

First Glances at New Books

PROBLEMS OF MODERN PHYSICS—H. A. Lorentz—*Ginn* (\$3.60). A mathematical account of some of the most important physical problems, relating to the quantum theory, the field of an electron, et.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

THREE CENTURIES OF CHEMISTRY—Irvine Masson—*Macmillan*. From the beginning of experimental science with Francis Bacon the author tells of the rise of chemistry, the experimental science *par excellence*, to the present day.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

GUIDE TO PHYSICS—John W. McCormack—*Globe*. A well arranged laboratory guide for high school classes.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

A LIST OF THE INSECT TYPES IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE ILLINOIS STATE NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS—Theodore H. Frison—*Illinois State Nat. Hist. Survey*. Of use to workers in systematic entomology.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

DIRECTORY OF RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT—Compiled by Leslie R. Marston—*National Research Council* (\$.50). This list of 425 workers in the field of child development shows in each case the full name, degree and where obtained, address, organization, specialties, and research problems, making a very serviceable Who's Who of these specialists.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

RELATION OF BIRDS TO WOODLOTS—W. L. McAtee—*Roosevelt Wild Life Bull. v. 4, no. 1*. A worthy addition to a fine series, with many illustrations by Fuertes and Sawyer.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

DOCTORATES CONFERRED IN THE SCIENCES BY AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES 1925-1926—Compiled by Callie Hull and Clarence J. West—*National Research Council* (\$.50). The trend of scientific research in the different universities shown in this classified list of theses, which the National Research Council has compiled annually since 1920.

Science News-Letter, April 30, 1927

The U. S. Bureau of Fisheries rescues millions of fish each year from land-locked ponds caused by the overflow of the Mississippi and some of its tributaries.

PEDAGOGY Education By Mail

Quotation from EDUCATION FOR ADULTS—Frederick Paul Keppel—Columbia University Press.

Not so long ago, when numbers were small, the question whether a given student was capable of profiting fully by such extra-mural courses as he might desire to take was relatively unimportant except to himself; and, as a matter of fact, he was pretty sure to profit, because, without his knowing it, he was the product of a process of selection. Even if he were not intellectually gifted, he had at least shown courage and initiative enough to swim against the current.

Today, however, the whole picture has changed. Students in adult education of various kinds have increased in number, not arithmetically but geometrically. The element of imitativeness, of which we all know the power, is in full operation. Young people are now subject to a terrific "selling" pressure. There are at least five thousand highly paid and highly skilled correspondence school salesmen at work all the time. One can hardly open a magazine without being faced either by an inspirational article in the reading matter or by an illustrated advertisement showing, for example, a young man who has taken somebody's correspondence course and is therefore sitting at the president's desk, from which he looks down with proud pity upon the shabby and cringing contemporary who failed to profit by his correspondence opportunities. In a word, we can no longer assume that men and women will enter adult education as a result of superior energy and power of deliberate decision any more than we can assume the students in our colleges to be impelled by the motive of intellectual interest. It is reported that nineteen out of twenty of the registrants in correspondence courses drop out before the completion of the course, and the mortality in all forms of extra-mural education is far higher than in regular courses, though the latter is high enough, in all conscience. Under the conditions necessarily controlling adult education, we must expect in any case a relatively high mortality, but is there anything we can do to keep it within bounds? For one thing, a way must be found to enable students to distinguish between *bona fide* correspondence schools and those which are simply swindles. It is a fact

that anyone "who has published an article" can become a candidate for the Ph.D. degree in an institution legally empowered to grant that degree, the institution offering more than eight hundred courses, conducted by a faculty consisting of a man and his wife, both of them government clerks, aided by their only child.

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GEOGRAPHY First Printed Map

The first map of the world ever turned out by the printing press shows a fanciful, plate shaped universe, with Adam and Eve and the Tower of Babel much in evidence, according to Dr. H. Hassinger, professor of geography at the University of Basel, Switzerland.

In a lecture before the Geographical Society of Basel, Dr. Hassinger pointed out the strange fact that the art of printing, which was destined to promote knowledge, only helped to establish medieval ignorance by its first ventures into geography.

Three ancient maps contend for the honor of being the first picture of the world turned out by the fifteenth century press. One of these is in the Rockefeller Library, in New York. Another, very similar, was discovered by Dr. Hassinger in a volume which had belonged to the library of the reformer Vandadius.

These two maps, said Dr. Hassinger, are almost identical except for a few insignificant details. The maps were cut into wood by two German artists, and the text is in German. They contain some known geographical facts of the time, combined with fanciful ideas about the universe supplied by the best imaginations of the middle ages. Paradise, with four great streams flowing from it, holds a prominent place on this flat earth map. The known islands of the world are arranged in a circle around the mainland of the world.

The third map which geographers say was made at about the same time has Latin text, Dr. Hassinger said.

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More copper has been produced in the world during the past 20 years than in the almost 7,000 years that copper has been known.

A naturalist who collected medicines in Chinese cities found evidence that remains of 85 different kinds of fossil animals were used.