

FIRST GLANCES AT NEW BOOKS

WILD ANIMAL INTERVIEWS—William T. Hornaday—*Scribner's* (\$2.50). Here are some Just So stories that really *are* so. Dr. Hornaday, you know, took care of the New York Zoo for years and years and years, and he can talk to animals, and understand them when they answer him. Their opinions of their brother, Man, aren't always nice (why should they be, considering the way he treats them?) but they are always interesting, and Dr. Hornaday, who is a great-grandnephew of St. Francis, makes a good apologist for our species to the rest of the animal kingdom. For the sake of skeptical children who have grown up and got too smart, be it added that these animals are real, live ones, and so are the people mentioned, and the stories are true, and really happened.

Natural History
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

KEEPING MENTALLY FIT—Joseph Jastrow—*Greenberg* (\$3.50). A collection of brief articles, each one driving home its psychological principle. "Are you a bore?" demands one chapter heading. "Are you social or mechanical?" queries another. "What is absent-mindedness?" These and many other questions are answered with a never-ending store of illustrative and anecdotal material and a clear-cut summing up of the point. The author who presents his science so readably was for thirty years professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin.

Psychology
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

DESERT DRUMS—Leo Crane—*Little, Brown* (\$5). The subtitle is "The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, 1540-1928", and the author has been an Indian agent in the Southwest for many years. His experiences with Pueblo customs, beliefs, and political problems are recounted in informal style and with a leisurely thoroughness. Incidents and discussions showing the relationships of the government with the Indians are of particular interest.

Ethnology
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

PRAIRIE BIRDS—B. J. Hales—*Macmillan (Canada)*. (\$3). A compact but comprehensive *vade-mecum* for the bird observer in the great middle country; well illustrated.

Ornithology
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE BOOK OF EARTHS—Edna Kenton—*Morrow* (\$6). A comprehensive outline of cosmographical theories from the earliest times to the present. The author has performed a most creditable piece of work, though some modern theories are given which could hardly be classified as sound science. Evidently the delving into so many theories has made her skeptical of all, even those definitely established by modern research. For she concludes with the statement that "science today is committed to nothing but 'guesses' on the still unknown figure of the earth" and compares modern geodesists with "that first man, whoever and wherever and whenever he was, who said, 'Perhaps it is like this,' and set down his crude lines of an island in the sea." But even so, the book constitutes a valuable source of information.

Cosmogony
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE LIFE OF SPACE—Maurice Maeterlinck, Translated by Bernard Miall—*Dodd, Mead* (\$2.50). Five essays on the fourth and higher dimensions. The famous dramatist seems to have been greatly influenced by P. D. Ouspensky's "Tertium Organum" and J. W. Dunnes' "Experiment with Time." The first, and longest, essay, on the fourth dimension, is largely devoted to an exposition of Ouspensky, while the second, on the cultivation of dreams, does much the same thing for Dunnes' book. Maeterlinck foresees a time when man will develop such a super-intelligence that he will be able to perceive the fourth dimension, and use his knowledge accordingly.

Metaphysics
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE GREAT PHYSICISTS—Ivor B. Hart—*Methuen* (3/6). A broad and popular survey of the chief steps in the development of physical science from Thales to Lord Kelvin by a well-known historian of science. Though small in size, and low in price (though American dealers may charge considerably more for it than the equivalent of the English price plus duty) it will be a worthy addition to any scientific library. And when one reads it he will look forward to the next volumes in the series of "The Great Scientists", which it inaugurates.

Physics
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE BOYS' LIFE OF THE WRIGHT BROTHERS—Mitchell V. Charnley—*Harpers* (\$2). This story of the first men to fly is of especial interest because the twenty-fifth anniversary of their first flight is now being observed. The story of events at this first flight, and how it was reported to the world, as well as later flights, and how the world was reticent about believing their success, is told in great detail.

Aviation
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE BOYS' BOOK OF REMARKABLE MACHINERY—Ellison Hawks—*Dodd, Mead* (\$2.50). A new book by this prolific English writer on popular science dealing with the fascinating subject of all kinds of machinery. He tells about the machines and their developments in a manner that anyone can understand, even when he is explaining such an unusual and remarkable piece of mechanism as the torque converter, which may revolutionize automotive design.

