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STORY HOUR in the children's room at Wellington Central Library—a member of the library staff opens the session with folk tales illustrated from a picture-book

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## CHILDREN NEED BOOKS

CHILDREN don't mince matters. The parent who established the bedtime story tradition was probably told petulantly, as so many others have been told since, "I don't want *that* book; I want . . ." which may fairly sum up the relationship of the reading guide and the child whose reading is guided. Left to themselves, children do not necessarily find the right kind of books—a newsagent told *The Listener* that he did "a huge business in comics, pirate, and gangster stuff with adults as well as

children"—yet the first book a child reads may be of the utmost importance in determining his later tastes.

One of the objects of *Children's Book Week* this year (from Sunday, August 15, to Saturday, August 21) will be to encourage adults to read more children's books. Anyone who has been interested in the reading of a child knows that this reading guidance is a ticklish business, and that mere censorship doesn't work. Reading *with* children may be the only answer in the early stages, and though the habit of reading aloud may lapse later, it is necessary that a teacher



Spencer Digby photograph  
A. W. REED (left) and STELLA MORICE, winners of the Esther Glen Award for distinguished work in the field of New Zealand children's literature