



INVESTIGATING THE CHPC ARCHIVES

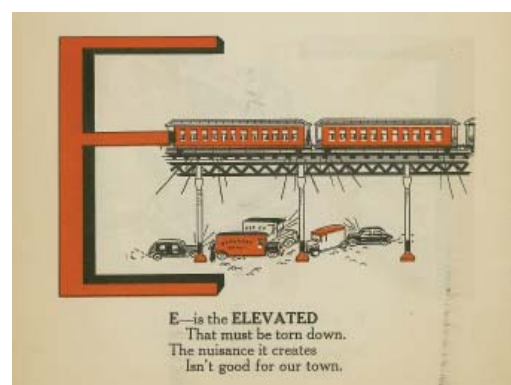
The ABC of City Planning: Not Just For Children

**"J is for Jumble
caused only by Man
Who recklessly built
without a good plan."**

- ABC of City Planning

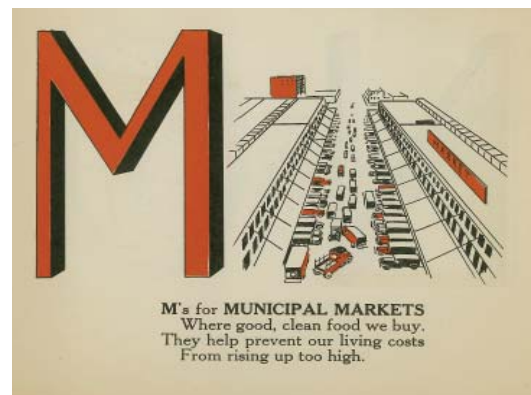
In 1937, Mayor La Guardia's Committee on City Planning produced a small book for children, titled *The ABC of City Planning*, intended to instill understanding and enthusiasm in children for the city's built environment. CHPC has preserved a copy of this adorable text, which for modern audiences is more than just an amusing diversion: it offers a unique insight into a New York City of a different era. Below, a few highlights, then a full reproduction of the text.

The Elevated in the E stanza refers to New York's first form of rapid transit, first operated in 1868. Its demise in Manhattan was ushered in by cleaner, quieter, faster underground subways - the most notable destroyed line being the Third Avenue El, torn down in 1955 and replaced only by the already existing Lexington Avenue line and bus routes.



Omnibus, meaning "for all" in Latin, is the linguistic predecessor to what we know simply as a bus; it was originally the term for a horse-drawn stagecoach that ran along a fixed route, holding around 15 passengers. The ABC praises the modernity of the motorized omnibus!

In the 1930s, Mayor La Guardia championed a WPA-built system of retail and wholesale food markets in an attempt to eradicate 15,000 food pushcarts, which were considered unsanitary nuisances and sold everything from peaches to "damaged" eggs. Vestiges of the municipal markets can be seen in the Essex Street retail market on the Lower East Side, La Marqueta in East Harlem, and the Gateway Center, a new retail development at the old wholesale Bronx Terminal Market in the South Bronx.



Citizens Housing & Planning Council

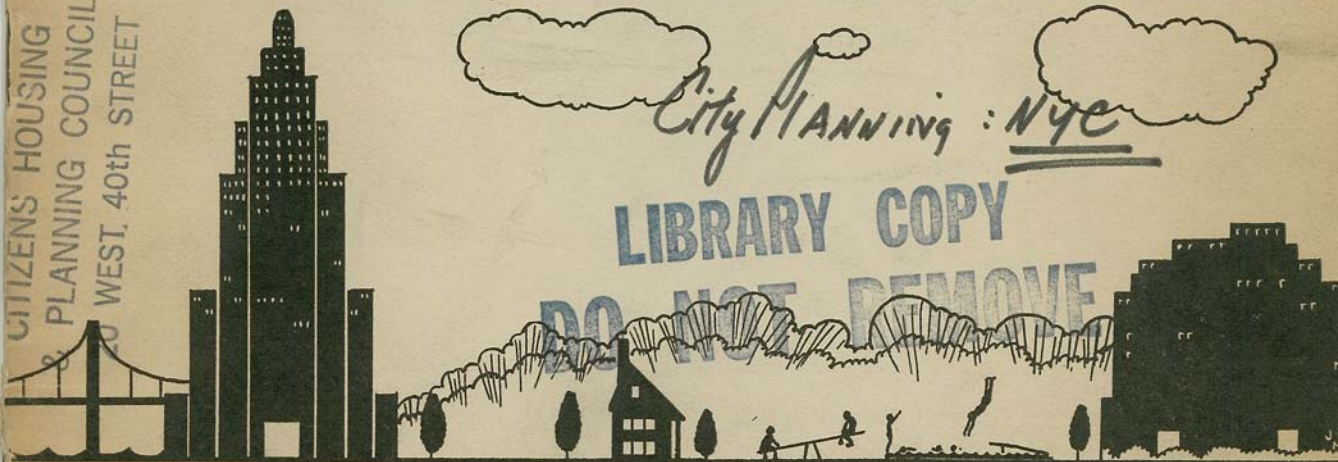
Founded in 1937, CHPC is a non-profit policy research organization dedicated to improving housing and neighborhood conditions through cooperative efforts of the public and private sectors.

By Stefanie Marazzi

The A B C

~~NYC. City Planning~~
~~Basic Educational Material~~

CITIZENS HOUSING
& PLANNING COUNCIL
20 WEST 40th STREET



of CITY

C.2

May

PLANNING



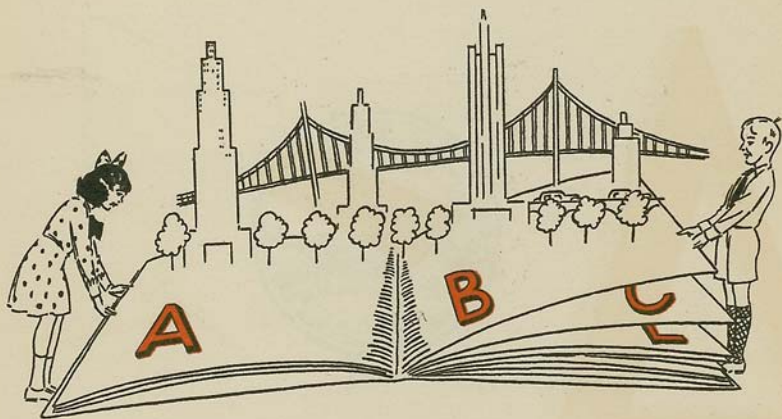
F. H. LAGUARDIA
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

