that some rather distinguished names seem to be of lesser importance. A numbered list of illustrations is appended, with locations of art objects, as is a relative index.

Baumann, Hans. *In the Land of Ur; The Discovery of Ancient Mesopotamia*; tr. by Stella Humphries. Pantheon Books, 1969. 167p. illus. $4.95.

A fine addition to the history of archeological research, documented in scholarly fashion and written with a communicable zest for the fascination of the unraveling of man's past. The author interpolates into the chronological record of early amateur and later professional excavators and interpreters enough source material to add historic relevance to the archeological interest. The illustrations are excellent: maps, drawings, and full-page photographs in color; a list of names (places, people, and words) with annotations is appended, as are lists of Mesopotamian explorers and major excavations, and a chronological table of kings.


A lovely book, the poetic text describing the festivities and customs of the Elizabethan Christmas from St. Andrew's Day to Twelfth Night. The illustration is exactly right, gay with bright costumes, fascinating
in period details, and vigorous with movement; the page layout is particularly striking.

Biegel, Paul. The King of the Copper Mountains; English version by Gillian Hume and Paul Biegel; illus. by Babs Van Wely. Watts, 1969. 176p. $4.95.

Highly original, and told in compelling style, a story that has within it a variety of tales, the whole nicely knit together. The old and fragile King of the Copper Castle, Mansolain, is close to death; to sustain his interest (and thereby his hold on life) a series of animals entertain him with tales, each bound to the other with a progress report on the whereabouts of the doctor who is hunting the magic herb that will save the monarch. The doctor's tale is the last, neatly rounding out a charming modern fairy tale that won the 1965 Dutch Children's Book Prize.


A series of photographs, quite contrived, is combined with coy, badly written captions. There is no attempt to tell a story. A cat loves hats; in each picture she is posed in a different hat, with comments by members of her family. Then they all say that since she looks beautiful in every hat, they will crown her Queen of Hats and call her Hatsy Catsy. A book that could hardly be more slight or mawkish.


All the children in the small town of Quarryville believed that the old house on the hill was haunted—a strange old woman was seen there, and ominous noises were heard. When the house was occupied by Polly and her parents, more gossip started. Polly wasn't like the other children; a man (her father) left the house at night and probably was a burglar, etc. Polly was ostracized by her classmates for a long time, until her story came out, little by little. Her father was an actor, the strange old woman had been her grandmother's servant, the woman in white was her mother, recovering from an accident. The style is good, but the plot is not convincing, nor are the basic premises that all of the children believe in ghosts or that the rumors about the family aren't scotched immediately.


Paul tells the story of his introduction to smoking pot, his doubts and worries, and his decision not to keep it up. His parents are busy people, with little time for their children: "We can't do much talking with Dad . . . My father isn't home most of the time . . . When my mother and he have a fight, she says . . . Even when I was a little kid my parents let me drink with them, not a lot but enough to get to my head . . ." So Paul and his two best friends, after much debate, try pot; they know many of the other ninth-graders use it. It only gives Paul a headache and he is quite willing to talk to his friend's father, a doctor. The story, which is convincing and realistic, bogs down into an adult lecture on the dangers of marijuana; the pace is slow throughout the book, which is psychologi-
cally sound but seems, by the end of the book, a fictionalized digest of a case history.

Cretan, Gladys Yessayan. Me, Myself, and I; illus. by Don Bolognese. Morrow, 1969. 26p. Trade ed. $3.95; Library ed. $3.78 net.

The imaginative ramblings of a six-year-old are accompanied by very handsome stylized pictures, some realistic and some fanciful. The boy dreams of being a hero—a knight, an astronaut, a lion tamer . . . and comes down to earth when his mother sends him on an errand. He can feel what it is to be a horse . . . or a color . . . to be a different person in the quiet, sliding, deep world of water from the boy who comes, laughing, to the surface. "I see all these things," the book ends, "I am whatever I want to be. But especially, particularly, positively . . . me." A bit sophisticated for the six-year-old, and not likely to be read (because of the protagonist's age and the format) by older readers, the book may find a limited audience. The text is not quite poetry, although it is poetic; the writing is uneven, although it is fluent most of the time.


