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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


Well, it's like this: a lighthouse keeper who is repentant moorcusser (wrecker-of-ships by intent) lives with his blind wife, the ghost of his brother (whose ship he had unknowingly scuttled), and a spirit, Caliban, imprisoned in the watery depths and guarding a book that holds the key to all knowledge. Also there's a sweet nineteen-year-old daughter who father is prepared -at gunpoint- to keep from returning to the lighthouse; also there are a wealthy criminal and his three stooges. Also a talking bird. That's the cast. The plot? Involved. All of this may sound impossible, and it certainly seems to call for professional production, with all its special effects. But Joan Aiken has a flair, and the nonsensical pastiche has some broadly comic scenes, along with some parodies of Shakespeare's songs that are very funny for those who recognize them. The story ends with grumpy Dad relegated to the cave, daughter taking off for a career in ballet, and the other characters—now lively ghosts—staying in the lighthouse to keep Mum company.


With his usual clarity and logic, Asimov explains the ways in which number systems evolved, always distinguishing between fact and conjecture. What gives the book particular value is the lucid discussion of the problems inherent in the early systems, a discussion that deftly develops a theory of numbers, so that a reader might move on very easily to an understanding of the binary system (for example) which this does not cover. The explanation of the Roman system is clear and concise, and the text is given added interest by such bits of historical material as the stages by which the western world came to adopt the Hindu method which had been adopted by the Arab world and is still called the Arabic system. An index is appended.


Photographs of a young student of the dance, intent and self-possessed, are backed by swirling designs and accompany a poetic text. "Sometimes I dance mountains," the dancer begins, and goes on to describe the things, the emotions, the free-flowing concepts that she dances. The pictures are attractive and the text conveys the limitless creativity of modern dance, but the book may have a limited appeal to young readers who are not interested in the dance; to them the book may seem repetitive and closely-focused, while the adult may have an appreciation of the beauty of the pictured child.
Barbara Cooney’s delicate illustrations that include some humorous comment almost save the day for this repetitive nursery tale, but not quite—it’s too monotone in quality. Seven little rabbits are walking down a road to call on old friend toad; one by one, they tire and go down into a mole’s den to sleep. The pattern is a long two-page repeat, with little action or climax; at the end, the last little rabbit dreams that there were “Seven little rabbits...” et cetera, a reprise that is the only hint of variation.


First published in Denmark in 1970 under the title Søfolket, a family story written in episodic style comprises the small adventures of the children in the house at the lake and of Peter and his friend, who are camping out on an island nearby. The writing is breezy and humorous, the characters lively although not drawn with any depth, and the family relationships strong.

Blake, Quentin. Snuff; written and illus. by Quentin Blake. Lippincott, 1973. 30p. $4.95.

A regular contributor to Punch, Blake draws with the same effect of casual ebullience as Harold Berson—the flowing line and the comic touch that is never overstated. His story has a medieval setting and rafflish characters that are a good foil for the matter-of-fact tone of the text. Snuff is a most inept page who can’t seem to master any of the skills that will be required when he graduates to knighthood. He can’t even catch on to How to Hold a Sword, let alone Sword Fights. But Snuff has a brain, and he uses it to foil some robbers and help Sir Thomas, whom he serves as page, so a beaming Snuff finally hears his liege announce, “I can see that you’re going to be a first-rate knight after all!” Light style, a light and merry plot.


As a subject for biography, Pearl Buck would be fascinating either for the role she played as a fine and prolific writer, as a humanitarian, or as a person whose life in China was filled with color and drama. Therefore any book about her would be interesting; her biographer here has woven the facts of her life into a book that also truly conveys the warmth and vitality of her personality. There is some discussion of Buck’s major works, but the strength of this smoothly-written and balanced biography is in the picture of the development of a forceful and passionate fighter for justice from the small daughter of American missionaries in a China that was a beloved home for the first half of Pearl Buck’s long life. A selective reading list and an index are appended.

Blue, Rose. We Are Chicano; illus. by Bob Alcorn. Watts. 1973. 58p. $4.95.

Carlos is twelve and convinced that his stepfather does not care for him as he does for Senina and Luis, his own children. Carlos doesn’t want to get into a gang, but he resents the fact that his mother and stepfather forbid him to go to a school basketball game because of the danger of gang warfare. He runs away, is convinced by his host, a teacher of Chicano migrants, to go home and finds that Papa is indeed loving and worried. The plot is not highly original but is solid enough; the writing style is adequate, the characterization shallow; the message is that each person fights for the right in his own way; the story is burdened by its purposiveness: well meant, but more a vehicle for information about Chicanos than anything else.

