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come well equipped to deal judiciously and kindly with the gamut of family and social problems assigned to them.

Spalver seems able to deal with the problems. She does so with sincerity and sensitive directness, whether the topic is dating, social rating, or mating. Mostly she uses short sentences of simple language. Probably a sophisticated, highly intelligent student would consider the dialogue a bore; but perhaps this type of student would not (or should not?) need the clarifications and admonishments. The so-called "slow learner," the slow reader, and the troubled ghetto youth may read the book more willingly, and each may well find good counseling here.

Marjorie P. Behringer
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks

THE TEEN-AGE DIET BOOK, by Ruth West. 1969. Julian Messner, New York. 183 pp. \$3.95.

Ruth West's adroit turn of phrase and her high-spirited writing make this book—and dieting—a fun thing. She seems keyed in to the thought and talk of adolescents—and of parents, as well, in a last section, "For Parents Only!"

Her humor ("Your gullible gullet!") and her joyful approach ("Play it off. You can!"), along with advice on "How to Shape Up" and a section of "Fun on the Straight and Narrow Menu," all add up to an entertaining book that just may work. (I'll tell you later.)

With the good humor, the author presents a sensible approach to dieting, mindful of the health requirements of nutrition and exercise. The book receives a grade of A-plus for adolescents and adults alike.

Marjorie P. Behringer
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks

THE EARTH IN ACTION, by Margaret O. Hyde. No date. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York. 128 pp. \$4.95.

The Earth in Action appears to be intended for readers of junior high school age. The book deals with dramatic and inherently interesting aspects of earth science, with major emphasis on geophysics. There are sections on oceanography, continental drift, polar study, and other broad topics.

The book contains many illustrations, and it is these that first raise questions as to the book's usefulness. The color and black-and-white photographs are well chosen and nicely reproduced, but the sketches and paintings are poorly executed, inaccurate, and misleading. Captions range from inaccurate to unfortunate.

On the first page of text appears the statement, "Each light year is the distance it takes light to travel in one year..." There is a premonition that awkward writing is to follow, and it does; for example, "These are just a

few of the projects some explorers are using to increase their knowledge by studying the bottom of the edge of the sea from its surface." And some statements are distinctly puzzling, as: "Great blocks of rock perhaps ten miles wide, may undergo a tilting process, and the fault may be as much as fifty feet high. It is easy to see why the earth above trembles causing catastrophe to large areas." In this and many similar cases the lack of clarity appears to be a consequence of misinformation rather than of poor expression.

Perhaps the most disturbing single passage is this: "Even though you live in an earthquake zone, there is relatively little danger that one will harm you. In any case, there seems to be as much disagreement about what to do when an earthquake strikes as there is about why they occur." On the contrary—young people, especially those living in seismically active regions, can and should be given specific instructions about what to do during an earthquake.

The book is not recommended.

Robert L. Swift, explorer
Belmont, Calif.

ZOOLOGY

FAIRWEATHER DUCK, by Vincent G. Dethier. 1970. Walker and Co., New York. 178 pp. \$4.95.

Fairweather Duck is fair-weather reading! The author of that delightful book, *To Know a Fly*, has written another thoroughly charming volume. A day-old wild duck adopts Vince Dethier, his wife, and their two sons, and spends a summer in Maine with them. The author's keen observation of the duck's growth and behavior will delight the biologist and nonbiologist, young and old, alike.

Jerry P. Lightner
NABT, Washington, D.C.

THE ARACHNIDS: AN INTRODUCTION, by Keith R. Snow. 1970. Columbia University Press, New York. 85 pp. \$5.00.

This is an unusually clear though limited "quickie" about mites, ticks, spiders, scorpions, false scorpions, sun spiders, and the king, or horseshoe, crab (*Xiphosura*). The diagrams of body parts, together with the glossary, are most helpful. Snow also tells how to collect and preserve arachnids.

This reader, who not long ago was emotionally involved in the care and contentment of eight tarantulas, found herself wondering whether Snow really likes arachnids or knows them as delightful creatures with whom one can have a friendly relationship. The defect (if it is that) is remedied somewhat by the supplemental-reading list, which takes the reader from the mere mechanics of these animals to a closer look into their remarkable little lives. Are