

Picture Books

By ALICE DALGLIESH

IN a picture-book Utopia, children, under the guidance of sympathetic adults, would have a great deal to say about the making of their picture books. There would be a laboratory, a human and friendly laboratory in which books would be tried out by many children before publication. Manuscripts would be read aloud to children and kept on shelves where they could be handled. At the end of three months or so some of them would show fingerprints on the pages and some would be perfectly clean! The finger-printed ones would go out into the world wearing a paper band, like a Newbery medal book, and on this band would be printed, "Tested and approved by children and grown-ups in the Picture Book Laboratory." Such a plan would kill the creative genius of artists and authors, you say? Not at all! It would really be a life extension institute for picture books. Authors and artists would watch the books being used with children, and they would soon be conscious of the places where the listeners began to wriggle, where a strange blank look came into several pairs of eyes, where there were puzzled frowns. After the books had been tried out, what then? Large sections of descriptive text would be omitted, obscure phrasing would be clarified, pictures added and subtracted, slow places speeded up, adult flippancies thrown on the junk heap. A text that had been read aloud many times and improved at each reading could not come limping along behind its pictures.

As no such plan exists, the next best thing is to try the books out with children after publication. I am nearly always sorry if I review a book before trying it out with children, because sometimes my arm-chair viewpoint is completely reversed. This year "The Happy Hen," by Helen and Alf Evers, was one of my enthusiasms. When I read it aloud to children I found that, although it is a nice picture book, its climax, most entertaining to adults, fell decidedly flat. I tried it with another group. They looked at me blankly and

asked, "Why was she happy to be home? Didn't she want to go with the other chickens? Why didn't they come back?" Children are so literal. The clever ending is not always the satisfactory one, and subtleties are dust and ashes.

It is such fun when a picture book "goes over" completely. This year there are some delightful books. Almost all of those reviewed here are well worth adding to a child's library, the "ifs" and "buts" merely indicate how they might be even better. Usually the beautiful and spectacular books are reviewed first. Let's reverse the process and take some rather inconspicuous but very childlike books that might not be noticed among the more elaborate ones. There is no uncertainty about the children's enjoyment of "Bobbie and Donnie Were Twins," by Esther Brann. It is not a very artistic book, there is nothing very unusual about it, but no book will be better loved by very little children this year. There are two birthday parties in it, and as we read about the first one Philip, aged four, murmurs, "Boy, oh boy, oh boy!" Another childlike book is Berta and Elmer Hader's "Whiffy McMann" with a good story, delightful kittens, but people who might look more pleasing. "Butterwick Farm," by Clifford Webb, is a most attractive book in which two little English children pay a leisurely visit to a farm then "hurry home to tea." Then there is "Ping," the gay story of a Chinese duck told by Marjorie Flack and pictured by Kurt Wiese. In using this with children one finds that it is very confusing to have single pictures giving the effect of double spreads alternating with real double spreads. Marjorie Flack's books owe their great success to their action and reality. Children enter into her stories wholeheartedly. As Angus follows the cat upstairs in futile chase a small boy shouts, "Get her, you dumb-bell, get her!" A better commentary on the Angus books does not exist. The new Angus book, "Wag-Tail-Bess," seemed to me to be a little too much on the same formula as the

three other books, but the children welcomed it with such joy that I have to say with them, "It's just grand to have another book about Angus!" The story is simple and well told.

Now for the spectacular books! First of all the books of the year I would place Wanda Gag's "ABC Bunny" and for a very special reason. Wanda Gag has a feeling for the rightness of words that no other maker of picture books can approach. Children love to follow the bunny's adventure through charming pictures and clever rhyming couplets full of pleasant words:

M for Mealtime, munch, munch, munch!
M-m-m these greens are good for lunch!

Q for Quail, R for Rail,
S for Squirrel Swishy-tail.

There are all too few picture books which allow children to revel in the sound of words and of delightful phrases such as:

Millions and billions and trillions of cats.

And their names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Peter.