Piquant pictures of children and animals add zest to a playful story for beginning independent readers. Homer’s four older sisters don’t want to play with him, so he meanders about asking animals to play. There’s a little of the “Who’s-on-first” routine humor in the dialogue, as Homer asks Duck, for example, to play. “What game,” Duck asks. “Anything,” says Homer. “I don’t know that game,” Duck says as he swims off. Finally Bear responds to Homer’s query about a game called Piggle: triggle, miggle, biggle, diggle. . . and they’re off on a rhyming spree with nonsense words that are just the kind children make up and should enjoy reading. Light-hearted and nicely gauged for the primary audience, the story is, despite the easy vocabulary, not too stilted—as many books for beginning readers are—to read aloud to preschool children.


Prefaced by a hasty peek at the past, Bova’s text describes the ways in which man has—deliberately or accidently—changed his world’s atmosphere; some of the book discusses such planned activity as rainmaking, some the efforts to control violent phenomena of weather, and some (a considerable portion) to pollution. The final chapter poses the need for international weather control and the problems it might entail. Appended material includes a list of government weather modification programs and an index. The writing style is brisk and informal, the organization of material logical, and the information authoritative and interesting. This book pairs nicely with the author’s fictional *The Weathermakers*.


In his usual capable fashion, an eminent astronomer explains the phenomenon of the total solar eclipse, defining terminology and explaining why it is possible for the moon to obscure the larger sun. There’s some discussion of the effect of the eclipse on animals and on the people of ancient times, and a home demonstration project that will enable the reader to see the image of the eclipse in safety. Succinct, lucid, and authoritative, the text is attractively illustrated.


Seventh in the series of picture books about a small and friendly ghost, this takes Georgie and his friends to the Southwest. The Whittakers have built a little house with a very handy attic on their car, so Georgie, Miss Oliver the owl, and Herman the cat go along on the trip. When a band of horse thieves preys on an Indian community, the three animals are instrumental in finding and reporting the whereabouts of the culprits. Everybody is pleased, especially the small boy, Kio, whose pinto had been stolen. The drawings are scribbly and ingenuous, the plot uninspired but adequate; the concept of the helpful ghost is appealing as ever, although Georgie’s personality doesn’t emerge as clearly here as in earlier books.


Uncle Coot tells the story of his nephew’s visit to Casa Mia, the Texas ranch to which Coot had retired after he quit as a movie stunt man. Grim and taciturn, Coot feels little in common with his visitor, a bookish boy who hero-worships the man he’s seen only in movie thrillers. This sober background serves as the context for an odd
bit of fantasy: a colt that is born with wings. The boy is enthralled but Coot is rather irritated by the strangeness of the situation; when Coot rescues the colt after it has disappeared, two things happen: the boy and the man recognize the affection that has grown between them, and the colt flies. The style is smooth, the structure spare, the characterization good although not probing; the combination of realism and fantasy is believable in the context, but it somehow lacks impact—perhaps because, with two aspects of the plot, (the relationship between boy and man, and the story of the winged colt) each robs the other of drama although in a literary sense they combine well.


First published in England, an oversize book with large, clear pictures that are excellent for showing to a group of children. The text—a paragraph or two for each double-page spread—is moderately informative, with an occasional note of coyness to mar the writing. Nothing unusual, but any book of animals is appealing to children, and this gives facts about the usefulness of farm animals and includes some of the gender names that may be unfamiliar: ewe, drake, sow, etc.


Big, clear photographs and a pared-down text show the birth process and the first weeks of a litter of miniature dachshund puppies. The pups, blind and weak, open their eyes and stagger about, suck their mother’s milk, begin to explore their world, and are ready to be taken home and loved by a child when they are eight weeks old. This is a wonderful opportunity for the child who has never seen the miracle of birth: to see the sac emerging, the mother biting the cord and licking the newborn pup, and the helplessness of infant life. It’s also a lesson in being gentle with animal babies, and it’s charming in portrayal of the beguiling puppies.


Why did people get so irritated by her remarks, Felicia wondered? She was only using common sense and telling the truth. Her mother suggested gently that Felicia might do better to turn to constructive criticism, so she eagerly seized on the idea. She wrote a list of suggestions for the harassed policeman at a school crossing, and she couldn’t resist jotting down some ideas on her aunt’s new children’s book and the arrangements at a cousin’s wedding. While all of this embarrassed her family, some of it worked; when Felicia decided to keep her own counsel in a newly-formed girls’ club the members of which had complained about her criticism, disaster struck. Why, the girls complained, hadn’t Felicia seen the pitfalls and criticized? Fresh and funny, the story has enough variety to be interesting despite the narrow focus of the plot; the relationships with family and friends are seen with a bright and keen eye, and the dialogue is completely natural.


