

First Glances at New Books

PRIMITIVE HEARTHES IN THE PYRENEES—Ruth Otis Sawtell and Ida Treat—*Appleton* (\$3). A pleasant semi-popular account of a summer's meanderings among the famous caves near the Spanish border. Illustrations by the artist-husband of one of the authors revivify the cave drawings of the Old Stone Age.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

THE INNER WORLD OF CHILDHOOD—Frances G. Wickes—*Appleton* (\$3). The mental and emotional life of the child analyzed by psychological methods for the benefit of parents, educators and all those interested in child development.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

HOW A TREE GROWS—William Somerville—*Oxford University Press*. Detailed account of biology of tree growth intended primarily for forestry students.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

THE CLEANLINESS JOURNAL—*Cleanliness Institute*. A new publication "published occasionally," to further the cause of cleanliness as a route to health and well being.

Science News-Letter, August 13, 1927

POLLAK PRIZE ESSAYS—R. W. Souter, Frederick Law Olmsted, C. F. Bickerdike, Victor Valentinovitch Novogilov—*Pollak Foundation for Economic Research: Newton, Mass.* This book consists of criticism of the economic theses advanced in *Profits*, by W. T. Foster and W. Catchings.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

HANDBOOK OF THE COLLECTION OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM—Frances Densmore—*U. S. Government Printing Office*. Not just a guide to the objects in one famous museum collection, but a great deal of interesting information regarding musical instruments from the gong of the savage to the violin and the hurdy-gurdy.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

MORTALITY STATISTICS—U. S. Bureau of the Census—*Government Printing Office* (\$2.25). Latest report of mortality statistics of the death registration area of the United States and Hawaii.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

Religion itself is one of the most striking possible examples of evolution.

—R. A. Millikan.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

SOCIOLOGY

"Unfitness" Not Encouraged

"Survival of the unfit," a stock objection by hard-boiled critics of public health work, was declared to be a bogey conjured up by the perfervid imaginations of persons to whom a little learning has proved a dangerous thing, by Prof. H. S. Jennings, of the Johns Hopkins University, one of the world's foremost students of evolution, genetics and eugenics, who spoke at the recent meeting of the National Tuberculosis Association, in Indianapolis.

Fitness, Prof. Jennings pointed out, is only a relative term, and an individual at whom the finger of scorn is pointed, as being "unfit" so far as resistance to tuberculosis or some other ailment is concerned, may be very "fit" indeed when it comes to doing useful work in the arts, sciences or business. Wipe out the disease, as yellow fever has been wiped out, diphtheria is being wiped out, and as tuberculosis can be, and the "unfitnesses" of the persons now susceptible to them automatically disappear, for there is nothing left for them to be "unfitted" to. Therefore to argue that nothing should be done to control diseases that take large toll of human life is not merely harsh and inhuman, but silly, in the opinion of Prof. Jennings.

"For most of the matters with which the public health worker deals there appears to be no indication whatever that the individuals preserved are undesirable, or at a disadvantage in a world in which the attacking agent has been controlled, no indication that defective genes are playing an important role," he stated.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

ASTRONOMY

Jupiter Moon Pulled By Sun

Though it revolves once in three years around a planet 483,000,000 miles from the sun, the ninth moon of Jupiter is strongly influenced by the sun. Dr. Seth B. Nicholson, of the Mt. Wilson Observatory, who discovered the moon in July, 1914, reported subsequent observations of the tiny satellite.

Moon No. 9 is one of the faintest bodies known to astronomers, for it is of the nineteenth magnitude, and observable only with the very largest telescopes. Since 1914 Dr. Nicholson has made several series of observations of his protege. The last series was made when Jupiter, the parent planet, had made one complete revolution around its orbit since the moon was discovered.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

ENTOMOLOGY

Honey-Cask Ants

Quotation from *THE ANT PEOPLE*. Hans Heinz Ewers—Dodd, Mead.

The larvae of the Honey-cask Ants are not distinguishable from one another, save in size; even the young, barely hatched workers, differ in size alone. It is true, indeed, that the majority of the Honey-casks belong to the larger order of workers, yet we do find many of medium size and some quite small. The large ones could not survive without the others to help. How it came about all at once that individual workers were altered into Honey-casks, we do not know, yet it is certain that the choice of this self-sacrificing office is made from earliest infancy. A number of the newly hatched workers manifest by their extraordinary power of food consumption the tendency to devote themselves to becoming casks, and at once they are fed more and more; fattened like the Moorish brides. Then one after the other is led into the honey cellar, and these they hang to the roof side by side with many others already there.

From that very hour, all their lives long, they are Honey-casks, and nothing else. From time to time they let a few drops pass from the community-stomach into their private stomach, but only enough to keep them alive. The opening and closing of the passage between the two stomachs is controlled by them, just like the opening and closing of the spigot, for that is the only correct name for their mouths. They have no other business than the continuous uninterrupted clinging to the roof with their feet, which have now become mere hooks, so as to carry the weight of the heavy casks. It is a tremendous strain upon their muscles, one which we humans can hardly conceive. During the lean months of the year, every ant who wants to eat goes into the cellar to the first cask it reaches. The cask opens its spigot; the ant drinks what it wants; the spigot closes. During the brief period of filling the cask the process is reversed. The honey-gatherers bring the sweet liquid home in their crops and pour it into the willingly opened bungle-hole in the living casks.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927

Disputes are multiplied as if everything was uncertain; and these are managed with the greatest warmth as if everything was certain.—*Hume*.

Science News-Letter, September 3, 1927