• First Glances at New Books

Astronomy

THE STARS FOR SAM—W. Maxwell Reed—*Harcourt, Brace,* 190 p., $3. Nobody who knows Mr. Reed's *The Earth for Sam* will need any argument at all to send them to their bookdealers with an order for his present venture into the heavens. It is written with a special eye to the unappeasable appetite for new knowledge that one finds in bright youngsters in their mid-teens. It is aimed squarely at their heads, not over them; yet it avoids the fatal error of seeming to be "written down." Although written for young readers, it does not flinch from such tough assignments as island universes, quanta, and relativity.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Hygiene

THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN LIVING—Mae Johnson Corwin and Walling Corwin—*Harr Wagner,* 464 p., $1.68. One of the attractive "Corwin Science Series" for seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. This volume is more comprehensive than the usual school book on health education. It is really a text on personal well-being, and includes lessons on better homes, mental health, safety, food, and clothing, all handled from up-to-date viewpoint.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Physical Sciences

THE SCIENCE OF DISCOVERY AND INVENTION—Walling Corwin and Mae Johnson Corwin—*Harr Wagner,* 735 p., $1.80. Another of the Corwin series of school books on science. This one deals with chemistry, physics, astronomy, and geology. The authors have not shied away from chemical formulae. In astronomy they use such terms as "sidereal period of revolution." They discuss combustion engines and facts about climate. The book will fascinate the scientifically inclined boy entering his teens. Other pupils of that age may find it a bit difficult unless the teacher is skillful in steering the course. But the young student who masters the book will know something about science.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Biology

THE SCIENCE OF PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE—Mae Johnson Corwin and Walling Corwin—*Harr Wagner,* 592 p., $1.72. To give the student a more thorough understanding of living things, introducing him to the world of plants and animals and to the problems and principles of agronomy, these aims are carefully carried out in this very thorough junior high school text. The book, like the two described in preceding reviews, is in the "Corwin Science Series."

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Archaeology

ANCIENT AMERICANS — Emily C. Davis—*Holt,* 311 p., $3.50. There have been many books, some of them good ones, about special aspects of American archæology, such as the great Incan culture of the Andes or the Maya ruins in Yucatan; but curiously enough until now there has been no single work covering the whole bewilderingly varied Indian world as it was in pre-Columbian days. Miss Davis has therefore done both the general public and archæology itself a real service in getting us out from among the trees and letting us see the forest. The Indians emerge from this book with considerable credit, as stewards of a great estate who within the frame of their inherent abilities made good increase of the fund with which they had been intrusted. Miss Davis has the happy ability to pack her book closely with facts without losing the leaven of easy readability. The illustrations are well chosen and their liaison with the text is good. There is an excellent index.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Biology-Philosophy

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF BIOLOGY—J. S. Haldane—*Doubleday Doran,* 155 p., $2. A printing of the Donnellan Lectures at the University of Dublin in 1930. Prof. Haldane attacks scientific materialism heavily, comes out flatfooted for the organismal or holistic approach to the phenomena of life, finds a place for God in a struggling world.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Ethnology

SERPENT WORSHIP IN AFRICA—Wilfrid D. Hambly—*Field Museum,* 85 p., 8 pl., 75c. Besides describing regional beliefs and customs dealing with serpent worship, Dr. Hambly also cites for comparison facts regarding serpent worship in other parts of the world. The explanatory passages telling why the serpent is so important in folklore are an especially interesting feature of the monograph.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Botany

LEAVES FROM GERARD'S HERBALL——Arranged by Marcus Woodward—*Houghton Mifflin,* 305 p., $3. It is a wonder that Gerard's *Historie of Plantes* has never gone through the thousandfold editions that have been the happy lot of Izaak Walton, for Gerard's combination of lucid language and curious conceits is certainly on a par with that of the Great Piscator. Perhaps this neglect of the centuries will be remedied now; for Marcus Woodward's selection of text and illustrations, combined with the excellent typographic job the publishers have made of the book, should attract hosts of readers who have never pluck'd a flower, just as Izaak's charm has won many who have never catch'd a fish.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Genetics-Evolution

MENDELISM AND EVOLUTION—E. B. Ford—*Dial,* 116 p., $1.50. A closely reasoned inquiry into the modern aspects of evolution, presenting Mendelian arrangements of mutations as the material on which natural selection operates.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Geology

THE BIOGRAPHY OF MOTHER EARTH—Henry Smith Williams—*McBride,* 315 p., $5. This author goes the limit with the continental drift idea. He starts with all the lands of the earth massed around the South Pole, and drifts them northward, and round and round at the same time. For him the coal fields of Spitzbergen are evidence that that land mass once migrated through the tropics. The book is lavishly illustrated, but the pictures are rather fuzzy.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

Chemistry

USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD—*Lead Industries Association*—104 p., 50c. Ubiquitous and indispensable lead and its compounds are the subject of this new and educative style of publicity. Lead is one of the oldest metals known to man.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931

General Science

A STUDENT'S LABORATORY GUIDE AND PROJECT BOOK IN GENERAL SCIENCE—M. C. Collister and E. L. Thurston—*Iroquois Publ. Co.,* 144 p., 76c. Intended for high school use.

Science News Letter, October 31, 1931