

First Glances at New Books

THE RACIAL BASIS OF CIVILIZATION—Frank H. Hankins—*Knopf*. This is a smash at the great Nordic myth that has grown up in recent years, and includes an extensive and interesting analysis of what is a race.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, 1925—*Government Printing Office*. (\$1.50) Of most general interest is the 600-page appendix, where are reprinted important articles on physics, astronomy, botany, zoology, biography, etc.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

THE AMERICAN ANNUAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1927—*American Photographic Publishing Co.* (\$1.50). The latest edition of the photographer's *vade mecum* in a new and enlarged form. A very complete section on new scientific developments in photography is of special interest.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

THE PATHFINDER STAR MAPS—Edward S. King—*Cosmos Press*. (\$1.25). Twelve star maps, for each month of the year, conveniently printed on one side of semi-translucent paper so that a flashlight can be used back of them at night.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

THE DENTITION OF DRYOPITHECUS AND THE ORIGIN OF MAN—W. K. Gregory and Milo Hellman—*New York: American Museum of Natural History*. Out of the mouths of apes more ancient than the hills of India, evidence on the most agitated and most crucial question in evolution.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

THE HYDROSTATIC SYSTEM OF TREES—D. T. MacDougal—*Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication No. 373*. New light on that most puzzling hydrostatic paradox: how water flows uphill in the trunks of trees. Prof. MacDougal's experiments are simple and clear, and his results authentic.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

FOGS AND CLOUDS—William J. Humphreys—*Williams and Wilkins* (\$4.) Humphreys has made the collection of pictures of fogs and clouds his hobby and now has arranged and explained them. All who have occasion to watch the sky will enjoy the hundred photographs and accompanying text.

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Mathematician as Motorist

Quotation from COMMON SENSE AND ITS CULTIVATION. Dr. Hanbury Hankin. Dutton.

Mr. A. E. Morgan, the Principal of the Antioch College, Ohio, has related to me that, on one occasion in a lecture he illustrated a point by saying that a person driving a motor would probably fail to get through a crowded street crossing if he depended on formal logical processes. Instead of doing this he relies on complicated estimates of the speeds of other cars carried out subconsciously far more rapidly than could be done in consciousness. After the lecture a member of the audience came to him and told him he had in his employ a mathematician who, in his subject, was of exceptional ability. But the bent of his mind was so strong towards formal logical processes that he had to give up driving his motor. On reaching a crossing he would have to stop and calculate the probability of collisions with other motors. Even his rare mathematical ability was insufficient for such an occasion and he got into so much trouble in driving that he gave up the practice entirely.

This incident illustrates the fact that, if we have to come to a decision, more than one kind of mental process is available.

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Pale Leaves: Few Vitamins

If Junior balks at eating dark-colored greens and insists on nice, white hearts of lettuce, tell him gently but firmly that if he wants to grow up big and tall like Papa he'd better take the green and leave the white. Preliminary reports by Dr. John W. Crist and associates, on growth experiments performed at Michigan State College, indicate that Vitamin A, indispensable for proper growth in young animals and young children alike, is associated with the greenness of the vegetables in their diet.

"Albino rats have been fed on leaf and head lettuce, which naturally differ greatly in degree of greenness, as sources of vitamin A," says Dr. Crist. "Without exception, the greener material has been superior in the production of growth. Equivalent amounts of it have not only been antecedent to greater gains in weight but also to more consistently uniform gains."

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Government experts have designed a device to measure the light given off by an electric light bulb.

Gifted Children a Problem

The recent idea of putting gifted children together into special classes so that they are not held back by the slow and the stupid does not solve the important problem of how to educate superior children. This is the conclusion from an experiment described by Dr. M. J. Van Wagenen, of the University of Minnesota.

In Dr. Van Wagenen's experiment the work done by mentally superior children taught together in a special eighth grade class was compared with the work done by superior children who attended eighth grade classes with the rank and file of boys and girl. The boys and girls of the special group did better work in fundamentals of arithmetic than the gifted children in the mixed classes. But when it came to arithmetic problems, the special gifted class fell below the others, and so on down the list of school subjects, with the gifted group doing a little better in one subject and not so well in another.

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Crystals Regulate Radio

Quartz crystals, now extensively used in controlling the wave length of radio broadcasting stations to keep the length constant, may now be available for long wave commercial stations, as a result of experiments by J. R. Harrison, assistant in physics at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn. Formerly, for long waves it was necessary to use large crystals so that they would vibrate with the proper frequency, but Mr. Harrison has found a type of mounting in which the electrical field is applied in a way that causes the crystals to vibrate more slowly than it ordinarily does.

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Page Mendel

We do not clearly comprehend the workings of heredity,
Which causes traits to cling to us like
odor of asafoetida—
That is, the ones we fain would shake,
like baldness and obesity,
While those we like, we cannot have;
now is this a necessity?

* * * * *

(We give it up. Lord help us all!)
—Anonymous.

Science News-Letter, January 8, 1927

Only about one person in 18 is susceptible to ivy poisoning.