

Short Reviews of Scientific Books

Science Progress. (Edward Arnold & Co., London.)

This well-known review of all sections of science is published as a quarterly ; the last number received in Australia (Vol. XXXI, No. 121), published in July, is well up to standard, and students of science will be able to take the advantage of keeping their general information up to date, whatever may be their more particularised interests.

A very interesting article is contributed by Professor Adrian on " Research on the Central Nervous System ", which will be just as interesting to the physicist as to the biologist ; after all, the physicist, depending on his nervous system for the making and interpreting of " observations " must necessarily be concerned with progress in the understanding of the central nervous system.

The customary section " Recent Advances in Science " is one of the first sections to which the hurried reader turns : those who have neither time nor opportunity for browsing through even a small field of current scientific journals will find summarised in these sections sufficient of recent advances to keep them informed as to what is happening, and where to find fuller information on those advances of which they want to read more fully.

The other articles (including the reviews) will attract the more specialised readers : those interested in the history of science will find an article on " Chérubin d'Orleans : A Critic of Boyle ", a Capuchin of Touraine, who flourished during the interesting period of the activities of Boyle and Huyghens.

(Annual subscription, including postage, 31/2 English. Our copy from Edward Arnold & Co.)

E.H.B.

Totem : The Exploitation of Youth. (Harold Stovin. Methuen & Co., London. 5/-.)

This will prove a very annoying book to scout commissioners, scout masters, girl guiders in general, leaders of " new youth movements " and others who are accused of this " exploitation of youth " by Mr. Stovin. We omitted, above, Toc H ; Mr. Stovin does not. To him it is a somewhat unpleasant evidence of our attempted reversion to earlier stages of civilisation, to the days of the pack and the tribe. One can hardly imagine the author as safe in England : he smiles at so many things that are part of the English boy's " code ". His statements we may, if we are any of the " youth leaders " mentioned above, take as silly and exaggerated, or even, worse still, deliberately annoying ; yet there is sufficient truth in them to cause the intelligent person to watch his own ways, even whilst refusing to believe that he has been influenced by the book.

(Our copy from Methuen & Co.)

R.P.V.

Elementary Science Physics. (Edgar Booth. Australasian Medical Publishing Company. 3/-.)

This book is issued to meet the needs of school pupils in New South Wales who take the course in Elementary Science for the Intermediate Certificate examination. It consists of Sections I, II and III of Major Booth's well-known text-book "An Elementary Introduction to Physics", bound and issued as a cheap edition, so that there should be no excuse for a student being unable to have his own text-book. The sections included are those required by the syllabus for Elementary Science. Whilst many teachers and students will still prefer the larger book, even though its full range of sections is not required for examination purposes, so that the students may employ the book as an introduction to their later work, it will nevertheless form a valuable addition for those who have no intention of reading beyond the stage required for Elementary Science Physics.

(Copy from Australasian Medical Publishing Company, Limited.)

P.D.

Spider Wonders of Australia. (Keith C. McKeown. Angus & Robertson Ltd. 6/-.)

Whilst few who read this will have the interest of a teacher or "examinee" on the subject of the book, it can be recommended to all scholars, their teachers, and their parents as being a very interesting, as well as an instructive book. Naturally, one turns up the index to find "trapdoor", "funnel" (or tunnel?) web spiders, "tarantulas" and other old friends who surely should be indexed. We find them, of course, and find them again in the text admirably treated, so that we are induced to read further.

The author is a scientist familiar with his subject, and after reading his fascinating book we find that we are familiar with it also and that we have an urge to pass on our knowledge, probably newly acquired, to our friends. If you do that, after reading this book, give credit to the book so that your friends can also enjoy it rather than your abstract.

(Our copy from Angus & Robertson Ltd.)

E.H.B.

Laboratory Experiments in Physics. Section IV Light. (Written by a Committee of the Science Teachers' Association of N.S.W. Australasian Medical Publishing Company, Limited, Sydney. 2/6.)

This book, which is advertised elsewhere in this issue, has long been required. It is the section dealing with experiments in optics, and is the result of the collaboration between six of our leading teachers of Physics.

A book such as this represents an enormous amount of work in preparation, firstly as to what shall be included, then inevitably as to what can be left out, before the task settles to a careful writing and re-writing so as to give the clearest and most precise correct information in a form which will be readily understood by the student of Leaving Certificate preparation age, into whose hands the book should be placed.

The authors have succeeded in this task ; they themselves will be their own most severe critics, because to the author nothing is ever as good as he hoped it would be, but any defects (and they are few and slight) will be removed in subsequent editions. There are fifty different optical experiments, many of which are set out to be performed by three or more different methods, mostly to be performed with apparatus which should be collected in any school physical laboratory : a range from which all science masters should be able to make up and to vary courses to suit their own interests and views. The book can be recommended not only to the students of those larger schools (very successful schools in this subject), but also to those smaller colleges which are in process of developing their courses from small beginnings. The book will be very useful to the teacher ; it is intended primarily for the student himself. The other sections will follow later.

(An advance copy by courtesy of the Australasian Medical Publishing Company, Limited.)

E.H.B.
