

FIRST GLANCES AT NEW BOOKS

EDISON: HIS LIFE AND INVENTIONS—Frank Lewis Dyer, Thomas Commerford Martin and William Henry Meadowcroft—*Harper* (\$10). This is the standard, authorized and official biography of Edison by men who have been most closely associated with him in his business, legal and personal affairs. Mr. Dyer was general counsel for the Edison interests from 1903 and Mr. Meadowcroft has been closely associated with Mr. Edison since 1881 and his confidential secretary since 1910. The first edition of the work came out in 1910 and the new edition includes chapters on the development of the diamond-disc phonograph and Edison's war-time activities and the post-war period in which he has been largely concerned with new sources of the rubber supply from home-grown plants and in which he has been the recipient of unprecedented honors from the American people. Among these honors his biographers do not consider it worth while to mention that Mr. Edison was made a member of the National Academy of Sciences in 1927. An appendix contains a list of the most important of the 1150 patents taken out by Edison with specifications of some of them. The work ends with the significant sentence: "He still works from 16 to 18 hours a day."

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

THOMAS ALVA EDISON: AN APPRECIATION—*National Electric Light Association* (45c.). A beautifully printed pamphlet containing the text of the various addresses given to honor Mr. Edison at the Association's meeting in Atlantic City last June. The authors are Preston S. Arkwright, John W. Lieb, Charles L. Edgar, Berton Braley, Elmer A. Sperry, Thomas N. McCarter and E. Wilbur Rice, Jr.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

GRAND CANYON COUNTRY—M. R. Tillotson and F. J. Taylor—*Stanford Univ. Press* (\$2). The Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park and a well-known outdoorsman have collaborated in the production of an informative and enterprising account of the greatest single scenic spectacle on this continent.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

LOKI: THE LIFE OF CHARLES PROTEUS STEINMETZ—Jonathan Norton Leonard—*Doubleday, Doran* (\$2.75). Here is a new life of the German hunchback, whose coming to America did so much to give electricity the place that it now occupies in our daily lives. Mr. Leonard has produced a book that deserves to rank with such great biographies of technical men as Pupin's "From Immigrant to Inventor," or Watson's "Exploring Life," even though it is not autobiographical. Mr. Leonard presents a picture of Steinmetz very different from that cultivated by the press during the last years of his life. Like Loki, he was not a full-blooded god—he never quite belonged to the divine family of Asgard, but, says the author, "his mind was one of the best in the world."

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

VULCAN: OR THE FUTURE OF LABOUR—Cecil Chisholm—*Dutton* (\$1). Labor thus finds its place in the interesting "Today and Tomorrow" series. The one day week and the disappearance of the foreman are some of the pleasures of labor foreseen by the author.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

EOS: OR THE WIDER ASPECTS OF COSMOGONY—Sir James Jeans—*Dutton* (\$1). In this recent volume in the ever-stimulating "Today and Tomorrow Series," Sir James tells in simple language the significance of some of his own important researches. Failing some unimaginable creative event, he believes, the ultimate end of creation will be "neither sunlight nor starlight, but only a cool glow of radiation uniformly diffused through space." All the atoms of matter will then have been transmuted to energy.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

HERACLITUS: OR THE FUTURE OF FILMS—Ernest Betts—*Dutton* (\$1). The author of this new addition to the "Today and Tomorrow Series" believes that the "talkies" spell the doom of the cinema. "The soul of the film—its eloquent and vital silence—is destroyed," he says. "The film now returns to the circus whence it came, among the freaks and the fat ladies."

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

HANBUCH DER ASTROPHYSIK; BAND IV: DAS SONNENSYSTEM—G. Abetti, W. E. Bernheimer, K. Graff, A. Kopff and S. A. Mitchell—*Julius Springer, Berlin* (RM 78.80). When finally completed, this monumental work under the editorship of three leading German astronomers (Drs. G. Eberhard, A. Kohlschütter and H. Ludendorff, will form the most comprehensive survey of astrophysics in any language. Volume VI, the second part of "Das Sternsystem", appeared somewhat over a year ago. Despite its rather high price, this new volume is already in every American astronomical library that makes a claim to completeness. To the individual scientist, or even the layman, who wishes the newest and most complete discussion of the physics of the solar system, it will also supply a want. Two of the five sections, covering 298 out of 501 pages, are in English—one by Prof. G. Abetti, of Florence, on "Solar Physics"; the other by Prof. S. A. Mitchell, of the University of Virginia, on "Eclipses of the Sun". With the exception of Prof. Mitchell's larger work on "Eclipses of the Sun" this latter section forms the best treatise on the subject in English. In German, Dr. W. E. Bernheimer, of Vienna, writes on "Radiations and Temperature of the Sun"; Dr. K. Graff, also of Vienna, on "The Physical Constitution of the Planet System" and Dr. A. Kopff, of Berlin-Dahlem, on "Comets and Meteors".

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THE PLANT IN RELATION TO WATER—N. A. Maximov—*Macmillan* (\$6.50). The mere announcement that this book is now available in an English translation is all the review it needs. English-speaking plant physiologists and ecologists have been waiting eagerly for it, and this version will stand as a fitting monument to the memory of its scholarly translator, the late Prof. Yapp. Even a hasty examination reconfirms the conviction that in Prof. Maximov Russia has a plant physiologist well able to uphold the honor which his compatriot Palladin earned in another division of his science. It is flattering to American students of plant life to note the extent to which plant physiological work in this country is discussed.

