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**BULLETIN
OF THE
CENTER FOR
CHILDREN'S
BOOKS**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

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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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 25

NOVEMBER, 1971

Number 3

New Titles for Children and Young People

Adoff, Arnold. *MA nDA LA*; pictures by Emily McCully. Harper, 1971. 22p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$4.43 net.

R
4-7
yrs. Pictures that are suffused with sunshine and love echo the triumphant poem of the story, told in rhyming syllables. The jacket explains (the book does not) that MA is mother, DA father, HA laughing, RA cheering, LA is singing, NA sighing, and AH feeling good. A family goes out to sow, to see the seedlings come up, to gather the tall corn, grind it, cook it; and in each picture the ritual is celebrated "MA nDA LA, MA nDA HA, MA nDA LA LA LA. . ." It must be read aloud to get the full effect of a child's blithe crooning, it must be seen for the full effect of the dark figures (silhouette save for the brilliantly patterned clothing) against the colors of the tropical foliage. Not suitable for group use, but right for reading aloud to an individual child.

Anderson, Clarence William. *The Rumble Seat Pony*; written and illus. by C. W. Anderson. Macmillan, 1971. 47p. \$3.95.

Ad
2-4 Peter's mother agrees to buy a pony, dirty and matted through neglect, that neighbors want to get rid of. Brushed and washed, the pony looks beautiful, especially to Peter, youngest of three children. The pony and the family's old car with a rumble seat lead a community parade, after which the neighbors all contribute toward a gift blanket for the pony. This hasn't really a storyline, once the pony is seen (spotted from the rumble seat, hence the title) but the subject and the illustrations are appealing, and the book demonstrates kindness to animals, family amity, and friendliness in a community.

Asinof, Eliot. *Craig and Joan*; Two Lives for Peace. Viking, 1971. 245p. \$6.95.

Ad
7- "BOY AND GIRL DIE IN ANTIWAR PACT," was the *New York Times* headline for October 17, 1969. Craig Badiali and Joan Fox were seventeen, both from quiet conservative families in a quiet town, both were popular and involved in school activities. The year before, they had marched in support of American soldiers in Vietnam. Then they changed; convinced that killing was wrong, they chose to die so that the world would recognize their concern for peace. Most of the book is based on interviews with friends, since Craig's parents were reluctant to discuss the matter (his brother was open and communicative) and Joan's parents would brook no discussion. The facts about Craig and Joan are touching, and their story particularly interesting in view of their personalities and their backgrounds, but the author's findings are given in a book that seems over-extended, the reminiscences of those interviewed being occasionally repetitive and the information about Craig's and Joan's brief pasts not always relevant.

Avery, Gillian, et al. *Authors' Choice*; illus. by Krystyna Turska. T. Y. Crowell, 1971. 216p. \$5.95.

R 6- Seventeen of the most distinguished British writers for children have each chosen their favorite stories for inclusion in an anthology that ranges from Tove Jansson and Hans Christian Andersen to Katherine Mansfield and Ray Bradbury. Most of the selections are by children's authors and each is preceded by a word of praise by its selector. Brief notes about contributors and selectors of choice are appended.

Balestrino, Philip. *The Skeleton Inside You*; illus. by Don Bolognese. T. Y. Crowell, 1971. 33p. \$3.75.

R 2-4 A very simplified text on skeletal structure, this does not describe all the bones in the human body, but discusses the different shapes of bones, something of their structure and their function, cartilage, joints, and ligaments. The text also mentions the foods that are high in calcium, necessary for strong bones, and the fact that bones grow and mend. The writing is matter-of-fact and informal, the amount of coverage right for the primary grades audience. The illustrations are lively and often illuminating, but there are some parts of the text that might be clearer with more detailed diagrams.

Barth, Edna. *I'm Nobody! Who Are You?* The Story of Emily Dickinson; drawings by Richard Cuffari. Seabury, 1971. 128p. \$4.95.

R 5-8 A very good biography that begins with the nine-year-old Emily, smoothly incorporates passages of her writing within the context of the text, and includes selected poems at the conclusion of the biographical material. The writing style is direct and informal, all of the dialogue based on research, and the tone is objective. A bibliography, a list of sources, an index of poems by first lines, and a general index are appended.

Bible. *And It Came to Pass*; Bible Verses and Carols selected by Jean Slaughter; illus. by Leonard Weisgard. Macmillan, 1971. 32p. \$4.95.

R K-4 The story of the Nativity is told in verses from the Bible, each double-page spread (text and full-color illustration) alternating with an appropriate carol, the two pages of musical notation (simple arrangements) embellished by delicate drawings in black and white. The Biblical text and the music may be used separately or together, the illustrations are lovely, and the book is particularly suited to home use.

Bishop, Claire (Huchet). *The Truffle Pig*; illus. by Kurt Wiese. Coward-McCann, 1971. 47p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.64 net.

R 1-3 If they bought a piglet, Pierre's parents decided, they could fatten it up and have delicious sausages. So they saved their pennies and bought Marcel, of whom Pierre became so fond that he didn't want his pet killed. They ran away, and it was then that Pierre discovered that Marcel could detect truffles. Home they went to announce the glad news and to start a new way of life—and the story ends with Marcel receiving a medal in a nationwide Truffle-Pig Contest, fortune for the family, and for Marcel a blue-tiled pool in his sty. The illustrations have simplicity of style and verve in their economical lines and the print is large, but the writing, although direct and simple, has a flat quality that is awkward. Useful for beginning readers.

