

GLANCES AT NEW BOOKS

SIR ISAAC NEWTON—F. E. Brasch, Editor—*Williams and Wilkins* (\$5). Last year there was celebrated throughout civilized countries the bicentenary of the death of Sir Isaac Newton, for in the two centuries that have since elapsed the work of the great English scientist has penetrated all political borders, and won him a place as a star of the first magnitude in scientific history. The chief American celebration was held last autumn in New York by the History of Science Society, with the cooperation of other scientific organizations. The papers presented at the meeting by David Eugene Smith, Dayton C. Miller, George D. Birkhoff, William W. Campbell, Michael I. Pupin, Florian Cajori and others, on various aspects of Newton's work, are now gathered together in permanent form. In the appendix is a catalog of the exhibit of Newtoniana held in conjunction with the meeting, and which gives an idea of the wealth of such material that has come to the United States. As usual with publications of Williams and Wilkins, the book is typographically up to the highest standards.

History of Science
Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

THE ESSENCE OF ARCHITECTURE—William Roger Greeley—*Van Nostrand*. A concise and interesting little book that gives just what the title says that it does. It is a bit surprising to Science Service, however, to see the building of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council, in which it has its home, referred to as the "Academy of Arts and Sciences."

Architecture
Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

ELEMENTS OF ASTRONOMY—Edward Arthur Fath—*McGraw-Hill* (\$3). In the second edition of this very good text Dr. Fath has included new astronomical discoveries up to the end of 1927. A set of new star maps, and minor changes in accord with various criticisms, all go to making this even better than the first edition. This book is one of several published in the last few years that have remedied the lack of a good elementary text in astronomy, a state of affairs that existed about 1922.

Astronomy
Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

Cloth Clue to History

Archæology
A few little pieces of cloth threaten to revolutionize present-day ideas of Greek history. The pieces of cloth, representing a knight or a khan, were among the collection brought from Mongolia by the Russian explorer, Col. Peter Kozlov. Archæologists who have examined them declare that they confirm the fact that Greek culture penetrated eastward to that remote region in ancient times.

Believing the discovery to be of great significance, the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union has had ten copies of the original pieces of cloth made, and has sent the original exhibits to Prof. P. Pelliot, of the College of France, authority on the archæology of central Asia.

Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

Cause of Stains Discovered

Chemistry
Methods of removing the brown stain that often disfigures Indiana limestone used for building facing and trim were announced to the American Society for Testing Materials by Lee Huber, research engineer of Bedford, Ind.

A jet of steam played on the stain followed by bathing with 5 per cent. formic acid solution is one cure. A poultice moistened with a 5 per cent. solution of sodium carbonate also gives results.

Mr. Huber traced the stain to seepage from the cement used to back the stone. Prevention of the stain is aided by the use of white portland cements.

Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

"Annealed" Meat

Physics
British brains have been hard at work to make palatable the famous roast beef of England, that has to come in these degenerate days all the way from Australia or South America.

The freezing process necessary to carry the meat on its long journey dries up all the natural juices. It has been found, however, at the Low Temperature Research Station at Cambridge that when beef is frozen and thawed very slowly, practically no fluid is lost. In one experiment the time consumed in freezing and thawing took nearly 80 days at the end of which the meat was hardly distinguishable from fresh. If this method can be applied in industry, it will be of considerable commercial importance, it is believed.

Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

NATURE RAMBLINGS

BY FRANK THONE

Natural History



Specters

Wanderers in the summer woods, or even sitters in summer pergolas and arbors are frequently startled at the sudden appearance of a long-legged live twig deliberately stalking up their arms or necks. Nervous people may be shocked, and even stouter individuals will not be able to resist a creepy sensation at the sight of this weird insect. Its entomological name, "phasmid," is an acknowledgment of its rather unearthly appearance, for it is derived from a Greek word that means apparition or phantom.

But the walking-stick need not cause any alarm, for it is quite as impotent for harm as any other phantom. The phasmids are relatives of the grasshoppers, little though they may look like their livelier cousins. The family is mainly tropical, but at least one species ventures north, and is common throughout most of the northern states. Walking-sticks are much more numerous than they appear to be, for even the most careful observers are easily deceived by their twig-like appearance. Only a few of the southern forms have even short wings.

These insects are like many other of the lower animals that are unable to defend themselves from attack, in that they can easily detach a limb if it is seized, and hobble off on the four or five remaining ones. They can also grow legs to replace such losses, though the new members are usually smaller and weaker than the original legs.

Science News-Letter, July 7, 1928

Green olivines found in the lava flows of Hawaii are known in the islands as Hawaiian diamonds.