

• First Glances at New Books •

Biology

THE CONQUEST OF LIFE—Theodore Koppanyi—*Appleton*, 263 p., \$2. This extremely readable book tells the story of life in a simple, interesting way. The subjects covered range from the single-celled ameba to the human embryo, evolution, glands, sex, diseases, the advances of modern medicine and psychology. In spite of this wide range, there is no confusion and the various subjects are easily but clearly explained. The intelligent layman will find a sane, simple exposition of topics that are being discussed today. The book is one of the New World of Science series, and is the principal selection of the Scientific Book Club for September.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Paleoclimatology

THE PAST CLIMATE OF THE NORTH POLAR REGION—E. W. Berry—*Smithsonian*, 29 p., 15c. Dr. Berry, after applying the touchstone of paleobotanical knowledge to the problem of ancient Arctic climate concludes: "There is no unequivocal botanical evidence of tropical or sub-tropical climates at any time in the Arctic. There is no evidence from paleobotany of a lack of climatic zonation at any geological period from which fossil plants are known, although at such times the evidence points to a relative mildness and a lack of sharp zonation, as compared with the present. The distribution of the known fossil Arctic floras with respect to the present pole proves . . . that there could have been no wandering pole."

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Astronomy

THE SPECTROHELIOSCOPE AND ITS WORK—George E. Hale—*Carnegie Institution of Washington*, 47 p., \$1.25. To George E. Hale science must give thanks for his inspiration of Yerkes Observatory, Mount Wilson Observatory and now the projected 200-inch telescope. As such gigantic instrumental projects are contemplated, Dr. Hale's own researches upon the sun might be overlooked. In this reprint from the *Astrophysical Journal*, Dr. Hale describes the history, instruments, adjustments and methods of observations with the spectroheliometer, an instrument of simple construction which can be used to observe the "storms" upon the sun. Activity upon the sun is of importance to dwellers upon the earth. And Dr. Hale visualizes the time when amateur and professional observers in all parts

of the world will watch the face of the sun for activity and report it in order that actions of men and machines upon the earth may be governed accordingly.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Economics

HOW GREAT CITIES ARE FED—W. P. Hedden—*D. C. Heath and Company*, 302 p., \$2.80. An apple a day costs a lot on the way, says the title of just one of the chapters devoted to the activities of the middlemen. The book is a good explanation of what the middlemen do to bring milk, fruits and vegetables to a tenth of the nation's people, and it is written by a man who knows—the chief of the Bureau of Commerce of the Port of New York Authority. It is edited by E. G. Nourse, director of the Institute of Economics.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

History

THE ANONYMOUS LA CONQUISTA DEL PERU (SEVILLE, APRIL 1534) AND THE LIBRO VLTIMO DEL SVMMARIO DELLE INDIE OCCIDENTALI (VENICE, OCTOBER 1534)—Edited with introduction and bibliography by Alexander Pogo—*American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 110 p., \$1.75. The possibility that the anonymous "La conquista del Peru" could have been written by various known reporters of Pizarro's expedition is discussed in this monograph, and the verdict is negative. The conclusion is that the writer was probably a simple soldier and certainly a man of limited horizon and vocabulary. This publication also brings the text of the little known Spanish chronicle and the early Italian translation into accessible form for handy reference.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Geophysics

TRANSACTIONS OF THE AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION TENTH ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 25 AND 26, 1929; ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 1 AND 2, 1930—*National Research Council*, 314 p., free. In this volume are gathered together the many important papers presented at the last two meetings of the American Geophysical Union. Of particular interest are the reports by members of the Carnegie Institution staff of the results of the last voyage of the non-magnetic ship *Carnegie*, which ended so tragically last November.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Ethnology

EDDIC MYTHOLOGY—John A. MacCulloch—*Archaeological Institute of America, Marshall Jones*, 400 p., \$10. This is the eleventh volume published in a series of thirteen entitled "Mythology of All Races." The Eddic poems are the great sources of our knowledge regarding the religious beliefs of the Teutons. From these old manuscripts come our vivid pictures of Frey and Thor, Odin, Loki, the Valkyries, Swan Maidens, trolls and werewolves, all acting out dramas against typical settings of the Scandinavian Viking Age. To what extent Scandinavian beliefs were held by other Teutonic peoples is one of the problems which scholars are attempting to answer by piecing together clues from archaeological remains, folk lore survivals, writings of Christian missionaries, ecclesiastical laws and other such sources. Dr. MacCulloch has brought a rich knowledge of his subject to his task of analysis and interpretation. Forty-seven illustrations bring before the reader's eye many scenes and objects that help to recreate the Teutonic world.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Physiology

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF TWINNING—Horatio Hackett Newman—*University of Chicago Press*, 230 p., \$1.75. Current knowledge of twinning in various creatures, from earthworms to birds and from armadillos to humans is discussed by this well-known zoologist in this orderly little book. The volume is one of the University of Chicago Series "written not only for the specialist but for the educated layman."

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930

Chemistry

THE CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT OF CHEMICAL LABORATORIES—Various authors—*Chemical Foundation*, 340 p., \$1. This is a report of the National Research Council Committee on the Construction and Equipment of Chemical Laboratories, of which Rev. G. L. Coyle, S. J., of Georgetown University, is chairman. All aspects of chemical laboratories, both for students and for research, are fully covered, from the external construction to the details of equipment needed inside. Anyone who has to do with the design of a new chemical laboratory, or with the improvement of an old one, will find this book absolutely essential.

Science News Letter, October 11, 1930