

• First Glances at New Books

Geography

VAN LOON'S GEOGRAPHY—Hendrik Willem Van Loon—*Simon and Schuster* 525 p., \$3.75. It is hard to decide whether the illustrations or the text is the more engaging part of the geography which has been chosen as the Book of the Month. Those who already know Mr. Van Loon's charming way of enlivening facts—sometimes called dull—will hasten to acquire his latest book. Those who are strangers to his style will find this a delightful introduction. It is, perhaps, only fair to warn the literal-minded that this is not a text-book, though it will help many to a much better understanding of geography than most text-books. Mr. Van Loon calls it "a study of man in search of food and shelter and leisure for himself and for his family and an attempt to find out the way in which man has either adapted himself to his background or has reshaped his physical surroundings in order to be as comfortable and well nourished and happy as seemed compatible with his own limited strength."

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Botany

HOW TO SEE PLANTS—Eric Fitch Daglish—*Morrow*, 122 p., \$1.50. This is not a popular "key" but a simple, readable, reliable account of the main facts of plant biology, small enough in format to slip into a pocket, brief enough to make a digestible mental mouthful. A number of full-page illustrations, engraved by the author in the excellent style that has already earned him a reputation, make the book more attractive.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Engineering

SYMPOSIUM ON WELDING—*American Society for Testing Materials*. 152 p., \$1.75. Papers on welding recently presented at a meeting of the Society in Pittsburgh have been published with their discussions in a well-bound volume. It constitutes a good review of the present status of the art.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Economics

RECENT TRENDS IN AMERICAN HOUSING—Edith Elmer Wood—*Macmillan*, 317 p., \$3. London has a lower death rate than New York largely because its slums have been cleaned up, the writer holds. She reviews what has

been done in Europe and this country to house in a healthful environment that large fraction of the population, estimated to be one-third of our one hundred and twenty millions in this country, which now lives among squalid, disease-breeding surroundings. It would be interesting to know how the mass production of metal homes might improve living conditions for the masses, but construction methods are not brought within the scope of this book.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Botany

FLORA OF THE PRAIRIES AND PLAINS OF CENTRAL NORTH AMERICA—Per Axel Rydberg—*New York Botanical Garden*, 969 p., \$5.50. This is a book for which American botanists have long been waiting; for the region that lies between the Mississippi and the Rockies, while partly covered by existing standard works, has been allowed by all of them to "sit down between two chairs" in many critical respects. And the great American grasslands form a floristic unity, or rather continuum, which deserves special treatment by itself, which surely no one is better qualified to give than Rydberg.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Physiology

A TEXTBOOK OF GENERAL PHYSIOLOGY FOR COLLEGES—Philip H. Mitchell—*McGraw-Hill*, 799 p., \$6. Second edition of a text designed for those students who have had some biology, physics and chemistry, but little or no organic or physical chemistry. This second edition contains less biochemistry and more physical chemistry than the first edition. Further revision has been in the direction of including as many as possible of the significant recent advances in the field.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Juvenile

CLEAR TRACK AHEAD!—Henry B. Lent—*Macmillan*, 84 p., \$2. An answer to the many questions about trains that the small boy can think of, interestingly written as a narrative from queries plied by the author's own son. Illustrated by a number of good line drawings.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Hygiene

BE BEAUTIFUL—Edith Porter Laphin and Flora G. Orr—*Appleton*, 160 p., \$1.50. Being beautiful, or attempting to be so, seems now to have reached the stage of science as well as art. In this very helpful and readable book, the authors have shown fully the scientific basis of beauty, which consists of good personal hygiene. In most instances the authors' advice on this is sound, though there are one or two slips. For example, orthopedists recommend, both for healthy, straight bodies and for the relaxing sleep that truly rests and beautifies, a firm, hard, flat bed, rather than the "resilient, downy mattress and springs" advised in this book. However, in the advice about beautifying and taste in personal adornment, the authors are on their own ground and may be safely and no doubt satisfactorily heeded.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Ornithology

INTRODUCTION TO ORNITHOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE—Mary Ferguson Coble and Cora Smith Life—*Wm. B. Straube, Los Angeles*, 91 p., \$1. This conveniently pocket-size book contains thoroughly-explained glossaries of ornithological names and terms, arranged in nine categories: according to structural characters, color, markings, etc. It should do much to take off the curse of "hard names" that is such a discouragement to many otherwise enthusiastic nature students.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Biology

GENERAL BIOLOGY—F. M. Wheat and Elizabeth T. Fitzpatrick—*American Book Company*, 566 p., \$1.60. A new text-book for high schools, containing ample material to form the basis of a year's work.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1932

Physics

PHYSICS—A. Wilmer Duff—*Blakiston's*, 681 p., \$4. The seventh edition of a text on which seven men have worked to give the different branches of the subject the benefit of their specialization. The book is terse, compact and up-to-date—a good text for engineering students and excellent for reference.

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