Branscum, Robbie. *Me and Jim Luke*. Doubleday, 1971. 140p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$4.70 net.

Ad 6-9 Sammy John had come to live with his grandparents on a dirt farm in the Arkansas hills, and on all of his adventures his companion is his uncle Jim Luke, two years his senior. Told in first person, the narrative is spiced with the local dialect and frank in its fidelity to a country boy's language: ". . . pee'd your britches. . .," ". . . watching Aunt Opal poking her tit in a young'ns mouth. . ." The two boys find a dead man in a hollow tree, decide to do their own detective work, and admit to their secret a young doctor and an attractive young woman who, as a city girl and an outsider, is the object of censure and persecution. Both boys adore Miss Raven Megan, and the doctor falls in love with her. In the course of their spying, the boys learn that it is a Klansman who committed the murder and that the Klan has burned a cross on Raven Megan's lawn. Discovered by the Klan, the boys hide out, and there is a dramatic showdown in which the Grand Wizard, unmasked, proves to be an uncle who has been spurned by Raven Megan. The Klan is routed by FBI men, the lovers become engaged, and the boys get just what they expected from Grandma and Grandpa—punishment. The local color is laid on rather heavily, but it rings true, and the plot, although it has some moments of sagging, gives a convincing picture of the tenacious activities of the Ku Klux Klan.

Burchardt, Nellie. *A Surprise for Carlotta*; illus. by Ted Lewin. Watts, 1971. 127p. \$4.95.

R 3-4 Smaller than the other third-grade children, overshadowed by her brother at home, shy Carlotta Hernandez only begins to blossom when she becomes fascinated by the duckling Mrs. Lopez brings for her class. When the fowl gets larger, Carlotta takes it home for a weekend; then it is all the harder to see Dandelion sent to a Zoo. In the course of caring about and for Dandelion, Carlotta finds new confidence; she is also happy to learn that her brother's secret project—about which she had felt envy and curiosity— is earning enough money so that she can go with him on a visit to Puerto Rico. A realistic story written competently, with natural dialogue and a good balance of home and school settings.

Cohen, Miriam. *Best Friends*; pictures by Lillian Hoban. Macmillan, 1971. 29p. \$3.95.

R 3-5 yrs. Engaging illustrations show the setting of a busy kindergarten room for a story of boy-meets-boy, boy-loses-boy, boy-gets-boy, the simple text enlivened by a quiet humor. When life is at its lowest ebb, and Paul and Jim are on the outs: "And the cookies were the plain kind." When Jim and Paul are sent into the room on an errand during recess, and they notice the incubator light is out, Paul goes for the janitor and Jim, hovering anxiously, tries "to be as warm as he could." The rupture is caused by just a bit of bickering and jealousy, and the coolness between the two best friends is mended as easily as it started; the light touch, good style, and realistic treatment make a pleasant tale out of an experience with which most children can identify.

Colman, Hila. *Daughter of Discontent*. Morrow, 1971. 191p. Trade ed. \$4.25; Library ed. \$3.94 net.

M 6-9 Kate, seventeen, comes from a small town where she lives with her divorced mother and three female relatives, to spend the summer with her father in New York. He is running for Congress and Kate, working in his campaign office, meets Malcolm, an independent youth whose treatment of her Kate resents until she finds out he is preoccupied with his own problems. She also meets some militant workers

for women's liberation, and is in a state of aroused ambivalence about that movement, her father's personality, Malcolm, and her own feelings of inadequacy. When her father is tried and found guilty of bribery, losing his position and any possibility of election, Kate decides he needs her; that she will live with him and become a lawyer. The problems of sexual ethics, parent relationships, and the role of women are of immediate concern, but the issues, mulled over but not really clarified, overbalance the story to the extent that it seems only a vehicle for them.

Coombs, Patricia. *Dorrie and the Birthday Eggs*. Lothrop, 1971. 44p. illus. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.78 net.

Ad
K-3
Even amongst witches there is a generation gap! Dorrie has completed an errand on which she was sent, but she's late, and she's lost one of her galoshes, and do you think anyone will listen to her explanation? Her mother, the Big Witch, is so busy talking to the Egg Witch that Dorrie can't get a word in. She finally writes a note, lets them know that the nasty witch Thinnever is out to do mischief, and is reinstated in her mother's good graces after Thinnever has been foiled. Children enjoy the combination of Dorrie's bumbling accidents and her ultimate triumph, and while the plot is lightweight, it moves briskly. The pictures complement both the ingenuous quality of Dorrie's personality and the light humor of the style.

Crosby, Alexander L. *One Day for Peace*. Little, 1971. 109p. \$4.95.

Ad
6-8
Shocked and grieved by the death of a friend killed in Vietnam, Jane writes to the President to ask why this country is at war. She is answered by a form letter and some bulletins defending the United States' position. Dissatisfied, she organizes a peace group, and asks the mayor for a parade permit. Knowing he will risk censure at election time, the mayor complies and declares a Day for Peace. The junior high school principal, the family minister, the American Legion, and some antagonistic boys attack the group, which has gained some support, but the demonstration, despite abusive reaction, is a popular success and gets coverage in the press and on television. Worthy as is the cause espoused by the author, and realistic as its development may be, the book is weakened as a story by the inclusion of barbed comments about other examples of injustice and prejudice: the mistreatment of Indians, scab labor, inequality for blacks, etc. These are only touched on, but the cumulation of such references overburdens the book to the extent that the narrative is dwarfed by the message.