This Pamphlet Compiled by

ANNA SHEPARD

Director of Education

Mayor's Committee on City Planning



FOREWORD

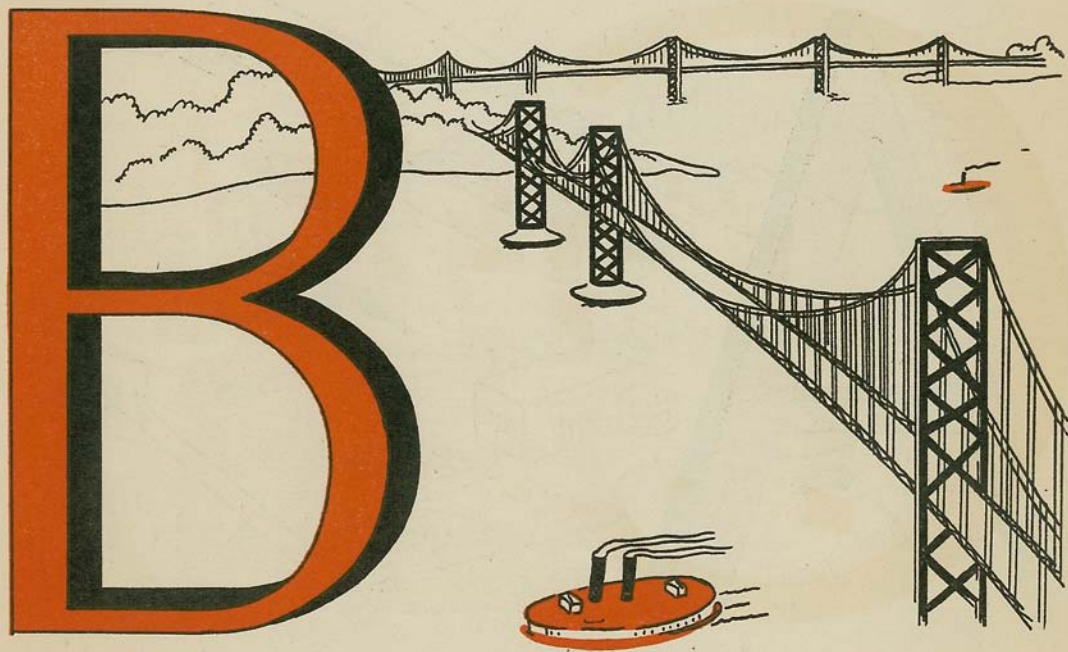
CITY PLANNING is not for "Adults Only". Children of all ages can understand the necessity for a finer, better, safer and more convenient city. Unless they do understand it, and it becomes as fundamental as the ABC, we can never hope to make our city the healthful, happy home it should be for our children and our children's children.

LAWRENCE M. ORTON

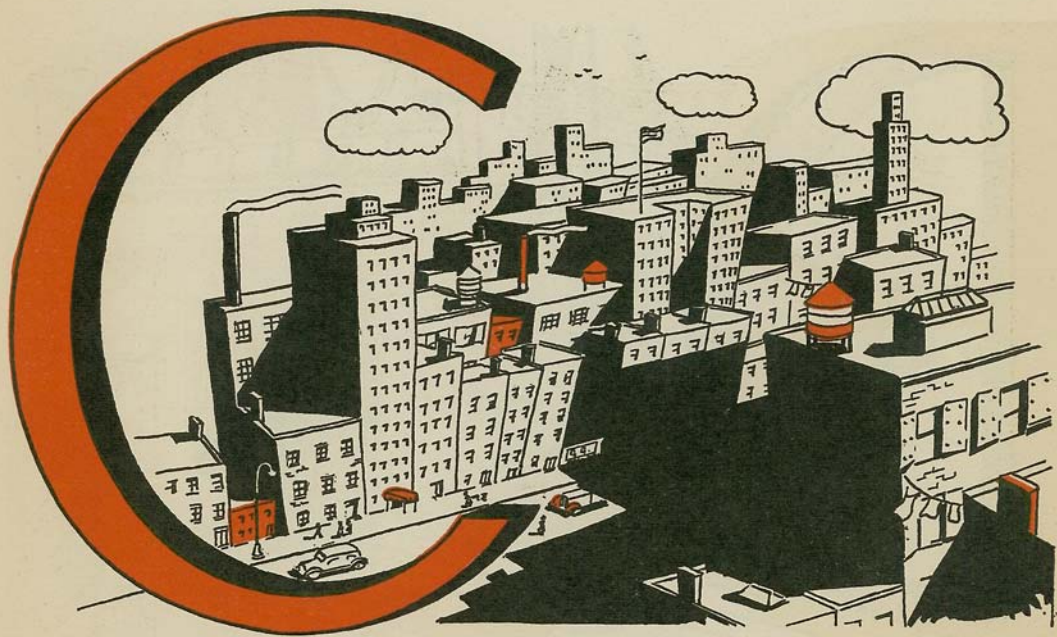
Secretary, Mayor's Committee on City Planning.



