

• First Glances at New Books

Linguistics

OUTLINE DICTIONARY OF MAYA GLYPHS—William Gates—*Johns Hopkins University Press*, 174 p., \$35. (Limited edition of 207 numbered copies.) This is the first systematic compilation of Maya glyphs. More than 2,500 distinct glyphs and about 100 minor modifying ones, all out of the three known Maya codices, are so arranged that each glyph is seen in all its contexts and combinations. Mr. Gates has definitely translated certain glyphs as a result of this systematic arrangement, the first time any such translation has been made. Maya writing is neither phonetic, pictographic, nor rebus, but ideographic, Mr. Gates says. It has a system, and the key is in the minor modifying glyphs. The glyph dictionary is a groundwork indispensable in future studies of Maya writing.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Biography

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN—Edith Gittings Reid—*Oxford*, 299 p., \$3.50. The life of Sir William Osler is well told in this short book. It will appeal to those who have not had time to read Dr. Cushing's longer work on the same subject. For those who do not know about the great physician, it will prove a splendid introduction.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Ichthyology

A HISTORY OF FISHES—J. R. Norman—*Stokes*, 463 p., \$7.50. A thorough-going biology of fishes, discussing their form and locomotion, their physiology, their relations to mankind. This book can be advantageously added to the reference shelf of any zoological laboratory, and of course will be especially useful to all persons concerned in any way with fishes.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

History

SKELETONS OF WORLD HISTORY, PART I—A. Johnstone Richardson—*The Red House, North Walsham, Norfolk, England*, 251 p., 50 c. To pack into a small paperbacked volume the main facts of world history from the beginnings of life down to 500 A. D. is a herculean task. Mr. Richardson has accomplished it by eliminating all but the fact words, even when that means at times leaving out verbs and other aids to easy reading. A chance quotation will best show the effect: "Egypt;

B.C. 1500, First Egyptian Empire; today a little communication node in British Empire; Eighteenth dynasty; Thothmes I and Thothmes III warred to Euphrates and the Orontes; subdued Phoenicia; took tribute from Assyria, Mitanni, Khatti; annexed Palestine and Syria."

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Philosophy

THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK—Bertrand Russell—*Norton*, 277 p., \$3.00. In this book Russell returns to his earlier vein, this time as official cold-shower to some of the over-enthusiastic prophets of modern science. At the same time his faith in science itself is undimmed. He discusses the nature of scientific knowledge, scientific technique and the society based on science. "Science has more and more substituted power-knowledge for love-knowledge" is his characteristic conclusion. "The government of the world," he says, "by which I do not mean its ministerial posts but its key positions of power, has been allowed to fall into the hands of men ignorant of the past, without tenderness to what is traditional, without understanding of what they are destroying." Russell still retains the art of giving his dicta the appearance of perhaps misleading clarity: but his pronouncements have the advantage of coming from a broad context.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Bibliography

A CATALOGUE OF BRITISH SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL BOOKS: Third Edition—Compiled by Daphne Shaw—*A. and F. Denny*, 754 p., 20 s. The British Science Guild retains the world in its debtorship with this new edition of the complete and well classified bibliography of British publications in science. Each entry gives author, title and publisher; size, date and price. Useful supplements are the list of publishers and the extensive name index.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Astronomy

SIDEREAL EXPLORATIONS—Harlow Shapley—*Harvard Reprint 68*, 115 p. A brief but comprehensive summary of the grand program of celestial exploration now in progress at Harvard College Observatory in Cambridge and at its southern observatory, formerly in South America, now in South Africa.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Entomology

THE INSECT MENACE—L. O. Howard—*Century*, 347 p., \$3.50. The former field marshal of the forces holding the American front against the devouring hexapod hordes, just retired with honors after a lifetime of battle, here presents in the vivid dramatic style of which he is master a popular summary of the vast knowledge of the nature and disposition of the enemy that made him so valuable an officer in the army of defence. He knows which insects will attack, and when, and where; he knows the artillery that man can push up to hold the line; he knows what allies mankind has in the camp of the enemy and how their aid can best be exploited. The illustrations, both drawings and photographs that are as clear and sharp as drawings, are quite worthy of Dr. Howard's text.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Physics

THE UNIVERSE IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN PHYSICS—Max Planck—*Norton*, 114 p., \$2.00. In the midst of the present flood of explanations of what modern physics is doing to upset the world, it is of value to have a statement from the man who, along with Einstein, really started all the hullabaloo—Max Planck, the founder of the quantum theory. Instead of trying to dazzle the uninitiated with verbal firecrackers Planck soberly outlines the nature and salient results of recent physical thinking as it appears to him. His method of exposition may make his book heavy for a generation accustomed to scientific popularization, but it is correspondingly less likely to mislead.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

General Science

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM AND THE UNIVERSITY—*City of New York*, 208 p. The sixty-second annual report of the trustees of the American Museum of Natural History gives, in addition to the usual fiscal facts and figures, some carefully-thought discussion to the special problems facing a great museum in a metropolis.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931

Physics

A MANUAL OF EXPERIMENTS AND PROJECTS IN PHYSICS—H. Clyde Krennerick—*Heath*, 184 p., 84c. Intended for use in modern high school courses.

Science News Letter, September 19, 1931