

Books of the Week

ADVANCED MECHANICS OF MATERIALS—Glenn Murphy—*McGraw-Hill*, 307 p., answers to problems, figs., \$4. An advanced undergraduate or graduate course in strength of materials, including such topics as the relationships among stresses and strains at a point, theories of failure, axial loading, stress concentration, and others, with emphasis on the tools, geometry and properties of materials.

THE ANCIENT MAYA—Sylvanus G. Morley—*Stanford Univ. Press*, 520 p., illus. \$10.00. The authoritative story of America's most brilliant native civilization in pre-Columbian times in Northern Central America and Southern Mexico.

A.S.T.M. STANDARDS ON TEXTILE MATERIALS (with Related Information) 1946 issue—*American Society for Testing Materials*, 490 p., illus., paper, \$4. Contains definitions and terms, methods of testing, tolerances and specifications for textiles and related materials developed by the A.S.T.M.

BUTALASTIC POLYMERS, Their Preparation and Application—Frederick Marchionna—*Reinhold*, 642 p., illus., \$8.50. A treatise on synthetic rubbers, giving sources and production of monomers, mechanism and processes of polymerization, and processing and industrial application of butalastics.

FROM GALILEO TO THE NUCLEAR AGE—Harvey Brace Lemon—*Univ. of Chicago Press*, 451 p., illus., \$5. This revised edition of *From Galileo to Cosmic Rays*, presents physics in a highly entertaining though authoritative manner, and makes the subject fascinating to students and nonscientific readers.

GREENHOUSE GARDENING FOR EVERYONE—Ernest Chabot—*Barrows*, 266 p., illus., \$3.

A book that answers about all the questions about gardening under glass, and carries a chapter on insects and plant diseases, with a program for easy control, as well as calendars and tables for planting in greenhouses and garden frames.

MICROCALORIMETRY—W. Swietoslawski—*Reinhold*, 199 p., figs., \$4.75. This book gives a comprehensive description of the methods used in measuring small amounts of heat developed by different objects. Microcalorimetric measurements have been employed in many fields recently, and it is expected that a wider application of this method lies ahead.

NEW WORLD OF MACHINES: Research, Discovery, Invention—Harland Manchester—*Random House*, 313 p., illus., \$3. The story of the new discoveries and inventions that will reshape the post-war world, such as radar, television, new wonders of lighting, communication and transportation, plastics, artificial rubber, and the new techniques in farming.

PERSONAL COUNSEL—A Supplement to Morals—Robert Frank—*Informative Books*, 306 p., \$3.50. Although this book is an attempt to meet popular reading requirements in the presentation and explanation of fundamental principles and facts applicable in personal relations, it is suggested as a collateral text in the presentation of intimate personal problems confronting young people.

Science News Letter, December 7, 1946



They Do Not Die

► DYING FLOWERS and falling leaves have been the keynotes of no end of melancholy mopings in song and verse. The general symbolism seems to go away back: we find it in such myths as those of Isis and Osiris, Venus and Adonis, and Orpheus and Eurydice. The slaying of Baldr with the mischievous Loki's arrow of mistletoe is a Northern variant of the same theme.

In modern times, poets with a relish for the melancholy have for the most part dropped mythological symbolism and written directly about the dying flowers themselves. Probably Bryant's poem, beginning "The melancholy days have come," is the best known of this genre.

Bryant even selected a few species for special mention: windflower, violet, brier-rose, orchis, goldenrod, aster and brookside sunflower. Bryant was a pretty good poet, but he certainly must have been either ignorant or unmindful of botany, for not one of the plants in his list dies in the fall. They are all perennials; though their flowers may dis-

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appear and their leaves wither and decay, the plants themselves are very much alive in underground root and rhizome. Even while we are reciting elegies over their supposed graves, the flowers are preparing, in hidden beginnings of leaf and bud, for next season's growth and blossoming.