Duvoisin’s gay pictures are always charming, and his heroine here is a particularly captivating plump pink cow, Jasmine, who finds and wears an old hat. The barnyard animals find Jasmine offensively different at first; then Noisy the dog brings other old hats down from the attic, and the others all don them. Jasmine takes hers off; again there is carping about a cow who wants to be different. Others take their hats off, Jasmine puts hers on again, and a third rumble is averted when a girl takes a picture of Jasmine surrounded by beaming animals. The message is that one should dare to
be different, but the story line is thin, especially in the concluding episode, in which the sight of a camera convinces all the barnyard to shift to amity.


Profusely illustrated with detailed, realistic drawings of plants and plant parts, this gives a great deal of information but is not comprehensive and has weak internal organization. An introduction discusses climatic conditions, the rhythm of plant growth, the needs of plants and the ways in which they adapt or reproduce, etc. Each geographical section (usually a continent is considered) has a distribution map or two; an index and a list of plants by common and scientific names are appended. The writing style is solid and dry, and the material authoritative. The index lacunae give evidence of the gaps in the text and of the fact that plants listed on the distribution maps are not always indexed in the same style: Candelabra cactus, for example is entered under 'candelabra' but not under 'cacti' while yellow buckeye is under 'buckeye' but not 'yellow.'


'Murder? Murder! Me? It sounded like some kind of joke... But it was no joke, the judge had bound seventeen-year-old Danny over for trial. He'd been in the woods where the body was found, his knife had been found nearby, and it was known that Jake, the dead man, and Danny had had a fight about the way in which Jake treated his dog. There is a dramatic false confession from a man who has long loved Danny's mother and wants to spare her, then a sudden revelation by a third man that Jake had been killed by his son, but these events are crowded into the last pages; until that point the book moves at a slow pace as Danny tries to discover clues, ponders his predicament, and reminisces about events that led up to it.

Fenten, D. X. *Gardening... Naturally*; illus. by Howard Berelson. Watts, 1973. 87p. Trade ed. $5.95; Paper ed. $2.95.

Enthusiastic but not fulsome, a text that gives sensible advice as well-organized and is written in an informal, almost conversational style. It includes advice on composting, mulching, dealing with plant pests, and soil improvement; it discusses annual, perennials, bulbs and tubers, et cetera, and it gives a calendar as a guide to planned gardening—whether the reader grows plants indoors or out. An excellent book for the beginning gardener, this includes a glossary and an index, and it gives both a brief list of other books to read and a list of organic gardening suppliers.


A simply written text describes the way houses are built in different parts of the world, often pointing out adaptations to climate and use of local materials; the book concludes with an observation on how many people in our time still live in crowded, unsanitary conditions. The illustrations are informative and attractive, although the colors are rather muddy: paintings of houses in twenty-four parts of the world, with a paragraph or two of decriptive, neutral comment on each type of home.


Hear ye, hear ye! Historical fiction, done to a turn. A description of Paul Revere's ride to Lexington is funny, fast-paced, and historically accurate; it is given added
interest by the establishment of Revere's character: busy, bustling, versatile, and patriotic, a man who loved people and excitement. The account of his ride is preceded by a description of his life and the political situation in Boston, and it concludes with Revere's adventures after reaching Lexington.


What Bradley really wanted to do for the summer was travel with his father's combo, but his parents instead sent him from Harlem to visit his father's family in North Carolina. Although there is a thin triple-weave story line (Bradley's relationship with his cousin, Vernon, his hunt for an old jazz musician and an old recording, and his appreciation of the gospel singing of his cousin Ardetha) the book is primarily a depiction of an urban child's adjustment to—and appreciation of—rural life and the experience of living with an extended family. The writing style is pedestrian, the characters believable but drawn with little depth; the most positive aspect of the book is in the warmth and affection of the family circle, but the plot is diffuse and lacks momentum.


Fifty songs are accompanied by directions (sometimes cursory) for fingerplay and other interpretative motions, the music in simple arrangements for piano with guitar chords provided. The illustrations are frolicsome, always attractive but not always indicative of the action suggested to accompany the song. Even without the fingerplay, this is a compilation of songs that anyone working with young children, particularly in groups, should find useful, and older children who can play piano or guitar can use the book for the music alone.


Illustrated with graceful and lively drawings that echo both the humor and the magic of the stories, this collection includes some tales that are familiar favorites, recipes that are matched to the stories (dumplings for "The Old Woman Who Lost Her Dumplings," soup for "The Old Woman and the Tramp"—a version of "Stone Soup"—and griddle bread for "Clever Oonagh" who outwits the giant Cucullin by baking an iron griddle into her loaves) with an occasional charm or riddle tossed in. Some of the recipes may be a bit demanding for the young cook, but the book can serve both as an enticement into cookery and an enjoyable collection of tales from such sources as Walter de la Mare, Eleanor Farjeon, Sorche Nic Leodhas, Joseph Jacobs, and Andrew Lang.