Purple shoes with crimson soles and crimson linings.

Speaking of color, look at the last double page spread in "Ola and Blakken," by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Here Ola, Blakken, Line, Sine, and Trine leave in quest of new adventures which we trust they will find. The text of this second Ola book is clearer, better written, and more childlike than that of the first book, and it is a real adventure story. It is full of delightful thrills. There is a "big bad" troll bird with "big bad black eyes," a bird so big that it has (to the delight of the children) to sit on two roofs. "Ola and Blakken" is decidedly a six, seven, and eight-year-old book, it is rather stimulating fare for the average younger child. We have two very decided groups of picture books, one group with familiar happenings for the babies, and one group for the children who, with increased age, become bold and adventurous-minded.

Another colorful and handsome book is Maud and Miska Petersham's "Get-Away and Hary János." Children of six and seven like it, many adults are enthusiastic about it. As collectors of toys the Petershams see the toys as they have pictured them. As another collector of toys I see them differently. To me toys are as simple and lovable as the children who play with them, not as smartly sophisticated as the toys in this book. And why in this toy heaven do all the foreign toys suffer (in text, not pictures) from a touch of Americanization? This is an individual point of view, possibly few will agree with it.

The pictures in Helen Sewell's "Blue Barns," while not in color, are a joy to adult eyes and charming to children. We like to look at them again and again. Although the text is by no means as beautiful as the pictures, the pleasant story of a gander who adopts seven little ducklings has much in it to interest children, and the book should be a favorite for many years to come.

This year we are indeed fortunate in having a number of funny books, books that are truly childlike in their fun. "Babar the Elephant," by Jean de Brunhoff is a most spectacular book translated from the French. It is gay and amusing, sophisticated yet childlike—just the kind of book that fathers enjoy as much as small boys. "Junket Is Nice," by Dorothy Kunhardt, is about as much on the level of a child's humor as a book written by an adult can possibly be. After such a situation as "a cow with her head in a paper bag" the reader is overwhelmed by an avalanche of laughter. The book is too long, it is over-naïve in style, and it is quite ugly, but it is funny and well worth reading. "Gaston and Josephine," by Georges DuPlaix, are two little French pigs who will have a good deal of popularity on account of the present pig epidemic. Although children think the book is funny, it cannot approach the simple gaiety of Walt Disney's "Three Little Pigs." Whole pages, such as that showing the little pigs at the opera, are made entirely for grown-ups. Among the funny books don't forget "Nicodemus and the Houn' Dog," by Inez Hagon, which has both plot and humor.

There is a whole group of photographic books, and it is really time to be quite critical of these. We might have photographic books that would be entirely charming and satisfactory, but from their first appearance most of these books have lacked plan. They suffer from having too many pictures that are too much alike,

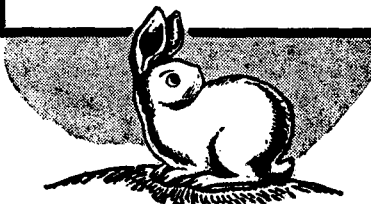
(Continued on page 282)

New juveniles from
Coward - McCann

Wanda Gág

Author of Millions of Cats

THE
ABC
BUNNY



Like no other A B C you ever saw before: a connected story, dodging its merry way through the alphabet with the adventurous bunny as hero. 28 full page lithographs. Size 10 1/4 x 12. (2-6 years) \$2.00

By E. Nesbit

THE ENCHANTED
CASTLE

The tale of a magic ring and the grief and joy it brought to its young wearers. With the original H. R. Millar illustrations, and a preface by May Lamberton Becker. (7-14 years) \$1.75

By Hawthorne Daniel

THE LOST
PROFESSOR

A new story for girls by the author of *The Seal of the White Buddha*; laid against the colorful historical background of New York City in the 1850's. (12-16 years) Illus. \$2.00

