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PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at
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 col-
     lections.

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 book about a pet's death is simple enough in vocabulary and concept for beginning independent readers, but can also be used to read aloud to younger children. It is, however, bland and has a rather abrupt ending. Small Ben wakes one morning to find that his old dog is lying still and does not respond to his patting. He calls his father, who tells him the dog is dead. All day Ben is conscious of his dog's absence: no barking when the telephone rings, no companion to join his play. He weeps, but is comforted by the puppy his father brings home. Soft illustrations show Ben's activities, and through the latter part of the book a shadowy silhouette, on the facing pages, show the old dog in Ben's memory, barking, running, and so on, a device that may be confusing to some children.

Ainsworth, Judy. The Lost Smile; photographs by Belinda Durrie. Hale, 1971. 40p. Trade Ed. $3.50; Library ed. $2.97 net.  
One morning a little boy woke up and didn't feel like smiling. All day he looked for his smile. Playing with some new friends he found it. End of story, which is simply a series of photographs that are as tediously contrived as the text.

Although this does not go into great detail about any single type of mask, it gives basic instructions for many kinds. They are grouped under cardboard, papier mache, and paper masks, with variations described and illustrated by photographs, most of which show the finished product. There are however, some pictures of steps in a procedure, and there are also some pictures in full color that show how striking a mask that is not difficult to make can be. Some of the material in the book was first published in Arts and Activities.

The theme of the youngest child, left out of family affairs and given no responsibility because he is too young, is a familiar one. Usually the protagonist vindicates himself and is admitted to be a participant; here, in a pleasant but not very substantial story, little Tony has been told by his parents and older brothers, one by one, that he isn't old enough to help in their tasks and to please stay out of the way. So Tony builds an imaginary house (a large log cabin, built in a day) and his family is so impressed they all move into Tony's house. Action and humor in the pictures and a light, breezy style make the best of a slight story line that ends weakly.

There's very little text in this amusing story, and words are hardly needed.

“Look what I can do,” says one carabao to another, prancing about on its hind legs. The other animal immediately tries it. “I can do it too!” Off they go on a mad, exhausting follow-the-leader series of capers that end when they crawl, breathless, out of the river. Lying on the bank like two gaping fish, the animals are accosted by a third carabao. “Look what I can do,” he boasts. Last page: the original pair sit, glaring, on the prostrate newcomer. The details of the illustrations are both handsome and amusing, especially the faces of other creatures watching the exhibition.

Barthelme, Donald. *The Slightly Irregular Fire Engine or the Hithering Thithering Djinn*. Farrar, 1971. 29p. illus. $4.95.

Victoriania in the form of engravings, a wine list, an Oriental idol, a sweet-faced Young Miss with Hoop, a Chinese pagoda, and some mighty fancy type faces used in captions all ornament a disjointed, heavily whimsical story. Matilda (hoop girl) finds a little Chinese house in her back yard, it grows taller, she enters, and there are a pirate in a rocking chair, a djinn (the official guide), a catseller on a camel, etc. The plot is almost invisible, the only attraction of the text being its non-sequential character, a sort of humor that may appeal more to adults than to children, although an occasional child dotes on this variety of nonsense. The sophisticated illustrations are amusing (yet they add to the artificiality of the text that bends to accommodate them) and inventively used.


Although there is no snow, Fred takes his new Christmas sled out; he discovers that the sled is magic and can fulfill his wish for a heavy snowfall. In a fanciful story that rambles a bit, Fred meets a fireman, an owlet, the mayor, a horse, a bear, etc. The characters climb on the sled, get off, quarrel. “How did it work out without snow,” Fred’s mother asks when he comes home. “It worked just fine,” he answers, with a small secret smile.


Cumulation in the text and the nonsense-plot are the appealing elements in a slight book for young children who are ready to read. For most of the story, all words begin with the letter “b” and even at the close there are few others. The drawings, in cartoon style, show “Big brown bear, blue bull, beautiful baboon blowing bubbles biking backward, bump black bug's banana boxes and Billy Bunny's breadbasket...” ending with “and that's what broke Baby Bird's balloon.” Since Baby Bird has had no part in the story, this adds a note of urgent contrivance to a tale not distinguished for its restraint.

Bernheim, Marc. *The Drums Speak; The Story of Kofi, a Boy of West Africa*; written and photographed by Marc and Evelyne Bernheim. Harcourt, 1972. 44p. $4.50.

Kofi was chosen as the first boy from his group of villages to attend the city high school, but his pride in this was shadowed by his apprehension about the tribe's coming-of-age test: climbing a tall palm. Kofi feared heights. Overcoming his fear brought Kofi a rich reward: for his courage in climbing as well as for his academic...
prowess, he was chosen as the new tribal chief, to take office when his education was completed. The full-color photographs are handsome, but some of the pictures have little relevance, and the consequent textual references are no more pertinent. The text is adequately written, but the book's real weakness is that it is neither quite a story (too padded with cultural details) nor is it a documentary (too interrupted by plot) yet is both informative and attractive.