Grimm, Jakob Ludwig Karl. *The Juniper Tree and Other Tales from Grimm*; in two volumes; selected by Lore Segal and Maurice Sendak; tr. by Lore Segal with four tales tr. by Randall Jarrell; illus. by Maurice Sendak. Farrar, 1973. 332p. 2v. $12.95.

A milestone, a tour de force, a joy to see, this two-volume edition of some of the stories from the Grimm brothers' collection includes some familiar tales and others that are less well-known. The translations have been made from several early editions, and both those of Jarrell and of Lore Segal are direct and fresh, unexpurgated and unsweetened. The illustrations are superb: beautiful, imaginative, appropriate, tender and terrible—as though the tales had been waiting for Maurice Sendak to interpret them. For children and adults.

Clean layout, a profusion of photographs, and a simplified text make an attractive first book about pandas; the book can be read aloud to the preschool audience for which the publisher recommends it, but it seems even more useful for the independent reader. The text describes the panda's habits and the ways in which zoos try to duplicate the animal's natural environment; it also discusses the unlikelihood of extinction of the species, and the fact that scientists have not yet agreed on the relationship of the panda to bears and raccoons.


"Her name was Edith. I did not like her," Phyllisia begins, and describes the slovenly, cheerful girl who is the only friendly person in class. Phyl and her sister have just come from the West Indies to Harlem, where their blustering, domineering father has a restaurant. Lonely, she turns to Edith even though she is ashamed to be seen with her, and she learns to be ashamed of herself when she insults her friend in front of others. Bereavement and paternal bullying have almost broken Phyl's spirit when a meeting with Edith, whom she has ignored, make her realize what true friendship is and give her the courage to have a showdown with her tyrannical father. The characters are memorable, the story powerful in its candor, vigor, and insight.


It is unfortunate that this oversize book looks like a picture book for the preschool child and that the writing has a recurrently coy tone, because it has one quality that is missing from the two other panda books that have appeared recently (Eberle's *Pandas Live Here* and *A Book About Pandas*, by Gross, reviewed above). It describes the pandas of the London and Washington zoos with such affection and in such detail that the panda's charm is made very clear. The first section discusses the panda in its native habitat, including descriptions of its anatomy and its habits; the second section is the story of Chi-Chi, the London Zoo panda who spurned a mate and developed a close friendship with an onager; the last section is about the two young pandas at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.


A description of the life cycle of the sperm whale begins with the birth of a calf, describes the mother's care and the baby calf's growth to independence, the challenge of an old bull by a young male, and the courting and mating of the whale mother that brings, months later, the birth of another baby whale. Simple, quite smooth in style despite the simplicity, and judicious in the amount of information provided for the intended audience, the book is illustrated in attractive if repetitive block prints: blue, green, and black scenes of the dark whale bodies in the blue-green sea.


An oversize book has, on most pages, pictures that are large-scale and therefore useful for group viewing. The text describes the work of Trudy Teacher, Fred Fireman, Irma Installer, Peter Policeman, and so on. In each case there are several pages showing some aspects of the work these individuals do, with the text focusing on activities that a small child would find most interesting; for example, the policeman is shown keeping order at a parade, stopping traffic while a child crosses the
street, helping a lost child, helping someone who is hurt, riding in motor cycles and helicopters, riding a horse, and going to "any place where there is trouble" in a patrol car. Only the latter gives any hint of the police in relation to crime. Some of the sections include material that is of interest to the child although not part of the busy peoples' jobs; the section on the teacher includes a page of number-symbol cards and another with clock faces; the pages on Carlo the Clown show as many other circus acts as they do Carlo. Random selection, some of it, but adequately illustrated, bright and varied: a book with both appeal and usefulness.


A good selection of stories, varied in theme and style, that have previously been published in magazines. Only a few of the selections are noteworthy; J. G. Ballard's "The Sound Sweep" envisions a time in which used sounds lie about until they are swept up by machine, a situation in which two distinctively pathetic characters are drawn, and in Bernard Wolfe's "Self Portrait" a scientist with a grey flannel mind is on the make in the Institute for Advanced Cybernetics Studies at Princeton—a devastating first-person exposure of smug and selfish opportunism.


Very nice indeed, this cookbook that eschews the french-toast-and-hamburgers-are-for-beginning-cooks idea, and gives recipes that are simple to make, impressive in results although not always worthy of the label "gourmet," and require few utensils and little cleaning up. The division of text is conventional (meats, fish, salads, cakes and pies, etc.) save for the order of the categories, the instructions are clear, and the writing style is lively and informal.


A boy and his great-grandfather amuse themselves by writing poems and stories and discussing them. The boy, who tells the story of their marathon, has an infected heel, and great-grandfather is frail; together they have retreated to the attic. They write of heroes, and in their discussions great-grandfather is the voice the author uses to express his philosophy of ethical behavior. The connective tissue of the story establishes the affection between the old man and the boy with warmth and humor; the poems and stories vary in quality, but the stress upon one theme makes the book at times rather heavy going. There are wonderful bits here, but the whole has less cohesion and less narrative flow than most of this distinguished German author's work.


