

THE ZOOLOGY OF TODAY

Introduction

I felt highly complimented when I received the invitation to deliver this, the first public lecture of the session, but it was with great trepidation that I accepted it. I have not been with you long enough to be familiar with your traditions, nor to know quite what is expected from the lecturer on such occasions.

It is the custom in certain of the older Universities for a newly appointed professor to deliver an Inaugural Address, open alike to members of the University and the public. Having the fortune to hear two very interesting lectures of this kind I came to the conclusion that the institution was an excellent one, but since undertaking to give this lecture which, I presume in some measure corresponds to them, I have been reconsidering my former judgment.

In such addresses it is customary for the professor to choose some branch of his subject in which he is specially interested, and to deal with it in a broad, philosophic manner, omitting all unnecessary details. This is a very desirable plan, since on the one hand it gives the lecturer great scope for bringing forward interesting matter, and on the other, the audience have an opportunity of hearing well considered judgments from one who is thoroughly versed in his subject.

I have decided on the present occasion not to proceed along these lines for reasons I shall mention later, but to attempt a wider though necessarily shallower review of the present position of Biology and particularly Zoology, the science in which I am myself interested, and its relation to other branches of learning. This must of necessity be incomplete, since it is beyond the power of one man to be abreast of all the manifold ramifications of this subject.

The older seats of learning have their traditions extending back for many decades, and the Professor of Zoology