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—Published June 7th—

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	Surface	
BACH, CONCERTO IN D MI. VIOLIN, OBOE & ORCH. Pacific Symphonetta, M. Compinsky, vl., G. Schoenberg, ob. Alco T 100 One 16-inch plastic	33 rpm long-play- ing. Single side. Quality equals that of 12" standard release. Oboe too close—an unpleasant, pinched sound.	AA	On re-hearing, this has its points—mainly the wonderful music. Oboe is very sour, whole a bit bumpy. 2nd & 3rd mvts. best. (Same as Bach 2-piano concerto.)
GRIEG, CELLO SO- NATA IN A MINOR. W. Van Den Burg, vc., Sara Compinsky, piano. Alco T 101 One 16-inch plastic	33 rpm long play- ing. Piano is on tinny side, some bad peaks. Cello good. Balance is OK, acoustics too dead.	AA— to A—	Piano will sound wobbly unless your motor is ab- solutely even. A big, concerto-like piece, fine melodies, overblown de- velopment. Bouncy.
SHOSTAKOVITCH, TRIO IN E MINOR. Compinsky Trio (vio- lin, cello, piano). Alco T 103 One 16-inch plastic	33 rpm long play- ing. Quality bet- ter than in regu- lar (12") release. Level about the same. Fine record- ing except for too high peaks.	AA+	Brilliant, well written, but overextended. Usual Shostakovich marches, scherzo. Good slow mvt. Excellent performance.
TOCH, THE CHI- NESE FLUTE. Paci- fic Symphonetta. M. Compinsky. Alice Mock, sop. Alco T 102 One 16-inch plastic	33 rpm long play- ing. My copy of this is poor—level below that of 12" pressings, seems fuzzy. Probably has been improved.	A to B+	A remarkably effective atmosphere piece, exotic. Astonishing tonal ef- fects, economy of means. Easy listening, but good too!

AT LAST—THE HALF-HOUR RECORD

SOME two years ago (SRL Aug. 24, 1946) this column suggested that instead of the hopeless anomaly of the record changer the sixteen-inch long-playing record was the best way to achieve musical continuity in the home. Now, at last, the first such records are available for home use (above).

It is not easy to change such an industry as the record business. Its inertia is measured in millions of dollars. Only pressure amounting to dire emergency can alter its course. But now that steam is up and pressure rising, every new development, however "practical," must be measured strictly in terms of its potential clash with existing interests. And on every score, I maintain, the long-playing record wins.

1). Long-playing records can be made with minimum conversion. Commercial long-playing discs have been standard throughout radio and in countless other recording situations for years. Moreover many of the records you now buy were originally recorded on sixteen-inch long-playing discs, then copied onto the twelve-inch size. 2). Similarly, slow-speed playing equipment has been made and sold to the trade in great volume for years. Develop-

ment problems are mostly solved ahead of time. With reasonable mass production a good home unit *should cost no more than a good changer*. It is far less complicated in construction. 3). All long-playing equipment is two-speed. It will play your present records as easily as the slow-speed ones, with an absolute minimum of duplication in equipment. Your present library need never be junked! 4). New recordings may be made available in both slow and fast speeds. 5). Older recordings—a vast legitimate vested interest—may be reissued as desirable in long-playing form with a minimum of trouble.

Pending further expected developments, you can acquire a complete "transcription player" (two-speed) for under \$50, and up. Separately, you may have a reasonably solid two-speed motor at any radio outlet for about \$20; a sixteen-inch curved arm pickup (it improves steadiness on regular records) is about \$15 with Nylon cartridge. GE and Pickering fit. Information on Alco records and players from Alco Distributing Co., 267 W. 69th St., New York, or Alco Recording Co., 8913 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 46, if not at your local store.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.



THE RIGHT BOOK AT THE RIGHT TIME

ONE OF the secrets of success in bringing together boys and girls and books is to have the right book at the right time. In the present state of world affairs one of the books reviewed below is an excellent choice for the summer vacation. Children may be a bit weary of various school "projects" that inform them about the problems that men face today. Nevertheless, it is evident that they are doing their own thinking and that their thinking is broader and more impersonal than it has been in other periods of our history.

A book like "Building the World," with its inviting pages and interpretative drawings, may fall into the hands of young people at a moment when they are mentally ready for it, when they are unconsciously reaching out for just what it can give. An exhibit of the development of atomic energy that thousands of New York boys and girls—and many from other cities—will see is an incentive for reading any good book that explains and interprets it. The next two months will bring a certain amount of leisure to young people. This is the time to search the book stores for good stories, good biographies, good books of true adventure. The phrase "leisure reading" has been spoiled by misuse. The truth is that one of the most desirable things on earth is leisure and a good book! It needs a little forethought to create them. The forethought should come now.