Old Testament stories are in the first and part of the second volume, New Testament stories in the remainder of the set. The adaptations are faithful to the Biblical version in essence, but are banal in style, with none of the poetic quality preserved. Somebody tells Mary that she and Joseph “will make a lovely couple,” and the adapter comments, “Not everyone would want a bride who was going to have a baby.” The books are profusely illustrated, and the pictures—like the text—are pedestrian. While children may learn the facts about Biblical characters and events, and the set can be used as a source for telling Bible stories, it would seem a pity to deprive young readers of the sonority and flow that are in other and better adaptations as well as in the Bible itself.


Mile 18 is a real place, a little, remote Mennonite community in Canada, and Mary was a real child, one of the students in the Mile 18 school where the author taught. While the book has a fairly patterned plot (Father refuses to let Mary keep a half-wolf cub until it gives warning of a coyote) the story’s major appeal is in the picture it gives of the hardworking, almost self-sufficient lives of the families of Mile 18 and of the frigid and beautiful country in which they live. The paintings have a primitive sturdiness and naive charm that is reminiscent of the work of Grandma Moses.


Cartoon style pictures, simply composed and static, illustrate a book that does not tell a story, but describes a series of places dogs don’t belong, and some suggestions for where they do belong. The former catalog the contents that are appropriate, so that a minimal value of the book is that a child can get some concept of groupings or even add to them. An over-extended situation, but small children, especially owners of dogs, may enjoy the listings despite the flatness of the writing.


A history that is divided into large areas of interest: political life, minority groups and immigration, the frontier, the literary world, American imperialism et cetera. While the technique does not give a cohesive sequential picture, it does present a series of clear views, detailed and objective, occasionally analytical. It is particularly valuable for the inclusion of more material about cultural affairs than is commonly found in young people’s books of American history. The style is direct and serious. A fairly lengthy and mature reading list and an index are appended.

The story of the piper whose revenge for a broken promise resulted in the disappearance of the children of Hamelin is delightfully illustrated by Walter Hodges. His full-color pictures are rich and authentic in detail, the faces varied and the composition dramatic; many of the illustrations bubble with humor and most of them are scenes of action.


Lively illustrations in ink and water color have both delicacy of detail and broad humor that supplements the more bland humor of the story. Together with his hounds and his very young wife, a man sets off on a hunting trip. “Grass finches, I’ll shoot six of them,” he says, and his wife says she’ll bake them in a pie—but why waste bullets on little birds? Four mourning doves, he suggests; two squirrels, she counters. Meanwhile the dogs are industriously pointing at a tiny insect, or chasing a skunk. Finally the young wife talks her husband out of shooting a deer, and they go home to a supper of eggs, milk, biscuits, and spreads. Sitting before the fire, the wife says happily, “Oh, Husband, what fun it is to go hunting!” The humor is clear but not pushed, and the theme of sparing animals’ lives is handled so lightly as to be painlessly effective. A merry tale, and nicely told.


Closeup and magnified photographs show the flora and fauna that can be seen on a meadow walk, most of the pictures informative as well as attractive. The author suggests some modest experiments, with such instruments as a thermometer or a compass required. The continuous text moves from topic to topic, sometimes abruptly, closing with a brief description of the plant-animal life cycle. A “Leader’s Guide” for the book is included, suggesting more complex experiments or other aspects of meadow life.


He was quiet, this unusual boy, so quiet that “the echoes that dozed in all the rooms never stirred when he went about.” He played alone. He could hear the animals talk and the grass shiver when a wind blew, and he heard the trees moan with cold. He met an old, old man who was Wind, king of the year; on the morning of the first frost the boy met the old man’s sons, the seasons (3 of the four with luxurious moustaches) and watched the season change to winter. While following the king and the winter prince, the boy met another boy and a girl, but he ran away. When spring came, however, he played with them. He learned to play and be noisy but he never forgot how to come up quietly. Pedestrian illustrations have the same colorless quality as does the text, for a story that has neither focus, humor, or grace of style to compensate for its weak story line and flat ending. An unsuccessful fantasy.


Jeff and Amy have been delegated to do the shopping for a class party, and as
they tour the market they learn many facts about how food is shipped, processed, marked, and priced. They also are given some helpful advice about careful shopping habits. In the course of their shopping they learn, also, sundry facts about the operation of a large chain grocery store. Useful, business-like, and sensible, the book is less contrived than many of the let’s go--let’s visit--let’s yawn books.


