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SPACE BOOKS

RECENT & FORTHCOMING

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Peace Or Atomic War? By Albert Schweitzer. 47 pages. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $1.50.

Few men in contemporary civilization are as universally admired as Albert Schweitzer. This little addition to his published works can do nothing but enhance his reputation. What is needed now, Dr. Schweitzer feels, is action on the part of all peoples, the United Nations, and most important, negotiations at the highest level—the Summit. To quote President Eisenhower, Dr. Schweitzer calls for "a gigantic leap into peace" and a new spirit of good sense and morality. This book cannot be ignored. It is a testament of conscience and of faith for today and tomorrow. In this hour of destiny, Albert Schweitzer, the most notable world citizen of our age, has sounded an urgent call to end the nuclear-arms race.

". . . At this stage," he says, "we have the choice of two risks: the one lies in continuing the mad atomic arms-race, with its danger of an unavoidable atomic war in the near future; the other in the renunciation of nuclear weapons, and in the hope that the United States and the Soviet Union, and the peoples associated with them, will manage to live in peace. The first holds no hope of a prosperous future; the second does. We must risk the second."

It will be significant to the reader to learn that this book is based upon three appeals broadcast from Oslo, Norway, on April 28, 29, and 30, 1958. Except for a few brief visits to Europe to raise money for his hospital in Lambarene in French Equatorial Africa and a trip to the Goethe Festival in Colorado in 1949, Dr. Schweitzer has remained with his patients, books, and Bach. This most recent excursion reflects his profound nobility of spirit and "reverence for life."

—Ralph E. Jennings

Once Around the Sun. By Ronald Fraser. 160 pages. New York: Macmillan. $3.95.

Dr. Fraser's book succeeds admirably in its purpose: to explain just what the International Geophysical Year is. This book ties together all of the many facets of IGY activities and shows the interrelationships between them. The author organizes his material in a neat way: he presents the known boundaries of geophyics and then explains how various IGY activities will either expand, refute, or prove them.

While the average, interested layman thinks of the IGY in terms of Earth satellites, Dr. Fraser—and rightly so—devotes only 12 pages of his book to the rocket and satellite phase of the program. In this way he illustrates that the most glamourous feature of the entire program is merely one link in the chain and that it is neither more nor less important than any other.

The book does not go into all of the details of each phase of the IGY. Reasonably, it could not. The book is broad in scope, and within the confines of 160 pages it manages to present in a clear and readable manner the greatest scientific investigation man has ever undertaken. The fact that the book is so readable is due in no small part to the facility which the English scientists in general have with their own language.

—M. Raymond

Satellites, Rockets and Outer Space. By Willy Ley. 128 pages. New York: Signet Key Books, The New American Library. $.35.

It is hard to say whether this little paperback is a synopsis or an introduction to Willy Ley's *Rockets, Missiles, and Space Travel*. It appears to be both at once. Like the longer work, the book is written in clear and simple language, and yet it covers a lot of material. The title almost sums up the contents. In general the book brings some parts of the earlier *Rockets, Missiles, and Space Travel* up to date. In addition it contains some excellent advice for youngsters who are planning a career in astronautics—and even defines the word astronautics. Perhaps its best feature is the author's neat summing up of flying saucer research and his convincing dismissal of the saucers as being from Space. The two short chapters on Russian missiles and American missiles are interesting, but technical flaws in describing American missiles tend to make the reader doubt the validity of his data on Russian missiles.

Another excellent feature of the book is the section "Beyond the Satellites." It is particularly appropriate now since it is concerned primarily with shooting a rocket to the Moon, the problems involved, and what we may expect to gain from such a shot. All in all the book is well worth its price; all the more so since it contains four excellent, full-color pictures of the Jupiter-C launching the first Explorer satellite, the 500,000-pound static test stand at the Army's White Sands Guided Missile Range, the Jupiter missile in flight, and the Redstone missile being fueled.

—M. Raymond

A Key to the Stars. By R. van der Riet Woolley. 144 pages. New York: Philosophical Library. $4.75.

For a small book (5" X 7½" X ½") this volume contains a surprising amount of information. Dr. Woolley, Astronomer Royal of England, writes as an authority, but in a smooth, flowing and readable manner of presentation. The occasional use of the first person gives conversational flavor to the discussion of subject matter sometimes difficult to put across to new students of astronomy. "I hope that (this book) will be of use to readers who are willing to take a little trouble to think about the subject," declares the author, "but who have no great acquaintance with the background and physics which would be necessary for a more elaborate examination of our knowledge of things outside the Earth."

Although little has been changed from the first edition, written as it was more than twenty years ago, the reader will find that the basic principles discussed by Dr. Woolley are just as important today as they were then. Chapter headings are: I, Time and Longitude; II, The Solar System; III, Stellar Distances and Magnitudes; IV, The Temperature of the Stars; V, The Composition of the Stars; VI, The Galaxy; VII, The World's Observatories. The last chapter, by the way, is not a tabulation of a great number of observatories, but centers attention on a few of those of historical interest plus a short discussion of the Greenwich Observatory, and brief mention of Mt. Wilson, Palomar, and Lick.

—C. D. Swanson

Sputnik Into Space. By M. Vassiliev. 147 pages. London: Souvenir Press Ltd. 1958.

First published in Moscow in 1955, this book has been revised to include limited data concerning the first Russian satellites. The English version is translated from an Italian translation of the original, which may account for some of the numerous technical errors.

Although the Russian author prepared the text under the supervision of a Professor at the Soviet Academy of Science (V. V. Dobronravov), there is very little information presented that is not already well known or readily available to Space enthusiasts. The book does reveal, however, the deep-rooted Soviet devotion to rocketry, and its many Space travel aspects. The fact that the original book and similar documentation was available for some time prior to the first Sputnik launching causes one to wonder why the event was not anticipated by the Free World to a greater degree.

—D. L. Christenson