The simple, direct style and large print that make this easy to read are balanced by the dignified tone and good coverage that permit older readers to use the book without loss of face. The writing is rather awkward and a bit coy for the first pages, in which King's childhood is described, but that is dropped as the account of his ministry and his leadership in the civil rights struggle progresses.


A house is not necessarily a home, although most of the buildings pictured and described here are early American homes with some unusual attribute. There are also a church, a railroad shanty, an outhouse (very elegant) and a gazebo. The text facing each attractive painting of an architectural curiosity gives some facts about the structure itself and the class of buildings it typifies; it also gives some extraneous information which may be of only peripheral interest.


Grandfather had said he could not go, but Billy had lived on the Navajo reservation all his life and wanted to learn new things, to see more of the world. So he went, hitch-hiking his way to the Indian School in the city he'd heard about. He enjoyed the companionship, became a member of the basketball team, and above all learned to paint . . . but he felt that he belonged with his own people, so Billy Lightfoot quietly left and went back to the People, to the winds and the mountains of home. Adequately written, the book has an interesting setting and an appealing protagonist; it is weak in story line: the boy wants to get away, he does so, and he decides to go home, walking out in the middle of a basketball game. The attractions of two cultures are made clear, but there seems little real conflict.

Hard enough for any boy to spend a year alone with four females (mother and sisters) but even harder for Alfred, who was especially close to his father, away on a year's tour of duty in Vietnam. The Finneys had moved to a rural community in Michigan, so Alfred and his sisters had to adjust to a new school and new friends. This is an episodic story of family life, low-keyed and with no overall plot; it is pleasant and realistic, but not exciting, and the anecdotes are weakly held together by theme of father's absence and the family's determined cheerfulness.


Another blithe tall tale about the marvelous McBroom farm, where instantaneous growth from superfertile soil and blazing Iowa sun provide magnificent crops of food and stories. Plagued by grasshoppers who would eat anything green, including McBroom's socks, the harvest disappeared; only one seed was left and from it grew a cornstalk that had only one ear. But what an ear! Adults should enjoy reading the book aloud or using it for storytelling, and independent readers are already a captive audience.

Gans, Margaret. **Pam and Pam**. Childrens Press, 1969. 31p. illus. $3.75.

Pam #2 is a doll that looks just like her owner: a brown face but not particularly Negroid features; both have the flat look of paper dolls. One day Pam trades dolls for the night, but her friend Cathy doesn't appear at the playground next day. Each day she sadly waits for Cathy, who has been ill and has forgotten about the trade. The last day of vacation Cathy returns and joy reigns. Illogical: Cathy's not missing her own beloved doll. Puzzling: the two girls play together every day, yet "there was no way for Pam to know what had happened." Stories about toys have appeal, interracial-friendship stories are useful, but the unintended implication that there is no social intercourse between the children except on the playground is unfortunate.


Simply written in a straightforward style, and illustrated with lovely paintings of birds and other creatures (occasionally making reading difficult because of a mottled background) this points out the one distinguishing feature that all birds possess—their feathers. The text moves very slowly through an elimination process: is it having wings that makes a bird a bird? No, other animal forms have wings, et cetera. The final pages discuss, very briefly, some facts about feathers.


Three short stories, each different and each splendid in its own way; all are set in the past and have in common a felicitous fidelity to the genre. The ghost story could have been written by Wilkie Collins, the
two sea stories have the authentic detail and vigorous language of the period. In the title story a boy's place is usurped by a ghost; in "Vaarlem and Tripp" a Dutch lad finds that Tripp, whom he despises for fleeing a sea battle, has his merits; in "The Simpleton" a young criminal being transported to Virginia is inspired, through love, to heroism. All of it has an authentic ring, but Garfield's masterpiece is always his villain, and the dastardly villain of "The Simpleton" will stand with any of the past.

Grosman, Ladislav. The Shop on Main Street; tr. from the Czech by Iris Urwin; illus. by Victor Ambrus. Doubleday, 1970. 123p. Trade ed. $3.95; Library ed. $4.70 net.