Delessert, Etienne. *How the Mouse was Hit on the Head by a Stone and so Discovered the World*; text and pictures by Etienne Delessert; foreword by Jean Piaget. Doubleday, 1971. 29p. \$5.95.

Ad
5-6
yrs.
A picture book fantasy based on research by Jean Piaget; in the foreword, Piaget explains that much of the text is based on dialogues with children forty years ago, tested and revised by reading and discussing the story with children of five and six. Digging a tunnel, a small mouse is hit by a sliding rock, and in the space it leaves, he sees the sun, moon, night, clouds, a flower, etc. and they tell him who they are and what they do. (These were the ideas of the original group of children.) There is some vying for eminence, and the mouse declares that they are all beautiful and he loves them all. Next day, the sun says, the mouse must take a long trip and meet other new friends, and he is given a farewell present: a gust of wind, a snowflake, a tiny star, etc. to put in his traveling sack. The mouse and the sun set off, the story ends, "going for a long trip on which they will meet many new friends."—which

does sound as though there may be a sequel. The illustrations are imaginative and handsome, the last double-page spread including an astonished-looking Piaget ranked with other life-forms. The fanciful ideas of the story may intrigue children, and the book is graphically attractive, but as a story it is limited by the lack of direction, being essentially a collection of some children's erroneous ideas of natural forces framed thinly by the situation of encounter by a creature who has never seen them before.

Desmond, Alice (Curtis). *Cleopatra's Children*; illus. with maps, charts and photographs. Dodd, 1971. 295p. \$5.00.

Ad
6-9 A biography that covers a wider period than the title might indicate, since it describes in detail the years between the first meeting of Caesar and Cleopatra and her death. The remainder of the book focuses on the life of Selene, although information about Cleopatra's other three children is given. The involved relationships among the royalty and aristocracy of the world of ancient Rome and the Near East, and the inclusion of many minor figures (often with double names or duplicate names) burdens the book, although it makes clear the intricacies of marriages of convenience and the power struggle. The inclusion of Latin words followed by a parenthetical translation seems unnecessary and certainly breaks the flow of narration: "Furious at his wife, Anthony got into a *celoce* (a small boat built for speed) with his son. . ." or, "Evenings, Juba frequented the *tabernae* (shops). . ." Some notes on the author's research, a partially annotated bibliography, and an index are appended.

Donovan, John. *Wild in the World*. Harper, 1971. 94p. Trade ed. \$3.50; Library ed. \$3.27 net.

R
6-9 There were no other homesteads on the New Hampshire mountain where the Gridleys lived in isolation. One by one his four sisters and six brothers had died, and John was alone. He seldom saw the neighbors, never told them that he had buried the last of his family himself. Living in solitude and silence, John welcomed the wolf that hung about the farm, and when it became friendly, decided it must be a stray dog. So begins the touching story of a love that releases a lonely human being; happy with his dog, whom he calls "Son," John becomes loquacious, content, even merry. Then in a stark and poignant ending, John dies of pneumonia, and the neighbors are sure that the animal they find with the body is a wolf that has killed him. They run Son off, but when they are gone, he comes back to sleep where John had lain. The writing is direct and deceptively simple, with depth and perception in subtle overtones, and with a remarkably high sustention of movement in a story with one human being (two brothers appear briefly, and an occasional meeting with a neighbor takes place) on a bleak, unchanging stage.

Durant, John. *Highlights of the World Series*; rev. ed. Hastings House, 1971. 218p. illus. \$6.95.

R
6-10 A 1963 title has been brought up to date, written in lively style by a *New York Times* correspondent. Since the book covers the most dramatic events of a series that is itself the event of the year in baseball, this is a door to happy nostalgia for fans, with good photographs and appended statistics that have reference use, and it may well be used by younger readers. The index is full, but the glossary (which is intended for the beginner) is inadequate: no bunt, no fungo, no infield fly rule, no Texas leaguer, etc.

Foster, Genevieve (Stump). *Year of Lincoln: 1861*. Scribner, 1970. 64p. illus. Trade ed. \$4.50; Library ed. \$4.05 net.

Ad 3-5 Although this does, like the author's earlier books, give some information about other events and people during a segment of history, it has neither the breadth of coverage nor the format that showed simultaneous events. This is, rather, a description of the Civil War, with some background and a brief focus on 1861; it moves from 1830 to 1865. The second part of the book deals separately with contemporary figures: Darwin, Twain, Douglass, Dickens, Queen Victoria, the Empress Tzu Hsi, and the Emperor Mutsuhito; again, the span for these quick historical sketches embraces but does not focus on the title year. Useful but not unusual in the coverage of American history; the second half of the book has some interesting material, but each section seems isolated. An index is appended.

Finlay, Ian Hamilton. *Poems to Hear and See*. Macmillan, 1971. 44p. \$3.95.

Ad 3-5 Poems that appeal visually, some of them very simple: "The CLOUD'S ANCHOR/ swallow" or "waterwheels in," followed by a wheel made up of the word "whirl" printed in two colors in circular pattern. This is not poetry that excites the emotions, but it is an interesting preview for young readers of the ideogrammatic goals of the Concrete Poetry movement.

Fisher, Aileen Lucia. *Feathered Ones and Furry*; illus. by Eric Carle. T. Y. Crowell, 1971. 37p. \$4.50.

R 6-8 Simply written poems about animals, in a book illustrated with handsome linoleum cuts in black on white or beige pages. The tidiness of meter and rhyme are exemplified by "A Robin." "I wonder how a robin hears?/ I never yet have seen his ears/ But I have seen him cock his head/ And pull a worm right out of bed." The appeal of the subjects and the level of writing make this a good book for reading aloud to younger children as well as for independent reading.

