

FIRST GLANCES AT NEW BOOKS

WILLIAM BATESON, F. R. S.—Beatrice Bateson—*Cambridge Press* (\$8.40). In 1920, William Bateson collected ten of his papers which were addressed to a lay public and which he described as "all more or less lawfully begotten by Mendelism out of Common Sense, *me obstetricante*." To these ten papers Mrs. Bateson has now added ten others dealing with Mendelism, evolution and education, together with three lengthy reviews.

Biography—Genetics
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

FIELD BOOK OF COMMON GILLED MUSHROOMS—William S. Thomas—*Putnam's* (\$3.50). The gilled mushrooms are the most common of the higher fungi, and are the ones most sought after as food, though at the same time most dreaded as possible poison. In giving concise and well-illustrated descriptions of all the commoner species, backed by a carefully worked-out key, the author has done a service both to him who would study the mushrooms and to him who would eat them. For the benefit of the latter, moreover, there are appended a number of excellent recipes.

Botany
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

FIELD BOOK OF NORTH AMERICAN MAMMALS—H. E. Anthony—*Putnam's* (\$3.50). From the jaguar of the south to the lemming of the Arctic, from the whale of the depths to the bighorn of the mountain-tops, you can have them all in your pocket in one handy volume. There are good pictures, both plain and colored, to back up the descriptions, and little distribution maps to tell you whether you have identified your species correctly for your locality.

Zoology
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

COMMUNITY PROBLEMS — Arthur Evans Wood — *Century* (\$3.75). Housing, health, recreation, and Americanization are important problems in every community, and the success or failure of the community to solve these problems has far-reaching results in the lives of its people. In this comprehensive volume, Prof. Wood has described methods which different types of communities have developed toward solving the problems, and has analyzed the different plans and projects in the light of practical sociological value.

Sociology
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

ENVIRONMENT AND RACE—Griffith Taylor—*Oxford University Press* (\$6.50). This account of the migration of the races of man, their settlement and ultimate status is interesting because of the author's novel viewpoint that the present status of the races is as much, if not more, the result of environment as of any inherent qualities in the races themselves. The superiority of the so-called Nordic race is questioned and the yellow races are shown in many respects to be the equal of the whites.

The book is well illustrated and contains many tables.

Ethnography
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

THE STORY OF ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY—L. Adams Beck—*Cosmopolitan* (\$5). One need not be a student of philosophy or of Oriental peoples to enjoy this book. Mrs. Beck (E. Barrington) tells the story in as simple a fashion as possible, considering the subject. The legends and parables of Oriental peoples, so often referred to in both Eastern and Western literature, are interesting for themselves and for the picture they give of early life in the Orient, aside from their deeper significance. The book helps in understanding these Eastern people with whom philosophy plays so much more important a role than with Westerners.

Philosophy
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

WHEAT FLOUR AND DIET—O. O. Swanson—*Macmillan* (\$2.50). A sane discussion of the place of wheat flour in the diet concludes an interesting account of wheat flour and the modern and ancient methods of milling it. Drawings and photographs add interest to the text, which will be easily understood by lay readers.

Nutrition
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

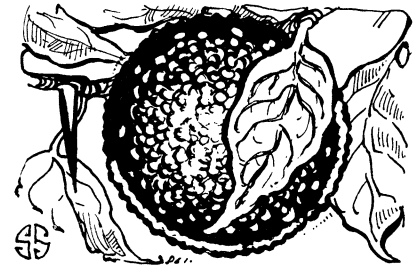
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF AMERICAN RAILROADING—John W. Starr, Jr.—*Dodd, Mead* (\$3.50). Perhaps more than any other country, the history of the United States has been linked with the history of the railroad. In this well-written and fully illustrated book, Mr. Starr tells of the development of our rail transportation, from the days of the Tom Thumb locomotive to the electric giants that now haul trains over our highest mountains.

Sociology
Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928

NATURE RAMBLINGS

BY FRANK THONE

Natural History



Osage Orange

A generation or so back, when land was not so valuable as it is now and when wire fences were much more expensive, farmers used to enclose their fields in stout hedges of this thorny American tree species, which will grow as a thick bush if it is kept cropped down. The hedges were very effective to keep cattle in and small boys out, but they effectually prevented crops from growing within fifteen or twenty feet of them; so that now they are fast disappearing before the less picturesque but more economical barbed wire. In their day, however, these hedges were so universally used that midwestern farmers still refer to the Osage orange simply as "hedge", and many of them do not know any other name for it.

Permitted to grow up, the Osage orange becomes an interesting little tree, yielding crops of great round yellow fruits in the autumn. These golden globes have given the tree its name, but they are not even remotely related to real oranges. They are, indeed, quite useless and are even reputed to be poisonous. No, they are not quite useless either: they are most beautiful for boys to pick up and throw, and they make a most interesting burst when they hit something solid. Although the species is thoroughly American—its distribution centers around southern Missouri and across Oklahoma and Arkansas to Texas—its nearest relatives are to be found in the isles of the South Pacific. One of these kin-trees is the famous breadfruit.

Though its fruit is useless, with the notable exception above recorded, the tree has its use, even though its employment as a hedge is gone. Its wood is very hard and strong, and resists rotting better than any other native timber.

Science News-Letter, September 29, 1928