The original story, the jacket flap states, of the award winning Czech film of the same title is based on the theme of moral responsibility versus organized persecution; the setting is a small Slovak town in 1942, the protagonist a good-hearted young carpenter, Brtko, who is awarded a Jewish shop for Aryanization. Brtko finds himself beguiled by the old woman who keeps the shop; he knows that Mrs. Lautman doesn't understand what is going on and he goes along with her mistaken idea that he has been put in as her assistant. The ending is gently tragic, the writing style adequate, the concept a vital one. The characters are believable, but they are almost stereotypes, and the story is heavily laden with slow-moving scenes that halt the action rather than developing it; for example, an early and lengthy scene in which Brtko, his meretricious wife, a pompous, bigoted brother-in-law, and his complacent wife get boringly drunk together.


Very much in the Mabel Allan style, a young English girl goes abroad, becomes involved in a mystery, is exposed to danger and saved; and finds a suitor. The writing style is adequate and the details of locale not too obtrusively introduced, and the characterization shallow but believable and varied. Frances Gray is hired as a secretary by a distant cousin who runs an exclusive boarding school, the Villa Bianca, in Switzerland. She becomes increasingly suspicious of one of the teachers and believes one of the pupils who had been insistent that another girl had not been killed in an accident, but had been murdered. She tells only her friend Roger, and their efforts to solve the mystery without telling either the head of the school or the police lead them to the brink of disaster. They are spared, the culprits are caught or die in a crash, and wedded bliss looms on the last page. The book is saved from mediocrity by good pace and some suspense.


Preceded by an informal discussion of what a maze is, with some historical background, and followed by some general instructions on drawing a maze, this consists of large pictures of about a dozen mazes, most of them ones that actually exist (Hampton Court, Somerleyton Hall, Versailles). The preface suggests that the reader follow the paths by eraser. Not substantial, but interesting for young puzzle fans.

Although there is some historical interest in the setting, ancient Greece, and some in the period details appropriate to the era of Athenian splendor, this adventure story is too contrived to have value. It is written in mediocre style and badly illustrated. Agathon, whose father is away fighting, is given a ring by a mysterious stranger; diverse unsavory characters try to get the ring, and succeed in getting Agathon. He succeeds in escaping, the ring is taken, father shows up in the nick of time—saving the ring and the treasure to which it is a clue, and unmasking the villain who had been posing as a friend.


Andy’s father takes him for a birthday walk in Central Park and falls asleep. Andy wanders off alone, crosses the street to a fascinating looking building, and finds himself in the Guggenheim. He rides the elevator up and walks down. "Whose work is that," he asks, and is told one picture is by Franz Kline. On the next page, two drawings are identified by "Leger" and "Rouault" printed at the foot of the page. Andy goes back to the park, father wakes and asks what his boy would like for his birthday; Andy says he’d like the Goo-Gen-Heim. There is some value in the idea of a child being interested in a museum and its contents, but the story is flat, the role of the father hardly admirable, and the plot slight. The illustrations have a breezy vitality, but they do not do justice to the building or the mounting of exhibits there.


Some of the characters familiar to readers of the Moomin stories appear in this rhyming read-aloud story of a frightened Toffle who cannot find any solace as he travels about—until he finds an even more timid creature, Miffle, whom he comforts. The message comes across clearly: there is comfort in doing things for others. Toffle and Miffle sail away toward ever-after happiness in a sea crowded with fanciful creatures; the oversize pages are crowded with figures, the colors harsh. There is some humor in the story but the characters pop in and out, never acquiring the personality that they have in Moominbooks, so that the story seems slow and cluttered.


All of her senior year at high school Henny had saved money for a trip to Europe, but when the uncle with whom she lived had a stroke, the plans had to be abandoned. She knew that Uncle John was upset by the evidence of loss at the supermarket where he had been manager, so Henny decided to combine a summer job with detective work. She found the work not uninteresting and the mystery fascinating, but Rob York was the nicest thing about her summer. Henny’s discovery of the staff member who had been stealing from the store is convincing enough, but the clues are so obvious from the beginning that it seems difficult to believe that neither she, Rob, nor the store detective would have spotted...