Twenty handsome full-color paintings by an eminent artist show scenes—chiefly chores or recreation—remembered from his boyhood on a Manitoba dairy farm in the 1930's. There is no story line, each page of text that faces a picture being a simply-written description of such winter activities as making a hockey rink, watering the cows, playing in snowdrifts, skiing behind a hayrack, or hauling firewood. The writing has an unpretentious spontaneity, the pictures are evocative.

Handsome woodcuts in strong colors illustrate a version of an old mummers' play, with music, advice on costumes, and instructions for a sword dance following the text, which is printed in playscript form. The lines of the traditional characters, with their rhymes and bluff humor, and the appeal of Father Christmas and the seasonal rapport between the dragon and his foes have a timeless quality. Fun to read and even more fun to produce.


A convincing and well-written fictionalized account of the Roanoke colony is told by one of the younger members, sixteen-year-old William Wythers. William describes the long and arduous journey, the futile attempts to build a permanent settlement, the dissent among the colonists, and the lack of understanding between the settlers and the Indians. In love with an Indian girl, William has become friendly with the members of her tribe and warns the other colonists that he has heard of an impending attack from another, hostile tribe—but they take no heed. All save William and the baby who is his godchild, Virginia Dare, are killed. A lively adjunct to a historical unit on colonial settlement, and an excellent adventure story, this has the same immediacy and solidity as did *Constance,* Patricia Clapp's story of the Plymouth Colony.


Written by a Russian archeologist and smoothly translated, this is a story set in Siberia in its Neolithic Era. While the pace of the story is slowed by some incidents that seem more valuable as evidence of cultural patterns than as narrative developments, the action moves fairly steadily; the inclusion of cultural details is not jarring. Seventeen-year-old Liok, who longs to become a hunter, is destined to become his tribe's new shaman; he has enemies within the tribe who fight his power, and he himself is uneasy at the fact that he has never seen the spirits with whom he supposedly communes. Eventually Liok and his brother run away, join another tribe and take wives; Liok's wife is killed when she violates a taboo; Liok decides that he will return to his village to share the knowledge he has acquired for new weapons and other new ideas, so that the story is both a fine picture of a Stone Age tribe and an indication of a path of cultural diffusion.


The last of a trilogy of novels dealing with the relationships between Irish and Protestant young people in the atmosphere of today's bitter hostility, this follows *The Twelfth Day of July* and *Across the Barricades,* in which Protestant Sadie and Catholic Kevin had fought as children, met as adolescents and fallen in love, and decided to flee to England. Here they are newlyweds living in London; they have no friends and little money, and all of the adjustments of marriage and of homesickness are exacerbated by the fact that Kevin and Sadie feel like aliens in England, and that their religious differences cannot be ignored. Called home by his father's death (killed by a bomb), Kevin goes to Ireland and finds his mother insistent that he stay and still unreconciled to his marriage. The solution of the young people's problem is achieved in part by the willingness of each to compromise and in part by the advice of an older man who, although a Catholic, is not as biased as Kevin's family and who
sees that the two must go off on their own if the marriage is to survive. A candid exploration of prejudice, the story stands on its own but is more meaningful as a sequel to the earlier books.


A counting book is divided into two linked parts: in the first, there are ten pictures with hard-to-find animals ("Do you see? One bull in a china shop . . . Two frogs in a stream . . . Three cows in a field . . .") and in the second, a cumulating procession as the animals leave their locale and journey to an empty house, bulging with creatures as the book ends. There is a game element in the first part of the book, but its very appeal distracts the reader from the counting function; the second section, with its repetition and cumulation, shows the animals more clearly but even here the busy details of the illustrations detract from the purpose. It’s a gay book, and it may be more fun than most counting books, but it seems less effective.


Sprightly drawings show the details of a small boy’s imaginative musings about Halloween costumes, as Bob tries to think of what to wear for the school’s Halloween parade. To be a fireman, for example, he’ll need boots and hat, and a hose . . . and he dreams of putting out a fire and earning the gratitude of his teacher. To be a wild game hunter he’d need other accessories . . . and he dreams of stalking animals and giving his teacher a free ticket to the circus. Save for the recurrent theme of winning Miss Reiley’s approbation, there’s little continuity, but the holiday theme is appealing, the text and the illustrations have a light, happy mood, and the ending has a bit of wit.


An old theme in children’s stories and trite treatment of the plot are given some relief by the colorful extravagance of execution in cartoon style pictures. A lion wishes for physical attributes of other animals; each time he is granted his wish he gains another feature: the giraffe’s long neck, the elephant’s trunk, a butterfly’s wings, etc. Seeing his own reflection, the lion is appalled and gratefully seizes the next opportunity to revert to his original appearance.