By Isadore Lhevinne

THE ENCHANTED
JUNGLE

The thrilling account of a visit to the Jibaro Indians in Ecuador. "Adventure of the first-rate, hardy brand."—*Saturday Review*. Illustrated photographs. (12-16 years) \$2.50

By Katie Seabrook

COLETTE and BABA
in TIMBUCTOO

Adventures of a little French girl and a Touareg boy—exciting and colorful as the Arabian Nights. Illustrated. (7-11 years) \$2.00

Illustrated by

ELIZABETH MacKINSTRY

ANDERSEN'S
FAIRY TALES

A children's classic, illustrated by one of our most distinguished artists. 12 full-pages in black and white; center spread and frontispiece in color; and many decorations. A beautiful gift book. (7-11 years) \$2.50
Preface by Anne Carroll Moore



And Don't Forget JAVA HO! by Johan Wigmore Fabricius (\$2.50) and THE PARROT DEALER by Kurt Wiese (\$2.00) two of the grandest boys' adventure books.

COWARD-McCANN
55 Fifth Ave. New York

BOOKS

Young People Will Remember

The YOUNG PEOPLE'S STORY OF ARCHITECTURE
By Emily Helen Butterfield
An important book that makes the story of architectural forms and developments interesting. Begins with Egypt and traces the significant steps down to modern America. Illustrated. (12-18 years) \$3.00

SELDOM and the GOLDEN CHEESE
By Joseph Schrank
A fairy tale for 1933, about a boy and a miraculous piece of cheese. Delightful illustrations. (7 and up) \$2.00

ANNALUISE and ANTON
By Erich Kästner
The author of "Emil and the Detectives" in a new story of a rich girl and a poor boy in Berlin today. Illustrated. (7-10 years) \$1.75

The Boys' Book of NEWSREEL HUNTERS
By Irving Crump
The exploits of the newest type of journalist—the motion-picture reporter. A thrilling book with a vocational interest. Illustrated. (12-16 years) \$2.00

UNCLE SAM'S GOVERNMENT at WASHINGTON
By George Knapp
Lively, intelligent picture of the various government departments and activities. Illustrated. (12-16 years) \$2.00

"MAKING" the SCHOOL NEWSPAPER
By Irving Crump
Indispensable for the young journalist. Illustrated. \$1.50

DODD, MEAD & CO., Inc., 449 Fourth Ave., New York City

Enthusiasm for THE SHORT BIBLE

has been so immediate that a first large printing was exhausted within two weeks after publication. Praise and comment have been pouring in from reviewers, ministers, college presidents, booksellers, men and women who have welcomed the idea of a Bible "to read and enjoy." This is what some of them say about the five important features of *The Short Bible*—edited by Edgar J. Goodspeed and J. M. P. Smith:

THE SELECTION:

The Short Bible seeks to present those parts of the Bible which everyone ought to be acquainted with, from a literary, historical, or religious point of view.

The Boston Post says: "A book that has long been need-

ed . . . presenting the salient facts of the Bible . . . but utilizing only such parts as would give a connected story." Rev. Neal D. Newlin, in the *Cincinnati Post*, emphasizes that it is "an abbreviated edition without losing any values."

THE INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS:

Each book is prefaced with brief, interesting editorial comments about why it was written and its place in history.

"It is not too much to say that to the reader who has not kept pace with Bible

scholarship, these prefaces will be a revelation."—*The Saturday Review of Literature*.

"Everyone who reads the Bible should have this book as an auxiliary."—Baker Brownell, Northwestern University.

THE CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT:

The books selected for inclusion have been arranged in the probable order in which they were written, the Old Testament beginning with the Book of Amos. In the New Testament the Epistles of Paul come first.

"One feels like testing out the chronological arrangement to see if the difference between Amos and Genesis can be recognized in their religious ideas," says F. G. Melcher, editor of *Publishers' Weekly*.

THE TRANSLATION:

The Short Bible is based upon the American Translation, especially designed for American readers, edited by Edgar J. Goodspeed and J. M. P. Smith.

