

McGraw-Hill Book Co. announces the third edition of "A Guide to the Constellations" by Barton and Barton. \$3.00. The publishers claim it is built around 17 specially prepared charts, and gives the essential facts simply and clearly and shows how to locate the principal stars and constellations without the aid of telescopes and instruments.

HOBBY NOOK

My first hobby as an amateur stargazer, after I had finished telescopes, reflectors, and refractors, was an opaque projector made out of a grocery box, two old Ford reflectors, a 10¢-store reading glass, and electrical connections. It is a good projector.

Many of you remember my 5-foot circular, illuminated star map on exhibition at the Willard Hotel convention. It is mounted on a pipestand with a floodlight behind it and has a blackout shield in front. With it you can see the stars at any hour of the year. I added since a clock motor to it and it may be rotated like the stars in the sky. I call it my planetarium. Next I am going to build a large hollow star globe, draw the mythological pictures on it of the northern and southern hemispheres, indicate all stars to the sixth magnitude and the most popular nebulae and globular clusters. The stars are being drilled with different size drills and the globe will be illuminated from the inside.

When finished, I can study the stars regardless of the weather. When I talk to school children, they will with it get a better idea of the wonderful universe as seen from a small speck in it called the Earth.

--R. C. Masters

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THE SATELLITES OF JUPITER will be the subject of a lecture by Dr. Paul Herget on April 1, 8 p.m., at the National Museum. Dr. Herget is now on war duties in the Nautical Almanac Office, U.S. Naval Observatory. He came to Washington from the Cincinnati Observatory where he was recently appointed Director. This famous observatory has just celebrated its centennial; its founding marked an epoch in American astronomy.

Dr. Herget has published many technical papers in astronomical journals in the difficult field of celestial mechanics. His researches have included important investigations of the motions of the newly discovered satellites X and XI of Jupiter. The satellite system of Jupiter is of unusual interest to amateur and professional astronomers alike, and has played an important part in the historical development of several fundamental astronomical topics.

The following references will be of interest in connection with this lecture: F. L. Whipple, "Earth, Moon

and Planets," (Harvard Books on Astronomy) pp. 169-173; Seth B. Nicholson, "The Satellites of Jupiter," Public. Astron. Soc. of the Pacific, 51:85-94, 1939 April; Seth B. Nicholson, "Two New Satellites of Jupiter," The Sky, 1938 Nov. p. 15; Percy W. Witherell, "The Eleven Moons of Jupiter," Sky and Telescope, 1942 April pp. 18-19. The remarkable characteristics of the gravitational motions of the four large satellites are described, and non-mathematical explanations of them given by Sir G. B. Airy, "Gravitation," a classical little book first published at London in 1934.

---Edgar W. Woolard

A CLUSTER OF FIRST MAGNITUDE ASTRONOMERS was the focus of attention of the amateurs on March 4th, through the courtesy of Harvard Observatory and Science Service at headquarters of the latter. Dr. Harlow Shapley presided at the symposium and after a brief introduction called upon Dr. Woolard who sketched the history and activities of the NCAAA.

The walls were hung with star charts which appeared in National Geographic, July 1943. Dr. Menzel who prepared these charts told of the research necessary in connection with the mythological figures. Lyra, for instance is depicted as the tortoise from whose shell was made the first lyre. The word is the same for both in Greek.

Dr. Bart Bok gave an account of his trip to observatories in the east and middle west and reported splendid work being done even during present conditions. He spoke of plans for post war research, the surprising amount of development in instrumental techniques, the study of radial velocities in north galactic latitudes, and many other developments in the field of astronomy.

Reverend McNally of Georgetown Observatory followed with a short paper. Dr. Walter Roberts showed slides of the sun's corona, taken at the Harvard station at Climax, Colorado. He pointed out particularly the

spicules which appear in the polar regions. Dr. Evans described the filter used for the coronagraph.

After intermission for refreshments, Dr. Clemence of the Naval Observatory reported on work in connection with Mercury; Dr. Cuffey of the Naval Academy dealt with clusters; and Dr. Shapley concluded the program with notes on the publications being prepared and distributed regularly by Science Service for the fighting forces, and results of the annual science contest for young students.

APRIL 17TH the celestial navigation group will meet at the home of Mr. Clarence Herreshoff, 3726 Connecticut Avenue, 8 p.m.

APRIL 24TH is the date of the next history of astronomy meeting with Dr. Woolard at his home at 7:30 p.m.

BOOKS WE ARE READING

INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY. United States Naval Institute, Annapolis, Md. 50¢. The preface describes this pamphlet as being designed primarily to give midshipmen at the Naval Academy a background of astronomy necessary for the study of navigation. While elementary in scope, it professes to equip the student with a general knowledge of the simpler celestial phenomena, or simpler explanations of complex phenomena. Picture the heavenly bodies moving within the limits prescribed by time, right ascension, and declination and you will have a fairly complete conception of this edition.

These fifty pages, at a cent a page, with diagrams, definitions, and examples, are ideal for the amateur astronomer. In the text the anonymous authors have allowed themselves only this revealing thought: "In verse, song, and story the beauties of the heavens have been portrayed since man became articulate. The riddle of the stars is one of man's earliest mysteries and astronomy is the oldest science."

---George L. Skirm