As a matter of fact, we all know this, and in the spring we make use of our knowledge when we celebrate the resurrection-feast of Easter. Not only to the Christian religion but to most pagan ones as well, flowers have always been foremost symbols of belief in immortality, because so many of them actually are physically immortal. Our perennial talk about their dying in autumn is just another instance of the extraordinary capacity of the human mind to entertain two mutually contradictory ideas at the same time.

Even the overground plant parts that do wither and decay are not lost to the cycle of life. Fed upon by the complex hordes of lower organisms in the soil, they presently become part of the soil itself, enriching it and enabling it to sustain coming generations of plant life.

Science News Letter, December 7, 1946

CHEMISTRY

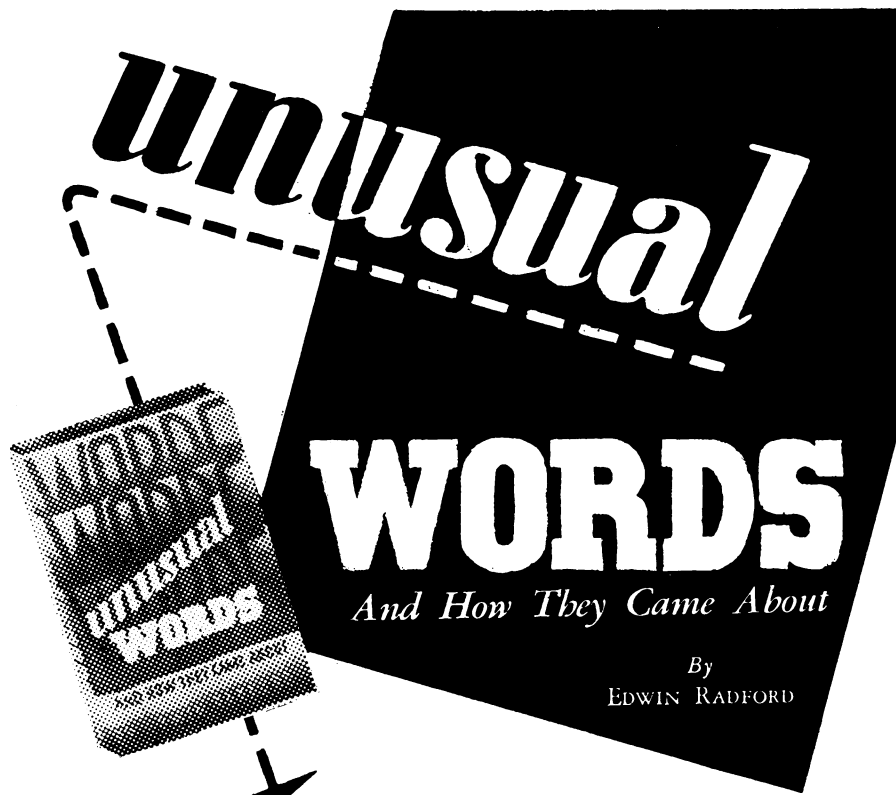
New Chemical Kills Nematodes, Soil Pests

➤ A NEW CHEMICAL for killing nematodes, which are plant-destroying lower worms that infest many soils,

is known as 1,1-dichloropropene-2. On this, patent 2,411,566 has been granted to Dr. T. W. Evans of Oakland, Calif., a Shell Development Company chemist.

Science News Letter, December 7, 1946

Diplomas in Roman days were not school awards but letters of recommendation given to travelers visiting the provinces; the letters were folded double, hence the name.



"This book provides more than a source for browsing. Edwin Radford has produced a book that serves not only as reference material for the curious, but as an encyclopedia for the student and scholar. Explanation of words is given after complete research into the customs, speech, life and anecdotal history of the English-speaking people over six centuries. The reader learns that when the phrase 'by the skin of my teeth' is used, the speaker is actually quoting scripture; and that 'boudoir' comes from the French 'boudier' to sulk. 'Unusual Words' serves the purpose of a short storybook to the average reader who wants something he can pick up and lay down at will. An excellent addition to the home library!" —The Emporia Gazette \$3.75

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