"In sheer beauty of language and dramatic incidents

it outdoes the best selling fiction or the most impressive historical work"—*Los Angeles Saturday Night*. "The reputation of the two editors stands for what is most thorough-going and advanced in modern Bible scholarship"—*Evangelical Herald*.

THE FORMAT:



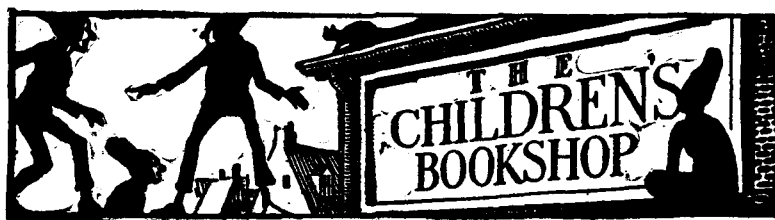
Printed and bound like a modern book, with a single-column page, paragraph divisions, full use of quotation marks, large type.

"A book for reading, gaily bound in red cloth"—*Time*. "Looks human, reads human, is human"—*International Journal of Ethics*.

A great book value at two dollars.

Ask to see THE SHORT BIBLE at your bookstore. It is an ideal gift for men, women, and young people. A noted educator writes—"I've a notion if the book were left lying around amongst young people they would read it with a sense of discovery." And *The Saturday Review* says "The new generation may here find a doorway to the greatest monument of spiritual literature."

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
5750 ELLIS AVE., CHICAGO, ILL.



A Living Child

WHERE IS ADELAIDE? By Eliza Orne White. With illustrations by Helen Sewell. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company. 1933. \$1.75.

Reviewed by ANNE CARROLL MOORE

"GO and find Adelaide and wherever she is and whatever mischief she is up to, tell her to stop it and come in at once. She is ten minutes late already." Adelaide at the moment was in the top of the tallest fir tree. She had climbed up there to escape an arithmetic lesson, and it took all Henry Chase's powers of persuasion and a certain amount of bargaining to bring her down again.

With the wit and understanding of child nature and the rare power of characterization which distinguish the work of Eliza Orne White she has created a living child character in Adelaide and placed her in a setting so true to New England that one can hear the people talk on every page. Adelaide is an orphan whose aunts find her a problem and send her to live with Mrs. Chase, who, it must be admitted, finds her a handful at first; but thanks to the tact of her young son Henry, the wisdom of old Marty the cook, who had lived in France, and the Christmas visit of Mr. Chase, Adelaide achieves a state of being loved and wanted by everybody without changing her essential nature. "She is a child who likes to be of importance," says Mr. Chase toward the end. It is a mistake to think that lively children are always a trial to their elders. But it is Marty, the warm-hearted cook, who confides to her, "If you had left these premises I would have had to follow you." The reader will follow Adelaide—follow her further, I believe, than any character Miss White has created in the many delightful books she has written for children.

It is nearly forty years since little Marietta Hamilton grew up from the age of three and a half to her eighth birthday within the dainty white covers of "A Little Girl of Long Ago." More widely read by children today than in the time it was published, those who read the book as children for the story read it as adults for its true pictures of child life in Boston of the 1820's and in Springfield when that city was a mere village.

The little Marietta Hamilton who crossed the Atlantic with her artist father in the sailing ship *Topaz* with her brother's miniature ship trailing from the stern was Eliza Orne White's mother whose best friend, Lucretia P. Hale, wrote the "Peterkin Papers." The New England life she depicts has a glow upon it. It is warm with friendliness, full of incident and natural conversation. In restricting her field to writing of little children in a New England environment Miss White has never restricted her outlook upon life itself. She brings to her scene the skill of the novelist who defies time.

Helen Sewell's drawings for "Where Is Adelaide?" are informed with the high spirits of the text and with feeling for the characters.