McNamara, Louise. *Your Growing Cells*; by Louise Greep McNamara and Ada Bassett Litchfield; illus. by Bill Commerford. Little, 1973. 32p. $4.95.

A simplified description of cellular structure, reproduction, functioning, and diversification is illustrated with pictures, not labeled, some of which may confuse the reader. The text is adequately written, save for an occasional remark that is unscientific in approach, such as, "When the nucleus gave the order . . .". While the book serves moderately well as an introduction to the topic, it does not serve the audience of beginning readers as do the Crowell beginning science books, primarily because the text incorporates many aspects treated in perfunctory fashion, rather than limiting the material.


Twelve-year-old Althea comes with her mother, Lady Catherine Stanhope, to her uncle’s castle; Uncle Richard is recently bereaved, his golden-haired little step-
daughter has lost the power of speech, her Caribbean nurse practices voodoo rites, two mysterious children are furtively living at the castle, there's a tutor who proves to be a French revolutionary in disguise, et cetera, et cetera. Despite the period setting, there is little of historical value in the story, the plot is hackneyed, the characters stereotyped romantic-adventure heroes and villains, and the writing style maunders.


Leah, usually a busy, happy little girl, wakes one day to find her toy bear missing. She screams. She screams and screams and screams. Her parents and brother come running and so do some of the neighbors; her grandparents come posthaste from their home on another street. Directed by Leah's father, the search party breaks up to hunt the bear, which is eventually discovered by a not at all sheepish Leah under her bedlinen. Everybody cheers and dances, Leah reverts to her normal behavior. While the bear hunt details are exaggerated without being very funny, and the ending is weak, the story has a certain amount of gusto; it has the appeal of a familiar situation; and it has some positive aspects in the good humor with which people help a child, do not chide her when the mishap proves to be of her own inadvertent making, and retain their equanimity in a period of dire stress, knowing that for a child it is truly a dire situation.


Born in Spanish Harlem, Nicholasa Mohr draws a sharp and candid picture of the life of a barrio child, each major character distinctively pictured, the story more a reflection of a life-style than a series of linked events, although these happen. Nilda is ten, curious about people, eager to learn and grow, disturbed by the ideological conflict between her devout mother and her Socialist stepfather. There is a series of jolts to the pattern of Nilda's life: her brother's pregnant mistress moves into the already-crowded apartment, having been thrown out by her mother; her stepfather dies and then her mother; Nilda goes to live with an aunt. The writing style is sometimes heavy, but the verisimilitude of the setting and the strength of the characterization compensate for the occasional stiffness of the prose.


Sherman is ten, lives in a pleasant home on Long Island, likes sports, goes fishing with his family and his younger brother, participates in Chinese-American social affairs and ritual celebrations, and does well in school. While the book has value because it depicts an affluent suburban family—a facet of Chinese-American life seldom seen in children's books—it may be limited in its appeal to readers by the stiff, fragmented quality of the writing which is based on taped recordings of conversations with Sherman; the text appears here as a first-person monologue.


Three cheers for the team of Monjo and Turkle, who have produced an easy-to-read history book that is as engaging as it is informative. The drawings are authentic in detail and attractive; the text is historically accurate and lively, convincingly told by Benjamin Franklin's small grandson, who accompanied his distinguished grandfather on a 1776 mission to France to urge French intercession in the American
Revolution. Seven-year-old Benny's comments are lively and humorous, and in a perfectly natural way they give a good bit of information about Franklin and about the rebellion against the British.


In a delightful new version of an old rhyme, Susan Jeffers contrasts three bumbling, comic figures against the beauty of woodland and meadow scenes. The huntsmen argue endlessly about what they see: one is sure that a large object, half-glimpsed, is a ship; another sees it as a house. All this, and similar incidents, take place in a country landscape populated by birds and beasts, none of which the hunters bag. The drawings, delicate in color and firm in line, are imaginative and lovely, especially the cool lavender night scenes in which the men wander about while night creatures peer, amused, from the trees.


Freddy, who has just come from Toronto to live in an American city, is baffled. He knows that the most popular four-letter-word graffito means *something* bad—but what, exactly? "Bumping," one of his friends says. (Bumping? When he bumps into his sister and explains it in terms of the four-letter-word, she runs screaming to their mother.) Mother's explanation further befuddles Freddy, and the librarian won't give him a sex education book without parental supervision. His father's response is informative, but it isn't until Freddy talks to his football coach that he understands that there's a connection between love and sex, and feels satisfied. Although there are some very funny moments in the book, it isn't quite convincing in constructing a situation in which so many people do a bad job of giving information; that enables the author to make a long story out of Freddy's quest, but the contrivance weakens the story, and it's noticeable that all the female characters are remarkable for their ineptitude. Although purposive, this sex education book may be of comfort to youngsters (Freddy seems to be about 11 or 12) who are embarrassed because they don't know what it's all about—but how many boys of this age don't?