Five short stories, all fanciful and most of them with animal characters, are adequately told and illustrated, but are not outstanding. Although neither the title page nor the cover of the book so states, three of the five stories are by the late Henry Beston, husband of Elizabeth Coatsworth; curiously, this information is given in jacket copy only. “The Journey,” by Coatsworth, is the story of a skunk that helps an eel start its migration to the Sargasso Sea; her other tale is about a conceited porcupine. Henry Beston’s stories describe the travels of a curious tree, the wooden housekeeper carved so realistically by a toymaker that she came to life and cooked his meals, and the origin of snow, found by a small boy to be paper snowflakes cut by bears. The stories are minimally useful because of their brevity, but they are not distinguished for style, conception, or plot.

Cole, Joanna. Twins; The Story of Multiple Births; written by Joanna Cole and Madeleine Edmondson; illus. by Salvatore Raciti and with photographs. Morrow, 1972. 64p. Trade ed. $3.75; Library ed. $3.56 net.

The subject is one that intrigues most children, and this gives many facts about twins, although in explaining identical twins, there is no mention of chromosomes, only “For some reason the cell, instead of forming one infant, splits into two separate parts...” Most of the book is devoted to a discussion of attitudes toward twins and the similarities and differences scientists have found in examining fraternal and identical twins and in the respective influences of heredity and environment in their lives. The book is illustrated with awkward drawings and many photographs of twins and of supertwins. A one-page index is appended.


An oversize book, profusely illustrated with diagrams and photographs, with several sections of color photographs to which there is an alphabetical index. The entries are written by professional people: breeders, trainers, judges, kennel club directors, and veterinarians, and are full and informative. Each breed is shown in a picture, the entries give cross-references, and words that are used as entries are capitalized when referred to elsewhere. Most of the entries give descriptions (and desirable attributes) of breeds, but there are many entries that give facts about dog care, training, disease, feeding, physiology, etc. The entry for “Rare Breeds” includes four pages of photographs that show some breeds not specifically cited in the entry and for which there is no separate entry—but this is a minor flaw in a very handsome and useful book.

Dodge, Bertha Sanford. Big is So Big; illus. by Ben F. Stahl. Coward, 1972. 47p. $3.49.

Although the text begins here with a discussion of “big” as a relative term, this is really a book about measurement rather than size. Tom, eager to see how big he has to be before he is as tall as his father, measures himself against a wall and calls that
unit a "tom." His father explains why a standard unit is preferable to one conceived independently, and shows Tom how to estimate area and volume. The clear illustrations and the lucid writing make this one of the best books on measurement for the primary grades reader.


Photographs show a middle-class Puerto Rican family (comfortable home, good clothes, father a cellist, Leonora an only child) who lead a happy, busy life. In a trip to the beach, a marketing expedition, some classroom scenes, and particularly a gathering of father's brothers—a classical quintet—in the substantial home of their father, Leonora's grandfather, it is clear that Leonora's world is rather like that of any child whose parents live in a city, have cultural interests, and are in comfortable financial circumstances. The photographs—and to a lesser extent, the text—give some interesting glimpses of a beautiful city, but the book reveals little that is unusual. Perhaps its greatest contribution is to show white children the richness and solidity of a culture that has black, Indian, and Spanish roots.

Faber, Doris. *Oh, Lizzie! The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.* Lothrop, 1972. 159p. Trade ed. $4.95; Library ed. $4.59 net.

A capably written biography of one of the early fighters for women's rights, this is also almost a history of the struggle for feminine suffrage in this country, since Elizabeth Stanton's friends and colleagues were Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, and other pioneers. The treatment is balanced, the viewpoint objective, the characterization adequate; the strength of the book is in the solid research that provides a firm base for the convincing picture of a historical period, and its weakness is a recurrent fictionalization of small details. On the whole, both interesting and useful. A list of books suggested for further reading, and an index are appended.


Paintings in dark blue and green incorporate authentic details of costume in attractive illustrations for an unpagged text. The style of writing is direct and simple, and the material is well-organized, but the text occasionally moves abruptly from one subject to another: "This was because art, in Egypt, had to follow the unchanging ceremonies of the ancient Egyptian religion. The valley of the Nile became great under the Pharaohs of the Old Kingdom." On the whole, the book is lucidly written and is as cohesive as a book can be that covers so long a period of man's history; it makes very clear the growing complexity of a civilization in which new institutions, laws, and inventions emerge to meet changing needs.


A sober and sobering review of the years 1917-1920, in which the persecution of those who were "different" and therefore suspect: aliens, radicals, blacks, pacifists, labor leaders, etc. reached new heights in the United States. From President Wilson's espousal of the war and the propaganda machine of the Committee on Public Information to the hysteria of the Palmer Raids, the book speaks not only in...
condemnation of the particular excesses it describes but also speaks to the danger in any period of the abridgement or negation of the democratic process, and of the civil liberties to which aliens as well as citizens are entitled. A bibliography and an index are appended.


