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Tradewinds

# Train For Girls, Saucers For Boys

By ERNEST L. ARMS

Toys have come a long way from the rag dolls and wagons.

These two, of course, still are favorites with the junior miss and junior executive of 1980.

But look what's ahead: \$500 electric cars the children can drive around, and a "satellite launcher" which shoots four flying saucers 70 feet into the air.

Americans this year are expected to spend a record-breaking \$1.5 billion for toys and games of all kinds.

**THAT'S THE WORD** from top toy manufacturers at the 54th annual Toy Fair in New York. Some 1600 toy makers are showing their 1957 lines at the fair, and 16,000 buyers from all over the world are expected to attend before it closes next Friday.

About 125,000 different toy items are being displayed, ranging from penny balloons to those \$500 electric cars.

**THE TOY FAIR** is the big bread-and-butter event for the nation's toy and game makers. Orders placed by store buyers account for the bulk of the year's total toy volume. Many items on display are hand-built models. Whether they go into production depends on the number of orders received for them.

Edward P. Parker, executive vice president of Parker Brothers, one of the world's biggest makers of games, said his company is looking for a record volume this year.

**HOWEVER**, he said some toy manufacturers are going to feel the pinch of foreign competition more this year than ever before. He noted that Japan and Germany are particularly active in the toy field and many American buyers are planning European buying trips.

Parker Brothers, whose "Monopoly" has been the biggest seller for 20 years, will introduce six new games this year.

**A. C. GILBERT JR.**, president of the A. C. Gilbert Co., said his firm is planning an all-out drive this year to popularize scientific toys. The 42-year-old company is introducing a number of new chemistry and microscope sets.

"We are convinced," he said, "that 1957 is the year of the scientific toy. We also believe that good science toys will play an important part in the Government and industry-sponsored drive to encourage more and better science education."

The company's American Flyer line of electric trains this year will feature a rocket-launching freight car.

**LIONEL CORP.**, with an eye on the distaff market, has introduced a special train for girls. It features a pink locomotive, a pink gondola car, a robin's egg blue boxcar, a lilac hopper car, a buttercup yellow boxcar and a sky blue caboose.

Ideal Toy Corp. is introducing 163 new toys this year, including a "satellite launcher" which shoots the flying saucers into the air as mentioned earlier.