First published in England, a study of the events that led up to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and of the abortive negotiations just preceding the debacle. The material is drawn from British, Japanese, and American sources, some of which have been only recently released. While this is not as dramatic as Taylor's *Air Raid—Pearl Harbor!* it is perceptive, written in a brisk, straightforward style, and valuable for the inclusion of the recently-disclosed material. Almost every page has marginal captions (sometimes one for each paragraph) that seem less than useful because there are so many; one double-page spread, for example, has "American isolationism, Hitler's victories aid Japan, America's Defense Act (1940), Churchill's warning, Fears for the fleet, America: Britain has a chance, Japan debates with Hitler." A list of dates, a list of books suggested for further reading, a list of sources, and an index are appended.


A suspense story that has good pace and construction has as its protagonist a motherless American girl of sixteen who is lured to London by her father's enemies and held captive. Karen, who has spent her childhood shuttling from one camp or school to another, has always suspected that her wealthy father was an underworld
figure and her suspicion is verified when she escapes from her captors and sees a newspaper. The story ends with a smashing chase sequence that is a natural for motion pictures, with Karen pursued by members of the gang and helped by a childhood friend who's at Eton and by a grande dame meant to be played by Margaret Rutherford. Karen's reunion with her father is a tentative conclusion, but the story as a whole is strong: an unusual heroine, a touch of mystery, a credible outcome, and lashes of action and suspense.


A continuous text describes the activities within the airport, the ways in which aircraft are checked and maintained, the coordination between pilot and control tower, et cetera. The writing style is adequate, the coverage fairly detailed in describing operations and procedures related to the flight, but less substantial in coverage of activities in the airport. The author tends to generalize: “Walking through the terminal, they hear many foreign languages and see people dressed in costumes from other countries,” a fact that does not obtain at all airports. There is no mention of security checking or of the fact that most airports have a Travelers’ Aid desk. There is no table of contents or index; a page of suggestions for “Other Things to Do...” while reading the book, and a two-page glossary are appended.


Eleven-year-old Miguel describes his life in New York’s Lower East Side. While this is fictional, it does not tell a story; Miguel rambles on conversationally about his family, his friends, his school. Most of the neighbors are Puerto Rican; the neighborhood is noisy, dirty, and unsafe. It’s another of the currently popular “slice of life” books, realistic and candid about the urban scene in poor neighborhoods and, while it is not very substantial or focused, it is cheerful and honest, and the text moves along at a brisk pace albeit with no direction.


Nicole Nieman is eight when she leaves the foster home in which she and her small sister have been living, and rejoins the parents who had not until then been able to afford a home big enough for four. Self-assured and rather self-satisfied, Nicole is baffled by the hostility of some of her classmates, a hostility that presages the persecution that French Jews suffered during World War II. When her parents are taken by the Nazis, Nicole goes to her foster parents; since it is unsafe there, she goes to school, where the teacher, who Nicole has disliked, shows unexpected compassion and takes Nicole in as a boarding pupil. A touching story, realistic in the way Nicole adjusts to the drastic changes of war and changes from a blithe eight-year-old to a mature adolescent. Style and characterization are deft, and the atmosphere of the place and period are convincingly recreated.


A section of sources and notes and a bibliography that stars books in which young people might be particularly interested are appended to a collection of riddles, shaggy dog stories, Tom Swifties, hate jokes, noodlehead humor, ethnic humor, and knock-knock jokes. The selections represent the range of American folk jest, and the book should be of interest both to young readers and to the serious student of folklore.

A useful book for the amateur magician, this compendium is divided into chapters in part by materials used ("Rope Magic," "Magic with Handkerchiefs") and in part by tricks done in certain circumstances, such as stage tricks or close-up table tricks. Each chapter begins with some historical background, and then for each trick described, the patter-and-illusion procedure is followed by a step-by-step explanation of what materials need to be prepared and how the trick is done. While all the tricks need practice and patter, they can be mastered by a reader working alone. Bill Severn is an old hand at explaining magic in print; the tricks are as clearly explained as they can be without a live demonstration. In addition to advice on technique given throughout the book, a final chapter gives general recommendations for performance. An index is appended.