Fuja, Abayomi, comp. *Fourteen Hundred Cowries; And Other African Tales*; illus. by Ademola Olugebefola. Lothrop, 1971, 256p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$4.59 net.

R 4-7 An anthology of Yoruba tales collected in the 1930's and 40's by the late Abayomi Fuja. Many of the tales are about clever animals, many are "why" stories or fables with a pointed moral. There are chants within the stories that have a flowing, free quality, but most of the writing is sedate. An excellent source for storytellers and for the student of folk lore.

Galdone, Paul, illus. *The History of Little Tom Tucker*. McGraw-Hill, 1970. 36p. Trade ed. \$4.50; Library ed. \$4.33 net.

M 5-7 yrs. The familiar nursery rhyme is printed on the first page, and the story goes on to teach a lesson about the folly of all play and no work, crowned by a dunce's cap. When Tom reforms, he gets a gold medal, is given toys and his own horse, and so on, now has a wife, and can sing each night after eating his white bread and butter. The verses falter both in rhyme and metre, the minatory purpose is of interest only historically, and the book's only appeal is in the lively humor of the illustrations. The text was first printed and published by J. Kendrew circa 1820.

Garcia Lorca, Federico. *The Lieutenant Colonel and the Gypsy*; tr. by Marc Simont; illus. by Marc Simont. Doubleday, 1971. 28p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$4.70 net.

NR
5-6 Translated from the Spanish, a fanciful story-poem-with-program-notes, in which a complacent and pompous military bully is crushed by the lyric, free spirit of a gypsy boy. The boy says, "I invented some wings to fly with, and I fly. . .Clouds and rings in my blood. . .In January I have orange blossoms. . .And oranges in the snow. . ." The lieutenant colonel, who has been saying "Ay!" falls dead. His soul goes out the window. The sergeant calls for help, and the story ends with four civil guards thrashing the young gypsy. Pleasantly illustrated, but both fragmentary and confusing, with an abrupt ending. Not a good introduction to the late, great Spanish writer.

Glass, Paul. *Songs and Stories of Afro-Americans*; illus. by Richard Cuffari. Grosset, 1971. 61p. Trade ed. \$2.95; Library ed. \$2.99 net.

Ad
5-9 This gives some useful and interesting information about some black composers and performers and about some of the kinds of music that black Americans have given the world; it also includes the notation for many songs, giving only the melodic line. The weaknesses of the book are that it is arbitrary in the choice of material (no James Weldon Johnson!), that it has no index, and that it often does not give full information: for example, the piece on Huddie Ledbetter does not mention the fact that he became beloved and famous under the name of Leadbelly.

Glasser, Barbara. *Leroy Oops*; illus. by Lee Jack Morton. Cowles, 1971. 17p. \$3.95.

NR
3-4 Leroy has been shifted from one class to another because he acts the clown. Having just come into a new class, he stands on his head, whirls around and commits other minor infractions, all the while guarding carefully something wriggling in a paper bag. When his pet mouse escapes, Leroy expects the teacher to scold, but he says the mouse would make a good class animal, so a happy Leroy decides he'll probably stay in this class the whole year. End of story. There is some value in the fact that an understanding teacher brings a restless child a measure of acceptance, but the story really doesn't deal with Leroy's problem, and the ending is abrupt. The pleasant illustrations show a classroom that is predominantly black in the two group pictures, but the others are, rather repetitiously, pictures of Leroy alone.

Griffin, Judith Berry. *The Magic Mirrors*; illus. by Ernest Crichlow. Coward-McCann, 1971. 59p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.64 net.

Ad
3-5 A modern fairy tale about a young African princess of long ago, Aminatou. Lovely and loved by all except for one of her fifty-three stepmothers, the wicked Fata, Aminatou was given two precious gifts for her birthday: the sun and the moon each gave her a magic mirror. These she used to foil Fata's malevolent plot, helped by the moon to destroy a wicked medicine man and release the enchanted warriors he held in thrall. Fata is turned into a toad, along with the medicine man, and Aminatou's father breaks the magic mirrors in which the past and the future can be seen, saying that there is no need to look backward and that the future can only hold happiness. Aminatou and her brother agree that although there are only fifty-two stepmothers left, there is enough to share between them, the story ends. There is no mention of other children. The story is pleasantly written and attractively illustrated, it cleaves to the fairy tale tradition, but there is little beyond the African setting to distinguish it from many others with the same ingredients and the same basic wicked-stepmother-destroyed-by-magic plot.

Guggenmos, Josef. *Wonder-Fish from the Sea*; ad. from the German by Alvin Tresselt; illus. by Irmgard Lucht. Parents' Magazine, 1971. 22p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.47 net.

Ad K-2 The author, a German artist and kindergarten teacher, used dyed leaves and bark to print lovely pictures, green and brown, in a fanciful story of leaves that fall into a river. They drift to the sea and become leaf-like fish; they spawn, and the water is filled with leaf fish of every shape and color. A fisherman sees these strange creatures, but when he brings his net up, it is full of leaves. The story is slight, the illustrations delightful. A brief closing note about the artist suggests that children may wish to try leaf-printing.

Hildick, E. W. *My Kid Sister*; illus. by Iris Schweitzer. World, 1971. 64p. \$3.95.