In the two earlier books to which this is a sequel, John described the usually-mercenary exploits of his older brother T.D., the Great Brain. Now T.D. has gone away to school, and John tries to live up to his brother's standards for wheeling and dealing—but he just doesn't have the knack. That John has a brain and can use it is shown beyond question when he outwits a dangerous criminal who has taken a small child (orphaned, and adopted by John's family) as hostage. Lively, funny, and at times tender, the story of a boyhood in a small Mormon town at the turn of the century is full of action.


Endpaper maps show the areas from which the nineteen stories, non-Russian tales from Russia, in this collection came; their sources are a dozen cultures with mixed heritage. Some of the tales are heroic, some earthy, some explanatory ("Living Water," for example, is a "why" story) and many have a robust, sly peasant humor. The style of the retelling is smooth and flavorful, so that the book is as useful and enjoyable for reading aloud as it is for storytelling.


The story of a poor Polish-Jewish family in the late nineteenth century is illustrated by the lovely drawings of Symeon Shimin. Here there is a sad, brooding quality that reflects the mood of the text and very probably will limit the book's appeal to young readers. So poor that they have only one pair of shoes, Avram's family must share them. Jacob, who is almost ready for the rites of manhood, feels the shoes should belong to him and very grudgingly consents to let his small sister use them when she goes on an errand into town. When little Dubbie comes back with a fractured ankle and a high temperature, Jacob sells the shoes rather than sacrifice his mother's beloved samovar, which she had given him to sell so that there would be money for the doctor. Then father, a withdrawn and crippled scholar, decides that he will sell three of his holy books so that each of his children may have a pair of shoes. Were it not so tender and dignified, this would come perilously close to being a Victorian tear-jerker; it is, however, written with quiet restraint.


Separated from his platoon, an American soldier is alone and frightened when he meets four Vietnamese children, the only survivors of a raid, who are even more frightened than he. They cannot talk to each other, but—warily at first—they begin to communicate, drawn by their loneliness, their fear, and their need for mutual help. One of the children retains some hostility, one becomes fond of him. But it is all the same in the end: the real enemy is the war, and all of them are killed. The story moves deftly from the viewpoint of Harry, the American, to that of Mi and the other Vietnamese children, impartial in its poignancy.
Higdon, Hal. *Champions of the Tennis Court*; illus. with photographs. Prentice-Hall, 1971. 60p. $3.95.

Ten brief sketches of the careers of outstanding tennis players of this century include some biographical information and some game sequences, usually those of the game in which the player won his or her first important title, and usually the game that marked the turning point in the player’s career. Photographs are included, and the book begins with an introduction that gives the history of the game’s evolution and describes its rules. The treatment is brisk, coverage superficial, and writing style informal; despite the brevity and the fact that many tennis champions are omitted, the book should appeal to tennis fans. A good glossary—both full and clear—is appended.

Holland, Viki. *We Are Having a Baby*; written and photographed by Viki Holland. Scribner, 1972. 60p. $5.50.

Photographs of four-year-old Dana and her family accompany the first-person text, as Dana describes looking forward to seeing the baby that had been growing inside her mother, and then to the adjustment of having a little brother at home. The hospital sequence is incorporated by virtue of having Dana describe what happened—as shown in the pictures Daddy had taken for her. There are a few points at which confusion may arise: for example, the text reads, “Here comes the baby!” after some labor room scenes—and the photograph shows the newborn child in a glass container. The dethronement Dana feels, after the baby is home, is alleviated by attention from Daddy, with the expectable ending: Dana cuddling the baby and saying, “He’s my brother.” Since all of the other photographs and text are sequential (if occasionally repetitive) and factual, it may also confuse children when unhappy Dana, not recognizing her emotion as jealousy, says she wants “something”—maybe she’ll dance, maybe her friend will come, etc.—and the photographs show her suddenly dressed in different clothes and engaged in other activities.


Australian teachers who specialize in Chinese studies, the Hunters have assembled a range of material from the Chinese, from an ancient cautionary tale and selections from a favorite contemporary play to speeches, transcriptions of broadcasts, and official statement. The selections are imbued, of course, with the fervor of communist ideology and adoration of Mao; they also give a very vivid picture of China today (there is only a little historical material) and of the tenacious zeal of its citizens. Each selection is prefaced by editorial comment that gives background. A chronology of Chinese history, a list of suggestions for further reading, and an index are appended.


