sustained enthusiasm and industry of that small group making up the committee, to the selection of which the academy has given so much earnest consideration.

WORTLEY F. RUDD,
President

VIRGINIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

THE PRESENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

IN listening to the reading of scientific papers I have often experienced difficulty in following the author's train of thought, because of the too conscious effort I have had to exert to hear his words. The difficulty is not in my ears, for I have not yet lost the notes of such birds as the golden-crowned kinglet and the grasshopper sparrow. The trouble is not with the reception, but with the delivery, and I know I am not alone in the—I had almost said exasperation—I feel in hearing a good paper spoiled in the delivery. I have particularly in mind the last meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union. Fortunately, many of the speakers at that meeting spoke distinctly and well, and among these I remember particularly a woman member who took the center of the platform, held her head up and her manuscript at just the right distance, and read distinctly in a clear voice that carried to all parts of the hall. When I hear a paper so delivered I wonder why such an example is not more generally followed.

The purpose of this letter, however, is not simply to complain, but to offer a concrete suggestion. That is, that all inexperienced speakers—yes, and some that are not without experience—should get advice from the more experienced before undertaking to address an audience. I am sure it is not a matter of embarrassment or lack of confidence with most of the offenders. It is simply that they do not realize how unsuccessful they are in making themselves intelligible, nor do they know how to cure their faults of enunciation and expression. Doubtless some speakers need more than a word of advice, need a real lesson or even a course of lessons to teach them to open their mouths, use vocal cords, lips and tongue correctly, and keep the voice up at the end of each sentence. Of course we don't want oratory, and this letter is not written with the object of promoting the business of teachers of elocution! What we have a right to ask of our speakers, I think, is the acquirement of a clear and common-sense manner of communicating their information and ideas to an intelligent audience.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

SEDIMENTARY PETROGRAPHY

Sedimentary Petrography, with Special Reference to Petrographic Methods of Correlation of Strata, Petroleum Technology and Other Economic Applications of Geology. Third edition, completely revised. By HENRY B. MILNER. London: Thomas Murby and Company; New York: Nordeman Publishing Company (Inc.). 666+xxiii pages; price, $10.00. 1940.

THIS third edition of Milner's standard text and reference book on sedimentary petrology has been partly rewritten and much new material has been added to include the latest developments in this relatively new and rapidly growing branch of petrography. About 150 pages have been added to the text, and, in addition, the size of the book has been increased from crown 8vo to demy 8vo.

In the new edition the problem of sampling is treated in more detail than in the former editions. Methods of preparing thin sections of friable and porous samples are discussed. A chapter on mechanical analyses has been added. Such methods of mineral concentration as the electrostatic, dielectric and flotation are described, and x-ray, fluorescence and microchemical methods of study are discussed. The section on methods of testing sedimentary rocks—for such properties as acid solubility, density, porosity, etc.—has been elaborated. Many more minerals are included in the section of diagnostic properties of the minerals. A section on applied petrography has been added in which are discussed such subjects as stratigraphic correlation, oil geology, ceramics, criminology, industrial maladies, etc.

The book is in large part a discussion of the methods and technic found by the author useful in the study of the loose detrital sediments. The methods of separating and studying the heavy mineral fraction from such rocks are discussed in detail, and many pages are devoted to a description of the diagnostic properties of the minerals found in sedimentary rocks. Some space is devoted to sampling, the study of consolidated sediments and mechanical analyses. Several chapters are devoted to the application of sedimentary petrology, to such problems as the correlation of sediments, soils and economic problems.

The book is an excellent, well-balanced treatment of the history, technique, methods, principles and economic application of sedimentary petrology. It is very well illustrated and contains excellent and extensive references to the literature.

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