

First Glances at New Books

THE KINGDOM OF THE MIND—June E. Downey—*Macmillan* (\$2).

This might be called a "cafeteria psychology." The reader waits on himself. He gets more fun than having everything served to him while he sits still and swallows it. Also he learns more that way. In fact the only way to learn anything really is to do it yourself. Especially anything about yourself.

Here are simple practical tests by which a boy can find out how to improve his game, however good that is. How a girl can find out how to improve her temper, however bad that is. How to test the accuracy of your senses and the quickness of your reaction time and the retentiveness of your memory and the originality of your imagination; in short how to inventory your mental stock in trade on which your future fortune depends.

This is the third volume of "The Young People's Shelf of Science," edited by Science Service to carry sound science to folks in their teens, but folks of several teens can profit by them.

Science News-Letter, December 24, 1927

I. APES AND MEN. II. HUNTERS AND ARTISTS. III. PEASANTS AND POTTERS—Harold Peake and John Fleure—*Yale University Press* (\$2 each). These three volumes are the first of a series of eight, published under the series title, *The Corridors of Time*. This initial triad carries the story of primitive man from his earliest beginnings down through the New Stone Age. The series as projected will carry through to the beginnings of Greece and Rome. The books are written in an excellently clear style and the illustrations are pertinent and well made. Best of all, the authors have kept clear of the facile dogmatism into which it seems to be so easy to fall when writing the history of men who left no history.

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THE NATURE ALMANAC—Arthur Newton Pack and E. Laurence Palmer—*American Nature Association* (\$1). Compacted into this manual is a great mass of information on nature study associations, courses and teachers all over the country. A comprehensive series of nature book bibliographies is an especially valuable feature.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

New Books In Science

Industrial progress is largely dependent upon science; and scientific and technical workers—whether engaged in research or in industrial pursuits—find their endeavors greatly facilitated by the published records of results attained by other workers. It is thus essential that scientific and technical men be kept informed regarding new books in their respective fields.

The Publishers' Weekly, the American Book Trade Journal, gives prompt notice of new books published in the United States, merely listing books of all classes, alphabetically by names of authors.

The Cumulative Book Index supplements the above service by arranging books by authors, titles, and subjects. It appears several times a year but cumulates the year's output in a final annual volume.

Book trade lists are published for the more important foreign countries, also, and it is thus possible to learn what books have been published. These trade lists, however, include both technical and non-technical books; and in all these lists the entries are very brief, giving merely titles, prices, publishers and, in some cases, the dates and number of pages. But book titles are often ambiguous or incomplete and, with the high cost of present-day technical books it is usually desirable to have further information before purchasing. Book reviews in scientific, technical, and trade journals (though not always ably written) afford the best information, but these reviews are widely scattered and few individuals find it possible to keep in touch with reviews in any large number of journals.

The Technical Book Review Index, issued quarterly by the Technology Department of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, is the only publication devoted to recording reviews of new books in the fields of science and technology. It constitutes a record of the reviews in several hundred journals and includes many books published abroad. Its chief function is to cite accurately the sources and length of the review, but information is also given regarding pages, price, date, and publisher. Also, whenever possible, extracts from reviews are quoted, so that in many cases the reader gets, directly from the *Index*, sufficient evaluation of the book without consulting the reviews at all. The *Technical Book Review Index* is not intended to compete with existing book

trade publications in suggesting books on any *subject*. It is, therefore, arranged alphabetically by names of authors. Incidentally (since the best books are the ones most likely to be reviewed) it is possible for the user to glance through the *Index* and quickly note the important works in his field. Each issue forms a pamphlet of 130 to 150 pages, and some 6,000 reviews are recorded annually. The price is 25 cents a copy or \$1.00 a year.

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Scientific Advances, 1927

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Contrary to the usual notion that men of genius are physically frail, a study of several hundred great musicians of the past two centuries shows that they were an unusually healthy lot on the whole. Dr. James F. Rogers of the U. S. Bureau of Education reported.

A child gorilla's use of its hands was studied by Dr. R. M. Yerkes, of Yale University.

A study of why high school students fail in their course revealed that in a large percentage of cases teachers do not realize the basic causes of failure.

The effect of noise on a typist's efficiency, tested by Dr. Donald Laird at Colgate University, showed that the typist could keep up her accuracy only at the expense of speed and with a heavy drain on her energy.

Allowing children to give way to their impulses was denounced by Dr. Charles W. Burr, neurologist, who urged teaching children to control their emotions as a means of race improvement.

Adults up to the age of 50 learn better than children, experiments by Dr. E. L. Thorndike, professor of psychology at Columbia University, showed.

The nerve center which controls emotions was located as a very small section of the optic thalamus, in the old primitive part of the brain, as a result of experiments by Dr. Philip Bard at the physiological laboratory of the Harvard Medical School.

Radio

The International Radio telegraph Conference revised the world laws governing radio.

Reception of short length radio signals was found to improve during periods of high sunspot activity.

The experience of the U. S. S. Kittery with a radio compass during hurricane weather indicated that the intensity of static may be of use in detecting and locating these disastrous storms at a distance.

Five-meter wave experiments by the General Electric Company shows that these short waves seem to cast shadows much like light.

Quartz plate was developed by the U. S. Bureau of Standards as a standard of radio frequency, bringing agreement between frequency standards of different nations to three parts of 100,000.

Station WGY at Schenectady operated on 100 kilowatt power using the world's largest vacuum power tube of that power.

Broadcasting upon low wavelengths was begun, necessitating adapters to most ordinary receiving sets.

Electron tubes operating directly on house supply alternating current were developed.

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