A slight story that has the appeal of a situation familiar to many children, but is more an exposition of that situation than a full story. Nicky had a favorite blanket, he also had a favorite animal, he also had a favorite doll, etc. all of which he took to bed with him every night. When his crib became too crowded, he asked for—and received—a new bed. Above it was a shelf for all his toys—but there was one thing missing. The story ends coyly, "What was it? And where could it be? Nicky knew. Do you?" The pictures are pleasant enough, but there is little variation in them.


A sophisticated little spoof, delightfully illustrated with period-piece drawings, in the form of letters from a Lady Katherine Huntington to an admirer. The receipt of a partridge is welcomed with joy, as is the pear tree; Lady Katherine grows effusive as other gifts arrive, and she positively dotes on the lovely golden rings. However, as milking maids and laying geese and drumming drummers amass, the flirtatious tone of the letters drops to coolness and then to hostility. The handwriting becomes shaky. The final note, typewritten by Lady Katherine's secretary, states frigidly that Lady K. has had a nervous breakdown, and that all gifts are being returned, save for the partridge and the rings. Great fun, nice Victorian pictures.

La Fontaine, Jean de. *The Miller, the Boy and the Donkey*; illus. by Brian Wildsmith. Watts, 1969. 29p. $4.95.

First published in England, another in the series of adaptations of the fables of La Fontaine, retold in an adequate but quite bland style and illustrated with glowing, riotous color. The story of the miller who obligingly hops on and off the donkey at the suggestion of each person he meets on a journey to the market has a mild humor, but there is little impact in the retelling of the tale here.


Julian Keen, boy scientist, is startled when he is addressed by a young tree, remarkable for its rapid growth and powers of speech (AND knowledge of colloquial English), part of an invasion force from outer space. Aware that air pollution is a serious problem, Julian and his friends assist the invasion program by planting tree-seeds. Goal, oxygen production and carbon dioxide consumption. The Program is just beginning to be effective when it becomes public knowledge; it receives enthusiastic support and the boy hero gets a trip to Mars, from whence came the original tree-seed. The idea is a welcome variant of the hostile-plant-takeover in science fantasy, but the flippant dialogue is an irritating aspect of the rather mediocre writing style. There is also a considerable amount of information doled out in conversations with adults.
Luzzati, Emanuele, ad. Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves; retold and illus. by Emanuele Luzzati; tr. by Robert Mann. Pantheon, 1969. 31p. $3.95.

A freely-adapted rhyming version of stories from the Arabian Nights, distinguished only for the stylized illustrations, vibrant with humor and color. The text is quite weak, faulty metrically, with rhymes that are often jarring and with a contrived use of words.

McKee, Don. Martin Luther King, Jr. Putnam, 1969. 192p. Trade ed. $3.95; Library ed. $3.64 net.

A good biography for older children, with very little fictionalization and with only brief references to some of the standard incidents in books about the life of Martin Luther King, such as the first racial rebuff he received as a small child. It does include the attempted assassination of King by a Negro woman, an episode missing from some books. There is little about family affairs or personal life, most of the book being devoted to a detailed and vivid account of the long struggle for civil rights and Martin Luther King's courageous leadership. A brief bibliography and an index are appended.


Bug-eyed monsters were never more convivial or colloquial than the inhabitants of Irdra, a planet so primitive in social organization that it has not yet been admitted to the Galactic Union. Bill Judson, who has been a nonconformist all through his Pre-Adult Education, is sent by the planning center of his own planet to see what the obstacle to progress is on the Irdran scene. Bill uncovers a bid for power by a second-in-command, a bid that involves fomenting native trouble; he saves the day and establishes his reputation, all of this in patterned lone-operator fashion, and with many details that are typical of the genre. What sets the book above mediocrity is the blithe gemütlichkeit of the native creatures, once they have admitted Bill isn't bad for a soft (ugh) Glaxie; he's ugly, all right, with that exposed mouth and all those wrappings, but once he's had a drink of vot-juice and speeded up his physical processes, he communicates like a plain, ordinary, everyday Irdran with tentacles and carapace.


A biography that gives most of the information found in others of Martin Luther King, not as well written as that by Clayton (reviewed in May, 1965 issue) which is for approximately the same reading level. The material is not well-arranged, the tone is adulatory, and some of the anecdotes are highly fictionalized. A brief list of dates matches events in the biographee's life with other events, some of them totally irrelevant, such as Amelia Earhart's flight. Some questions about material in the text, five additional books suggested for further reading, and a guide to pronunciation of "interesting words" are appended.


