

First Glances at New Books

THE NEXT AGE OF MAN—Albert Edward Wiggam — *Bobbs-Merrill* (\$3). A forward looking book which takes stock of man's present status, economically, culturally, eugenically, and sees hope for the future. "Surely," says Dr. Wiggam, "man can make use of the intelligence which evolution has given him to influence that evolution of the future, just as he now puts other laws of nature to the uses of his intelligence and will."

Science News-Letter, August 13, 1927

THE RELIGION CALLED BEHAVIORISM—Dr. Louis Berman—*Boni and Liveright* (\$1.75). Dr. Berman starts out dramatically with the assertions: "Christianity is dead, Judaism is dead, Mohammedanism is dead, Buddhism is dead, for all spiritual purposes. . . . Slowly but steadily a new, a powerful religion is growing into maturity in the United States as a result of a new psychological movement. It calls itself Behaviorism. It might be called Watsonianity." Student suicides and other mental maladies of the day he ascribes to the spread of materialistic and mechanistic philosophies like Behaviorism. He sees salvation to society only in the introduction of the Gestalt psychology. His advice to the patient is: "configure with the universe."

Science News-Letter, August 13, 1927

ANCIENT CITIES AND MODERN TRIBES — Thomas Gann — *Scribner* (\$5). Dr. Gann brings us up-to-date on the archæological discoveries lately made in this corner of America and even lets us look forward to the possibility of more wonderful finds—forerunners of the Maya, perhaps even Americans of the Old Stone Age, and the long sought books which were buried with the Maya priests and which would be a veritable Rosetta Stone to unlock the written speech of these people.

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PHOTOGRAPHY—Alfred Watkins—*Van Nostrand* (\$4). A standard treatise on photography, now revised by the addition of sections on amateur cinematography, aerial photography, etc.

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DIELECTRIC PHENOMENA — S. Whitehead—*Van Nostrand* (\$4). A complete and authoritative work on electrical discharges in gases.

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SCIENCE: LEADING AND MISLEADING—Arthur Lynch—*Dutton* (\$3). A British psychologist examines the foundation of modern science, and prods at all the cardinal dogmas to see whether they are solid or just stuffed. His remarks are pertinent, and frequently pert as well. If you happen to dislike somebody with a vogue—Freud, for instance—you will get a lot of "kick" out of the book; if, on the other hand, you are devoted to a favorite master or "school," the mental liver-jolting may do you a lot of good.

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IN UNKNOWN ARABIA—R. E. Cheesman—*Macmillan*. The travels and adventures of a British soldier-naturalist in eastern Arabia. In addition to the frequent references to the wild life of the regions traversed in his journey, the author gives in a series of appendices his collection notes covering all forms of animal and plant life, geological jottings and meteorological observations. He seems to have taxed his territory for every scrap of information it would yield.

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SPEECH: ITS FUNCTION AND DEVELOPMENT — Grace Andrus de Laguna — *Yale University Press* (\$5). A comprehensive volume, dealing with speech in its evolutionary, psychological, and philosophical aspects, with the particular aim of considering the function of speech in society and its function in the life of the individual.

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APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY—A. T. Poffenberger—*Appleton* (\$4). An excellent text, dealing in detail, first with efficiency, thinking, fatigue, suggestion, and other human factors, then with environmental factors such as ventilation and distraction, and finally with the application of psychology to many different activities.

Science News-Letter, August 13, 1927

THE HARVEST OF THE YEARS—Luther Burbank, with Wilbur Hall—*Houghton-Mifflin* (\$4). A sympathetic interview-autobiography of the great horticulturist, which has lately been appearing in serial form.

Science News-Letter, August 13, 1927

THE LURE OF THE GREAT SMOKIES—R. L. Mason—*Houghton-Mifflin* (\$4.50). An account of the interesting mountains of the Tennessee-Carolina border and of their still more interesting inhabitants.

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Maya Writings Sought

Quotation from **ANCIENT CITIES AND MODERN TRIBES**—Thomas Gann—*Scribner*.

To the archæologist, however, the cave (the cave of Loltun near Coba, Mexico) is naturally of even greater interest, as here, if anywhere, will be found traces of man, if man existed in Yucatan, before the coming of the Maya in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Some little excavation has already been done beneath the earth covering the floor of the cave in the immediate vicinity of the Loltun openings, where traces both of burial and occupation by the Maya during the New Empire are to be found in great abundance; but the petroglyphs, both at the Hunacab and Loltun mouths, afford us this information at the first glance, and I am convinced that it is in the remoter fastnesses of the cave, as yet entirely unexplored, that discoveries may be made, not improbably of a pre-Maya race, or possibly even of palæolithic man, such as have been made in France, Spain, and Palestine, for if traces exist anywhere on the American continent, surely such a vast natural cavern as this would be the place to look for them, admirably adapted as it is either as a mausoleum or dwelling-place.

Moreover, here, if anywhere, might be discovered the anhaltes, or ancient books of the Maya, dealing with their history, calendar system, and religion, all but three of which were burnt by Bishop Landa after the Conquest as works of the devil.

We know from contemporary historians that these books, made of the fibre of the *Agave americana*, or American aloe, were buried with the priests, but up to the present not one has ever been discovered, probably owing to their complete disintegration in this warm, damp climate. Yet it is the dream of every Maya student's life to find one of these historical codices, which should not only supply a history of this wonderful people for probably two thousand years before the arrival of Europeans on the American continent, but, by affording a key to the unknown glyphs, act as a Rosetta stone to the monoliths, and enable us to read the records of the individual cities, their rise and fall, their conquests and defeats, pestilence, floods, and other disasters, the names of their principal men, their art development, and perhaps the social life of their rulers and priests.

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