

Wells Bewildered

Quotation from *THE WORLD OF WILLIAM CLISSOLD*, by H. G. Wells. New York: Doran.

Everybody in those days thought of atoms as tangible things, and of space as a framework of three dimensions as rectangular as a window sash. The ether, the now vanished ether, wrapped about us like a garment, and time was like a star and dwelt apart

Since then all those easy old imaginings of quasi-tangible atoms and infinite incessant space have dissolved away insensibly. We have followed our deductions further and further into a stirring crystalline complex of multi-dimensional curvatures and throbbing reactions. Energy is and it is not, and then again it is, all Being flickers in and out of Not-being, there is an irrational bound set to motion, there is a limit to the range of temperature. Space is bent in some incomprehensible fashion so that straight lines re-enter into themselves, gravitation is a necessary consequence of duration, and atoms are the orbits and harmonies of infinitesimal electrical charges. Einstein's own description for popular enlightenment of his space-time system with its bent and possibly unstable coordinates, reads to me like the description of a clear vibrating four-dimensional haggis. Weyl goes wider and further, and Bohr has imposed a rippling intermission upon the whole universe. In the depths or heights of physics, for one word seems as good as the other when all direction is lost, I find my mind sitting down at last exhausted of effort in much the mood of Albrecht Dürer's *Melancholia*. I have gone far along that way, and I can go no farther into that wilderness of vanishing forms and puffs of energy in a quadri-dimensional field of force.

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AERONAUTICS

Test Airplane Wing Cloth

How tight should the covering on an airplane's wings be? A new instrument that measures the tension of the cloth that holds the helium in a dirigible as well as that used on planes has been perfected in the laboratories of the United States Bureau of Standards.

It is of great importance, say experts, that the tension of the fabrics used in aircraft should be exactly right. If it is not taut enough the operation of the plane is unsatisfactory. If it is drawn too tightly there is likely to be strain on the metal framework.

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A College President Talks

THE COLLEGE PRESIDENT and WHAT EDUCATION HAS THE MOST WORTH. By Charles F. Thwing. New York: Macmillan Company.

President Thwing has summed up his own lifetime of experience and responsibility and that of many of his colleagues in the field of educational administration in "The College President," a book which may easily take rank with President Eliot's *University Administration*. Besides outlining and illustrating the manifold duties which fall to his share, President Thwing discusses the perils that beset the captain of the academic ship of state and in particular the danger of autocratic and tactless treatment of the faculty. Yet he opposes the system of faculty control advocated by Cattell, Kirkpatrick and many other American scholars on the ground that the American university, still in the growing stage, needs the services of a group of financial experts as trustees and an administrative expert as President. Speaking in terms of the British Prime Ministership, as the next most difficult job in the world, President Thwing wittily says that the ideal American College President should possess "the boldness of Peel with the many-sidedness of Gladstone, the sagacity of Disraeli with the considerateness of Campbell-Bannerman, the breadth and calmness of Balfour with the popularity and personal charm of Lloyd-George."

President Thwing's "What Education Has the Most Worth?" covers a much broader field, but plows less deeply. It is a rapid survey of all the various educational influences that play upon the plastic mind, not only the school, the church and the library, but equally the newspaper and the moving picture. Unfortunately the space at his disposal prevented any very full consideration of any of the topics touched upon.

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Photoelectric cells, which give an electric current when exposed to light, have been made so delicate that they can detect the variation in light when a hair is placed in front of a nearby electric bulb.

Cattle, sheep, and hogs that are fed rations containing large amounts of vitamins A and B will furnish meat that is richer in these vitamins than meat from animals lacking these food elements.

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First Glances at New Books

THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY, by Will Durant, New York: Simon and Schuster, \$5.00.

Fifty thousand sold in five months! Who says philosophy is not a live subject nowadays? It is when a live author handles it, no matter how long the philosopher has been dead. Unpedantic explanations and criticisms of Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Spinoza, Voltaire, Kant, Schopenhauer, Spencer, Nietzsche, Bergson, Croce, Russell, Santayana, James and Dewey.

BIRTH CONTROL: Facts and Responsibilities, Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, \$3.00.

A discussion of the question from various standpoints by Dr. Adolf Meyer of Johns Hopkins Hospital, Margaret Sanger, Professor Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins, Professor E. A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin, Professor E. M. East of Harvard, Rabbi C. A. Rubenstein, Professor H. A. Miller of Oberlin, Dr. R. McC. Chapman, Professor R. A. Spaeth of Johns Hopkins, President C. C. Little of the University of Michigan, Professor L. J. Cole of the University of Wisconsin and Dr. Eleanor R. Wembridge.

EXPERIENCE AND NATURE, by John Dewey, Professor of Philosophy in Columbia University. Chicago. Open Court Publishing Co. \$3.

The most mature and complete exposition of the philosophy of one of America's foremost thinkers who for forty years has been an educator of educators. The first series of the biennial lectures of the Paul Carus Foundation. Dr. Dewey here expounds the metaphysical foundations of the pragmatic radical empirical mode of thought which he has developed in his books and teaching in America and China.

OPINIONS RENDERED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE. Opinions 91 to 97. Washington. The Smithsonian Institution. 1926.

Of interest to students of systematic zoology.

THE WORLD THAT WAS. By John G. Bowman. New York. The Macmillan Company.

Reminiscences of boyhood days and school life by the President of the University of Pittsburgh, written in a delightfully intimate and poetic style and beautifully printed.

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