

Household Physics

By Walter G. Whitman. Third edition. Pp. vii + 436. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1939.) 18s. net.

THIS book, now in its third edition, deals with the practical applications of physics with particular reference to the home. The general plan of the first edition has been retained, but many changes have been made and six new chapters have been added, including one on air-conditioning.

Throughout the book the everyday experiences of students are used as a base from which to develop the concept of the fundamental laws of physics; there are twenty-eight chapters embracing examples in all the main branches of the subject, and since the whole is so comprehensively treated, the author has found it impossible to give great detail. Many very clear diagrams are included, and at the end of each chapter a useful summary of the main points is given, also a few suggestions for further study.

The book will provide interesting and instructive reading to both boys and girls, whether they are proceeding to a more academic treatment of the subject or not, and certainly a greater knowledge of the underlying principles and the operation of many devices found in the modern home will be of benefit to all. The student must be warned, however, that in some cases the author has been compelled, owing to lack of space, to give a necessarily condensed and incomplete theory; this is sufficient for ordinary purposes, but the student who is interested in pure physics will wish to go more deeply into such theory.

MISCELLANY**Acute Infectious Diseases**

A Handbook for Practitioners and Students. By Dr. J. D. Rolleston and Dr. G. W. Ronaldson. Third edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. ix + 477. (London: William Heinemann (Medical Books), Ltd., 1940.) 17s. 6d. net.

THE third edition of Rolleston's work, now under dual authorship, maintains the high standard of previous editions. The book is well produced, and, considering the amount of information supplied, is very convenient to handle. The absence of clinical illustrations, to which reference is made in the preface to the first edition, is amply compensated by the graphic description given of the cutaneous lesions of the acute exanthemata. It is unusual in a work of this size to find an attractive historical summary of each disease and also a serviceable bibliography. The source is a guarantee of scholarship and accuracy.

At a time when infectious diseases are specially liable to occur, the publication of such a book is opportune, for it offers to all, whether in the Services or in civilian practice, a reliable guide on all matters of treatment and prevention. Since the publication of the last edition, chemotherapy has revolutionized the treatment of certain infectious diseases, the use

of serum in treatment and prevention has been extended, and much work has been done with regard to immunization, more especially in the virus diseases. All these subjects have received a detailed consideration which will be of value to the practitioner. Two additional chapters deal with erysipelas and isolation methods. The former is opportune as erysipelas is an excellent example of a disease amenable to both serum treatment and chemotherapy. The last chapter, with plans of modern isolation blocks, will appeal to all who are interested in administration.

The Annual Register

A Review of Public Events at Home and Abroad for the Year 1939. Edited by Dr. M. Epstein. Pp. xiv + 507. (London, New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1940.) 30s. net.

IT is seemly that an annual volume that now makes its hundred and eighty-first appearance should be published at the accustomed time and should maintain its normal size and all its normal features. As usual, more than half the volume is a review of world history with special regard to Great Britain and the British Empire. The year was one of preparation for war in most lands, but, as events have shown, a preparation that proved too leisurely even during the last four months of the year. Other European States receive full consideration, and the enigmatic attitude of the Soviet Union is revealing. The second part of the volume has the usual chronicle of events, obituaries and retrospect of art, science, literature and finance. The review of science directs attention to an unusually prolific year in biological publications and great advances in many aspects of that subject. Several important public documents are printed in full. They include the agreement with Poland, the treaty of mutual assistance between the United Kingdom, France and Turkey, the Russo-German pact and the various Soviet pacts with the Baltic States.

PHILOSOPHY**Causality and Science**

By Prof. Nalini Kanta Brahma. Pp. 120. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1939.) 6s. net.

AS an ultimate assumption of science, the principle of causation is capable of a metaphysical analysis. Deploring the rejection of final causes by modern science, Prof. Brahma believes that the present interpretation of physics has not come to stay. For example, he questions that the indeterminism in the effect proves the indeterminism in the cause; and he contends that the idealistic view of physics is more superficial than fundamental. Moreover, scientific causality, whatever be its interpretation, is always partial, as it does not cover the other realm of values which give colour to life. The author rejects the mechanistic as well as the organic theory of causality. He holds that a cause is neither a sum total of conditions nor an implication of the whole effect latent in itself. For in both cases, causality lacks