

(4) This is one of Mr. Maycock's many works on electrical subjects, and is intended to deal with the requirements of Grade I, and the final examinations in electric wiremen's work of the City and Guilds of London Institute. It is therefore essentially a book for beginners, and as such can be recommended. It contains a number of questions and their solutions.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

Careers for Our Sons. A Practical Handbook to the Professions and Commercial Life. Edited by the Rev. G. H. Williams. Pp. xii+564. Fourth edition. (London: A. and C. Black, 1914.) Price 5s. net.

THAT this book has reached a fourth edition since its first appearance ten years ago is an indication of its usefulness to parents and guardians. There are few more baffling tasks than to find a suitable opening for a boy whose school and college training are completed, but who has no clear idea of what he desires to do to secure a livelihood. To those who are face to face with the problem this complete and well-arranged compilation may be recommended confidently. Mr. Williams is an old schoolmaster who has supplemented his own wide experience by much valuable information gathered from a large number of experts.

Manks Antiquities. By P. M. C. Kermodé and Prof. W. A. Herdman. Second edition. Pp. 150. (Liverpool: University Press, 1914.) Price 3s. net.

THE first edition of this book, which was out of print for some time, was reviewed at length in the issue of NATURE for June 14, 1906 (vol. lxxiv., p. 152). During the ten years since the original appearance of the work, the authors have explored several additional prehistoric sites, and a systematic survey of the antiquities of each parish has been undertaken by a committee of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society. From these and other sources much new material has been worked into the present edition of the book, which will prove of interest and service to the people of the island and their summer visitors.

Royal Society of London. Catalogue of Scientific Papers, 1800-1900. Subject Index. Vol. iii., Physics. Part II., Electricity and Magnetism. Pp. xv+927+vii. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1914.) Price 15s. net.

IN the review of the first part of the third volume of the Royal Society's catalogue of scientific papers, which appeared in NATURE on May 22, 1913 (vol. xci., p. 289), the general plan and scope of the work were described. It will be sufficient to say of this part that it completes the subject index on physics, deals with electricity and magnetism under the registration numbers 4900 to 6850, and contains 23,300 entries. This makes in all 56,644 entries for the subject physics for the years 1800-1900 inclusive.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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Active Nitrogen.

IN view of the apparently inexplicable contradiction between the results of Tiede and Domcke (*Ber.*, 1913, 46, 340 and 4095) and Baker and Strutt (*Ber.*, 1914, 47, 801 and 1049) on this subject, Tiede and Domcke offered to visit London with their apparatus, and it was arranged that each pair of experimenters should repeat their experiments in presence of the other. This was done, and as a result it was agreed that Tiede and Domcke were justified in their statement that the addition of a trace of oxygen to the azide nitrogen increased the intensity of the glow. With the form of discharge vessel and the electrical equipment used by them it was possible to diminish the afterglow considerably, and then to restore the brilliancy of the glow by the addition of an infinitesimal trace of oxygen, liberated by gentle heat from silver oxide. When the amount of oxygen added exceeded this very small quantity, the glow entirely disappeared, as all former experimenters have agreed.

On the other hand, employing the form of discharge vessel used by Baker and Strutt, which has not been described in detail, but is better designed for obtaining the glow, it was not found possible to observe any distinct diminution in the intensity of the glow, even when the vessel was washed out several times with nitrogen prepared by Tiede and Domcke with their own materials, as used in the previous experiment. It is always possible that if the experiment had been more prolonged a different result might have been obtained.

It appears, therefore, that a sample of nitrogen may be made to give the glow more easily if it is mixed with a trace of oxygen. On the other hand, the purest nitrogen with which we have worked in our joint experiments in London is capable of giving a brilliant glow under the experimental conditions used by Baker and Strutt.

It seems possible that the effect of the infinitesimal trace of oxygen is to alter the conditions of discharge so as to make it more suitable for the production of active nitrogen. Prof. Warburg's observations of the effect of traces of oxygen on the kathode fall in nitrogen tends to confirm this idea. Possibly other substances than oxygen may be found eventually to produce the same effect.

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London, July 2.

The Horns of the Okapi.

HITHERTO it has been considered that the horns of the male okapi, with the exception of the bare antler-like terminal caps, are permanently covered with hairy skin, like those of giraffes. The skin and skeleton of an old male okapi recently sent to Messrs. Gerrard, of Camden Town, by Dr. Christy, seem, however, to indicate that, extraordinary as it may appear, true horn-sheaths, like those of antelopes, are developed in at least some individuals. The skull, which, from the condition of the teeth, indicates an animal at least