NR 4-5 There are only three things, the teller of the story says, that can stop his three-year-old sister's crying: awful faces, impressive noises, and acrobatics. And he's the only one who can do these. Since Patsy cries easily and well, he is often called upon to perform. He and another boy, who also has a kid sister who cries, also age three, decide on a contest, plan their ploys, and are indignant when the two little girls laugh instead of cry; both fathers come along, both boys get a public spanking, bets on "hollering" are switched to the two boys, and the kid sisters stand there and laugh and laugh. This may be intended as a nonsense story, and it certainly has elements of exaggeration, but it doesn't get far enough away from the abrasions of familial behavior—or misbehavior—to be funny, despite the appeal that the jocund style may have to some readers.

Hoban, Russell C. *Emmet Otter's Jug-Band Christmas*; illus. by Lillian Hoban. Parents' Magazine 1971. 38p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.78 net.

Ad K-2 The widowed Mrs. Otter took in washing and her son Emmett helped every way he could, but times were bad and the chance for giving each other exciting Christmas presents was dim. Emmett took his mother's washtub to use for a country music band, hoping to win a cash prize. His mother took Emmett's tool box so that she could buy dress material, enter the same talent contest, and win a cash prize. Neither did—but on the way home Emmett's band and Emmett's mother were playing and singing, were heard by a restaurant owner, and were hired on the spot. The illustrations are engaging, the theme (slight overtones of O. Henry) appropriately—but not overly—sentimental for the Christmas season. The style is lightly humorous and smoothly bland, the ending pat, weakening the story.

Hodges, Margaret. *The Making of Joshua Cobb*; illus. by W. T. Mars. Farrar, 1971. 170p. \$4.50.

R 4-6 A sequel to *The Hatching of Joshua Cobb* (reviewed in the November 1967 issue) in which Joshua, only child of a widowed mother, was away from home for the first time and adjusted to camp life. Here Joshua has to adjust again, this time to a preparatory school. The pattern of school life, the relationships between teachers and pupils, the pranks and ploys of the boys, all have a touch of Mr. Chips-milieu-American-style, and the episodic structure is firmly based on good characterization and on Joshua's growing acceptance of—and being accepted by—the school community. This has good humor, in both meanings of the term.

Hogrogian, Nonny. *One Fine Day*. Macmillan, 1971. 27p. illus. \$4.95.

A picture story book based on an Armenian folk tale is illustrated with bold,

R simple compositions in soft colors, the pictures echoing the humor of the story.
K-3 Nicely told, the tale uses a familiar cumulative pattern: when a fox drinks all the milk from an old woman's pail, she cuts off his tail; he begs her to sew it on so that his friends won't laugh at him. She agrees—if he will return her milk. So the fox goes from one creature to another, each asking for a reciprocal favor, until a kind man takes pity, and gives him grain to take to the hen to get the egg to pay the peddler, etc. A charming picture book that is just right for reading aloud to small children, the scale of the pictures also appropriate for group use.

Hope, Laura Lee. *The Bobbsey Twins: The Mystery at Cherry Corners*. Grosset, 1971. 178p. \$1.50.

NR The twins (two sets: Flossie and Freddie, 6, and Nan and Bret, 12) come to visit
3-4 their cousins, the Parkers, and solve the mystery of the bell that rings by itself in an old schoolhouse on the Parker property. As in older books in this unquenchable series, the children are bright and amiable, the adults are amiable but not quite as bright as the children, and the plot develops with a maximum of contrivance and coincidence. The children, taken on an educational trip of New York State during which they hunt for a stolen pet monkey, run into the culprits in a magic store; fortunately animal masks just happen to have been put on, so the Parkers and Bobbseys are not recognized. Later, the children climb into the schoolhouse and are trapped when it is moved. However, they escape and flag the police, and the miscreants are identified beyond a doubt by a snapshot taken by the monkey. Wholly unconvincing, and pedestrian in style.

Hudlow, Jean. *Eric Plants a Garden*; story and photographs by Jean Hudlow. Whitman, 1971. 34p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$2.96 net.

R Written with direct simplicity, with short sentences in goodsized, easily legible
2-4 type and illustrated with photographs that make some of the steps in gardening very clear, a fine first book for the beginning gardener. Eric draws a plan for his garden, carefully measures the plot, buys seeds, weeds and cultivates his plot, waters it, and has the pleasure of eating the vegetables he has grown. The text includes some helpful hints and strikes a nice balance in presenting information in a lightly fictionalized framework.

Jacobson, Morris K. *Wonders of the World of Shells: Sea, Land, and Fresh-Water*; by Morris K. Jacobson and William K. Emerson; illus. with photographs and drawings. Dodd, 1971. 80p. \$3.95.

R Although the text has an occasional note of "writing down" for the young
5-8 reader, it is for the most part straightforward and brisk in describing the six classes of shelled mollusks, their ways of eating, reproducing, and protecting themselves. The authors are an amateur and a professional malacologist, and the text has the recognizable stamp of authority. This does not serve as a handbook for identification of shells, but it gives some advice on collecting and arranging. The text includes information on unusual or dangerous mollusks, and the photographs are clear and adequately labelled. A glossary and an index are appended.

Kafka, Sherry. *I Need a Friend*; illus. by Eros Keith. Putnam, 1971. 27p. Trade ed. \$3.75; Library ed. \$3.49 net.

A good idea is weakened by monotonous treatment, with no variation save for the last page. A small girl, alone in her yard, thinks, "All by myself I can eat a

M sandwich. . . But I need a friend to have a picnic," or "All by myself I can tell a
3-6 joke. . . But I need a friend to laugh." The pattern is repeated, while the illustrations
yrs. show that a moving van is being emptied in the background. A head appears from
behind the fence, and on the last page (no text) two little girls are enjoying a picnic.
The illustrations are pleasant, but they do not lend enough variety or action to give
the story pace.

