metaphysicists. Because scientific workers do not present their conclusions in this respect as binding and final, philosophers must return the courtesy and treat them, for example, in the same dignified spirit as that shown in Sir Arthur Eddington's reply to Mr. Cohen's criticisms. His case would have been perhaps stronger if Mr. Cohen had shown more modesty and less partisanship in his statements and in his professional defence of materialism and free thought. But when he starts off by proclaiming that after his criticisms of "very many" books by scientific workers aiming at reconciliation of science and religion, their authors decided generally that "discretion was the better part" and that "silence in their case spelt safety", one may pertinently wonder whether Mr. Cohen should be taken as a safe guide in philosophy, and whether he is qualified to pay compliments to that section of the Christian clergy whom he denounces as "dishonest" for acclaiming these men of science as being witnesses on behalf of God. T. G.

Acoustics of Buildings: including Acoustics of Auditoriums and Soundproofing of Rooms. By Prof. F. R. Watson. Second edition, revised. Pp. x+155. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1930.) 15*s*. net.

IT is not a great many years ago since the satisfaction of acoustical requirements was purely a matter of empiricism. Here and there a scientific worker such as Rayleigh could explain the underlying principles; but seldom could an acoustic triumph, like the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, be acclaimed, nor could dependent data be obtained even from that; consequently, neither analysis nor synthesis came to our aid and architects were but blind leaders of the blind. Wallace Sabine, however, introduced a new era into acoustical research, and now it is by no means uncommon to secure success. Prof. Floyd Watson's treatise is a welcome contribution to the synthetic treatment of the subject. Whether it is better to secure original acoustic satisfaction or to correct acoustic failures, admits of no argument. In either case, the author's work has the merit of showing the way. The value of wires and sounding boards is almost entirely discounted in the light of modern investigation. The concluding argument is interesting, in its recommendation that Sabine's advice (remembering the varying size of the audiences) to effect a compromise, is the desirable procedure. For practical purposes the use of the different sound-absorbing coefficients is of the greatest value.

P. L. M.

The Annual Register: a Review of Public Events at Home and Abroad for the Year 1930. Edited by Dr. M. Epstein. (New Series, Vol. 172.) Pp. xii+313+176. (London, New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1931.) 30*s*. net.

THE new issue of this useful book follows the usual plan of arrangement, which, combined with a detailed index, make reference easy. The bulk of the volume records the political and social history of Great Britain, the Empire, and other countries. The summaries are both full and readable, and omit no matter of importance in any part of the world. The second part is devoted mainly to retrospects of literature, science, art, law, and finance during the year.

Science has ten pages for its share, divided between the biological sciences, including anthropology, and the physical sciences. Much interesting matter and many broad views are crowded into these pages, and some of the more important books of the year are mentioned. The public document printed in full this year is M. Briand's memorandum on the organisation of a regime of European Federal Union, with the report by the French Government on the inquiry. The volume concludes with biographical notes of eminent persons who died during the year.

Number: the Language of Science. By Prof. Tobias Dantzig. Pp. xi+260+11 plates. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1930.) 10*s*. net.

THE author of this interesting book has achieved a difficult task with much distinction, in showing that number, which is considered as the 'driest' topic on earth, could be made the basis of a profoundly human story. From the use of finger-prints to the invention of transfinite numbers, we are told how the theory of numbers, born in religious mysticism, has passed through a period of erratic puzzle-solving before it acquired the status of a science. Yet the book is not a technical history of the subject; so that it should interest not only mathematicians but also the wider circle of those who like to ask themselves how science has come about. Symbols are scarcely used; but the historical method has been freely introduced to bring out the rôle intuition has played in the evolution of mathematical concepts. This novel and pleasant presentation of an intricate subject is a great credit to its author. T. G.

L'Art nègre: à l'Exposition du Palais des Beaux-arts du 15 novembre au 31 décembre 1930. Par J. Maes et Dr. H. Lavachery. Pp. 32+48 planches. (Paris: Les Éditions G. Van Oest, 1930.) 30 francs.

THIS book, primarily a guide to the section of Negro art in an exhibition held at Brussels at the end of 1930, consists of two brief but adequate essays on the main characteristics of African art. M. Maes deals with the sculptural art of the Belgian Congo, and Dr. Lavachery with that of the remainder of Africa: a not unfair division of labour in view of the importance of the Congo as an art centre. It will be remembered that from here came the wooden statuettes which have had such a marked effect in modern European art and æsthetics. The plates figure a large number of examples. Excellent as is the text within its limits, the plates alone make this something more than a mere guide-book and worthy of permanent preservation.