Tyrone and his younger sisters were delighted with the cat that Dad had brought home, but Mom was far from pleased—especially when the cat scratched the furniture and ruined her stockings. However, when a mouse appeared, Mom changed her mind about having the cat in the house and was anxious to have it as close to her as possible. Although this gives a candid and rather cheerful picture of a black family, it is weakened by the change-of-heart-about-an-animal-that-has-proved-itself formula plot, and by a tendency to stereotype: Mom is afraid of mice, is superstitious, and attends the House of Occult Help; and the twins’ voracious appetites are overstressed.

Light, amusing, and affectionate, another story about Johnny Lion (a cub who might almost be a small boy) and the small activities that make a child's life interesting. Like rain, staying out of—or rain, playing in. Johnny's efforts at amusing himself on a rainy day are described in a simple, moderately repetitive text that is intended for the beginning independent reader but can also be used for reading aloud to preschool children. Johnny's indoor cavortings have just about run dry when Father Lion appears with a pair of red rubber boots and our hero goes off to face the elements with great joy.


Seventeen poems about animals are included in a collection profusely illustrated by lively drawings. The poems are quite pedestrian, bland and simple, perhaps best used with the child who loves animals and needs to be led gently to poetry, since these poems will not tax him. The poems are untitled; one short example is "there were all these turtles/ and this big/ sheep dog/ and we all drank milkshakes/ and ate hamburgers/ together."


Written by one of the great tennis players of our time, this junior novel has authoritative, realistic, and exciting game sequences. The story is simple in plot with little characterization save for the protagonist (good but not deep) and her father (very good). Vicky at thirteen is a natural athlete, and she quickly picks up the fine points of tennis when she is spotted by a member of a Tennis Association and given lessons. The book has a triple theme: Vicky's victories, her father's domination of her life and career, and the love interest between her father, a widower, and a young woman who moves in tennis circles. The writing style is far from outstanding, but it is adequate.


Miss Darling, owner of the large and amiable sheepdog, Humphrey, decides to move into a New York apartment that is being sublet for the winter, so that she can be comfortable while her house is being repaired. She becomes interested in her new neighbors, and Humphrey helps attract attention to one of them, a would-be young actress who has taken the dog out for a walk—and again for an audition. Everybody's happy, and when Miss Darling moves back to Upper Burrditch, her New York landlady and daughter come to visit and all the neighbors have a party. Pleasant enough in tone, this is weak in two ways: no story line, just a series of incidents, and very little to do with Humphrey, actually. The dog is used as an ornament to what is basically a short story about an adult who moves from one environment to another and who finds advantages in each.


Photographs of each model of the experimental cars described in the text are correlated carefully with descriptions. Save for the brief introduction to the topic of X-cars and the closing section on pollution (the problems, the experimental cars...
using other kinds of fuel, the possibility of private automobiles being banned from city streets) the text is wholly devoted to discussions of models. Only the impassioned car buff is liable to agree with the surfeit of laudatory adjectives: "stunning . . . beautiful . . . the spirited beast . . . lean and powerful-looking . . ." and so on. The final section describes the automobile industry’s research and experiment; it does not make clear the resistance encountered by the proponents of such legislation as the Muskie Bill, which proposes a six-year period by the end of which engines must be made 90% clean. An index is appended.


Soft illustrations, authentic in mood and detail, complement nicely the retelling of a romantic folktale that embodies the virtue of kindness and the redeeming power of love. The concept of the creature-child who later gains human form is a familiar one in folklore; in this variant, a childless couple is granted a snail son by the water god to whom they have prayed. Twenty years later, the snail looks just the same but he talks in the voice of a young man and is able to help his old father. A rich man is so impressed he wants the snail for a son-in-law, and his tender younger daughter (isn’t there ever a gentle older daughter and a mean younger?) weds the mud snail, coming to love him so deeply that he becomes a normal young man. Nicely told, a story that reads aloud well.


Sent to the "punish bench" for kicking a girl who had hit her first, Jennifer muses about how she would run the school. Everybody could stretch, and talk in the library, and pour sand in their hair outdoors, and the girls could play on the boys’ teams, and there would be a parade through the school halls and then a party in the principal’s (Jennifer’s) office. “Then at three o’clock Jennifer would rise, distribute bubble gum to all, and dismiss them for the day.” There is some fun in the idea of a permanent, permissive play time, but there is no story here. Jennifer is a launching pad for an idea, not a central character, and the idea is overextended.


A companion volume to the Elsosfon book reviewed above, this shows the contrast between the comfortable life of a well-to-do San Juan family (in the first book) and of a Puerto Rican family that has come to New York (in this, the second book) to live in the East Harlem neighborhood known as “El Barrio.” If the book is meant as contrast, it might better have shown a factory worker with five children in Puerto Rico; if it is meant simply as a photo-documentary of how Puerto Ricans live in New York, it glosses over some real problems. The apartment is crowded, but Henry’s parents cope; the children are beautifully dressed as they set out for church; Henry and his friend are shown around the local police station by a patrolman who invites them to come back and bring their friends; Mr. Colon has to travel two hours to get to work, but he has a job good enough to support his family. Not unusual either in the information it gives or in the quality of the photographs, this is valuable chiefly for the picture it gives of a family who are poor in other ways but suffer no lack of affection, self-confidence, and pride.