It didn't take long for Cindy Young to discover that dating a big man
on campus could be boring, although her date for the big dance at Fuller College had seemed the pinnacle of social success. It didn't take much longer to discover that the undependable and sardonic editor of the student magazine, John Warren, could twist her around his little finger. Grades slipping and confidence shaken, Cindy had just decided that she wasn't going to see John again when he took her for a last, reckless ride and smashed the car. In the hospital she learned that he had been expelled for cheating... but it was a slower recovery from first love than it was from the accident, even when she found that he'd told another girl the same sweet lies, even when he sent Cindy a handful of rose petals. The writing style is smooth, the characterization good, and college background convincing if not vividly drawn; the plot is basically the familiar triangle of attractive but worthless male preferred to sensible, steady other male who stands by and gets girl in the end.


On an evening walk in the park, a father with his own children and some of their friends talk about the end of the day. "Where does the day go," Steven wants to know. Karen thinks it breaks up into little pieces and becomes the stars. But the day fills the sky, say the others: where are the rest of the pieces? Kiku thinks the day slips into the ocean, Jose that it fills people's eyes and makes them sleepy, Steven that the tired day rests on the moon at night. But each proposal brings doubts and questions. Daddy talks about how different people are, and how wonderful that is—just as day and night are different; then he gives the real explanation of the phenomena of day and night. The illustrations echo the mood of quiet discussion tinged with wonder; the group is a racial potpourri. Discussion-provoking, the story has an exemplary adult-child situation; as a story it lacks animation.


A slight story, with attractive pictures of a lively little boy in a black urban neighborhood. Freddie finds a frog in a mud puddle; he asks two adults what they would do if they had a frog. "Use it for bait," says Mr. Mann; Miss Mary says that frogs' legs are good to eat. Horrified, Freddie rushes home and asks his mother what she'd do, finds that she would put the frog in the pond in their rock garden, and does that. Contented frog hops on a lily pad and says "Croak." The story shows the joy a child has in a pet, it demonstrates kindness to animals, and it establishes the fact that not all urban living is in slums, but the story line is weak and the convenience of the pond-and-pad seems artificial.


For the Puerto Rican child who needs material that mirrors his environment (if it is an urban ghetto) or for the child who needs to widen his horizons because he does not know this milieu, a useful book. There is no plot, and Carlos describes no problems that are personal, although all of the ghetto problems impinge on all residents. He talks of the family's crowded apartment, the street fights, the joy of splashing in water...
from a fire hydrant, the nice teacher at school, the frequent neighborhood fires. The writing is not always smooth, but it is adequate; the illustrations, like the text, are straightforward and realistic.


James Cleveland was his real name, but a teacher misunderstood when he said "J.C." and the boy was "Jesse" from then on. The family, unable to make a living at sharecropping in the deep south, had come to Cleveland partly because young J.C. was so scrawny and sickly. It was Charles Riley, the coach at school, who first urged the boy to train for track; Jesse Owens finds no praise too high for this life-long friend who so patiently and optimistically worked on his behalf. His records in college and as an Olympic star are sports history; the grueling story of his financial and physical problems in later years is less familiar and not quite as interesting, but it rounds out realistically what would otherwise be a routine treatment of an athletic hero. What raises the book above average, despite the mediocre writing style, is the candor and moderation of Jesse Owens' references to the problems he has had and slights he has suffered because of his race.


A good biography for young readers, despite the uneven quality of the writing and the often-foulsome phrases; it has a good balance of material, with Martin Luther King's childhood, ministry, family life, and his role as a civil rights statesman given adequate attention. The author stresses the influence of Gandhi's philosophy on King's credo and his program.


A potpourri of facts about measurement, the continuous text moving briskly from one topic to another; the page headings are the only clue to contents, there being neither an index nor a table of contents. The authors discuss some of the tools and techniques of measurement, with a few tips for the reader (wrapping thread or wire around a pencil to measure thickness) and some useful diagrams. The writing is not without error ("One kind of clock used to give relatively accurate time is the quartz-crystal clock. They have a...") but it is generally lucid and the book can serve adequately as an introduction to speculation about the whole field of precision measurement.


