

First Glances at New Books

TOWARDS THE OPEN: A PREFACE TO SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM—Henry Chester Tracy, with an introduction by Julian Huxley—*Dutton* (\$3.50). A highly significant book this, the significance being about equally divided between the title and the sub-title. The "Open" referred to is the great world of nature, plotted and titled by man or not as the case may be, plus the human soul undulled in its response thereto.

The humanism advocated is to be made scientific by making this response both rationally critical and emotionally sensitive.

A sort of partnership between science and art for the understanding and appreciation of nature and for using nature to man's well-being seems to be what the author aims at. And the aim is the more significant from being conceived and set forth with unmistakable literary excellence by one trained scientist and endorsed by another such scientist.

Much penetrating comment on various phases of American culture believed by the author to be contributing meagerly indeed toward the ends he holds desirable merits careful reading by many people.

William E. Ritter.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

THE ROMANCE OF THE ATOM—Benjamin Harrow—*Boni & Liveright* (\$1.50). Old and new theories of the structure of matter written for the layman.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

THE MIGRATION OF BIRDS—Alexander Wetmore—*Harvard University Press* (\$2.50). A valuable assemblage in one book of widely scattered facts about bird migration to which the writer has added significant data from his own observation.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

FOUR THOUSAND YEARS OF PHARMACY—Charles H. LaWall—*Lippincott* (\$5). A readable and comprehensive history of the use of drugs in remedying human ills, ornamented with reproductions of illustrations from early books on pharmacy in the author's library.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

THE CONQUEST OF DISEASE—Thurman B. Rice—*Macmillan* (\$4.50). Books like this should have a place in every family's medicine cabinet. Intelligent absorption of its contents will do more good than many a bottle.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

PHOTOSYNTHESIS—H. A. Spoehr—*Chemical Catalog Co.* (\$6.50). All life on this planet is dependent on one set of chemical reactions, which only the green plant, with the aid of radiant energy from the sun, can accomplish.

The attention given by chemists and physiologists to the problems presented by this fact is commensurate with its importance; regrettably, the completeness of our understanding of it is not yet commensurate with the effort bestowed. Nevertheless, progress, fairly rapid in spots, is being made. Dr. Spoehr places all science, and especially chemistry and physiology, in his debt by assembling into one concise and comprehensive volume all known facts about photosynthesis, including those brought forth by his own penetrating research. No director of advanced study in organic or physiological chemistry or in plant physiology can pretend to be doing justice to his students or to his own investigations unless he has this book among the "ten most indispensables" on his reference shelf.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

NUTRITION WORK WITH CHILDREN—Lydia J. Roberts—*University of Chicago Press* (\$3.50). Presents the problem of malnutrition as it affects childhood together with practical methods for its eradication. Designed as text book for students of dietetics in universities and colleges.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

A GUIDE TO THINKING: A Beginner's Book in Logic—Olin Templin and Anna McCracken—*Doubleday, Page*. To teach young people (and perhaps older ones, if possible) the technique of thinking, is the aim of this well organized and clearly written text on logic. The necessary abstractions of the subject are made less formidable by numerous exercises and examples.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY—M. Ralph Brown—*Bobbs-Merrill*. The part which the new science of psychology is prepared to play in assisting the old science of law is told in readable style. The chapters in which Mr. Brown analyzes the mechanics of court room procedure provide convincing evidence that both introspective and objective psychology can scarcely be kept out of the court room, even though some ultra-conservative jurists continue to "object" to its introduction there.

Science News-Letter, April 9, 1927

GEOGRAPHY

Minerals Enter Politics

Quotation from **MODERN BUSINESS GEOGRAPHY**—Ellsworth Huntington and Sumner W. Cushing—*World Book Co.*

The possession of mineral deposits by a country is partly a matter of chance and partly a matter of political foresight. It is fortunate for the United States that its northern boundary was so run that it includes some of the richest of the world's iron deposits; but since at that time no one knew the value of the minerals near the head of Lake Superior, credit for giving the deposits to this country must go to mere luck. On the other hand, it was not luck that gave Alaska to the United States; it was the political foresight of Secretary Seward. For two cents an acre he bought a vast region which up to 1920 had yielded more than \$2.50 per acre, chiefly in gold. Today every advanced country is eager to obtain either political or commercial control of places that furnish any sort of mineral wealth, but especially coal and petroleum. This eagerness has been a cause of political troubles in Mesopotamia, Manchuria, Mexico, Spitzbergen, and elsewhere.

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EUGENICS

Eugenics and Race

Quotation from **THE RACIAL BASIS OF CIVILIZATION**—Frank H. Hankins Knopf—The author is professor of sociology in Smith College.

There can in fact be no doubt of individual variations; there are superior and inferior strains in every race, nation, class or community. This is a general biological fact of the widest application. But such variations would exist and be equally important whether races are equal or unequal to one another. If we assume the races to be equal the aims of a sound eugenics are in no way affected. It would still be desirable to prevent differential rates of reproduction from lowering the average hereditary endowment among any given people. If, on the other hand, we assume the races to be unequal, the eugenic aims and the data for their realization become more complicated, but their importance is neither increased nor decreased.

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There are few gaily colored flowers in the regions where nectar and pollen gathering insects are scarce.

The male black bass stays on its watery nest of fish eggs during the entire incubation period.