A Dog's Life

DASHENKA: THE LIFE OF A PUPPY. By Karel Capek. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

CAPEK has a double sense of humor, as those who remember "Letters from England" know. He sees humors reflected in a mirror of life, and sees behind the mirror, too. The story of Dasha has none of his malicious irony, but it doesn't fail to twist in and out among men as well as dogs. Dashenka is a fox terrier puppy, whose charming photographs are part of the book, which is enlivened still further by numerous amusing sketches which make a kind of Mickey Mouse progress of the life of a pup. Capek has "written, drawn, photographed, and endured" it all—a house full of puddles and torn slippers, a garden dug into trenches, a puppy learning to be a dog. The endurance was noble, the pictures excellent, but the writing is best of all; for here one learns not only how the infant Dasha learns to assort

her feet, but also the kind of fairy tales which keep dogs quiet while their pictures are being taken: how the Doberman ate his tail until he had to be chased apart; how a hare racing past the Creator's studio pulled the bone pile after him which became the greyhound, how and why the fox terrier lost the tip of his tail. Someone writing in this magazine a few years ago asked what would happen if the masters of adult literature began to write again for children as they did in the nineteenth century. Here is an instance which should satisfy anyone except those, if any, who hate dogs.

"From Six to Twelve"

SHIP'S MONKEY. By Honoré Morrow and William J. Swartman. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1933. \$2.

NAM & DENG. A Boy and Girl of Siam. By Phyllis Ayer Sowers. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1933. \$1.50.

COLLETTE AND BABA IN TIMBUCTOO. By Katie Seabrook. New York: Coward-McCann Co. 1933. \$2.

SOUTH SEA PLAYMATES. By Robert Lee Eskridge. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1933. \$1.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS TOBEY

THERE is a danger in reading four books at one sitting, so to speak; it is apt to produce a comparative judgment, to raise any which is superior to dazzling heights in the reviewer's mind and to lower to the point of the negligible any which, considered alone, without the proximity of the others, might seem fairly pleasant. Yet there cannot be any possible doubt that "Ship's Monkey" is a distinguished, delightful book. As told by William J. Swartman (Master Mariner and ex-Lieut. R. N. R.) to Honoré Morrow it concerns the joys and trials, to the good ship *Tamara*, of Chabu, a pet monkey who was found, wounded, in Sumatra by the *Tamara's* bosun. Chabu's adventures are escapades which the reviewer would not trust himself to relay to you; you must—and should—read the book to discover them in all their fine flavor. Gordon Grant's admirable contributions help to make this a book which should have the serious consideration of the Newbery Medal committee.

"Nam and Deng" and "Collette and Baba" not only invite comparison; they demand it. This is unfortunate for the author of one of last year's outstanding books, "Gao of the Ivory Coast." "Nam and Deng" is the story of a brother and sister in Siam, their everyday life and the adventures that befell them when Nam was kidnapped and held for ransom. "Collette and Baba" is the story of Collette's journey from France to Timbuctoo, via the Ivory Coast and the Niger River, and of the attempted kidnapping of Collette and the Touareg boy, Baba, when desert tribes clash in a blinding sand storm. But the desert raid and its excitement occupy only twenty-odd pages of one hundred and sixty-eight which read more like a wearied traveler's letters to the simple-minded servants at home than a story which promises color and charm if not adventure. How much more gracefully Mrs. Sower's story bears the exposition of details of the life of Siamese children, how much more completely does its narrative thread lassoo the minutiae which has to be explained at every step. "Nam and Deng, A Boy and Girl of Siam" is definitely a book on our recommended list.

"South Sea Playmates" is the story of the author-artist's visit to the Island of Manga Reva in the southern Pacific and his friendship with a native boy and girl, Yo and Ti-Ti. It is all there, the games, the preparation of coffee, the descriptions of fish-life and pearl-hunting, but it has the flatness of a group of postcards and none of their rich and essentially florid coloring. Only the Tahitian myth of Tafari's prowess takes any hold upon the mind. Even the illustrations do not live up to the promise of the colorful jacket drawing.

All concerned with life in strange lands under unfamiliar conditions, these books are for boys and girls between six and twelve years of age.