

Michelet's "The Insect" of 1874, and has since reappeared in many historical memoirs. Dr. Schierbeek correctly affirms that no contemporary portrait of Swammerdam has so far been discovered. His picturesque birthplace, however, now sadly mutilated by drastic repairs, and even scheduled for future demolition, is shown as it was in Swammerdam's time in an old print in the archives of Amsterdam, which Dr. Schierbeek reproduces. An important matter not mentioned by him is that ten of the plates in the "Biblia Naturæ", which include asymmetrical figures, seriously misrepresent the facts owing to the failure of the engraver to reverse the drawings on the copper plates. Dr. Schierbeek reproduces photographically the original drawings of two of these plates, and, as all of them were available to him in Leyden, it is disappointing that he was unable to reproduce more.

The book is well produced; but the binding in cloth of a dead-black colour gives it a somewhat mournful appearance. The plates are reasonably good copies of the excellent line engravings of the first edition of the "Biblia Naturæ".

F. J. COLE

## INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY

### Man in the Primitive World

An Introduction to Anthropology. By Prof. E. Adamson Hoebel. (McGraw-Hill Series in Sociology and Anthropology.) Pp. xii+543. (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1949.) 30s.

**D**URING the past two or three years a very large number of anthropological text-books has come from the United States. Among the most recent of these is this volume by the professor of anthropology in the University of Utah, which claims to be no more than an introduction to the subject, but is nevertheless one of the best. After a brief introduction to discriminate between the various fields of anthropology, an introduction notably useful on the relationship between material and non-material culture and on that between social anthropology and sociology, the book is divided into five parts which deal respectively with prehistory, with race, on which the author's views are eminently sane, with primitive society—a long part, amounting to about three-fifths of the whole volume and divided into sub-heads—and with society and culture, which is really concerned with theoretical backgrounds and practical method. It is perhaps this last part that is the most valuable part of the book, containing as it does a brief critical approach to several aspects of recent developments in anthropological work, developments which hold many pitfalls for the unwary and need the more caution from beginners on account of what might almost be described as their meretricious attractions. A glossary of twenty pages, a bibliography and an index complete the volume.

Occasional points arise which either call for criticism or at least challenge debate. It is surely dangerous, for example, to state categorically that the irrigation of rice is an improvement on a more ancient method of growing it dry. It seems more likely to the reviewer that rice reached Indonesia as an irrigated crop and that its dry cultivation there has taken place by the borrowing of part only of the complex. In his otherwise excellent treatment of the

incest taboo, the author omits to mention the reason for royal incest found in the descent of property in the female line, so that a prince must marry his sister, or even daughter, to retain the kingdom. In regard to nomenclature, nothing is said of the common practice of giving names of insignificance or humiliation. The treatment of, or rather the allusion to, trial by ordeal suggests perhaps an incomplete acquaintance with the material and psychological factors involved; and the words "so help me God" of a Christian taking oath are not a conditional curse at all, but an invocation of the Deity for help in making a completely correct statement—very often no easy matter. The two chapters on religion (28 and 29) might usefully have included some account of the doctrine of 'soul-stuff', which has been, and still is, an important element in all the religions of south-east Asia and is, as a matter of fact, much more widely spread, since it appears in all continents; fertility cults are also passed over. In one passage the author speaks of the "reported behaviour" of the lemmings, who "supposedly" travel until they reach the sea and are drowned; but this well-known periodic migration of lemmings has been examined in detail by Collett and is not a myth.

Such criticisms, however, relate to matters of minor detail. The book as a whole forms an admirable introduction to anthropology and can be recommended as such with confidence. It is well printed, well illustrated and well indexed, and the price is, for these days, moderate.

J. H. HUTTON

## MODERN SCIENCE FOR THE LAYMAN

### Achievements of Modern Science

By Dr. A. D. Merriman. Pp. xii+272. (London and New York: Gregg Publishing Co., Ltd., 1949.) 21s. net.

### A New Survey of Science

A revised and enlarged edition of 'Science Marches On'. By Walter Shepherd. Pp. 512+35 plates. (London: George G. Harrap and Co., Ltd., 1949.) 15s. net.

**D**R. A. D. MERRIMAN, who was adviser in scientific matters to the commander-in-chief at G.H.Q. Middle East during the Second World War, has produced a work of high quality. In spite of the ambitious title, "Achievements of Modern Science", he has limited himself to a comparatively few recent applications of physics suggested by technical developments during the War. Concerning these he is a master, and he has the gift of clear, simple exposition without the sacrifice of scientific accuracy.

The book will be useful to many classes of reader, from the member of the Armed Forces to the senior grammar school boy. The topics discussed are rockets and space travel, atomic energy, thermionic valves and cathode-ray oscillographs, radar, electron-microscope, magnetism of the earth and degaussing, the aircraft propeller and weather control—a short list, and one that creates a desire for more from the author, particularly as the book costs a guinea. The diagrams in the text are good, and other features of the work are an appendix of photographic reproductions and a coloured frontispiece of F. O. Salisbury's painting of anti-aircraft batteries in action against flying bombs on the Sussex coast in 1944.