Kaufmann, Helen L. *The Story of Sergei Prokofiev*; illus. with photographs. Lippincott,
1971. 159p. \$4.50.

Ad The author cites, in her note of acknowledgement, a reference to Prokofiev as
6-9 "90 per cent composer, 10 per cent human being," and the text makes clear the
fact that the biographee was, indeed, an irascible man whose music was the most
important thing in his life. The book dwells rather lengthily on Prokofiev's child-
hood, then gives a fairly balanced treatment to personal and professional events,
although the latter are emphasized, explains the musician's acceptance of official
reprimand by giving Prokofiev's rather lame excuse that it might endanger his
ex-wife (whome he had treated shabbily). The biography gives a great deal of
information about the musician's career and gives some impression of his person-
ality; its weakness is an uneven quality: small incidents may be described in great
detail while important events are accorded a brief paragraph. A selected list of
Prokofiev recordings and an index are appended.

King, Helen H. *Willy*; pictures by Carole Byard. Doubleday, 1971. 45p. \$3.95.

Ad The boy (no name) who tells the story is ten, and very much aware of the fact
3-5 that he is the man of the family, since his father is dead. A rat has been ravaging the
family's food, and the boy tries—unsuccessfully—to catch the animal, which he calls
"Willy," with an ordinary trap. Even some men who are guests try, one night, to
catch the rat. But the boy has a great friend who runs a hardware store, and on the
friend's advice he builds a box-trap; Willy is caught and the boy rushes to his
friend's home, as per instructions. Willy is thrown into the furnace, and the boy and
man celebrate. He knows he can't tell Mama that he's had a taste of beer, but—the
boy ends his story—it sure makes him feel like a man to have half a glass of beer. A
realistic incident of ghetto life, the writing style adequate, the relationships
between the child and adults positive, the ending weak.

Klimowicz, Barbara. *When Shoes Eat Socks*; illus. by Gloria Kamen. Abingdon, 1971. 39p.
\$3.50.

M Trying to keep up with the other children, Barnaby was always having to stop
K-2 because his socks slid down into his shoes. Big Roy and Scooter teased him, saying
that his shoes ate the socks and might eat his toes; Maggie tried to teach Barnaby to
tie his laces but he paid no attention. Then, still worried about his toes, he cried in
bed at night; his parents came in and taught him how to tie his shoelaces, and next
morning he was able to join the other children at play and keep up with them.
There is some value in the picture of the play group (mixed by age, sex, and race)
but the plot is slight and the parental role—up to the crisis scene—consists of
mother's saying, "When you going to learn to tie your own shoes, little boy?"

Kubler, Arthur. *Tomaya*; written and illus. by Arthur Kubler; tr. by Roseanna Hoover.
Atheneum, 1971. 24p. \$4.95.

An oversize picture story book from Switzerland, the fanciful dream of a child

they show the river at its best, so that the emphasis is on beauty rather than on the pollution that has brought an end to beauty. This seems not very effective, therefore, as a message of despair save for those who already despair. The format (full-page photograph faced by a page with a few lines of print) seems too ponderous for a single lyric, extended as it is into a book.

Moore, Clement Clarke. *A Visit from St. Nicholas*; a facsimile of the 1848 edition; engravings by T. C. Boyd. Simon and Schuster, 1971. 22p. \$2.95.

R all ages A facsimile edition of the 1848 publication of the poem that was to become a perennial favorite. The frontispiece is labelled, "Santa Claus's Visit," but the illustrations show a figure that is, save for his plump paunch, quite unlike the traditional Santa Claus, but a portly, bearded gentlemen clad in knee breeches and buckled shoes. The book is small, the old-fashioned engravings are interesting, and the poem loses nothing with the passage of time.

Mother Goose. *One Misty Moisty Morning*; Rhymes from Mother Goose; pictures by Mitchell Miller. Farrar, 1971. 42p. \$2.95.

Ad 4-6 yrs. Illustrations with soft, almost blurred lines, in imaginative black and white pencil drawings, have sometimes-grotesque figures and delicate touches in detail, in pictures that are more interesting than childlike. The comparatively few rhymes chosen are, for the most part, not the most familiar ones. This fact, plus the sophistication of the pictures, may make the book less appealing to small children than other editions of Mother Goose.

Mother Goose. *Rimes De La Mere Oie*; Mother Goose Rhymes rendered into French by Ormonde de Kay; designed and illus. by Seymour Chwast, Milton Glaser, Barry Zaid. Little, 1971. 89p. \$7.50.

SpC 3-6 yrs. Sixty-eight Mother Goose verses in French are followed by the same rhymes in English; there are no page references to the French versions, but these are assigned page numbers at the beginning of the book. The book, like *Mother Goose in French* (translated by Hugh Latham and illustrated by Barbara Cooney) is attractive but difficult to place for the child who is not French-speaking, since the child who can read the verses as a student of French will probably be too old for nursery rhymes, and the preschool child who has no French will not appreciate them. The book is probably best placed in a foreign language collection. As in the Latham, the translations bend to accommodate rhythm and idiom; of those rhymes found in both books, the Latham falls more into the spirit of nursery rhymes, while this is more polished as poetry; both will probably be wanted to round out collections. Unlike Barbara Cooney's pictures, which have a French flavor, those in this version are in varied styles and techniques; those by Zaid are unimpressive; those by Chwast intriguing, those by Glaser stunning.

