

## First Glances at New Books

**INFLUENCING HUMAN BEHAVIOR**—H. A. Overstreet—(3rd Printing)—*Norton*. (\$3). In a world that is full of bright young people with something to sell, “applied psychology” has become a touchword credited with magic powers. It is greatly to be hoped that solid books such as this one will eventually overcome and drive out the “courses in will power” and “keys to success”—high-sounding as drums, but as empty—that now flood the land.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**EDISON**—George S. Bryan—*Knopf*. This book goes beyond the usual popular-magician tale of the greatest of American inventors. It makes a real endeavor to get reliable data in orderly array, with definite citations from the mass of scattered Edisoniana. Very creditably also, it tells something of Edison's fellow-laborers and their contributions to the corporate reputation that is Edison.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**PSYCHOLOGY**—Everett Dean Martin—(7th Printing)—*Norton*. (\$3). Fairly complete, thoroughly up-to-date, written in short words and illustrated with homely and familiar examples, this book deserves its popularity.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**MAGNETISM AND ATOMIC STRUCTURE**—Edmund C. Stoner—*Dutton*. (\$5). The latest ideas of the relation of magnetism to the structure of atoms and molecules, and the radiation of energy.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**THE NEW UNIVERSE**—Baker Brownell—*Van Nostrand*. (\$4). A new “outline of history” from the beginnings of the solar system to the present, and including chapters on such topics as “Mind and Behavior,” “Society Today,” “Society Tomorrow” and “The Finalities of Life.”

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**HOW WE BECOME PERSONALITIES**—Edward Huntington Williams—*Bobbs-Merrill*. (\$3). An account of the way in which our glands make us what we are, and the possibility of controlling them.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**FATALISM OR FREEDOM**—C. Judson Herrick—*Norton*. (\$1). A biologist tackles the old, tough riddle of determinism and decides in favor of free will.

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**HORSES, NOW AND LONG AGO**—Lucy Sprague Mitchell—*Harcourt, Brace*. Horses, including little horses, and their story from the early eohippus to modern ones, intended for children from eight to twelve but interesting to all ages.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**SUNDIALS**—Arthur Robert Green—*Macmillan*. (\$4.25). A study of the peculiar vertical sundials, or “mass-clocks” found in medieval English churches.

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**BEYOND THE MILKY WAY**—George Ellery Hale—*Scribner's*. (\$1.50). A little book on astronomy old and new, particularly valuable because of the attention it devotes to the almost unimaginably remote “island universes” of the spiral nebulae and stellar clouds.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**NEW SCHOOLS FOR OLDER STUDENTS**—Nathaniel Peffer—*Macmillan*. (\$2.50). A full account of methods of educating adults, such as the open forum, educational programs of corporations and art and science museums.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**MYTH IN PRIMITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**—Bronislaw Malinowski—*Norton*. (\$1). Tells of the efforts of “natural man” to find explanations for the riddles of the universe. Wisely, the author does not try to cram all lore into one short popular essay, but confines himself to a closer study of one Melanesian people.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**SCIENCE AND POETRY**—I. A. Richards—*Norton*. (\$1). A Fellow of Magdalene College essays the building of an obviously much-needed bridge.

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**WILD BIRDS IN CITY PARKS**—Herbert Eugene Walter and Alice Hall Walter—*Macmillan*. (\$1.50). Condensed descriptions of 766 species of birds which have been seen in city parks, with easy analytical keys and charts of times and places of occurrence. A very useful pocket vademecum.

Science News-Letter, November 27, 1926

**THE HISTORY OF WITCHCRAFT AND DEMONOLOGY**—Montague Summers—*Knopf*. Material from the medieval witchcraft trials reviewed by a true believer. Sheds some light on the cult and more on the minds of the lords temporal and spiritual.

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## ASTRONOMY

### Ephemera

Quotation from *THE NEW ASTRONOMY*. By Samuel Pierpont Langley. Prof. Langley was the father of aeronautics, pioneer of solar study and for many years secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

I have read somewhere a story about a race of ephemeral insects who live but an hour. To those who are born in the early morning the sunrise is the time of youth. They die of old age while its beams are yet gathering force, and only their descendants live on to midday; while it is another race which sees the sun decline, from that which saw it rise. Imagine the sun about to set, and the whole nation of mites gathered under the shadow of some mushroom (to them ancient as the sun itself) to hear what their wisest philosopher has to say of the gloomy prospect. If I remember aright, he first told them that, incredible as it might seem, there was not only a time in the world's youth when the mushroom itself was young, but that the sun in those early ages was in the eastern, not in the western, sky. Since then, he explained, the eyes of scientific ephemera had followed it, and established by induction from vast experience the great “Law of Nature,” that it moved only westward; and he showed that since it was now nearing the western horizon, science herself pointed to the conclusion that it was about to disappear forever, together with the great race of ephemera for whom it was created.

What his hearers thought of this discourse I do not remember, but I have heard that the sun rose again the next morning.

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## GENERAL SCIENCE

### Experiments

In treating any particular subject I would first of all make some experiments, because my design is first to refer to experiments and then to demonstrate why bodies are constrained to act in such a manner. This is the method we ought to follow in investigating the phenomena of Nature. Theory is the general, experiments are the soldiers. Experiment is the interpreter of the artifices of Nature. It is never wrong; but our judgment is sometimes deceived because we are expecting results which experiment refuses to give. We must consult experiment and vary the circumstances, till we have deduced general laws, for it alone can furnish us with them.—Leonardo da Vinci: *Note Books*.

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