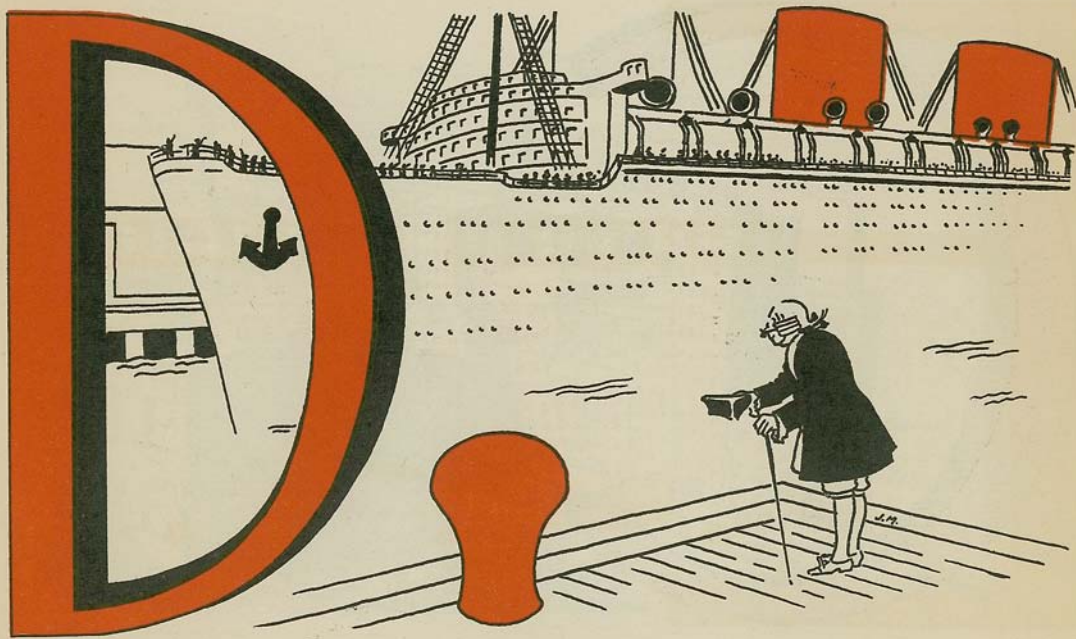
A—is for **AIRPORT**
Where airplanes are bound.
They must have a clear space
Where they can ground.



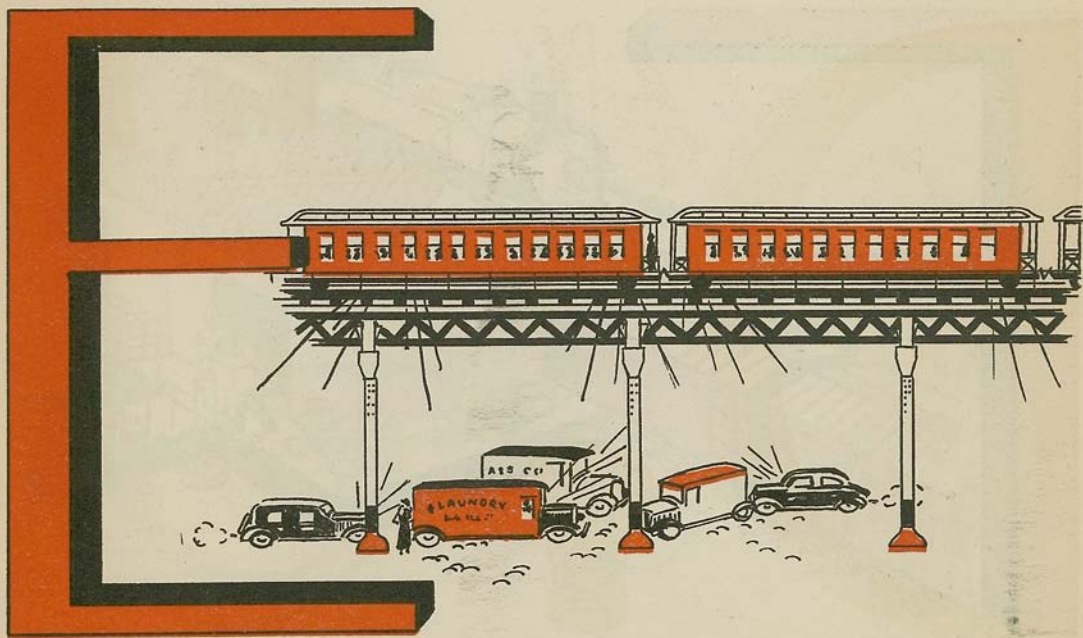
B—is for **BRIDGES**
That join land with land,
They help us to travel
But must be well-planned.



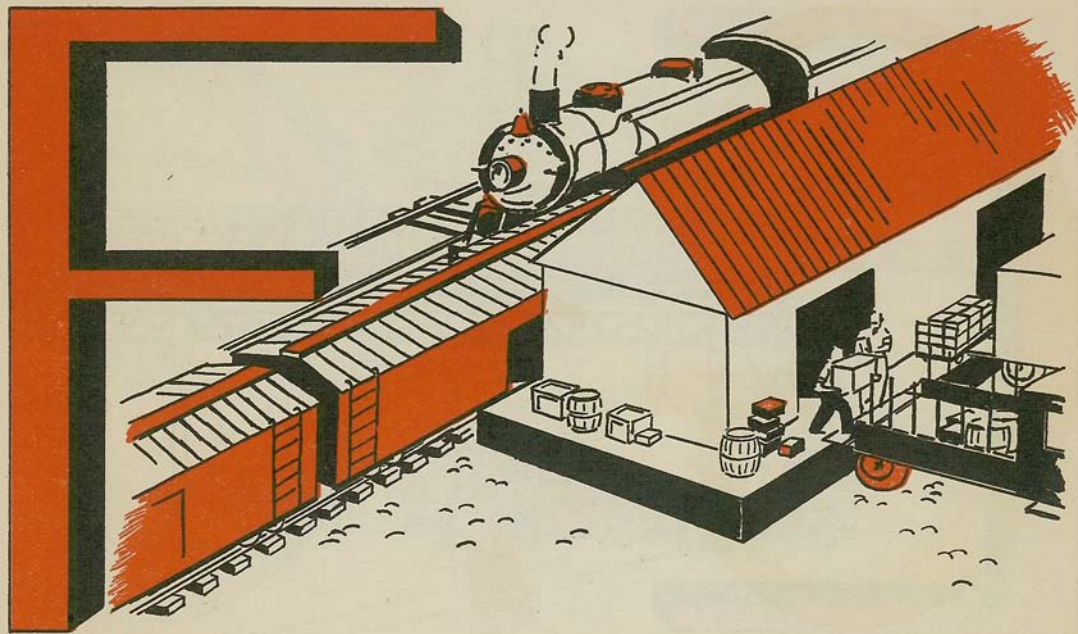
C—is for **CITY**,
In which we all dwell,
Where we work, sleep and play
And try to keep well.



