

In the World of Books

By MAX SCHACHTMAN

"Our Medicine Men" (Century) by Paul H. De Kruif, contains ten essays written in an artificially exasperated tone, maintained by means of the cacophonous style used by the man de Kruif imitates, H. L. Mencken. Nevertheless, the book is a very good criticism of the stupidity, narrowness and fraud in the medical profession today.

One part I could not swallow. Writing against preventive medicine because it produced over-population in proportion to production, the author advocates compulsory contraception, not for the "backbone of our national strength," the plutocratic and middle classes, but for the proletariat, whose "larvae" swarm in our cities. Shades of Parson Malthus and William Sanger, what diluted Nietzscheanism is this! I think this is a bit of the clownishness to which Mr. de Kruif admits his mind to be prone. It reminds me of a callow, underaged half witted youngster who used heatedly to defend old Friedrich's Sklavemoral; he could see the absurdity of himself as a Superman. The last I heard about him was that some truck driver, a confirmed low-brow and very unintellectual, struck him lightly and obliged my friend's removal to a morgue. Thus passed a future ruler. This trifling tale may be apocryphal, but I have a copyright and intend to use the story as the kernel for my projected monumental satire on the theories of Freddy Nietzsche.