

General Science

• First Glances at New Books

History of Science

INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE, VOL. II—George Sarton—*Williams and Wilkins*, 1252 p. \$12. Only modesty labels this as an "introduction." Dr. Sarton's great inquiry into the history of science, of which this tremendous two-part publication is the latest fruit, is one of the great historical researches of all time. The first volume issued five years ago and the volumes of the journal, *Isis*, edited by Dr. Sarton since before the World War that rudely interrupted momentarily his work are part of his mapping of intellectual life and activity that is carried in volume II through the thirteenth century. The Carnegie Institution of Washington is to be congratulated upon sponsoring so effectively Dr. Sarton's work. Volume II is Carnegie Institution publication 376. The two centuries of the Middle Ages ending in 1300, from Rabbi ben Ezra to Roger Bacon, are covered with minutely investigated first hand data upon the individuals, Muslim, Christian and Hebrew, who carried and kindled the torch of science in those days. An introductory chapter of over a hundred pages, arranged by various branches of science, gives a survey of the period. Much history of science was unknown or erroneously known before the Sarton era.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1932

Ornithology

MEASUREMENTS OF BIRDS—S. Prentiss Baldwin, Harry C. Oberholser, and Leonard G. Worley—*Cleveland Museum of Natural History*, 165 p., paper cover, \$1.20; fabrikoid, \$1.85. Systematic ornithologists everywhere will welcome this thorough-going, fully illustrated exposition of bird measurement as practiced at one of the foremost centers of bird study in this country. The standardization of methods as set forth by Mr. Baldwin and his associates will do much toward developing a real biometry for birds.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1932

Chemistry

MAGIC CHEMISTRY—A Book of Experiments for Junior Chemists—*Published by John H. Winn*. 80 p., 75c. Learned professors may shudder when they see the lurid cover of this interesting book. However, the eager youngsters who repeat the numerous and instructive experiments described here will not be

disturbed by the frank recognition of the fact that the first appeal of chemical science is its promise of performing wonders. Some of the experiments, it is true, are of more interest to the conjurer than to the scientist and not all of the magic is explained. However, this method of introducing the student to chemical science is psychologically sound and there are no obvious errors in the experiments treated and in the accompanying descriptive matter.

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Physics

GENERAL PHYSICS FOR HOME ECONOMIC STUDENTS—Fred G. Person—*Wiley*, 298 p., \$2.50. A very elementary text covering briefly the material usually dealt with in a high-school course.

Science News Letter, March 26, 1932

Radio

WIRELESS—L. B. Turner—*Macmillan*, 528 p. \$8.50. Subtitled "A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of High-Frequency Electric Signalling," this book is written by a lecturer in engineering at Cambridge and printed at the Cambridge University Press. It is designed to give a comprehensive and detailed treatment of wireless telegraphy and telephony, both principles and the more prominent present-day practice. Electrical transmission of pictures or television is not included.

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Embryology

A TEXTBOOK OF EMBRYOLOGY—Mary T. Harman—*Lea and Febiger*, 476 p., \$4.25. This textbook is excellently adapted either for the use of pre-medical classes or for students pursuing anatomical courses as a part of a well-rounded training in general zoology. Dr. Harman has brought to its preparation a background of many years of teaching, so that she understands well the difficulties encountered by even the best of undergraduates when they tackle embryology, and is well prepared to "help them over the hump" with excellently-conceived diagrams and brief, telling descriptions.

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Psychology

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS: A STUDY IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN MIND—Richard M. Bucke—*Dutton*, 384 p., \$5. Originally published in 1901, this book attempts to establish the existence, in certain well-known men of genius, (and in others less known) of a unique type of mystical experience. It is a pity that the author has pinned all his faith in this uniform interpretation of these experiences (which doubtless is open to criticism by psychologists). There is much of value in the book with reference to the spiritual evolution of numerous historically great mystics which will be missed by those who do not like his title. William James has read the book and expressed his opinion that it constitutes a definite contribution to psychology. Gautama, Jesus, Paul, Plotinus, Mohammed, Dante, Las Casas, Francis Bacon, William Blake, Balzac, Walt Whitman, Edward Carpenter and Emerson are among those whose biographies are discussed in a way that is valuable quite apart from whether or not one agrees with the special thesis of the author.

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Microbiology

MAN AND MICROBES—Stanhope Bayne-Jones—*Williams and Wilkins*. 128 p., \$1. One of the "Century of Progress" series, issued in connection with the forthcoming exposition at Chicago, this small book summarizes in compact readable popular style the main facts about the swarming invisible life about us that ripens our food and spoils it, fertilizes our fields and ruins them, makes dead things useful for purposes of life and oftentimes kills as quickly as a sword.

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Engineering

NOISE AND VIBRATION ENGINEERING—Stephen E. Slocum—*Van Nostrand*, 171 p., \$2.75. Methods of studying and combating what the author calls the plague that Egypt missed are presented. The book will be informative and valuable to all engineers.

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