Nyce, Vera. *A Jolly Christmas at the Patterprints*; illus. by Helene Nyce. Parents' Magazine, 1971. 27p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$3.78 net.

Ad 3-5 yrs. Written and illustrated over fifty years ago but never published, a story that is pleasantly told but rather pointless, the illustrations cheerful and folksy, the appeal in the Christmas setting. Frightened because he had seen Santa Claus in the woods (he'd never seen a mouse with a white beard) a tramp rat, Lije, bursts into the home of the Patterprints, a mouse family. They prepare to eat hurriedly and clear the fireplace where a huge pot of soup is cooking, but they are not fast enough. Santa

falls in the soup. Cleaned up, he sends the family to bed, fills their stockings, and departs. Lije and the Patterprints enjoy the contents of the stockings and then have a large, delicious Christmas dinner. More interesting as a curiosity piece than a story, perhaps.

Parker, Arthur C. *Skunny Wundy*; Seneca Indian Tales; illus. by George Armstrong. Whitman, 1970. 224p. Trade ed. \$3.95; Library ed. \$2.96 net.

R
4-6
Written by the grandson of a Seneca chief, a collection of stories told by tribal storytellers, first published in 1926 and unavailable for many years. All of the tales are about animals, many of them "why" stories that explain animal habits or appearance, and many about tricksters. Skunny Wundy (a name used for brave boys, mighty hunters, or good storytellers) is the crafty character who tricks Fox into telling a tale every night for a moon, so that children may find stories about what animals used to do "in the dim long ago before people came to this world." Some of the tales, but very few, have seasons or plants as characters, or human beings, and almost all have a sly humor. The style retains the conversational quality of the oral tradition, and the collection should be useful for storytelling.

Peyton, K. M. *Flambards in Summer*; illus. by Victor G. Ambrus. World, 1970. 189p. Trade ed. \$4.95; Library ed. \$4.91 net.

R
7-10
The third novel in a trilogy about the Russell family, a chronicle which received the 1969 GUARDIAN Award, set in England in 1916. Christina, young and widowed, decides to return to Flambards, the family estate, and when she finds that her brother-in-law has an illegitimate son, she brings young Tizzy (Thomas) to Flambards. Most of the story is concerned with Christina's problems in managing the estate and in coping with her complicated relationships with Tizzy's father and with a former employee with whom she has fallen in love. The plot is of less importance than the whole picture of country life in England, complete with period details and the niceties of social gradations; the characterization and dialogue are excellent.

Randall, Florence Engel. *The Almost Year*. Atheneum, 1971. 239p. \$5.95.

NR
6-8
Fifteen, black, living alone with her Aunt Cyd, she is sent to stay with a white family (for whom Aunt Cyd had been a baby nurse) while her aunt is away. She tells her story with bitter clarity, but it isn't a convincing story. Resentful and suspicious, resented and suspected, she searches with the others for the source of the poltergeist events that invade the Mallory's home: rocks thrown about the house, a pounding noise in the attic, shattered glass. She suspects herself; fourteen-year-old Holly Mallory fears her parents suspect her. Were this to conclude with either total clarification or the assumption that some supernatural force was at work, it would be stronger; but only vaguely is it thought by the girl (her name is never given) that the events were induced by fear.

Roth, Arnold. *Arnold Roth's Crazy Book of Science*; conceived, designed and perpetrated by Arnold Roth. Grosset, 1971. 92p. Trade ed. \$4.50; Library ed. \$4.59 net.

Ad
4-7
"An underhanded overview," the jacket calls this, and it is certainly an unorthodox romp through the sciences. Chemistry, Space, Weather, Sound, Mathematics, et cetera, are approached via a series of quips, cartoons, examples, definitions, with a few pages devoted to a skirmish that is often amusing and occasionally instructive. "Lenses and Prisms," for example, begins with a paragraph that states, "Without

light, lenses and prisms would not be very interesting. We know this to be true because, even with light, lenses and prisms are hardly the thrill of a lifetime. It is what light, lenses, and prisms do to each other that interest us." Then a cartoon labelled, "A Lens & a Prism Having a Light Conversation." The next four pages are filled alternately with cartoon frames alternating with statements on light waves, refraction and reflection, the spectrum and the spectroscope, types of lenses, and the citing of three instruments (camera, microscope, and telescope) in which lenses are used. This does not tell all, but it is intriguing, it gives a glimpse of many disciplines, and it may catch and interest readers who would shy away from staid prose.

Russell, Solveig Paulson. *Lights for the Night; A First Look at Illumination*; illus. by Patricia Frank Korbet. Walck, 1970. 42p. \$3.75.

Ad
2-4 A history of lighting, from the caveman's discovery of fire and the fact that it could be transferred by a torch, through the use of oil lamps and candles, gas and kerosene, to the invention of lamps that used electricity. Save for one reference to "the strange force we call electricity," the text is direct, simple, and clear. The illustrations are attractive; the material is arranged by topic, with neither index nor table of contents. A brief discussion of the final topic, animal light, seems both superficial and tangential.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. *The Topsy-Turvy Emperor of China*; tr. from the Yiddish by the author and Elizabeth Shub; pictures by William Pene du Bois. Harper, 1971. 32p. Trade ed. \$3.50; Library ed. \$3.79 net.