Awarded the Grand Prize of the Salon de L'Enfance, 1968, this is a book with a message of peace, and that is its only worthy attribute. The plot is that of a grade-B movie; the style and development are pedestrian, the characters unconvincing. An Egyptian boy who had been hanging about a regiment follows them when they go off to battle. Lost in the Sinai Desert, Slimane engages in a sniping duel and finds that his enemy, whom he has wounded slightly, is an Israeli girl his own age. From then on the story degenerates into a now-we're-friendly-now-we're-hostile seesaw,
with the relationship between the two patently innocent yet described frequently as though it were an adult love affair. The ending, with the soldiers of both armies coming to the rescue, lectured on the folly of war by the girl, then sheepishly shaking hands, is hardly credible.


An undistinguished addition to the series of books about children of other lands. Some of the pictures are attractive, a few informative, and most quite ordinary. The facts given in the text, which is flatly written, are to be found in most of the books about life on a kibbutz. The chief value of the book, one that exists in most of the books in this series (which is highly variable in quality) is that it shows some of the facets of each child's life that are like the lives of children everywhere.


Few photographically illustrated books avoid the pitfall of pictures that look posed and text that seems contrived to accompany the pictures; this has rather less than most but is not without them. The story line leads slowly up to the fact that Ronnie's big surprise gift from Dad is a pair of roller skates; his first experience brings a sense of bliss and the story ends with Ronnie shouting, "I can fly!" Dad had kept his secret until they came to a playground; Ronnie had meanwhile been disgruntled by the fact that little sister is tagging along. The writing is uneven: some plodding filler and some quite moving glimpses of a small boy's moods and emotions. Ronnie is black; the setting is an urban neighborhood, the home and family attractive, and the aspect of the book that is most striking is the perceptive interpretation of a child's actions and reactions.


A most useful book that gives instructions for making three kinds of puppets (paper bag, rod, and papier mâché), for building stages, for adapting a story for dramatic use, for writing an original puppet play, and for making costumes. Directions for construction are clear and simple, all materials—including those for sets and scenery—are comparatively inexpensive if not free, and the advice on procedures of production is succinct and sensible. Three complete puppet plays are included; a brief list of additional readings and an index are appended.


A useful book that contains much the same material as is in Lauber's *The Look-It-Up Book of the 50 States* (reviewed in the Nov. 1968 issue) and is similar in format: illustrations (state flower, flag, tree, bird, and a map) followed by general and historical information. Although the Lauber book is illustrated in color and this is black and white, the former giving an occasional added fact (a second motto) and including the
state seal, which this does not, this is on the whole more valuable for
the historical information, the textual section being better-written and
more extensive, and the format and typography more dignified.

$8.95.

Lucid and informative, a book that serves as an excellent introduction
to the art history of two centuries, but is comprehensive and author-
itative enough for the reader who is already acquainted with the subject.
The text is divided by countries, chronological within the divisions, and
profusely illustrated with full-color reproductions. An index and number-
ered list of illustrations are appended; the latter gives locations of
art objects. Illustrations are, unfortunately, not indexed, so that there
is no way to find quickly—for example—all of Canaletto’s works repre-
sented, since they are not cited in the index and the list of illustrations
(in order) is by title.

Harcourt, 1970. 26p. Trade ed. $3.25; Library ed. $3.30 net.

Taunted by the other second-grade children, who sang the Oscar
Mayer "Wiener Song" jeeringly, Oscar finally broke down and told his
parents how he was being teased about his name. Indignant, his mother
rushed to the *Dictionary of Given Names* and read the meaning of Oscar:
Bounding Warrior. The next day, after the children on the playground
had been frightened into respectful silence by Oscar’s large dog, they
all crowded around to find out the meaning of their own names. That
night Oscar sang the "Wiener Song" as he cleared the table. The words
and music of the song are appended. Although the idea that it is cruel
and silly to tease others because of their names is propounded, the story
seems otherwise simply a vehicle for describing a commendably book-
oriented mother; the inclusion of a television commercial song is of du-
bious value.

