

Books and Men



In Three Parts — Science, Civilisation and Values Useful Publication from Victor Gollancz

(Reviewed by W. A. Armour, M.A., Head Master of Wellington College.)

"AN Outline for Boys and Girls, and Their Parents" is a Victor Gollancz publication edited by Naomi Mitchinson, with whom young people will have a pleasurable acquaintance as the author of "The Conquered."

The editor's preface is a delight to read and sets the stage fittingly.

Possessing about 900 pages of clearly-printed reading matter, together with a full index, the book is divided into three parts, the first of which deals with Science, the second with Civilisation, and the third with Values. Its price seems to be almost ridiculously low for the wonderful amount of information so interestingly presented from the pens of no fewer than twenty-six contributors of note.

The same publisher issued two or three years ago "The Outline of Modern Knowledge," which achieved a wide sale. The present volume is built up on the same lines, but is intended, of course, for young people, though most adults would like to feel themselves possessed of a competent knowledge of its contents.

A remarkable feature of the book is its continuity. In spite of the large number of contributors each section fits into that preceding it almost as smoothly as if the whole came from one pen; and yet any section may be read independently of the others.

To-day, when the claim of biology to a prominent place in school curricula is being recognised, the earlier portions of the book are of great interest. The chapter on Applied Biology reads like a romance. There is a chapter on Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics which we would suppose could only be as dry as dust. But the writer has succeeded in writing about sixty pages which any young person will find more enthralling than his favourite work of fiction. It is being stated and re-stated to-day that a great weakness in our educational system is the omission of social science from the curriculum. To think and talk intelligently of the problems and difficulties of the world to-day, it is essential to possess much of the knowledge contained in the second half of the Outline.

It is to be hoped that a perusal of these chapters will dissipate the commonly-accepted idea that the only studies worth pursuing are those presented in the classroom. There is ample leisure for all young people who wish to aspire to any independence of thought to interest themselves in investigations which cannot be pursued in the limited time and opportunity offered to the much-harassed teacher in the classroom.

While it may be remarked that the volume rather neglects what is spiritual in the makeup of mankind, it certainly treats almost the whole range of human thought and endeavour with a clarity, simplicity and an attractiveness which will make this volume as keenly read by adults as by girls and boys. No wonder one reviewer stated that he meant to glance through the outline before handing it on to his granddaughter, but became so absorbed in it himself that she was to receive it only when he could himself spare it.

"An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents." Edited by Naomi Mitchinson. Victor Gollancz. Our copy from the publishers.

PERHAPS I might mention that I was married in Russia, and had the opportunity of noticing subtle differences in the behaviour of my companions which tourists would be likely to miss.—Letter in "The New Statesman."



Predestined
to be the
1936
favourite

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

ALL-WAVE RADIO

See & hear it at...

Model C.132

"Consult your nearest H.M.V. dealer, or write direct to **His Master's Voice (N.Z.) Ltd.**, 118-120 Wakefield Street, Wellington."