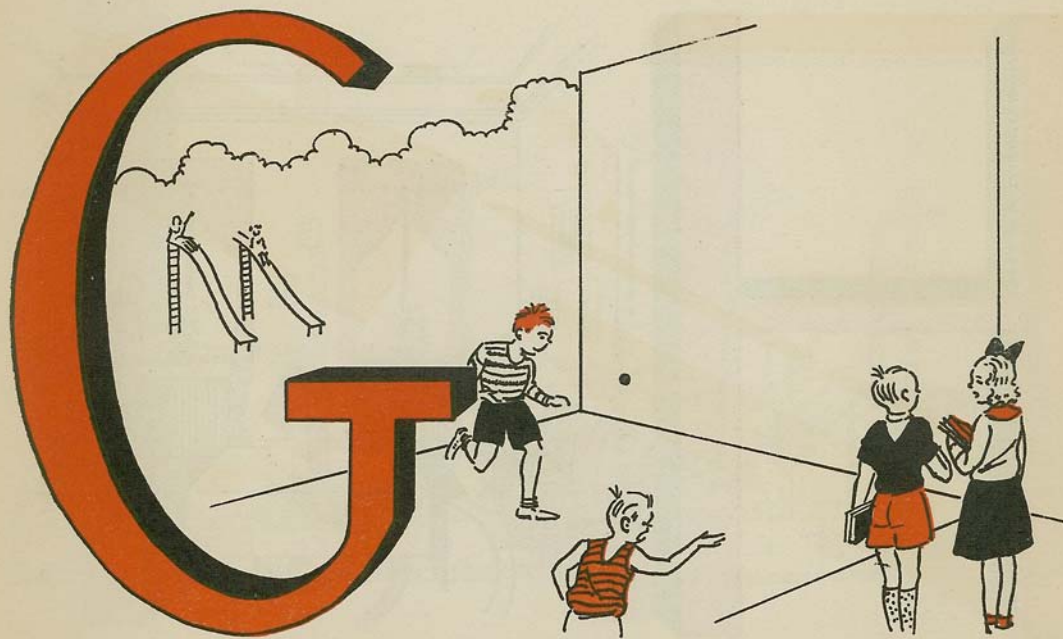
D—is for **DOCKS**,
The nation's front door,
What strangers see first
When they land on our shore.



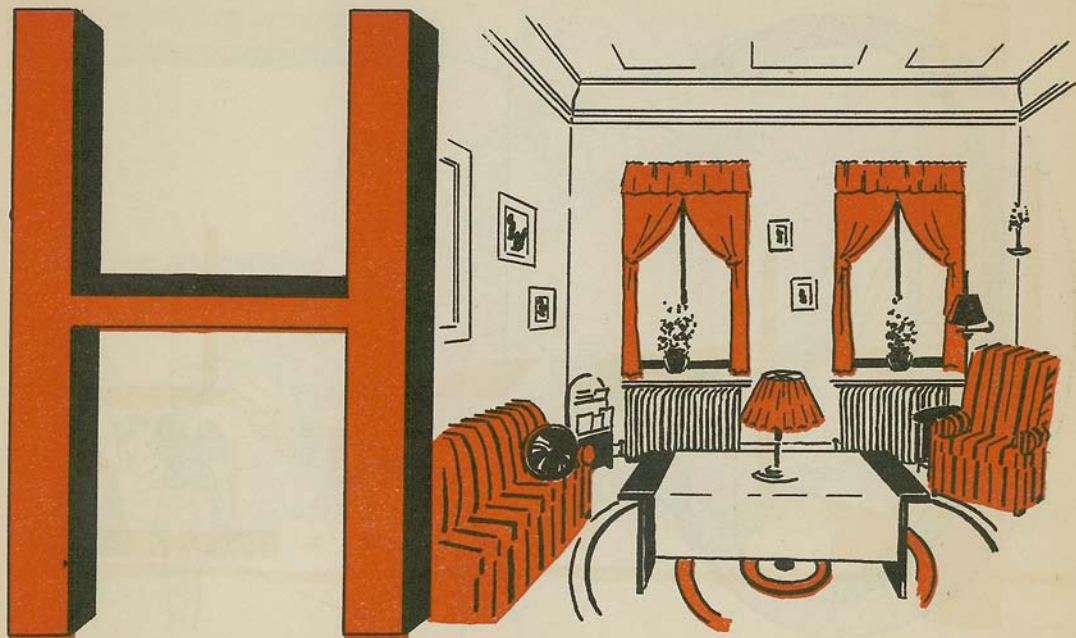
E—is the **ELEVATED**
That must be torn down.
The nuisance it creates
Isn't good for our town.



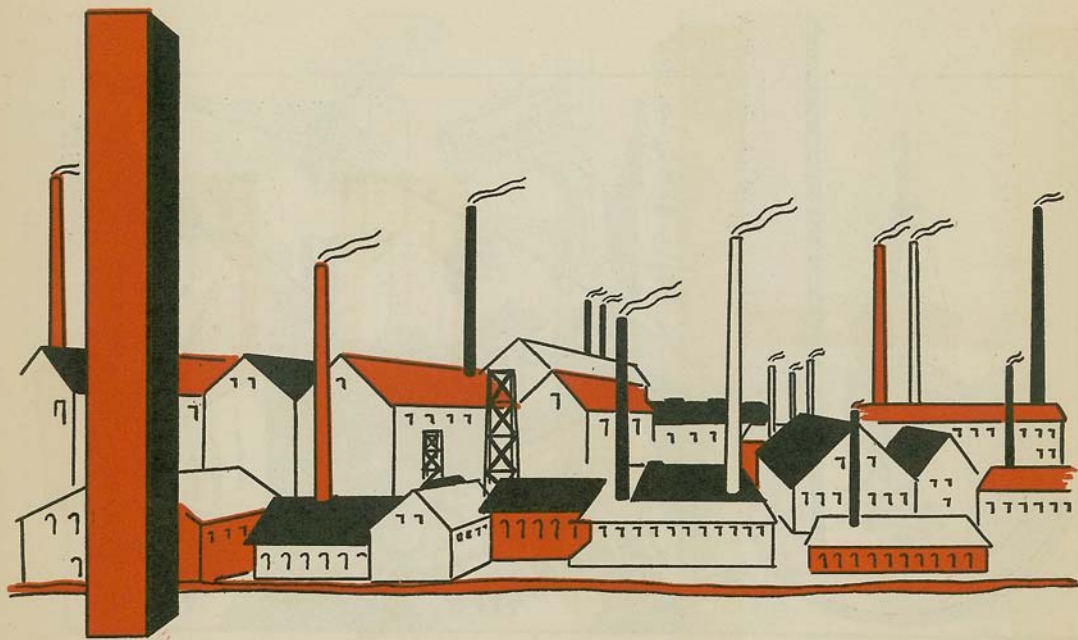
F—is for **FREIGHT**,
Bringing things which we need—
So to railroads and trucking
We have to pay heed.