47p. Trade ed. $3.95; Library ed. $3.78 net.

Clear, well-organized, straightforward writing makes this, like other
Selsam books, an exemplar of science writing for the very young inde-
pendent reader. The diagrams are simple and carefully labeled and the
close-up photographs show each step in the growth of a peanut plant, es-
pecially interesting because of the unusual pattern of development.

$2.97.

An amusing concept in a book that is weakened by belabored reitera-
tive details, a flat ending, and occasional note of writing down—although
the writing has, in general, a breezy jocundity. When Noah was given
his sailing orders by the Lord, they did not include his cousin Moah (an
irresponsible artist) and they specified only certain kinds of animals.
So Moah built his own ark, loading it with such creatures as the centaur,
the hippocampus, the mermaid, sphinx, etc. Years passed, but Noah
never heard from Moah after the flood; however, the book concludes, it
is possible that somewhere, perhaps on an island not yet discovered,
there may be found all these impossibly marvelous creatures, "leaping and loping and flying and hopping and buzzing and slithering around, demanding to be treated like men and acting very much like beasts, just as they did on the decks of the other ark." The style is always informal, often amusing but occasionally awkward. The description of the querulous behavior of Moah's passengers (the mermaid said that if the hippocampus stayed in the tank, she was leaving) is potentially the most enjoyable section of the story but it is overdone.

Stern, Philip Van Doren, comp. The Other Side of the Clock; Stories Out of Time, Out of Place; comp. and with an introduction by Philip Van Doren Stern. Van Nostrand, 1969. 192p. $5.95.

A dozen science fiction tales on the theme of movement in time, some excellent, some written with a heavy hand. Heinlein's "— And He Built a Crooked House" is light in mood, almost slapstick but well done; "Chronoclasm" by Wyndham is poignant despite the fact that there seem to be some missing lines; a few of the tales have an eerie quality. A good anthology, but not outstanding.

Storr, Catherine. Lucy Runs Away; illus. by Victoria de Larrea. Prentice-Hall, 1969. 69p. $3.95.

First published in England, a sequel to Lucy (reviewed in the Jan. 1969 issue) in which the dauntless heroine, playing detective, became involved with real thieves. Here Lucy, bored by her sedentary summer, decides that she will run away as soon as she turns ten. And she does, at the age of ten years and three days, having chosen a coastal town because she might find some interesting smuggling going on. Consoling herself with the fact that nobody realizes that a mysterious outlaw (herself) is on board, Lucy rides to the sea; she falls asleep on the beach and calls for help when an old man, having an early swim, flounders. Quite satisfied with her adventure and the newspaper publicity, Lucy placidly accepts her sisters' envious admiration, and announces that she will run away again—farther—when she is twelve. Light style with just a bit of a bite to it, good dialogue, and a satisfying plot.


Two English children on a Welsh walking tour pick up a runaway girl who is the age of the older Davies, John; his sister is thirteen. Ilonka Kazinczy tells John and Ann that the police are after her because she has run away from a cruel uncle, but her story is suspicious: why should there be such an intensive hunt for her? The truth soon comes out; Ilonka's uncle has been murdered and she is carrying a secret document that will help organize a Hungarian freedom movement. The incidents of chase and pursuit are full of action, the setting is interesting (although there is a heavy dose of mountaineering detail for non-climbers) and the style competent, but the plot is both contrived and melodramatic.


Short sentences and large print in a book that gives good coverage to Lee's life and his role in the Civil War make a useful contribution that is limited by the blandness of approach and the often-awkward movement...
The book begins slowly, with a description of Lee's father, describes his boyhood and army career, his marriage and his views on slavery, some highlights of the campaigns and battles of the Civil War (with a sentimental treatment of the surrender and farewell) and Lee's last years as president of Washington College. An endpaper map shows the division of states during the years of the war.


A simple and touching story, illustrated with sunny pictures of seashore scenes; in the golden sands and the fleecy clouds in a summer sky there is an almost palpable feeling of warmth. To a child who saw a dog pictured in those clouds, it was almost miraculous when a fleecy white dog appeared. Boy and dog were instantly a team, even though mother warned that somebody would probably claim the dog, but that didn't happen; at the end of the summer, the boy took the dog home with him. Not substantial, but a satisfying story for the read-aloud audience, nicely told and engagingly illustrated.


