

First Glances at New Books

THE OLD TESTAMENT—An American Translation—Alexander R. Gordon, Theophile J. Meek, J. M. Powis Smith and Leroy Waterman—*University of Chicago Press* (\$7.50). This is a new book to the average Bible-reader for now he has the scriptures in his own tongue and can understand what he reads as well as if he understood the Hebrew text. The diction is dignified and devout yet thoroughly modern; unobscured by obsolete words and clarified by careful criticism. It is a frank as well as a faithful version. Where a passage remains unintelligible in spite of all study it is so stated. Where a reading can be conjectured the reasons for it are given. Where various versions differ the choice is explained. The oldest known Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament dates from the ninth century A. D., and this is eleven centuries after the last of its books was written, so the wonder is that the corrupt passages are so few. Whether one reads the Bible for religious, literary or critical purposes he will want to get at the original meaning as correctly as he can. The type is clear and the page is easy to read because of the clear type and the arrangement into logical paragraphs with the poetical passages printed as verse.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

THE LIFE OF THE WHITE ANT—Maurice Maeterlinck—*Dodd, Mead* (\$2.50). "The years," says the dramatist in his introduction, "teach every man that truth alone is marvelous." Notwithstanding this modest disclaimer the great Belgian has been inspired to some of his best embroidery of fancy by the complex civilization of the termites.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, 1926—*Government Printing Office* (\$1.50). This newest yearbook of the Smithsonian contains a most entertaining and enlightening collection of papers on science. To mention a few: Dr. W. E. Safford describes "Our Heritage from the American Indian," Dr. Austin Clark writes on "Fragrant Butterflies," Dr. Vernon Bailey on "How Beavers Build Their Houses," and Dr. C. G. Abbot on "The Evolution of the Stars" and "Influences of Sun Rays on Plants and Animals."

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

THE NEW CENTURY DICTIONARY—Edited by H. G. Emery and K. G. Brewster—*Century* (\$22.50). The Century Dictionary in its original form of ten tall volumes has hitherto been the envied possession of large libraries and rich men. Now it is brought within the reach of many whose shelf space and book money are limited. The three volumes are light enough to hold in the hand and sufficiently full to satisfy most purposes. The type is clear and there are several pictures on nearly every page, illustrations that actually elucidate the meaning. Thousands of new words and usages, originating since the war, have been added. Business terms, geographical and biographical names are placed in appendices. The new Century combines convenience, competency and comprehensiveness.

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THE HUMAN BODY AND ITS CARE—B. M. Davis—*Rand McNally*. An excellently written, compact textbook of human physiology and hygiene, designed for first or second-year college use. The author has succeeded admirably in selecting out the fundamental facts from the great mass of data that constitutes present-day physiology. The illustrations are similarly stripped down to diagrams, exceedingly simple yet telling their stories accurately.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

THE STORY OF EVEREST—John Noel—*Little, Brown and Co.* (\$4). An account of the valiant and almost-successful assault on the world's greatest height, written with a soldierly simplicity and directness, with illustrations by the author—the "highest-up" photographs ever taken.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

COMPTES RENDUS DE LA SEPTIEME CONFERENCE INTERNATIONALE DE LA CHIMIE—Union Internationale de la Chimie Pure et Appliquée—*Secrétariat Général, Jean Gérard, Paris*. Abstracts of papers and proceedings of the Seventh International Chemical Conference, held at Washington, September 13 to 15, 1926.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

GETTING WELL AND STAYING WELL—John Potts—*C. V. Mosby*. Information that all tuberculosis patients and their families should know.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

The Rocky Mountain blue jay is really a gray jay.

Clay-Modelling in Genesis

Quotation from *CREATION*—Edwin Tenny Brewster—Bobbs Merrill.

"And Javeh formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

All our versions unite to obscure the meaning of this simple-minded passage. The Hebrew verb, which we, for edification, render "formed," really means "to mould with the fingers like wet clay," as the Septuagint frankly renders it, using *plassein*, whence our "plastic." We really ought, therefore, to say: Javeh "pottered" man out of clay and blew the wind into his nose. But, of course, that would hardly do.

Science News-Letter, October 15, 1927

ENTOMOLOGY

Wanted: Large Cockroaches

Apartment dwellers in American cities will be interested to know at least one populous spot on the globe is afflicted with a dearth of cockroaches.

When the reptiles in the London Zoo were moved recently to new and sanitary quarters the large, mouse-sized American cockroaches that had made their home in the warm, dark, dirty lurking places around the furnace pipes were out of luck. In the process of making the old reptile house over into a home for small birds the dark places have been opened up, the warm pipes removed and the dirt cleared away with the consequent disappearance of suitable cockroach homes.

Their presence in their old abiding place was condoned by the keepers if not actually encouraged, not only because the insects furnished food for many of the lizards but because the keepers turned many an honest penny by selling them to biological laboratories for dissection. Now, however, there is a cockroach famine. Large juicy cockroaches of the American variety can be found in no other animal house in the Zoological Gardens, so the Zoo authorities have had recourse to breeding them in the insectarium where other insects and worms are bred to gratify the capricious appetites of the larger Zoo inhabitants. Whether a regular supply can be secured instead of merely a glut at the most favorable season and whether the cannibal instincts of their charges can be restrained in such close quarters are problems that will make life interesting for the guardians of the cockroach farm.

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