Book Reviews

All unsigned reviews were made by the Editor.

Elementary Education

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE JUNGLE, Russell Peterson, 64 pp., $2.50, Franklin Watts, Inc., New York 22, 1964.

For many children, whose ideas of the jungle are derived from motion picture and television fiction, this enchanting "first book" describes in its own quiet but vivid way the silent jungle of Guiana, inexorably dominated by its kingdom of plants. Here is the stage upon which are played the deadly struggles of animals to survive their enemies and the courageous attempts of man to conquer the wilderness for himself. The lure of the jungle, which continues to attract the adventurous spirit, is easily understood by the reader of this colorful book. Young people, from intermediate school on, will surely be intrigued by the wealth of authentic detail and by the opportunity to explore for themselves one of nature's few remaining frontiers.

Maxine Dunfee
School of Education
Indiana University

THE CRAZY CANTILEVER AND OTHER SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS, Robert R. Kadesch, 175 pp., $3.95, Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., New York, 1961.

This book contains a group of 40 science experiments and demonstrations which can easily be done by the science interested youngster. The materials and equipment needed are easily obtained around the home and therefore are available in the classroom at low cost. Even though the experiments are simple, they provide practice in careful observation, sound experimentation, and clear thinking. Even the individual titles are worded to attract attention as well as to indicate the nature of the demonstration. Each is illustrated by pictures and/or diagrams which clarify and complement the experiment.

Parents and elementary teachers should be strongly urged to make it available to children.

Virgil Heniser
Coordinator for School Science
Indiana University

BIOGRAPHY OF THE UNBORN, Margaret Shea Gilbert, 160 pp., $3.50, Hafner Publishing Company, New York, 1963.

A fascinating book in which the author attempts to objectively describe events from union of the sperm and egg to parturition. Simplification in this case has not robbed the presentation of its factual accuracy. Illustrated with line drawings which are few in number but carefully chosen. Early, historical misconceptions such as the sperm manchild being nurtured by the female are dismissed scientifically. The chapters of this book are a chronology of the development of the human embryo. The author has chosen the content well. She explains clearly and succintly the development of each organ system in man. Excess scientific verbiage is avoided. This book might well be recommended for the young first time mother. Information is complete enough to satisfy the discriminating biologist. Recommended for high school libraries as a book to be read by students in health and biology classes. Needs little if any adult interpretation.

H. S. Fowler
College of Education
The Pennsylvania State University

BECAUSE OF A TREE, Lorus and Margery Milne, 152 pp., $3.95, Atheneum Publishing Company, New York, 1963.

The Milnes have done a masterful job of developing for youngsters the ecologists' theme of a "balanced community" by describing a series of events, all taking place within the spreading branches of eight different trees. The Christmas tree, Cyprus, Redwood, and the Sugar Maple are some specific examples of the trees used to depict a general ecological unit or biome where they would be found as part of the typical vegetation. No where in the book does the ecologists' vocabulary appear, but around each tree develops the story of the interdependence of life illustrating that all are different but have adapted in special ways to the place where they live. No one of them stands alone yet each has evolved together, forming a community of living things each depending on the other for survival. An excellent book for the upper elementary and junior high school reader who needs to see and understand the relationships between the different forms of life.

Ronald Gibbs
Coordinator for School Science
Indiana University

STARS, MOSQUITOES AND CROCODILES, Millicent E. Selsam, Ed., 170 pp., $3.50, Harper and Row, Publishers, New York 16, 1962.

Charles Darwin called Humboldt, "The most scientific traveler who ever lived." *Stars, Mosquitoes and Crocodiles* is the story of Humboldt's travels to the Equinoctial regions of America during the year 1799-1804. The original account of Humboldt's travels runs 1,500 pages of fine print. From it and other of Humboldt's writings, Mrs. Selsam has selected those