MARY GOULD DAVIS.

BUILDERS OF THE OLD WORLD.

By Gertrude Hartman and Lucy S. Saunders. Illustrated by Marjorie Quennell. Maps by Magnuson Derwinski. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1948. 468 pp. \$3.

THIS history of the world, from pre-historic times down to the discovery of America, is so arranged that it could be used as a text book. It has an index, a table of dates, and an unusual number of fascinating and informing maps. On the other hand, it is so interesting in both text and illustration that we can easily imagine reading it as one reads a story. It has an unusually attractive page, with good type and wide margins.

Marjorie Quennell's drawings, in color, are a constant temptation to read the text. It is a book that answers many questions, gives many historical facts with the least possible effort involved.

PICTURE BOOK OF MOLECULES

AND ATOMS. By Jerome S. Meyer. Illustrated by Richard Floethe. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. 1948. 47 pp. \$2.

THIS was published last year, but now that New York is to have an exhibit on the development of atomic energy as a part of its Golden Jubilee, it is a good time to bring it before the boys and girls. It is an explanation of the molecule, the atom, the proton, and the neutron — and of atomic energy in general. It is told in a clear, convincing style, using many comparisons with things that are familiar to most young people. Like "The Picture Book of Astronomy" by the same author and artist, it is presented in a large, flat book with many illustrations. It is far beyond the comprehension of little children, and one wonders if the picture-book form will not antagonize the older ones who are capable of understanding it. There are imagination and design in the drawings, as well as a scientific presentation of a rather complex subject. There are tables showing the proportion of protons, electrons, and neutrons in the various elements. There are drawings which illustrate the action of molecules in gas, liquids, and solid substances. All this is exceedingly useful. Our only adverse criticism is the book's format.

PRINCE OF PARIS and Other

Stories Around the World. By Katherine Adams. New York: Barnes & Noble. 1947. \$2.50.

THE PEACE of this mad world of ours can come only through the continual intercourse and understanding of its youth. That is why Katherine Adams's latest book, a collection of thirty-odd tales of different countries, is so valuable. Holland, Italy, Ireland, Arabia, Turkey, Norway, Greece, the Soviet Union, England, and America are all represented. The stories, written in her natural and

inimitable style, are packed and vivid, abounding in adventure and holding a quality of joyous camaraderie. Yet serious problems are not ignored; such as that of the Brazilian school-boy Tamas, who gives up education, companionship, and good times in Rio de Janeiro to return to his native jungle in the North and teach his people what he has learned; and Janet Wheatley's championship of the Negro girl Cindy Williams, whose genius in painting she discovers by chance.

The reviewer has her own favorites, the chief being a mystical story called "The Voice," an incident of a Greek boy, a runner who feels the presence of Pheidippides; a Dutch story called "The Sleigh" and one from the mountains of Norway, "Karlsdotter and the Cave." Though there are so many stories, some much slighter than others, a high level of interest has been maintained. Only an author who has known early and wide travel, has absorbed the sights, scents, and tastes of other lands could have dealt so happily with young people. They come to life and take our hands; their backgrounds hold clearly the homes, the pets, the dress, and native customs, in short the inherent spirit of each nation. And, oh, the marvelous things they have to eat and the wholesome fun they squeeze out of each day! What a book for boys and girls at the present time. We need to laugh more and—that being the case—we need more books like this one.

LAURA BENÉT.

SENOR CASTILLO: COCK OF THE

ISLAND. By Helen Caire. Pictures by Christine Price. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1948. 76 pp. \$1.50.

A STORY that has something of the flavor of a folktale, this tells of a proud cock who lives on an island off the coast of California. He rules the hens in a royal manner, gets slightly bored with it all, and goes off by himself in search of adventure. After a long and often an uncomfortable and humiliating journey, sometimes on sea and sometimes on land, he returns to the barnyard and the hens a wiser and more humble cock. His story is illustrated with black-and-white drawings that have humor and atmosphere.

LET'S MAKE A LOT OF THINGS.

Written and Illustrated by Harry Zarchy. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1948. 156 pp. \$2.50.

HERE are clear, practical directions for making jewelry and for making various useful and beautiful objects from metal, from clay, and