

# Books of the Week

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, 1947—*Gov. Printing Office*, 471 p., illus., \$2.00. Contains research reports on a variety of timely topics, including atomic energy, plutonium, silicones, biology of Bikini and reaction-propelled airplanes.

THE EARTH AND MAN: A Human Geography—Darrell Haug Davis—*Macmillan*, rev. ed., 696 p., illus., \$5.50. A college text.

FILM AND EDUCATION: A Symposium on the Role of the Film in the Field of Education—Godfrey M. Elliott, Ed.—*Philosophical Library*, 597 p., \$7.50. Each of the 37 chapters is contributed by a specialist in one of the various fields covered. The chapter on science films is by Oron Keeslar of the Kern County Schools, Calif.

HANDBOOK OF URANIUM MINERALS: An Exposition and Catalog of the Uranium and Thorium Minerals, Including their Occurrence, Detection, Location and Exploration—A Guide for the Prospector and Miner—Jack De Ment and H. C. Dake—*Mineralogist*

*Publishing Company*, rev. ed., 96 p., illus., paper, \$2.00. For prospectors, students and others who may be searching for uranium in response to the AEC offer of \$10,000 for discovery of fruitful deposits.

HIGH-POLYMER PHYSICS: A Symposium—Howard A. Robinson, Ed.—*Chemical Pub. Co.* 572 p., illus., \$12.00. The physicist has had the help of the chemist in making the strides reported here.

INVENTORY OF MAJOR LAND USES IN THE UNITED STATES—L. A. Reuss, H. H. Wooten and F. J. Marschner—*Govt. Printing Office*, 89 p., illus., paper, 25 cents. In the 1,905 million acres of the United States there is the utmost variation in climate, soil, slope of surface and development and use of land.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INDIANA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE, VOLUME 57—P. D. Edwards, Ed.—*State Library, Indianapolis*, 207 p., illus., \$3.00.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1949

## PSYCHOLOGY

# Why Some People Drink

➤ AMERICAN drinkers are divided about evenly between those who drink "to be sociable" and those who drink because it "makes me feel good," "I like it" or other individual reasons.

This was discovered in a survey made for Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N. J., by the National Opinion Research Center. Results of the survey are discussed in the QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF STUDIES OF ALCOHOL (Dec.), by three Rutgers sociologists.

Most of the social drinkers said they drank "just to be sociable", or "because all our friends drink," or "to be a good sport."

But a full two percent of all the 1,744 drinkers interviewed declared, "I drink to keep my husband company." Others said they drank only on festive occasions, because they were "brought up with it" or "as a business courtesy."

Among the non-social drinkers who gave individual reasons for drinking, the most frequent response was that it "makes me feel good." More than one in every 10 explained, "I like it."

Six percent of the drinkers pointed out as a reason for drinking alcoholic beverages that they quench thirst.

Appetite stimulation and other health reasons were also listed by some drinkers.

Social drinkers offered reasons ranging from a Pennsylvania housewife's explanation to the statement of a young ex-GI in New York City.

"People think you're dead if you don't drink", said the housewife.

The New Yorker explained, "Liquor is always sold in the places I frequent. You can't have a soda in a night club. It's just not done."

Listed by the sociologists as individual, non-social reasons for drinking were the replies of a domestic employee in Oklahoma and a building contractor in North Carolina.

The Oklahoman told an interviewer, "A bottle of beer makes me feel rested after a hard day's work. Then I can get up and clean my house."

The contractor said, "When I drink I feel important."

Women gave social reasons more frequently than men. Younger people, both men and women, tended to be social drinkers. And the figures showed that the social drinkers drank less often. A majority of the daily drinkers gave individual reasons, while social reasons dominated in the once-a-month and less groups.

In legally dry areas, the larger number of drinkers had their own reasons, while social drinking was more important in "wet" areas.

Drs. John W. Riley, Jr. and Charles F. Marden and Marcia Lifshitz, Rutgers sociologists, point out that the importance of social reasons for drinking is that social pressures may be used to help solve the drinking problems of drunkenness and alcoholism.

What is needed, they find, is a new set of group sanctions regarding drinking.

For one social control on drinking, the

sociologists suggest a simple rule of etiquette: offer non-alcoholic as well as alcoholic beverages, so that you are never insisting that anyone drink. This rule, they point out, will help both the "dry" alcoholic, who has regained his sobriety but should not take one drink, and the person who has been ordered not to drink for physical reasons.

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## ASTRONOMY

# Non-Astronomers Honored By Astronomical Society

➤ THE FIRST two non-astronomers to be chosen patrons of the American Astronomical Society, meeting in New Haven, Conn., were announced by Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of the Harvard College Observatory and ex-president of the Society.

The new patrons are Judge H. S. Hulbert of Detroit and Dr. George Russell Agassiz, Boston, Mass. Judge Hulbert was one of the three persons responsible for the creation of the University of Michigan's McMath-Hulbert Observatory at Lake Angelus, near Detroit. Dr. Agassiz is vice-chairman of the Committee to Visit the Department of Astronomy of the Board of Overseers of Harvard College.

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## Science Service Radio

➤ LISTEN in to a discussion on "Blood, The Fluid of Life" on "Adventures in Science" over the Columbia Broadcasting System at 3:15 p.m. EST, Saturday, Jan. 15. Dr. Ross T. McIntire, administrator of the National Blood Program of the American Red Cross, will be the guest of Watson Davis, director of Science Service. Dr. McIntire will discuss the Red Cross program to provide blood to save those injured in accidents or needing medical treatment and forecast the growing use of blood in the treatment of illness.

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The mysteries of mathematics are revealed in a series of twenty chapters on "THE MEANING OF COURSES IN MATHEMATICS" now running in the MATHEMATICS MAGAZINE. If you never understood mathematics well or want to understand it better, here is your opportunity at trivial cost. No special training is required to understand and enjoy these articles, ranging from beginning algebra through most graduate courses, and colored by the individualities of the sixteen mathematicians who are writing them.

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