

Books of the Week

TO SERVE YOU: To get books, send us a check or money order to cover retail price. Address Book Dept., SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 1719 N St., N. W. Washington 6, D. C. Ask for free publications direct from issuing organizations.

AIRCRAFT ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS, HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS, AND INSTRUMENTS—R. H. Drake—*Macmillan*, 393 p., illus., \$5.60. This non-technical book explains the fundamentals of three complex and closely related parts of modern aircraft.

BIOLOGY IN DAILY LIFE—Francis D. Curtis and John Urban—*Ginn*, 607 p., illus., \$3.60. A text for high school students. Excellent drawings and illustrations.

BUILDING FOR MODERN MAN—Thomas H. Creighton, Ed.—*Princeton University Press*, 219 p., \$3.50. Views of the experts in the field based on papers presented at the bicentennial conference at Princeton.

ESSENTIALS OF GYNECOLOGIC ENDOCRINOLOGY—Gardner M. Riley—*Caduceus*, 205 p., illus., \$3.00. A handbook for medical students, internes, and medical specialists.

NATURAL PRODUCTS RELATED TO PHENANTHRENE—Louie F. Fieser and Mary Fieser—*Reinhold*, 3rd ed., 704 p., illus., \$10.00. A detailed and critical survey which includes a number of new correlations and interpretations of data.

OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK: Employment Information on Major Occupations for Use in Guidance—*Gov't Printing Office*, 453 p., illus., paper, \$1.75. An extensive compilation by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in cooperation with the Veterans Administration. Forecasts your chances of finding a job in a wide variety of occupations.

OUR IMPERILED RESOURCES: Report of the 17th Annual New York Herald Tribune Forum—*New York Herald Tribune*, 247 p., illus., \$2.25. Papers on a timely topic presented before the Herald Tribune Forum in October, 1948.

PHYSICS IN THE MODERN WORLD—Henry Semat—*Rinehart*, 434 p., illus., \$5.00. A text for arts and social science students.

THE PRESCRIPTION STUDY OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL SURVEY—J. Solon Mordell—*American Council on Education*, 278 p., paper, \$7.50. Report of an analysis of prescriptions to determine the knowledge required in compounding them.

PRINCIPLES OF ELECTRICITY AND ELECTROMAGNETISM—G. P. Harnwell—*McGraw-Hill*, 2d

ed., 670 p., illus., \$6.00. A thorough revision of a text for advanced students, which incorporates the many important developments in electricity made during the past decade.

REORGANIZATION OF FEDERAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES: A Report to the Congress by the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, March, 1949.—*Gov't Printing Office*, 129 p., paper, 40 cents. This section of the Hoover report examines the entire vast field of federal business enterprises.

SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION—Delbert Oberteuffer—*Harper*, 405 p., \$3.25. A college text for students preparing for teaching, nursing, or medicine.

THE STORY OF SILK—William F. Leggett—*Lifetime Editions*, 361 p., \$5.00. A descriptive narrated history of silk from its very beginning.

WINDBREAKS FOR ILLINOIS FARMSTEADS—J. E. Davis—*Illinois Natural History Survey, Circular 38*, 33 p., illus., paper, free upon request to publisher, Urbana, Ill. How to plant and care for windbreaks.

YEAR BOOK NO. 47—*Carnegie Institution of Washington*, 235 p., illus., paper, \$1.00. Reports of the year's researches and co-operative studies.

Science News Letter, April 16, 1949

BIOCHEMISTRY

DDT Action May Depend On Solution in Skin Lipids

➤ DDT's ability to paralyze and kill insects appears to depend on its solubility in the lipids, or fat-like substances, of their cuticle or skin, it appears from experiments reported by Dr. H. Hurst of Cambridge University, England.

Dr. Hurst used the larvae or maggots of a blowfly species, which are highly resistant to DDT in powdered crystalline form. At a temperature of 67 degrees Fahrenheit they developed as if there were no DDT in the neighborhood. But when the temperature was raised to 97 degrees, then lowered again to 67 degrees, the larvae died. The most likely explanation is that at the higher temperature the skin lipids took in the DDT more readily and passed them on to the insects' sensitive nerves. Killing took place more readily at the lower temperature because that is apparently the level at which the insects' life processes function more efficiently.

Support for this theory was gained when Dr. Hurst dropped some of the larvae into kerosene in which DDT was dissolved. Kerosene alone is not fatal to the larvae, just as dry DDT is not; but it apparently served as a means for getting the DDT into the skin lipids, and thence again to the nerves.

These and other experiments are reported in outline in a letter to the editor of *NATURE* (Feb. 19). A more detailed publication of the results is promised in the near future.

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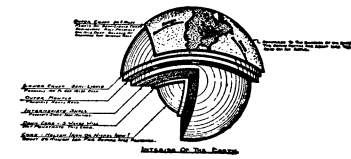
Words in Science— DISINFECTANT

➤ A DISINFECTANT—such as high heat, chlorine or tincture of iodine—kills disease germs or renders them harmless.

An antiseptic prevents the development and growth of disease germs. It is not a disinfectant unless it is capable of destroying germs as well as halting their growth. A familiar antiseptic is boric acid.

Formaldehyde (formalin) is both. It is an antiseptic in weak solution, but a disinfectant in strong solution.

Science News Letter, April 16, 1949



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