G—is for **GAMES**,
We all like to play
In fine parks and playgrounds
Where we spend the day.



H—is for **HOME**,
The place we keep neat,
With large sunny windows
Facing the street.



I—is for **INDUSTRY**—
Factories and stores,
(But kept in their places,
Not right at our doors.)

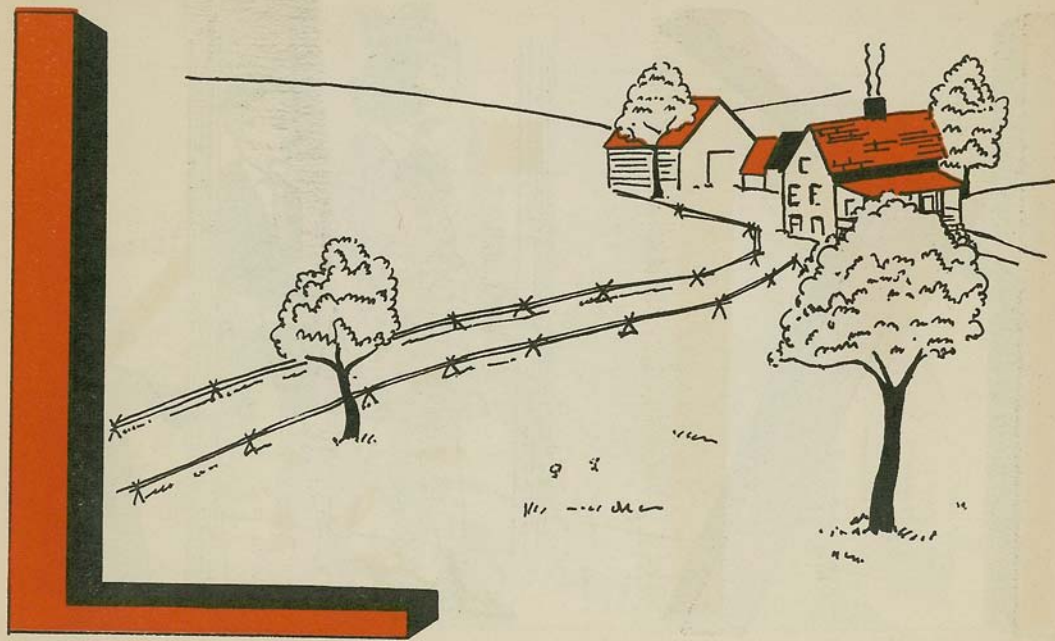


J—is for **JUMBLE**
Caused only by Man
Who recklessly built
Without a good plan.

K

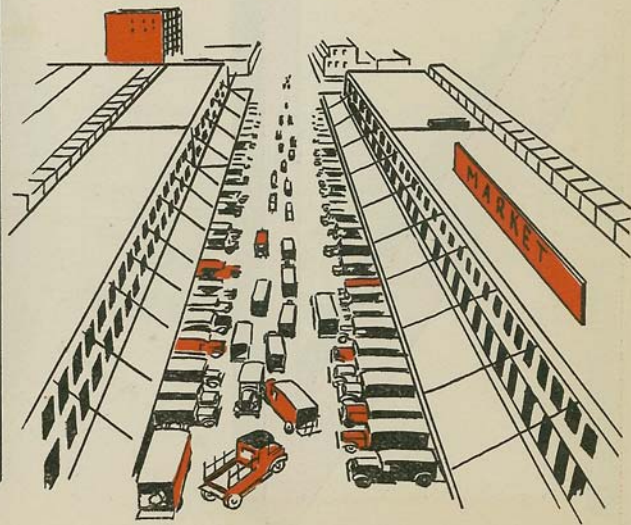


K—is for **KNOWLEDGE**
Which surely does show
Just how our great city
Must prosper and grow.



L—is for **LAND**
That used to be green,
But now it's all pavements—
So let's keep them clean.

