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Book Notices

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Ways of the Weather

Everyone talks about the weather and no one can do anything about it. In a scholarly treatise Humphreys, a veteran weatherman of forty years’ experience, gives a comprehensive discussion of its various aspects. He presents only the most elementary knowledge of the weather by his readers, and discusses in detail not only such subjects as Structure of the Atmosphere, Distribution of Temperature, Water Vapor and Atmospheric Pressure, Wind and Precipitation, but also the meteorological instruments employed and gives considerable history of the science. Of special interest are the chapters on such unusual subjects as Weather Music, Weather Perceptions, Atmospheric Electricity and Atmospheric Optics.

The literary style employed is of an unusually fine quality. The author does not hesitate to use rhyme and verse when appropriate. For example, “even the big eddies have smaller eddies upon them and the smaller eddies lesser eddies. As L. F. Richardson puts it, ‘Big whirls have little whirls that feed on their velocity, And little whirls have lesser whirls and so on to viscosity.’ ”

The reader gains the impression that the writer knows what he is talking about, and that he has not sacrificed scientific accuracy on the altar of popular appeal. Indeed, the seeker of easy and complete answers may be disappointed in this book. It is not light reading and in some instances the gleaning of worthwhile information is made tedious by unnecessary details.

The volume is attractively bound and a splendid grade of paper is used. It is replete with excellent illustrations. Anyone interested in the “ways of the weather,” and this includes most of us, should find this book an illuminating reference.—D. C. Rife.

Ways of the Weather, by W. J. Humphreys, the Jaques Cattell Press, Lancaster, Pa., 1942. $4.00.

Ohioans in Aviation

Dayton, Ohio, is the place where Wilbur and Orville Wright were born and lived the greatest part of their lives. It was here that they designed and conducted the first wind tunnel experiments in history. The principles thus scientifically discovered enabled them to succeed where others had failed. The real achievement of this book, however, is not a eulogy on the significance of their activities. It is an interesting, well documented account of the experiences and personal reactions to them which the Wrights had. Such an intimate personal analysis was possible only because Orville Wright himself participated by making a mass of original documents available to the author, by reading the entire manuscript, and by suggesting corrections. Here is the true story of the Wright Brothers as they lived it.—Elton F. Paddock.