First published in England, an excellent selection of rhymes, with diagrams for the finger plays. The material is divided into categories that are related to the interests and activities of very young children: rhymes and songs about toys, about animals, about things seen in town or on the farm; games to play with feet, number songs, singing and dancing games, etc. Directions for playing games are given in italics, and the musical notation gives the melodic line for songs. A first-line index is appended.


Scrub of the litter, the pup had been chased off by Jackson, its owner, and was saved by Dave Martin and his parents. Fed and loved, Scrub grew into a handsome dog, and Jackson insisted on having his property back, to Dave's dismay, for he knew that the surly Jackson would not treat his pet well. Dave is orphaned and goes to an uncle's, where he finds his aunt prejudiced (Dave's half Indian) and his cousin hostile. Scrub, meanwhile, has been winning races for Jackson, but loses one when he hears David's voice and careens toward him. The story ends with Jackson outwitted, Scrub and David united, and David ready to be a working partner of a wise and kindly family friend. The writing style is competent, the values sound, and the boy-dog theme has appeal, but the plot is patterned and predictable.


Everything in her family's life had to be exactly right—on the surface—but Lia knew that her father was disinterested, her mother taking refuge in tranquilizers and solitude, and she and her brother as alone as if they lived separately. So, when she found Sue-Ellen in the woods one day, as lonely as she, their friendship seemed inevitable. A country child, living alone with her grandmother in a bare, ramshackle house, Sue Ellen was a secret that Lia kept, knowing that her mother would disapprove, knowing Sue-Ellen was too dear to give up. When Sue-Ellen comes to the big house one day and Lia denies knowing her, the situation comes to a decision-point. Immediately filled with regret and shame for the denial of her friend, Lia rushes away from home and, forgiven by Sue Ellen, takes refuge in her home. Hours later Lia's stern father comes, is surprised by his daughter's vehemence and shocked into the realization that she understands and resents the home situation. The story is not quite convincing in its ending, and the style is rather stiff, but the picture of two lonely children finding solace in each other is believable and moving.


A story set in Mexico two hundred years ago. Topo-el-Bampo was a mountain village in which even the mayor was poor, so poor he sold the two family burros to the silver miners. Well-fed but overworked, the two burros were destined for quick death after their last trip, the journey of the pack train to the coast, where the bars of silver would be shipped to the King of Spain. Attacked by bandits, the treasure train was broken up, and the two donkeys of Topo-el-Bampo trudged home, delighting the mayor's children and making the town wealthy. The style is sprightly, the illustrations attractive, and the story of historical interest; the picture of the poverty-stricken peasants and the conditions of mining are smoothly enough presented. The story is somewhat overburdened, however, by the convenience of the bandit-incident and the detailed account of the mayor's family, a beginning that
Paterson, A. B. *Waltzing Matilda*; illus. by Desmond Digby. Holt, 1972. 32p. Trade ed. $5.95; Library ed. $5.59 net.

The familiar words of the song, "Waltzing Matilda," were written years ago to the tune of an old English marching song; here they are illustrated with charming paintings in a picture book version first published in Australia in 1970 and designated there as the picture book of the year. Soft, vivid, and touched with humor, the pictures give a colorful impression of the old rascal who stuffed the jumbuck (sheep) in his bag and went off waltzing Matilda (carrying his swag, or pack), was pursued, jumped into the water-hole, and was drowned. A glossary is appended.


An oversize book with stylized illustrations, some in full color, that are busy with detail; some of the translated tales are as well-known as "Cinderella," "The Sleeping Beauty," "Tom Thumb," and "Little Red Riding Hood," although a few ("Donkey Skin") are less popular. The translations and retellings of this complete collection of Perrault's tales are adequate, although occasionally an explanatory remark seems obtrusive. A "moral" in verse concludes each tale.


A competent and informative book that gives historical background for the Revolution and describes the personalities in power and the course of events in Russia through the 1960s. This is not as smoothly written as Salisbury's *Russia* nor as detailed as Habberton's *Russia*, both of which were published in 1965, but it gives, in a brief final chapter entitled "Russia Today" some information about events since that year. A short list of books suggested for further reading and an index are appended.


