

consisting of the historical aspects of biology. The present edition differs from previous issues. Unit I has been revised to provide a simpler approach and to enhance the beginner's interest. The principle of conservation is particularly stressed under Unit VI. The large fund of biological subject matter included between the covers of this text may appear to be voluminous, but the modern secondary school teacher will find a rich supply of useful educational material from which to draw for students the experiences of an enthusiastic fellow biologist.

ALAN A. NATHANS
ABRAHAM LIEBERMAN
VICTOR LEWITUS
FRANKLIN B. MYERS
ETHEL POSTER.

HINMAN, R. B., AND HARRIS, R. B., "*The Story of Meat*," Swift and Company, Chicago, Illinois. 1939. \$1.00.

A unique vocational textbook combining a range of academic subjects—history, geography, economics, biology, and nutrition—with instruction in a trade hitherto scarcely considered by educators is the recently published 250-page "*The Story of Meat*" by Robert B. Hinman, professor of animal husbandry at Cornell University, and Robert B. Harris, teacher at the New York City Food Trades Vocational High School.

Written originally for students in New York City's Food Trades Vocational High School who intend to become meat retailers, it is a textbook that blazes a nutrition—with instruction in a trade trail in a brand-new field, and indicates an interesting and important trend in today's vocational education. A far cry from the cut-and-dried handbooks of the old-fashioned trade school, "*The Story of Meat*" is a spirited, readable, and well-rounded presentation of a major industry, its vast and colorful history, its complex present-day operation and sig-

nificance and its economics. The book, attractively and profusely illustrated, has been designed to present this complex and sometimes technical story in terms interesting and comprehensible to high-school age students.

Beyond its intrinsic interest as the first textbook in its field, and as an important contribution to vocational education, the book represents a new and interesting type of collaboration between education and industry.

A limited number of copies are available free to selected schools offering vocational subjects allied with the meat industry.

B. BERNARR VANCE,
Associate Editor

Biological Briefs

RUTH SHERMAN

HODGE, HENRICKS. *The Nightshade Family: The Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde of the Plant World*. Natural History 44: 160-167. October, 1939.

For an ancient background of superstition and reputed panaceas, as well as for a list of modern uses as foods and powerful drugs, we may look to the nightshade family in its old- and new-world forms. In the Middle Ages, the mandrake was associated with fearsome legends, and was considered a precious cure-all. From its close relatives, the alkaloids atropine and belladonna in minute amounts are yet used as drugs. The European black henbane, introduced along the southern banks of the St. Lawrence River, is extremely poisonous; from it the drug hyoscamine is obtained. The species of *Datura*, common in both hemispheres, include many highly poi-