Joey and E. J. had asked an elderly friend to help with their science fair project, and when they went out to see him, they found that the old man had special permission to fish the waters around Cape Kennedy. That was how they discovered that it would be possible to stow away on the spaceship *Camelot*. Although Joey has been the instigator, it is E. J. who, dreaming of space, hides in the ship. When he is found, Houston command decides that the landing on the moon must be cancelled, but favorable publicity and Presidential influence change the decision. The mission is highly successful, with E. J. making several contributions during the investigation of the moon's surface; at the time of splashdown, however, the astronauts are faced with a near-fatal accident. While one or two incidents strain credulity slightly, the tone of the writing is so matter-of-fact, and all of the scientific details are so authentic that the story as a whole is believable; it is tightly constructed in plot although not always maintaining pace.


Even handsomer than the original edition, this revision of an authoritative survey of Alaska has been brought up to date throughout the text and includes new illustrations. The book explores all aspects of Alaskan life, agricultural and urban, geographic and historical, and industrial; it discusses the Eskimos, the Indians, the oil rush and the struggle between industrialists and environmentalists. Useful, well-organized, and well-written. A relative index is appended.


The first of three volumes, this impressive book is based on newspaper accounts, correspondence, essays, and diaries; much of the material has not been previously published, and all of the excerpts are linked by explanatory notes. The book gives a vivid picture of black history, particularly of the back-to-Africa movement of the late eighteenth century, of the participation of black people in the North in social movements, and of the courage and tenacity of men and women who fought for their country, their brothers, and their own integrity. A fascinating book, a rich resource. An extensive index is appended.

A major interpreter of industry and technology for young readers adds a volume on transportation, a subject that is far from dull in Sullivan's practiced hands. He describes in brisk, direct style such contemporary subjects as container shipping and what it means to producer and consumer, the enormous crawler-transporter used in carrying rockets to launching pads, supertankers, the "mail pail" that delivers mail to ships, air-cushion vehicles, zoo transport, the C-5 airplane, and the shipment of foodstuffs by air. Varied, interesting, and informative. A divided bibliography and an index are appended.


A companion volume to the author’s *Pro Football’s Passing Game,* this profusely illustrated book discusses every aspect of kicking (place-kicking, punting, returning or blocking kicks, soccer-style kicking, etc.) and gives both a modicum of information about the early days of football and the outstanding kickers of the past and a great deal of information about kicking specialists of today. Crisp, informative, straightforward writing. An index is preceded by statistics on records and yardage.


An interesting story for the general reader, an engrossing one for the bird lover, this account of three baby mockingbirds that were brought to the "birlday of Queens" when they were ten days old is true, with photographs that are fuzzy but engaging showing the antics of Andy, Chuck, and George. The author writes affectionately but without sentimentality about birds; as a knowledgeable member of the Audubon Society’s bird-saving corps, she gives a considerable amount of sensible advice about rescuing and caring for birds as well as describing the progression of the three mockingbirds from helplessness to cheeky independence.


A description of the development of the laser, the theories on which its functioning is based, the kinds of lasers that have been built, and the applications of the laser in many fields, with concomitant problems of safety, expense, and efficiency of operation. While the information is accurate, the writing here is neither as clear nor as well-organized as in Bova’s *The Amazing Laser* or Stambler’s *Revolution in Light,* and the diagrams are not as lucid. A glossary and an index are appended.


A discussion of what causes differences in skin color emphasizes the joy of variety rather than focusing on the scientific explanation, although the book gives some facts about melanin and hereditary factors. The tone and attitude of the text are excellent, but the organization is diffuse and the writing weakened by a patronizing note, as in "Let’s see! Could you think of another of our basic needs? Quickly now! Did you think of sleep?" or, "Can you tell a color from its taste? No peeking now." An appended glossary defines words in the text that are printed in heavy type.


First published in England, a story set in the time of Henry VIII reflects the turmoil and anguish caused by the dissolution of the monasteries after the king had
declared himself the head of the church. Piers and his family live in the remote countryside, their lives at first untouched by the sackings and the punishment of clerics. Then a beloved uncle who is a monk dies, and Piers promises him that he will protect the strange, silent girl who is in his charge. Loved and protected by Piers' family, Isabella becomes happy and busy; she and Piers wed and have a child—and then she confesses. She had been a novice, pledged to a life of chastity, and her guilt weighs so heavily upon her that Isabella commits suicide. Although the period details are strongly depicted and the dialogue richly appropriate, the historical aspect of the writing does not outweigh the narrative; the book hasn't the starkness or grandeur of Greek tragedy, but it has the same inevitability.


In the same format as the *Woodstock Craftsman's Manual* (reviewed in the October 1972 issue) this extends the number of skills described by craftsman of the Woodstock community. The writing varies in style and quality, as does the clarity of instructions, but the preponderant number of articles are useful. Only one section, "How to Write a Song," seems worthless, since it doesn't really tell the reader how to write a song. This covers sandalmaking, needlepoint, woodblocks, stained glass, bronze jewelry, using video equipment, and preparing copy for offset printing. As with the first book, the value lies as much in the informality and enthusiasm of the text as in its usefulness.
READING FOR PARENTS

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