

# Man and His World

General Science

MAN AND HIS WORLD—Northwestern University Essays in Contemporary Thought, Edited by Baker Brownell — Van Nostrand (12 volumes \$19.25). Northwestern University is utilizing all the modern means of approach in the extension of its educational work. Prof. Baker Brownell's course in Contemporary Thought is given first in the classroom of the school of journalism from which it is broadcast to a wide circle of listeners who study the lectures and pursue the reading. The lessons are also carried in the *Chicago Daily News* and now they have been brought together in twelve handy little volumes in covers so gay and decorative as to entice the unwary reader into thinking that they were a set of new detective stories or novels. Here are gathered a few of the fifty-eight contributors of the varied beliefs presenting a composite picture of modern views of the universe and the problems of modern life. The scope of the work is best shown by the mention of some of the lectures or subjects which they discuss. Ellsworth Huntington, "Does Civilization Set Us Free?"; Zona Gale, "Modern Prose"; Walter Dill Scott, "The New Energies and the New Man"; W. E. Hotchkiss, "Business in the New Era"; Fay-Cooper Cole, "Primitive Societies"; Joseph Jastrow, "Mind and Emotional Control"; Robert Morss Lovett, "The Value of Living"; Shailer Mathews, "The Religious Life"; Bishop Francis J. McConnell, "Fact and Faith"; Austin H. Clark, "Animal Evolution"; Morris Fishbein, "Society and the Human Body"; Richard T. Ely, "The Practical Approach to the World"; Clark Wissler, "The Origin of Man and His Races"; Ferdinand Schevill, "Man's Political History"; Whiting Williams, "What's Machinery Doing To Us?"; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Feminism and Social Progress"; Baker Brownell, "The New Universe"; Edwin E. Slosson, "The Democracy of Knowledge" and "The Energy of the New World."

The course in Contemporary Thought, which is the origin of these essays on "Man and His World," is one of the efforts made by various universities in different ways to give the student a synthetic survey of modern civilization to counteract, so far as possible, the extreme special-

ization of most university courses. The editor has not attempted to bring these various thinkers into conformity. This would be practically impossible as well as undesirable. But the student and the independent reader will gather from this collection a more realistic conception of present day problems and the world in which he must live and work than he is likely to get from miscellaneous reading.

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## Books—Cont'd

THE AVIFAUNA OF EMERYVILLE SHELLMOUND—Hildegard Howard—*Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Zool.* (\$1.25). An exhaustive examination of the bird bones of one of California's famous Indian refuse heaps. That the aborigines were not too nice in their tastes is attested by the presence of bones of buzzards, hawks and owls as well as those of the more appealing waterfowl.

Zoology

*Science News-Letter, September 21, 1929*

OUTLINES OF GENERAL ZOOLOGY—H. H. Newman—*Macmillan* (\$3.50). A revised edition of Prof. Newman's excellent textbook.

Zoology

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SKYLARKING—Bruce Gould—*Horace Liveright* (\$2.50). Not the history of aviation, not the story of an individual exploit, but the intimate details of the romantic adventure of flying.

Aviation

*Science News-Letter, September 21, 1929*

FORTUNA: OR CHANCE AND DESIGN—Norwood Young—*Dutton* (\$1). A new book in the Today and Tomorrow series. The author makes a statistical analysis of several methods by which "suckers" can lose money, and concludes that the least rapid is trent-et-quarante, and the fastest the stock exchange.

Statistics

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ALPHABET OF IDEAS OR DICTIONARY OF RO—Edward Powell Foster—*Roia* (\$1). A convenient dictionary of the universal language Ro.

Language

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## Musical Will-o'-the-Wisp

Physiography

The mysterious acoustic phenomenon over Yellowstone and Shoshone Lakes, recorded rarely but nevertheless intermittently during the past 44 years, has again been heard this summer on two succeeding days. The descriptions of the weird sounds vary. To some they are "musical". Others describe them as resembling the whirring sound made by the wings of many birds flying through the air, and to yet another they resemble moans.

Among the latest to hear the mysterious noises are Harold P. Fabian, Republican national committeeman from the State of Utah, and Edward E. Ogston, assistant chief ranger of Yellowstone. While fishing on Grebe Lake, with the breeze blowing in a northerly direction, they heard sounds similar to that coming from an airplane, originating in the east, passing over the lake, and dying in the west. The following day Chief Ranger George Baggley, while standing within 200 yards of the shore of Lake Yellowstone, heard the sounds, similar to that of many birds in flight, occur at three different times.

Back in 1885 John H. Renshaw, topographic engineer of the United States Geological Survey, recorded hearing the mysterious sounds when he had a supply camp on the west shore of the Lake about half-way between the present location of the Lake Hotel and the Lake Outlet. Mr. Renshaw states that he frequently heard the sound which has been called music, but that to him it was something more like a moan. This sound, he says, seemed to come from a hot spring on the bank of the lake on the opposite shore, and was dependent upon the state of the atmosphere and the direction of the wind. On approaching the spring, however, the only sound heard was the hiss of escaping steam.

While he was crossing the lake in a home-made boat with three assistants one morning, a strong wind came up and the boat was struck by lightning. One member of the party was killed, while the others were knocked unconscious. Mr. Renshaw states that the bolt of lightning which struck the boat came apparently out of a clear sky, and that when he regained consciousness the sun was shining and the air was clear. It is believed by some that the bolt of lightning from the clear sky may in some way be closely allied to the cause of the acoustic phenomenon.

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