M



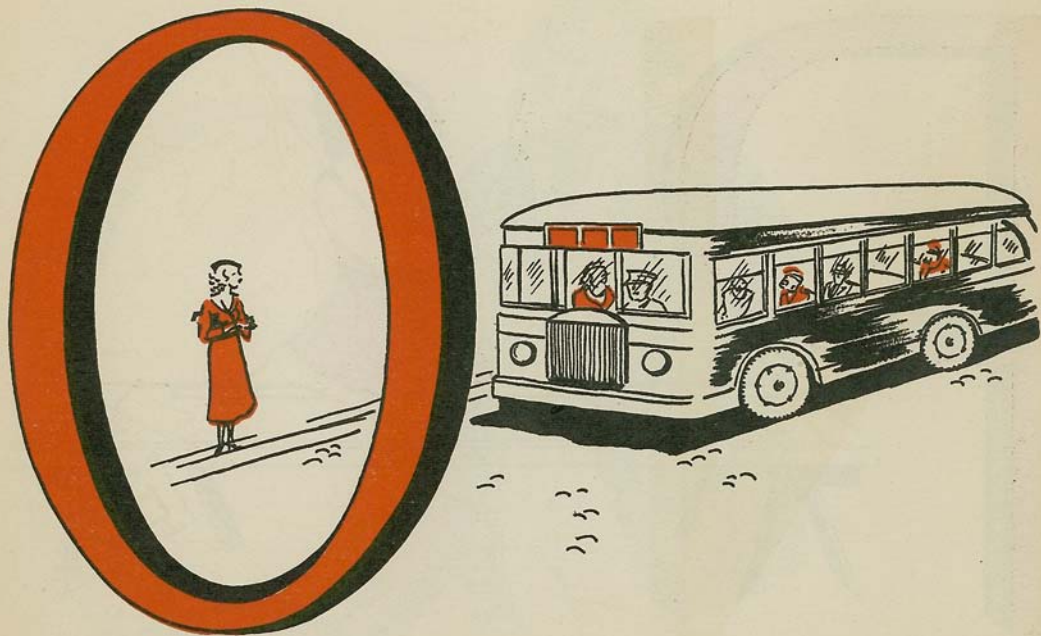
M's for MUNICIPAL MARKETS

Where good, clean food we buy.
They help prevent our living costs
From rising up too high.

N



N's for **NEW YORK**,
And also for **NICE**—
To make New York livable
Is worth any price.



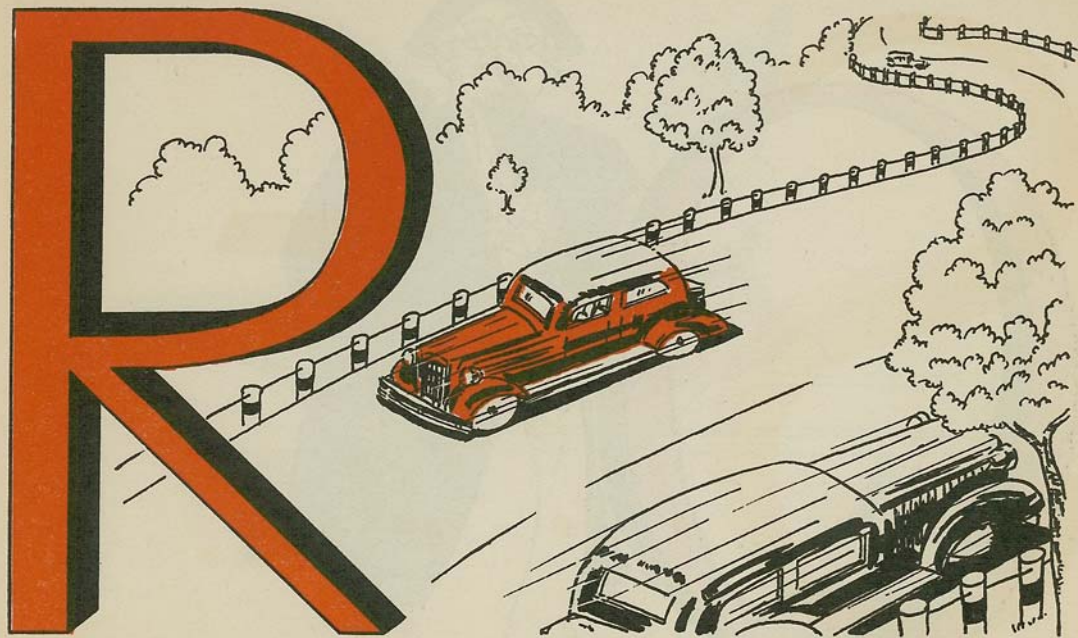
O—is for **OMNIBUS**,
And the nickel you pay
Transports you for miles
In a most modern way.



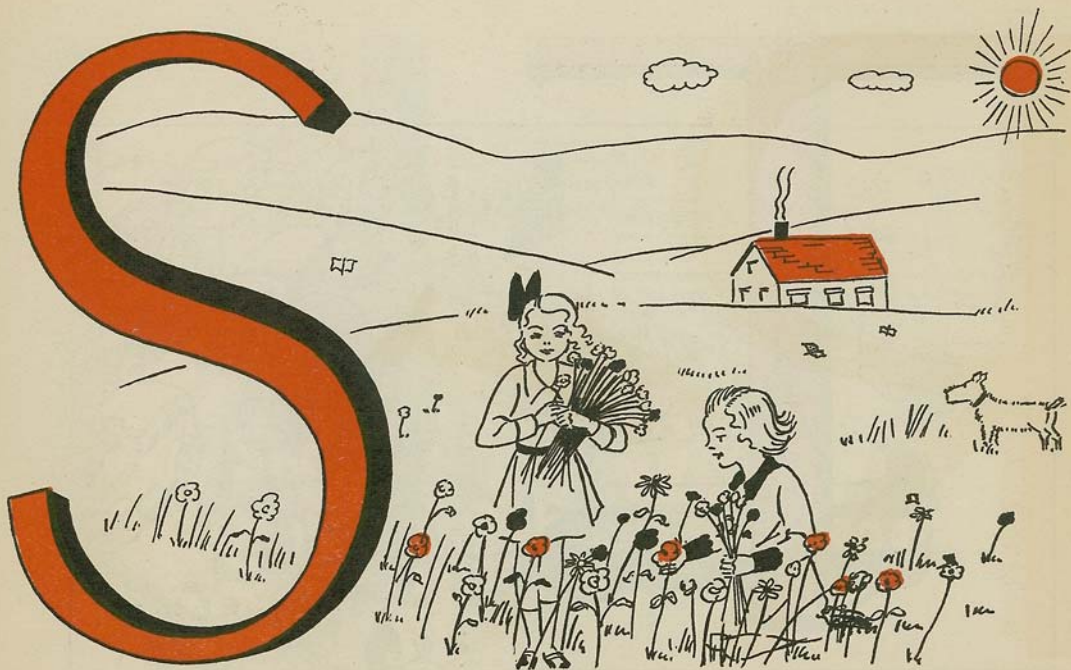
P—is for **PLANNING**,
The thing we must do
To make a fine city
For me and for you.