In a sequel that maintains the standards and appeal of *Sumi's Prize* and *Sumi's Special Happening*, the small Japanese girl whose elderly friend figures so largely in her life has a new adventure. It is, in fact, due to old Mr. Oda that Sumi has a brief but delicious moment in the limelight, a spot she has long seen occupied by another child. Mr. Oda's goat will not budge from the path of the new Tokyo express, and only Sumi can convince the animal to move; the delay enables the class to have a conducted tour through the train. The satisfactions and yearnings Sumi has are common to children everywhere, the thrill of the occasion is crystal-clear, and the touches that are uniquely Japanese (in both text and illustrations) add to the book's charm.


For his five sturdy sons, Pipsa's father gave his time and his praise; but "he never thought of praising a little girl." Her mother was proud of all the ways in which Pipsa helped her, but it was only when Pipsa saved the life of her baby brother by killing a rattlesnake that her father showed appreciation. Then he noticed, also, that Pipsa had grown a new plant for the Algonkian people to use—the sunflower, which she had seen growing in another village. The illustrations are quite attractive, the style adequate; the two themes seem contrivedly meshed, however, and the father's attitude not convincing: even the most stoic of fathers, Indian or not, contemporary or not, would be very likely to pay some attention to an only daughter.


An exciting survey of the new techniques, the research projects, the advances in knowledge pure and applied, that have given mankind an in-
creasing control over his longevity, his health, his ability to learn and memorize and modify behavior. Medical progress in such fields as transplants, fetology, surgical techniques in cardiovascular cases, and experimentation in memory-transfer are some of the areas described in a book that is written with never-flagging vitality, professional competence, and a flair for phrase: "The double-helix structure has other remarkable qualities that suit it for its role as an intracellular town crier," or, ". . . we have only recently, though with enormous success, begun to circumvent nature's systematic method of selecting the genes best suited for survival in this world." A divided reading list and an index are appended.


"Do they fly off your hands?" Michael's mother asked when he lost the eighth pair in a year, and she pinned a pair of his brother's mittens to Michael's sleeves. He was to sit in a chair, she said, and see what happened. Nothing happened. Then they tried it without the pins, and Michael passed that test, too—but when his mother went off to answer the telephone, he went outside. The last double-page spread announces, "It was spring," and there is Michael, who has shed not only his mittens, but half the rest of his clothing. The story has a raffish humor, and the appeal of an all-too-familiar situation, but the ending is abrupt and disappointing.

Wiesner, William. **Tops.** Viking, 1969. 27p. illus. $4.50.

An oversize picture book with vigorous and boldly designed illustrations, the setting in no particular period to judge by the medieval-oriental costume details. A lonely giant comes out of the woods and tries to make friends; everybody but the king is afraid of Tops, but the king conceives of a plan. He has a giant-size suit of armor made, thinking that Tops will frighten the enemy away. No fighting is necessary, not because the enemy decamp, but because they have a giant, too. Also dressed in armor, also named Tops. The two lonely giants, enchanted by each other, having wanted all their lives to play marbles, immediately begin a game. Each country fearing the other's giant, they go no more to war. There is a message here, but it isn't very convincingly framed; the story has action and some humor, however, to add to the appeal of the friendly-giant theme and that of the gay illustrations.


An anthology of true stories of spies and agents of the twentieth century. Despite the drama and danger in the material, few of the twenty-seven tales are written in a style that makes the most of such assets: the majority of selections are rather heavy and serious. Each selection is prefaced by background information; a brief foreword discusses the various areas of spy activity.
Bibliographies

To order any of the items listed here, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.


Books to Own. Detroit Public Library, 1969. 15p. $.50. Send self-addressed mailing label and payment in check or money order to Publications Dept., Detroit Public Library, 5201 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48202.


Children's Books for Holiday Giving and Year 'Round Reading. Cleveland Public Library. Children's Dept., 1969. 16p. $.05. Order Dept., C.P.L. Gift Division, 325 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114.


