C’est une heureuse initiative d’avoir publié une nouvelle édition, revue, de cette *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises* dans une édition commode et à un prix abordable, mais il est dommage que la riche iconographie de l’édition précédente ne s’y trouve pas.

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The name “Darton” has long been associated with the production and history of children’s books in England. William Darton I (1755–1819) completed an apprenticeship as an engraver and worked as one for a time before setting up his own printing and publishing firm in London in 1787. He briefly was located at White Lion Alley, Birchin Lane, but soon moved to 55 Gracechurch Street where, in 1791, he established a partnership with Joseph Harvey (1764–1841). Over the years the firm’s name varied, but descendants of the founding partners carried on the business at the Gracechurch Street location until its closure in 1846. Having served an apprenticeship with his father, William Darton II (1781–1854) set up an independent business in 1804, starting out at 40 Holborn Hill, where he worked in partnership with his brother Thomas from 1806 to 1811. In 1808 W. & T. Darton moved to 58 Holborn Hill where the firm remained, again carried on by descendants and with changes in name, until 1876. The Darton firms were among the principal publishers of children’s books, teaching aids, and other pastimes during these years.

books. In his research, Darton also accumulated much information on the non-book publications for children produced by both firms, but decided not to include them in his checklist. In 2002, he offered his extensive notes to Jill Shefrin, suggesting that she produce a separate volume on the non-book publications. With Darton’s documentation as a basis, his personal collection of Darton imprints available in the Cotsen Children’s Library at Princeton University (along with other Darton material from other sources), and the support of the Cotsen Family Foundation for research and publication, Shefrin spent some seven years completing the project. The result is this beautifully produced, richly illustrated, and highly detailed work.

Shefrin has divided the volume into five parts. She begins with a brief history of printed teaching aids to provide a context for the productions of the Dartons. Next is a “vade mecum” which serves as a guide to the sorts of teaching aids included in the volume, giving the history and physical descriptions of each, as well as notes on Darton practices. This section also includes definitions of terms used, abbreviations, and related technical and historical terms, as well as a key to the icons used throughout the checklist. Following this is an essay on the Dartons as publishers of prints and educational aids in which Shefrin explores the role they played in the development of that market. A chronology of the imprints of the two firms is reproduced from Lawrence Darton’s book. The descriptive checklist of the educational aids, pastimes, and juvenile ephemera published by the two firms makes up the bulk of the volume and is discussed below. This section also includes addenda to Lawrence Darton’s Check-list and a list of Darton Juvenile Books in the Cotsen collection cross-referenced to the Check-list numbers. The final section contains a description of the Darton Family Archive from the Gracechurch Street branch held by the Cotsen’s Children’s Library, with biographical notes. The sources consulted are given in three different places: a list of recommended works follows the vade mecum, works cited in the checklist immediately precede that section of the book, and other works consulted appear at the end of the volume. There is an appendix containing two tables: one, on the survival rates for Darton pastimes based on the checklist, and the other, those items issued by William and Thomas Darton. The indexing of the volume is divided into three sections: authors, illustrators, and titles, with selected subjects; booksellers, printers, engravers, and lithographers; and the archive.

Over the years the Darton firms were active, the market for teaching aids and educational pastimes expanded dramatically with
the expansion of educational opportunities for all levels of society. The Dartons, particularly the younger firm, responded to the demand producing a wide range of products: alphabet tiles, battledores, block puzzles, cards (reward, flash, and conversation cards), dissected (jigsaw) maps, dissected pictorial puzzles, games, maps, map samplers, pictorial sheets, scrolls, text sheets, writing sheets, and object lesson boxes. All are covered in the checklist. Following Lawrence Darton’s arrangement, Shefrin has divided the material between the Gracechurch Street (G) and Holborn Hill (H) firms and has continued his numbering sequence for each. Within each firm, the arrangement is essentially alphabetical by author/artist or title, but the sequence is frequently disrupted with sub-sections: maps, for example, are grouped geographically by continent (except for the United Kingdom which is listed separately), then chronologically for continental maps and alphabetically by individual countries within the continent. Works with assigned titles, given in square brackets, appear in the alphabetical order, but untitled works are listed at the end of each sequence. There also are unnumbered notes set in italic type which precede a set of entries and provide either biographical information for an author/artist (not all are given this treatment) or bring together information about a series. The sequence of unique “G” or “H” numbers, the “bibliographic identifier,” is frequently sub-numbered: by Arabic numerals for different formats (pictorial sheet, dissected puzzle, sets of cards, etc.) and by Roman numerals for different states or editions. This makes the checklist somewhat difficult to navigate at times, but the indexes prove helpful when searching for a particular item. There also is a certain amount of repetition, some of it intentional so that a reader seeking a specific example will not have to consult other sections of the checklist or the volume.

The icons at the head of each entry provide a visual key to the format of the item. Author, title, and imprint information, including the full address, is given as it appears (London is assumed) with no attempt to provide an exact facsimile. An open square bracket separates the transcription from the location of copies, which are listed alphabetically. (Shefrin includes all located copies whether or not she was able to examine them.) Sources cited follow two forward slashes. Items recorded solely from advertisements are indicated as follows: “[// Advt.” Notes to the entries include additional information about the physical object (the graphic technique, dimensions of the sheet, descriptions of boxes, slipcases, or other original containers); details
about the design and content; copy specific information on surviving copies, including provenance; and references to other information in the checklist.

In all, Shefrin has described some 2200 items when the sub-numbering is taken into consideration. A breakdown by formats and firms is given at the head of page 89 in the essay on the Dartons, while a table on survival rates, by firm only, appears in the appendix. (Curiously, the totals per firm vary slightly in these two charts: 368 for G and 1,843 for H in the first chart; 357 for G and 1854 for H in the Appendix.) Of the total number of items described, 56.5% are known only from advertisements (33% G; 61% H), 34.5% located in a single copy (55%, G; 30.5% H), and 9% located in multiple copies (12% G; 8.5% H). It would have been useful to have the survival rates broken down by format as well as a greater explanation of the figures. It is likely, as Shefrin notes, that copies will surface as more collections of ephemeral materials are catalogued and/or digitized. As she explains, two albums of prints, one in an institution, the other in a private collection, came to light just in time to be included in the checklist. The publication of this volume will help, no doubt, to discover more material yet.

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Jennifer Alison’s case study of Angus and Robertson, the leading Australian publisher in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is an important addition to the growing body of work on Australian print culture. This substantial book focuses on the firm’s early years, 1888 to 1900, and Alison analyzes Angus and Robertson’s publication list and accounts, as well as examines the publisher’s sales and advertising practices. The Angus and Robertson archive at the Mitchell Library in Sydney includes 13,000 business letters, and reading this “vibrant” correspondence inspired this meticulously