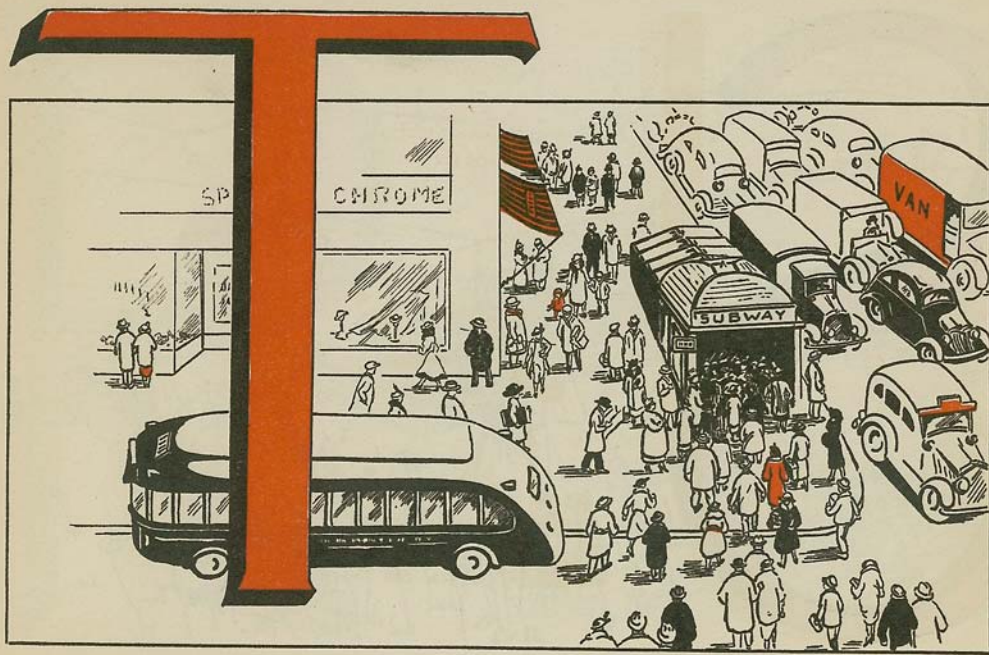
Q—is for **QUIET**,
For which we should care
Almost as much as
For sunshine and air.



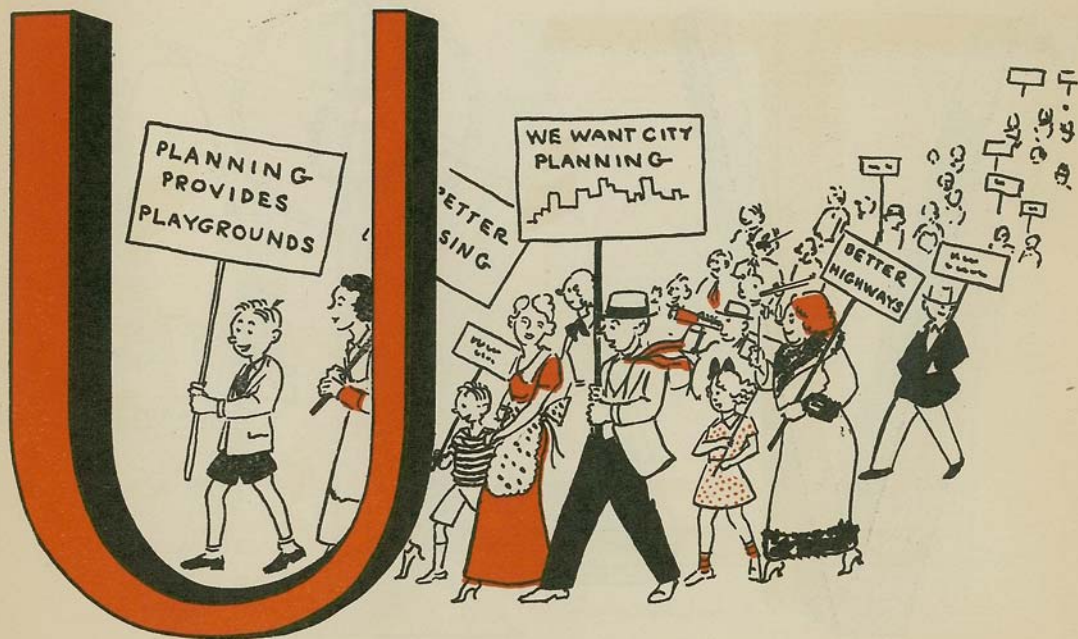
R—is for **ROADS**
Over which we must ride,
It's best, then, to make them
All smooth, safe and wide.



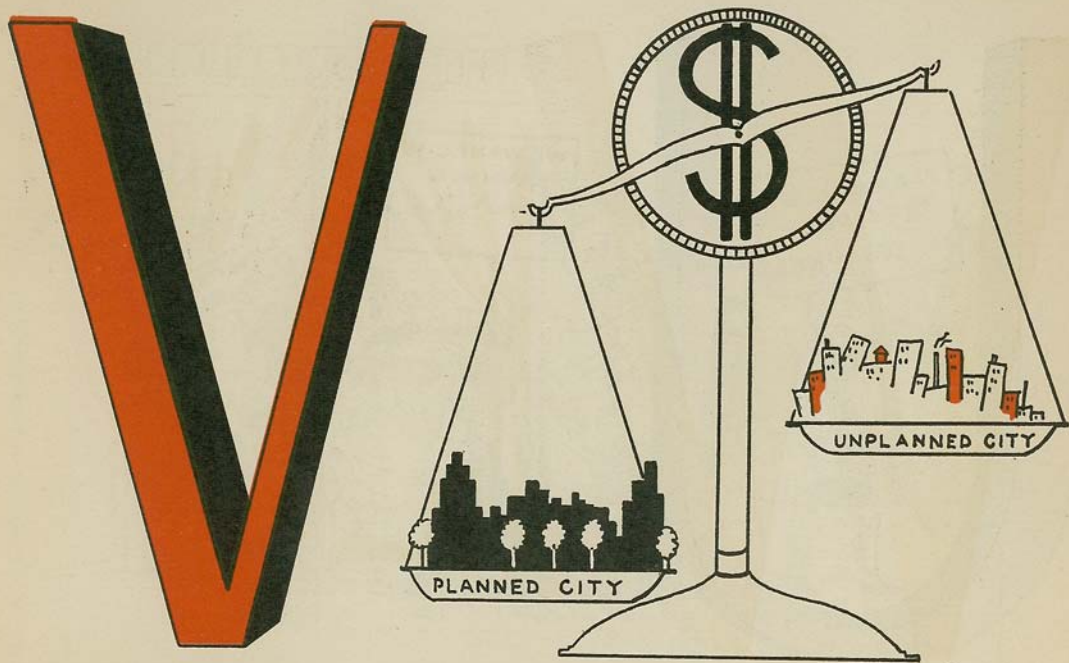
S—is for **SUNLIGHT**,
We need it for health.
For plenty of sunshine
Means more than great wealth.