Clear, bright colors and clean drawing make the illustrations as simple and lucid as the text, told in first person by a small boy who is riding with his mother on the thruway. The child describes the separation strip that keeps vehicles that are moving in opposite directions apart, traffic lanes, passing, a cloverleaf, a drawbridge, a tollbooth on a bridge, leaving at the right exit, and then—"we were there," the text ends, and the picture shows a zoo entrance. While the fictional framework is so slight as to seem unnecessary, the book should reinforce the recognition of facts and terms in highway travel for the pre-school child.

Ross, Laura. *Finger Puppets; Easy to Make, Fun to Use*; illus. by Laura and Frank Ross. Lothrop, 1971. 64p. Trade ed. $3.95; Library ed. $3.78 net.

Like many craft books, this can be used by adults to entertain children or by children themselves, and many of the puppets and puppet plays can be managed by very small children with assistance. There are several kinds of finger puppets: paint on the hand itself, bare fingers used in games, shadow figures made by fingers and hands, and fingers clad in various degrees of intricacy of costume. Several games
and plays are given in full, as well as instructions for manipulating finger puppets and making costumes. A list of books and rhymes for finger puppets is appended.

Samachson, Dorothy. *The Russian Ballet; And Three of Its Masterpieces*; by Dorothy and Joseph Samachson. Lothrop, 1971. 159p. illus. Trade ed. $4.95; Library ed. $4.59 net.

A good history of the ballet in Russia, including the establishment of ballet schools and the roles of composer, director, and choreographer. The emphasis is on the past, although there is some discussion of contemporary ballet in Russia. The book concludes with detailed discussions (and plot synopses) of three Tchaikovsky ballets; only one (Swan Lake) is mentioned in the chapter devoted to the composer whose music gave the art form new depth. The book has less material about individual dancers than do most books on ballet, the emphasis being on training, the types of ballet that have become popular, and some of the characteristics of Russian ballet. The writing is dignified and direct, the drawings and photographs enticing for the balletomane. A glossary of terms, a list of great ballets of the past, a brief list of Soviet ballets (with literary origins and composer) and an index are appended.


The story of Anna’s stay with her friend Rosalind has humor, action, and vitality in writing; it is amusing, but it isn’t quite convincing. Having picked up the wrong suitcase at the airport, Anna discovers an alarming and mysterious note that begins, “Get rid of Miss P.P.T. as best you can destroy her if necessary.” The endeavors of the girls to track down the author of the note, his intended victim, and his motive might be tedious were it not for the alleviation of sprightly style and—when it is between the two girls—a relationship that rings true in narration and dialogue.


The dramatic nature of the material compensates for a dry writing style in a brisk overview of highlights of the conquests of space by man and his inventions. The text begins with the thirteenth-century rockets of the Chinese and moves, topic by topic, from “First Mention of Space Travel” by Konstantin Tsiolkovsky in 1898, a paper published five years later, to “First Men on the Moon.” Jules Verne is not mentioned. The few pages devoted to achievements before the 20th century are superficial in treatment, but the descriptions of modern rockets, spacecraft, satellites, manned flights, docking, landing, and orbiting combine to give a fairly comprehensive picture of famous firsts in space although it is all familiar material. An index is appended.


A comprehensive and informative survey of living rodents, with descriptions of the different species preceded by some general facts about distinguishing characteristics. Most of the animals described can be found in the United States, although European and other rodents are mentioned, with a special section on those of South America. A final section discusses rodent pets: hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, and pocket mice; an index is appended. The illustrations are attractive although not always clear enough for purposes of identification; the text is authoritative, brisk, and well-organized.

Careful coordination of text and illustration make this an exemplary home demonstration book. The author uses the process approach, suggesting variations on the airplane and asking the reader to consider why a certain effect is obtained, or which change is most effective for a desired result. The book does, of course, show the reader how to make paper airplanes, but it is really used (and very deftly) to discuss what makes a real airplane fly, and how the various parts of a plane contribute to or affect its flight.

Solbert, Ronni. *I Wrote My Name on the Wall*; text and photographs by Ronni Solbert. Little, 1971. 72p. $5.95.

Although the photographs of a heterogeneous group of New York slum children are varied and sensitive, they give a fragmented effect, since each picture, with its accompanying first-person text, is about a different child. "Hold it. Don't shoot now. Wait for him to come out... We seen em, Papo, too. They cut through the schoolyard and beat it up the street... Loretta, she make that wheel fly up an twirl around an come on back to her. How she do that?" The pictures make it possible to tell that different children are speaking, but the lack of focus robs this documentary of impact, and the text-captions do not always speak convincingly in childlike fashion. Certainly an accurate collage of ghetto life, especially in the photographs, the book as a photo-documentary lacks impact.


