

## BOOK REVIEW

POPULAR RESEARCH NARRATIVES, VOLUME II. Collected by the Engineering Foundation. Williams and Wilkins Co., Baltimore, 1926. 174 pages. \$1.00.

Fifty of the achievements of science, engineering, and invention, most of them recent, are recounted briefly and clearly in this book. Choosing a few discoveries out of the thousands that are annually announced is no easy task. The Engineering Foundation has not only picked subjects that are important to human welfare, but it has also succeeded in making a book of varied and entertaining reading.

Sir Ernest Rutherford discusses the possibility of utilizing atomic energy. M. Luckiesh tells how important artificial light has been in aiding our industrial development. Dr. William Crocker describes how the anesthetic ethylene was discovered because it put carnations in a greenhouse to sleep. And so on through the fifty accounts. The first volume of fifty narratives, which appeared in 1924, proved its right to the title "popular". This second volume is a worthy follower of the first.

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A POPULAR GUIDE TO THE HEAVENS; by Sir Robert Stawell Ball, completely revised and edited by the Rev. T. E. R. Phillips. George Philip and Son, Ltd.; London, 1926. 84pp. & 86 plates; 15 shillings.

First published in 1892, under the title of "An Atlas of Astronomy", this book soon became invaluable to the amateur star-gazer who desired an accurate, but not too elaborate set of charts to aid his studies. It was revised in 1905 and 1910 by the original author, but since the third edition the advances of astronomy have been so rapid that in some places it was considerably behind the times. This, the fourth, edition<sup>has</sup> been brought up to date by the Rev. Phillips, who is secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society of Great Britain, and, obviously, well qualified for the task. The addition of a number of modern photographs, made at some of the greatest observatories, of comets, nebulae, star clusters, etc., add to the interest of the book. The charts are similar to those in the previous editions, though they, too, have been brought up to date when necessary, and with their aid one can identify an unknown planet in the sky, tell what constellations will be visible at a certain time of the year, or locate, with the aid of a small telescope, a particular crater on the moon. Though it is not addressed to the professional astronomer, knowledge of the barest essentials of astronomy is presupposed of the reader; but even if one does not have this, if supplemented with a good elementary general book on astronomy, such as Dr. C. G. Abbot's "The Earth and the Stars", it will serve admirably to introduce the layman to the mysteries of space.

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Three million people died from smallpox in the East Indies in 1770 and 1771.

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