

First Glances at New Books

WORLD WEATHER RECORDS — Edited by H. H. Clayton—*Smithsonian Misc. Coll. v. 79* (\$3). This work amply merits the application of that somewhat overworked word, "monumental." It is the result of the labors of many compilers scattered over a world systematically parcelled out for them to comb for weather records. They have done their task completely; this book contains literally every weather record worthy of the name, not only from such to-be-expected places as Washington and Rome and Medicine Hat, but from stations of which Americans at least have never ever dreamed. If you want to know what the rainfall was in Quetta during the summer when Jack Barrett died there, or if you are curious about the temperature at Jacobshavn, Greenland, when Peary raced for the Pole, you will find it all here. There is romance as well as painstaking science in these rows of figures.

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INTERNATIONAL HEALTH BOARD, 13TH ANNUAL REPORT—*Rockefeller Foundation*. The workers of the Rockefeller Foundation go about the world uttering in whispers dramas that are worthy of thunder and the roaring of great seas. Yellow fever, malaria, hookworm control, rural health organization, public health education—these drab chapter heads tell more than pompous names of battles and sounding titles of treaties. War slayeth its thousands, these men save their tens of thousands.

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THE ANALYSIS OF MATTER—Bertrand Russell—*Harcourt, Brace* (\$6). An exceptionally useful and timely book since it gives a clear presentation, with no more mathematics than necessary, of the strange theories which have in the last few years swept so far beyond Einstein as to make the theory of relativity in its primitive form seem tame and conventional. Mr. Russell is one of the few modern thinkers who is sufficiently familiar with mathematics, metaphysics and physics to be able to handle critically the debatable borderland where these three realms join. Also he is gifted with power to employ picturesque analogies that illuminate the tortuous pathway for those who fail to follow the logical steps of his procedure.

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ARCHÆOLOGY

Vikings Were Business Men

The Swedish Viking was not merely a feared raider. He was also a businesslike trader. This fact has been demonstrated by archæological discoveries, and Swedish scientists have concluded that while the written sagas lay greater emphasis on the warlike exploits, the unwritten record dug up from beneath the ground presents a better-balanced picture. In other words, the Viking has been a victim of contemporary yellow journalism on the part of the "skalds" or minstrels. The more sober modern scientists have set out to right the balance.

Even in the Bronze Age, long before the Viking Era, Sweden had an active foreign trade, the archæological finds disclose, so that the traditions of regular Swedish imports and exports are at least 3,500 years old. Ancient implements, weapons, coins and pottery found in Sweden prove that the inhabitants entertained trade relations with their neighbors on the European continent as early as 6,000 years ago. These relations attained their heyday about 1500 to 1300 B. C. The art, ornaments, designs and habits of the Mediterranean peoples strongly influenced the Swedes, though the latter developed them into an independent and national Swedish culture.

The main export articles of Sweden during those ancient times were furs, wool, dried fish, iron and iron ore, horses and probably beeswax, the last item showing that the Swedes have kept bees since the beginning of historic times. The existence of commercial relations with countries as distant as Spain, Italy, and Constantinople are proved by thousands of Frankish, Anglo-Saxon, Arabian, Persian, Byzantine, Roman and German coins and ornaments found in the soil of Sweden. These coins were not brought to Sweden as war booty, but in regular and organized trading extending all over Europe.

Sweden's international relations were also kept alive by the contact between the home country and Swedish emigrants and settlers abroad. Thus in the year 375 Swedes penetrated as far south as the Black Sea and founded an Austro-Gothian dominion. Others settled on the British Islands and in Normandy. Headed by the great statesman and warrior Rurik, one group went east across the Baltic and founded the empire of Russia, named after the coast district of Roslagen near Stockholm.

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College Catalogues

By FRANCIS J. OPPENHEIMER

Granting that the student-body is everything it is accused of being by the University presidents, it certainly cannot be held responsible for the catalogues issued by these institutions which prove as much as anything else how far scholarship has wandered away from the time-tested unities with which thought once concerned itself. Giovanni Gentile himself, a Professor of Philosophy in the University of Rome, correctly accuses the Universities of being philosophical only at "certain hours of the day."

Without exception these "house organs," present one jumble of "subjects" after another, all wrenched violently from the heart of knowledge, which is another way of saying that our University "authorities" do not even possess a bowing acquaintance with one another's work. Nor, need it be said, are their various classroom topics harmonious parts of one majestic philosophical fugue sweeping up the human spirit along with it, although as originally instituted the Universities were dedicated to nothing less ambitious or less noble.—Quotation from *The New Tyranny*—Boni.

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EVOLUTION

A Thermophilous Mutation

An instance of evolution in a laboratory bottle, with a small aquatic animal producing offspring that can thrive only at abnormally high temperatures, was described before the Fifth International Genetics Congress at Berlin recently by Dr. A. M. Banta and T. R. Wood.

The two scientists were conducting a series of experiments at the Station for Experimental Evolution at Cold Spring Harbor, N. Y., in which huge numbers of a minute water animal known as Cladocera had to be reared. They noticed that the brood of one of the animals were not doing very well, and they tried putting the bottle in which they were growing into a warmer place. At once the little creatures began to thrive and multiply. Further observations brought out the fact that the new race demanded for its best growth a water temperature considerably above that which its parent species found most suitable for its life processes, and this preference for being "always in hot water" was handed down from generation to generation.

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