

Copernicus' Universe

Quotation from Copernicus (Nicolaus Koppernigk, Polish mathematician and astronomer): *DE REVOLUTIONIBUS ORBIUM CELESTIUM*. Chap. X. Exponent, rediscoverer and popularizer of the heliocentric theory of the solar system, who received the first printed copy of his book on his deathbed in 1543.

First and above all lies the sphere of the fixed stars, containing itself and all things, for that very reason immovable; in truth the frame of the universe, to which the motion and position of all other stars are referred. Though some men think it to move in some way, we assign another reason why it appears to do so in our theory of the movement of the earth. Of the moving bodies first comes Saturn, who completes his circuit in xxx years. After him, Jupiter, moving in a twelve-year revolution. Then Mars, who revolves biennially. Fourth in order an annual cycle takes place, in which we have said is contained the earth, with the lunar orbit as an epicycle. In the fifth place Venus is carried round in nine months. Then Mercury holds the sixth place, circulating in the space of eighty days. In the middle of all dwells the Sun. Who indeed in this most beautiful temple would place the torch in any other or better place than one whence it can illuminate the whole at the same time? Not ineptly, some call it the lamp of the universe, others its mind, others again its ruler—Trimegistus, the visible God, Sophocles' Electra the contemplation of all things. And thus rightly in as much as the Sun, sitting on a royal throne, governs the circumambient family of stars. We find, therefore, under this orderly arrangement, a wonderful symmetry in the universe, and a definite relation of harmony in the motion and magnitude of the orbs, of a kind it is not possible to obtain in any other way.

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HEREDITY

Degenerate Sons

No race as a whole can be made up of "degenerate sons of noble sires." Where decadence exists, the noble sires have perished, either through evil influences, as in the slums of great cities, or else through the movements of history or the growth of institutions. If a nation sends forth the best it breeds to destruction, the second best will take their vacant places. The weak, the vicious, the unthrifty will propagate and in default of better will have the land to themselves.

—David Starr Jordan.

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Food and Prejudice

Quotation from *CARGOES AND HARVESTS*. By Donald Culross Peattie. New York: D. Appleton and Co.

To show to what length a racial prejudice in agriculture will go, the case of a gang of engineers and laborers in Brazil may be cited. Imported from the United States for construction work in the Amazonian jungle, they were fed regularly on white bread, meat, cornstarch and other common American diets, all imported from the United States and shipped up river at enormous expense. It might have been thought that food as good as this would be satisfactory, but fresh vegetables and fruits, being perishable, had naturally been left out and as a result beriberi soon began its ravages, until the little white tombstones beyond the camp were more numerous than the tents of the survivors. Some one suggested that they should eat the fruits and nuts on which the natives and animals fed in the forest. But this idea was scornfully rejected because no white man cared to eat "monkey food." In fact, it was preferable to die. The same prejudice against substitutes was felt during the food crisis of the Great War.

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CUSTOMS

Lawbreaking America

Quotation from *PSYCHOLOGIES OF 1925*. By Knight Dunlap. Worcester, Mass.: Clark University.

Americans are notoriously a law-breaking people. Among the vast mass of statutes which we legally adopt and contemptuously disregard, the Volstead act is a mere minor detail. Fish and game laws are notoriously intended for the other fellow. In some states elaborate Sunday laws exist, and are unanimously broken, even publicly broken by many of the individuals who are active in keeping the laws on the statute books. Speed laws are mere joyous scraps of paper, and automobile manufacturers do not hesitate to boost their wares by advertising them as capable of speeds much higher than any state legalizes. Some states have recently passed laws requiring all motor cars to come to a full stop at all railroad crossings; and in those states I have not yet heard of any one who stops if he does not think a constable is in view. Laws against gambling in various forms are common; and are not regarded by anyone who has no conscientious scruples against taking a chance.

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First Glances at New Books

FLOWER SCENT. By F. A. Hampton. London. Dulau & Co. 4s 6d.

A compact little monograph attacking a problem made difficult by the vanishing sense of smell in man. The author undertakes a classification that will take cognizance both of the physiological perception and of the chemical arrangements that stimulate it. A useful book of reference for biological, psychological and organic chemical laboratories.

OSTRICH EGGSHELL CUPS OF MESOPOTAMIA AND THE OSTRICH IN ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES. By Berthold Laufer. Chicago. Field Museum of Natural History.

Includes, besides full information on eggshell cups, a summary of the appearance of ostriches in the literature and on the monuments of all nations of antiquity.

THE GIST OF EVOLUTION. By Horatio Hackett Newman. New York. The Macmillan Co. \$1.50.

A compact statement of the principal facts and arguments supporting evolution, with refutations of the most frequent anti-evolutionary arguments. Suitable for the intelligent non-scientific reader, and for class use in elementary courses.

THE RELATION OF NATURE TO MAN IN ABORIGINAL AMERICA. By Clark Wissler. New York. Oxford University Press. \$3.50.

A comprehensive survey of traits and types of culture among the Indians, showing how geography shaped and limited these primitive tribes.

PAPERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE BIOLOGY OF THE CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON, VOL. XXIII. Washington.

Six technical papers on various aspects of the marine biology and geology in various islands of the Antilles and the South Pacific.

CARGOES AND HARVESTS. By Donald Culross Peattie. New York. D. Appleton & Co. \$2.50

Chapters from the history and romance of international agriculture; rubber, tea, camphor, potato, cotton, tobacco, etc.

THE TIDE. By H. A. Marmer. New York. D. Appleton & Co. \$2.50.

The first book that adequately, both technically and popularly, tells how the moon affects the waters of the earth.

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