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First Glances at New Books—*Continued*

THE EARTH: ITS ORIGIN, HISTORY AND PHYSICAL CONSTITUTION—Harold Jeffreys—*Macmillan* (\$6.50). The first edition of this work appeared in 1924. In this new edition Dr. Jeffreys has expanded the section on seismology and added and expanded some other parts to take account of recent work. It still remains an excellent outline of the main problems of geophysics and their interrelation.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

SCIENCE AND THE UNSEEN WORLD—Arthur Stanley Eddington—*Macmillan* (\$1.25). The distinguished astronomer and physicist of Cambridge University here further elaborates his views on the relation of science and religion as given in the last part of his "Nature of the Physical World." It is the text of his Swarthmore Lecture, delivered last spring in London before the Society of Friends, of which he is a prominent member.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

THE STORY OF THE WEATHER—Eugene Van Cleef—*Century* (\$2). An interesting book describing not only the various weather phenomena and their cause, but also telling how some of these things may be turned to good account by the alert business man.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

INTRODUCTION TO QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS—Edward G. Mahin—*McGraw-Hill* (\$2.25). In this new volume in the publisher's International Chemical Series the author has abridged his very successful larger book on the subject, and produced a work that can be used in colleges giving a single year, or less, of quantitative analysis.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

MYTHS AND TALES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN INDIANS—John R. Swanton—*U. S. Government Printing Office* (\$1). A large collection of stories told by Indians of the Creek, Natchez, and other tribes. Dr. Swanton recorded most of the tales more than fifteen years ago, and even then there were not many Indians who knew the old tribal languages, so that they could relate the tales in the true Indian wording.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ABNORMAL PEOPLE—John J. B. Morgan—*Longmans, Green* (\$3.75). A healthy state of mind is quite largely dependent on education, the author believes, and therefore educators and adults who deal with children should understand the more common weaknesses of the human mind and should be able to direct the children in their charge toward healthy attitudes and habits of thinking. Besides being based on a sound line of argument, the book is an exceptionally comprehensive and clearly written text on all sorts of emotional and mental disorders.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

MASTER OF MY FATE—Herschel T. Manuel—*Century* (\$3). A "popular" psychology in a desirable sense of the word, written by a professor of psychology at the University of Texas for young men and women who want to know how to make the most of themselves. The first part deals briefly with the biological and psychological foundations of human conduct. The second deals with the personality problems that people are continually asking psychologists to help them solve; problems dealing with social adjustments, physical traits, character, religion, and self improvement from every angle. The long list of 502 points on which readers can analyze themselves is a constructive feature of the book.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

THE ART OF STRAIGHT THINKING—Edwin Leavitt Clarke—*Appleton*. Are the things you know really so, or is your mind a dizzy confusion of propaganda, fallacies, half-baked ideas and prejudices? Aiming to help the reader avoid the latter alternative, this book explains in much logical detail the processes by which we acquire our knowledge and our views, particularly our views on the problems of the world today. It is a logic textbook, written particularly to set college students and other students to thinking clearly on social subjects. There are chapters, for example, on prejudice, dishonest propaganda, oral testimony, and a co-operative technique for solving social problems.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

THE AGE OF THE HUMAN RACE IN THE LIGHT OF GEOLOGY—Stephen Richarz—*Cath. Anthropol. Conf.* (30c.). This pamphlet sums up the evidence for a high antiquity of the human race, invoking the positively known lapse of time as measured by varve clays and the probabilities involved in glacial advances and retreats. The minimum age allowed is 30,000 years, and the possibility of a much higher figure admitted. The author's final declaration, that "no theological problem is involved," will hardly be accepted in Fundamentalist circles.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

PRINCIPLES OF ANIMAL BIOLOGY—A. F. Shull—*McGraw-Hill* (\$3.50). A third edition of a very successful textbook, revised to take in the newest advances in its field. The physiological approach to biology gives this book a strong appeal in modern teaching circles.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

MODERN BIOLOGY—J. T. Cunningham—*Dutton* (\$3). A critical examination of some of the still-vexed problems in biology that confront modern students. Many of the things we considered pretty well settled a decade or two ago are again open to discussion; and the present author's discussion will be found stimulating by many readers.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

PLANT AND ANIMAL NEIGHBORS—F. B. Younger—*C. C. Nelson, Appleton, Wis.* A general biology reader for junior high school use.

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STUDIES IN THE FLORA OF LOWER CALIFORNIA AND ADJACENT ISLANDS—Alice Eastwood—*Proc. Calif. Acad. Sci.* Of interest to students of systematic botany.

Science News-Letter, October 5, 1929

PALEONTOLOGY—E. W. Berry—*McGraw-Hill* (\$3.50). A textbook of extinct animal forms, compact but complete, well-arranged and well-illustrated. Prof. Berry's book is deserving of adoption by university classes in paleontology, and should find a place on the reference shelf of any properly organized course in general geology.

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