Engineering
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

WHAT ENGINEERS DO—Walter D. Binger—*Norton* (\$2.75). The story of civil engineering, how bridges are thrown across chasms and streams, how skyscrapers are built, why concrete is as strong as it is, and what the surveyor does with his transit, all told in a vivid and interesting manner. Though written primarily for boys and girls, there is no "writing down" and so it will be especially interesting to them, and also to the adult who wants to know about the work of the civil engineer.

Engineering
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

WHY NEWS IS NEWS—Charles R. Corbin—*Ronald* (\$2.75). What makes a news story "hot"? In this book the managing editor of the *Toledo Blade* (who should know a good news story as well as any one) summarizes the elements of news, and illustrates his point by numerous quotations from newspapers. Incidentally, three Science Service stories are quoted as good examples of how science can be treated as news. Anyone who wants to write articles that will be used in newspapers, whether for pay, or in order to secure publicity for some cause in which he is interested, should study and ponder over this book.

Journalism
Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

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First Glances at New Books—Continued

ANNUAL SURVEY OF AMERICAN CHEMISTRY—Clarence J. West—*Chemical Catalog* (\$3). As in the two previous issues of this now standard annual a group of chemists, each an authority in his particular field, reviews the progress made during the past year. This volume covers the period from July 1, 1927, to July 1, 1928, and will be a welcome addition to the library of anyone who is interested in what is being done in any branch of chemistry.

Chemistry

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

MAN A MACHINE—Joseph Needham—*W. W. Norton and Co.* (\$1). Modern physicians often refer to the human body as a machine, but the mechanistic theory has been debated for many centuries. Professor Needham reviews the chief arguments and presents a few of his own which add to the age-old subject a decidedly modern note.

Philosophy

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE POLAR REGIONS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY—A. W. Greely—*Little, Brown* (\$4). It was in the years 1881-1884 that General Greely made his famous expedition to the Arctic, after which he wrote a book on polar exploration up to that time. In this book, nearly fifty years later, he summarizes more than 80,000 pages of original narratives of the expeditions of Peary, Amundsen, Shackleton, Byrd, Macmillan, etc.

Exploration

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE CONQUEST OF LIFE—Serge Voronoff—*Brentano's* (\$3.50). In this book Dr. Voronoff describes his gland graft experiments and his results in simple language for the layman. While the subject is one of great interest to every human being, this work must be regarded as still in the experimental stage. Dr. Voronoff's results are questioned by the majority of scientists, including medical men. The deputation that visited his experimental farms in Africa was not convinced that Dr. Voronoff had proved his theories.

Biology

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE SYMMETRICAL OPTICAL SYSTEM—G. C. Steward—*Macmillan* An outline of the theory of the symmetrical optical system, both from the purely geometrical and also from the physical point of view.

Optics

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE ELECTRIC WORLD: THE RISE OF RADIO—Paul Schubert—*Macmillan* (\$2.50). Here is a book on radio that is quite different in character from most of those that have so far appeared—it tells of the development of radio in all its scientific phases from the early experiments of Hertz to modern broadcasting. But it does more than that—it tells also of the economic, the business and the political phases of the art. It tells how they have all interacted in making radio communication what it is today. Truly a book for all interested in radio, whether that interest is merely that of the dial-twister, or occasional sender of a radiogram, or of the radio engineer.

Radio

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE OUTLINE OF RADIO—John V. L. Hogan—*Little, Brown* (\$2). A complete account of radio and how it works. As the book has passed through two previous editions, both of which were well received, and this one has been brought fully up to date, it seems certain that it will have a wide distribution.

Radio

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE BOOK OF ELECTRICITY—Bertha Morris Parker—*Houghton, Mifflin* (\$1.50). A book for children from 10 to 14 years of age. It contains not only a simple explanation of familiar electrical phenomena, but also accounts of what famous workers in the field have done and directions for simple experiments. Naturally, all of these are perfectly safe for the child.

Electricity

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

THE GROWTH OF MANUFACTURES—Edmund E. Day and Woodlief Thomas—*Government Printing Office* (\$1.35). A study issued by the Bureau of the Census of indexes of increase in the volume of manufactured products.

Economics

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928

INTRODUCTION TO WORLD GEOGRAPHY—Philip A. Knowlton—*Macmillan* (\$1.32). A first text-book in geography for elementary schools. It is simply and clearly written, while the numerous illustrations, many in color, will make it attractive to the children.

Geography

Science News-Letter, December 15, 1928