First published in England, a fanciful story by a writer of popular adult novels. The writing style is excellent, the details inventive, the plot the weakest part of the story—full of action, much of which seems padded. Lonely on a visit to an elderly great-aunt, Mary is intrigued by the small black cat that appears and makes friendly overtures. He leads her to a strange flower—the flower's juice on her hands activates a broom—and off Mary goes, delivered to the door of a school for witches. She then discovers that the headmistress is conducting cruel animal experiments; with the help of a book of spells conveniently at hand she rescues the beasts including her own cat; she flies home, pursued by the wicked witch, and is saved by the animals she has rescued.


An analysis of eleven businesses: bowling center, drugstore, ski area, general aviation airport, restaurant, summer camp, supermarket, television station, photography studio, department store, and police precinct house. The author discusses procedures, problems, finances, physical arrangement, and the policies each establishment has in its relation to the public. The topics are treated in separate chapters, each of which gives an adequate amount of information in a brisk, rather dry style, with an occasional discussion of a facet that seems ancillary: for example, in the chapter that describes the way a department store is run, there is over a page devoted to a clerk's method of effecting a shoe sale despite customer resistance. The text is printed in two columns. A divided bibliography and an index are appended.

Writings about and by the Vietnamese, chiefly the latter, give a collage of impressions of Vietnam. The voices come from both north and south; they range from magazine articles on popular subjects to official government correspondence. Much of the material is historical, and a substantial portion of the book is devoted to poetry, both traditional poetry and contemporary protest. A brief, pithy editorial comment precedes each selection, and the book is, in balance, objective as well as informative. A short list of suggestions for further reading and an index are appended.


Objective in tone, candid in approach, and written with authoritative informality, Syme's biography of the Haitian leader is both informative and interesting reading. Born a slave, Toussaint was given his freedom, when he was thirty-four, by a master grateful for the competence and industry that had so improved his estate. Toussaint took no part in the 1970 revolt against the planters, but in the next year he became active in the struggle against white domination and, in the civil war between blacks and mulattoes, quickly rose to a position of leadership. When the French and English signed a treaty that ended their war, Napoleon was free to concentrate on Haiti, and he was determined to get revenge against Toussaint and to restore slavery to the island. Imprisoned in an Alpine fortress, Toussaint died.


One of a series of stories about Felipe, a ten-year-old boy whose parents, migrant workers, have come to Illinois. Felipe and his friends play baseball after school; one day they leave the camp (forbidden) to play ball in an empty lot and break a window in the house next door. The boys run, but the migrants' leader finds them and makes them pay. Felipe's father repairs the window, Felipe acting as translator. The woman's granddaughter, who is in Felipe's class at school, is sent indoors when she talks to Felipe. This story is an odd mixture of flat style and unresolved action with some valuable facets. For one thing, it is not often that a story about migrant workers has so little to say about the generally deplorable circumstances in which they live and work; here there is evidence of prejudice (the boys must not play outside camp grounds, the homeowner is hostile) but no evidence of basic inequity. The story is written in pedestrian style, but it does remind readers that migrant children have the same interests as other children and that there are differences among them. The story ends with the window fixed (i.e. Felipe's father is both responsible and capable) and then it abruptly tails off—an incident rather than a plot.


A solid and well-researched biography of the versatile astronomer, mathematician, and architect whose fame today rests primarily on his imposing London buildings, particularly the churches, and most particularly St. Paul's Cathedral. Although Wren's life was lived against a turbulent background of civil war, fire and plague in London, restoration of the monarchy, and a succession of kings and queens, each with a different plan for Sir Christopher Wren to execute, his personal...
life was placid and his interest in his projects so consuming that his career was little affected. An impressive subject, but not an exciting one; Wren's biography is also more imposing than stimulating, but it is smoothly written and historically interesting. A chronological table, a list of sources, an index, and a catalogue of devices exhibited by Wren at Wadham College are appended.


A selection of folk tales, legends, and pithy sayings is illustrated in traditional Chinese style. The material is varied, selected from many sources, and told in a fluid style that lends itself to reading aloud or as a source for storytelling. Some of the tales have historical bases ("The Borrowing of 1,000,000 Arrows" is about a Chinese general, and "Gift of the Unicorn" is the legendary story of Confucius' birth) but most are concerned with magic and folk-wisdom.

Young, Miriam. *If I Drove a Train*; illus. by Robert Quackenbush. Lothrop, 1972. 32p. Trade ed. $3.95; Library ed. $3.78 net.

In the same format as other "If I Drove (Sailed, Flew). . . ." books, this is in first person, with the speaker cataloging the joys of different kinds of vehicles. This has a little less variety than some of the other books, bringing in a hand car and the railroad yard control tower as variants, and concluding with the choice of a freight train as the favorite. The text rhymes at the beginning and ending of the book, a device that seems forced. The allure of vehicles is perennial, and small children respond to the appeal of taking command of the situation, but this book lacks the bravado, dreams-of-glory quality that made *If I Flew a Plane*, for example, amusing as well as informative.
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