TABLOID BOOK REVIEW

READINGS IN SCIENCE. Edited by John A. Lester. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

This new number of the famous Riverside Literature Series is devoted to literature of an uncommon sort, namely, brief articles on various scientific topics by Sir Oliver Lodge, John Tyndall, H.G. Wells, William Beebe, J. Arthur Thomson, Benjamin Harrow, Edwin E. Slosson, Vernon Kellogg, etc. The editor defends his innovation by saying:

> "Even a professional instructor of English may be forgiven for a dawning doubt whether the exploration of the successive steps by which Macbeth degenerates into an angry brute, however adroitly and lucidly it may be pursued, is really, as a detail of an adolescent boy's education, comparable in importance with frank and simple discussion of the means of assuaging the passions of men in the interest of the future of civilization."

PRACTICAL RADIO: By James A. Moyer and John F. Wostrel. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1926. 271 pp., $1.75.

To the radio fan who uses a set which hehas purchased complete, but who wishes to learn some of the practical details of its operation and ways of testing it, this book is one to be heartily recommended. Though it is intended as a text book for use in practical electricity courses, this fact makes it none the less attractive. And then, if the reader's interest is aroused to such a point that he wishes to construct some of his own pieces of apparatus, he will also find, in the last chapters, some useful instructions on this phase of the radio art.

THE NEW NATURAL HISTORY. (First volume) By J. Arthur Thomson. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1926.

Prof. Thomson makes his foreword a sort of apologia for writing another book on natural history, when so many are already in existence. As if any one wanted an accounting for Thomson's books! Our only concern is that he will not have time, even in a long lifetime, to write as many of his kind of books as the world should have. The "slant" of the New Natural History is in the direction of what the learned call Ecology, which means the Housekeeping of Nature - not so much a discussion of living things one by one as a snipping here and there of vivid bits from the intimately inter woven web of life, with birds and worms and trees and flowers and grass all mixed up together, as one actually finds them outdoors. There are a lot of very good photographs, and a considerable number of really sumptuous colored plates.

THE COMMON SENSE OF THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY; by Paul R. Heyl. Baltimore, Williams and Wilkins Company, 1924. 44pp.

In this small but meaty book, which is a reprint of an article which appeared originally in the Scientific Monthly, Dr. Heyl shows that the so-called "ridiculous" aspects of relativity can be reconciled with common sense. However, while he regards the Einstein theory as a distinct improvement on Newton, in that it explains phenomena for which the older views fell short, he protests against regarding relativity as final. "Newton cut so closely," Dr. Heyl concludes, "that over two centuries elapsed before an Einstein could better his formula; andhow long it will be before thenext corrective term is added to the empirical equation for the great curve of Nature is a matter at present on the knees of the gods."

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