M
5-6 Cho Cho Shang, heir to the throne of China, was "mean and monstrously ugly," and when he became Emperor, he reversed all standards of beauty, behavior, and scholarship. A Court of Injustice was established, a Royal Medal for Thievery was struck, the people were ordered to eat with their hands, children were taught to be dirty and lazy, etc. When the Emperor's son grew up to be handsome, he was deemed a freak. Came the Revolution. The old laws were reinstated, the new young Emperor encouraged art, scholarship, and good manners, etc. Conclusion: "The struggle between good and evil, beauty and ugliness is even older than China itself." Singer can't write badly, and the illustrations by William Pene du Bois (black and white) are imaginative to the extent of making ugliness elegant, but the story itself is really an extended description of a situation, with the love affair and succession of the new ruler the only development. The author has a good point, but it so buttressed by iteration that it is overburdened.

Snyder, Zilpha Keatley. *The Headless Cupid*; illus. by Alton Raible. Atheneum, 1971. 203p. \$4.95.

R
4-6 Having just acquired a very pleasant stepmother, David was prepared to accept her daughter—but Amanda, resenting her mother's remarriage, made no effort to become part of the family. Her whole attention given to the occult, twelve-year-old Amanda soon had her four stepbrothers and sisters going through a long and complicated apprenticeship that would make them worthy to share her absorption with the supernatural. It was when they read about the fact that the house had once held a poltergeist that a new stir of inexplicable activity began. David suspected Amanda, but wasn't sure—because Amanda seemed, for the first time, nervous. The solution is logical, the momentum deftly sustained and knit into the theme of the unhappy Amanda's angry resistance to her mother. The author portrays children

with acute understanding, evident both in her delineation of Amanda and David and of the distinctively different younger children. Good style, good characterization, good dialogue, good story.

Swenson, May. *More Poems to Solve*. Scribner, 1970. 64p. \$4.50.

R 6- A stimulating collection of new poems, of which some are riddle-poems, some shape-poems, some word-thing poems, and some that combine these excursions into structure or invitations to the reader to interpret. In these, and in the poems of space and flight, there is wit, perception, and an ebullient, imaginative use of language. The preface, "A Poem Is A Thing," is a small bonus.

Tashjian, Virginia A., ad. *Three Apples Fell from Heaven*; illus. by Nonny Hogrogian. Little, 1971. 77p. Trade ed. \$4.50; Library ed. \$5.10 net.

R 4-6 "Once there was and was not in ancient Armenia," begins each of the tales in this delightful collection, and each ends in the traditional way: "Three apples fell from heaven: one for the teller, one for the listener, and one for all the peoples of the world"—or a variant of this. The style is excellent, the illustrations restrained, delicate, and amusing. Some of the stories have elements of magic or supernatural creatures, and some have animal characters, but most of the tales are concerned with the foibles or feats of people, and they are a happy addition to sources of materials for storytellers.

Turk, Midge. *Gordon Parks*; illus. by Herbert Danska. T. Y. Crowell, 1971. 33p. \$3.75.

Ad 2-3 A very simple biography of the creative and versatile Gordon Parks, attractively illustrated and giving the major facts about his life. Although neither the audience level nor the format of the series invites extensive treatment or sophisticated style, the tendency to oversimplification is disappointing, as when the text describes Gordon's mother's feeling that he was special, and concludes, "She did not want Gordon to be discouraged because he was not white."

Ungerer, Tomi. *The Beast of Monsieur Racine*. Farrar, 1971. 28p. illus. \$4.95.

Ad 3-6 yrs. An oversize book with amusing and clever, if occasionally macabre illustrations, the text silly but engaging. A retired Frenchman, M. Racine was determined to trap whatever or whoever had been stealing the luscious pears that grew in his garden. His ruse worked, but the creature he trapped bore no resemblance to any he had ever seen. It became so soon a companion that M. Racine had playground equipment made for the playful beast, fed it the sweets it enjoyed, and took it for motorcycles rides. Lumpy and long of snout, with no eyes, this scientific curiosity was eventually taken to Paris to be presented to the Academy of Sciences—but at the high moment of presentation, the beast fell apart to disclose two gigglers: a boy and a girl. There was rioting in the streets, but M. Racine, who enjoyed a sense of humor, went home with his friends to continue their happy relationship. The weakness of the story is that the long, sock-like ears (socks) and the face without eyes or nose are so clearly a fake that it strains credibility, even within a nonsense tale, that the hoax went undetected. But it's fun.

Reading for Teachers

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.

Burton, Dwight. "English in No Man's Land: Some Suggestions for the Middle Years." *English Journal*, January, 1971.

Chambers, Dewey and VanAssen, T. Frances. "America the Beautiful: A Study of Ecology Through Children's Literature." *Elementary English*, March, 1971.

Colbert, Margaret, comp. *Children's Books: Awards and Prizes*. Children's Book Council, 1971. 150p. paper. \$2.95. Available from the C.B.C., 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

Elliott, Virginia. "Suburbia Reaches Out." *English Journal*, May, 1970.

Johnson, Kenneth R. "Teacher's Attitude Toward the Nonstandard Negro Dialect—Let's change It." *Elementary English*, February, 1971.

Lanes, Selma. *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Atheneum, 1971. 239p. \$7.95.

Ohanian, Vera. "Cherished Books of Children: What Makes Them So?" *Elementary English*, November, 1970.

Townsend, John Rowe. *A Sense of Story: Essays on Contemporary Writers for Children*. Lippincott, 1971. 216p. \$6.50.

Smith, Lewis and Willardson, Marlyn. "Communication Skills Through Authorship." *Elementary English*, February, 1971.