T—is for **TRANSIT**,
A system of travel.
The mix-up we have
We now must unravel.



U—is for **UNION**,
That makes us all strong,
And helps us to push
City Planning along.



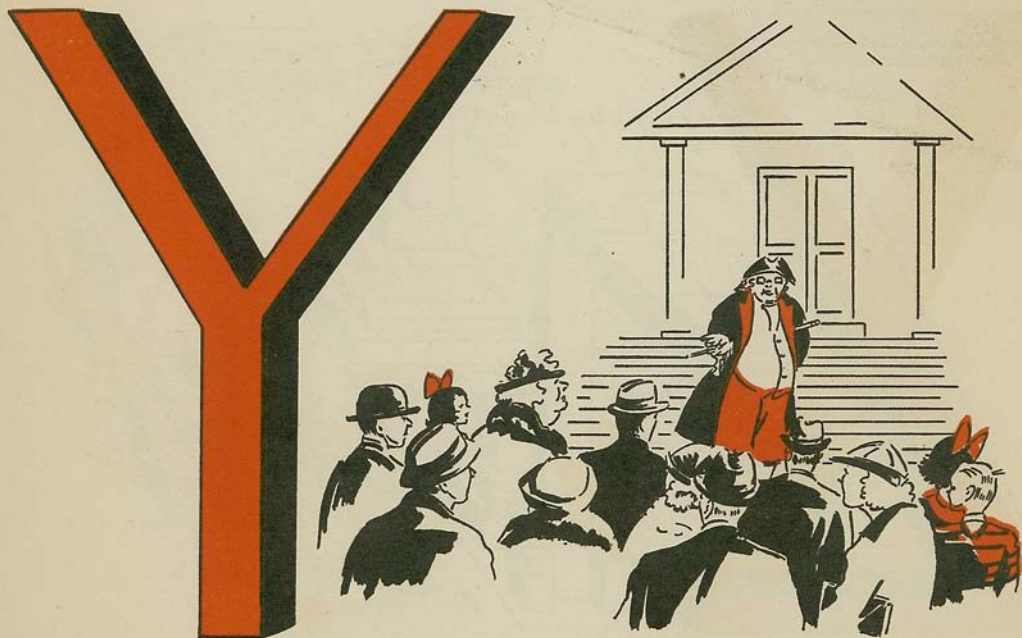
V—is for **VALUE**
Not measured in wealth.
Planners think wisely
Weighing comfort and health.



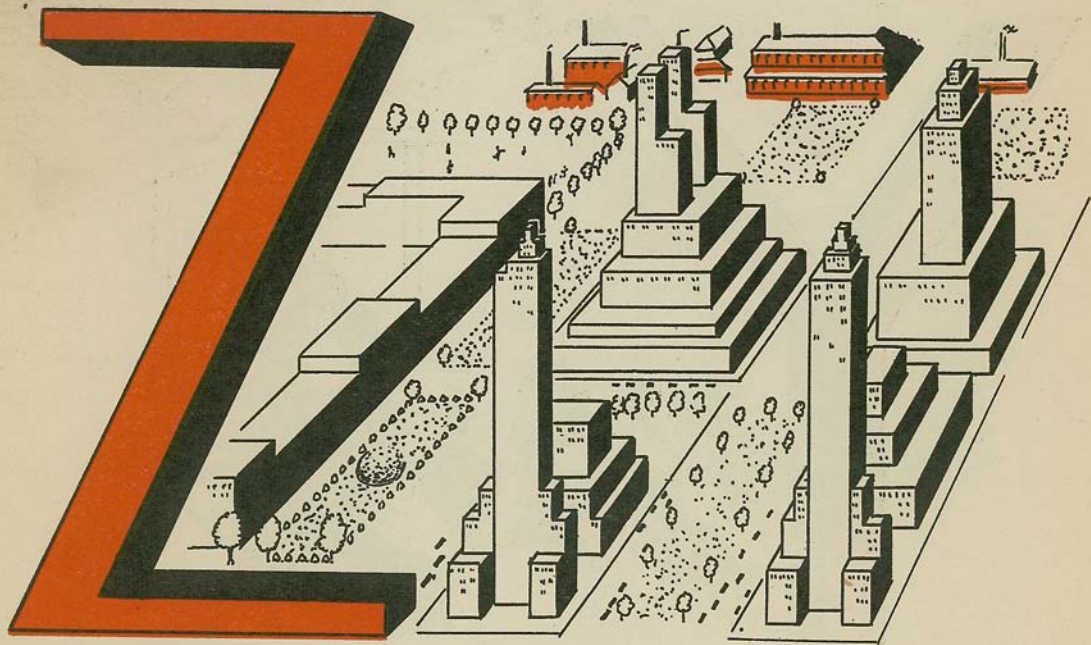
W—is for **WINDOWS**,
That let in the light,
And make homes and classrooms
Both healthful and bright.



X—is the **CROSSING**
Where often we've seen
People breaking through traffic
When lights are not green.



Y—is for YOU
To work and to plan,
To make New York City
As fine as you can.



Z—is for **ZONING**
That marks off the land,
So that homes, schools and factories
Are properly planned.

PRINTED BY MARSTIN PRESS, INC., NEW YORK



