

"New Atlantis", by "R. H. Esquire" and dated 1660. Sir Geoffrey inclines to the belief that this was, in fact, Hooke's first published book. Other sections deal with Hooke's early tract on capillary attraction, his controversy with Auzout, the "Micrographia" and its derivatives, the six Cutlerian Lectures, the "Philosophical Collections" which Hooke edited to fill a gap in the sequence of *Philosophical Transactions* caused by Oldenburg's death, Waller's edition of the "Posthumous Works", Hooke's contributions to the *Transactions* and to contemporary books, and, finally, the "Diaries". Following the bibliography proper are four appendixes: these comprise a summary list of Hooke's papers and letters preserved in manuscript, a list of letters from printed sources, a selection of books and articles bearing upon Hooke, and, lastly, Newton's notes on the "Micrographia" which have not been transcribed before.

The book is excellently produced, and its interest is enhanced by the inclusion of reproductions of the title-pages and of a few historic plates from Hooke's works; there are also drawings of the College of Physicians which he designed. Sir Geoffrey Keynes has fashioned a tool which will prove indispensable to students of the life and times of Newton's greatest rival.

A. ARMITAGE

AN INTERPRETER OF WHITEHEAD

Whitehead's Philosophy of Science

By Dr. Robert M. Palter. Pp. xv+248. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; London: Cambridge University Press, 1960.) 60s. net.

THERE are probably several reasons why Whitehead's contributions to philosophy have suffered some neglect, and even a little discredit, with the passage of years. One is the difficulty of his language and symbolism, another his concern with metaphysics. A great mathematician—now no longer living—once told me how shocking it was to write so obscurely as "A. N. W."; yet the same authority declared—just as Whitehead did in so many words—that metaphysics must be firmly based on science for its survival; and furthermore, that it needed to be critical of itself before it applied the lash to others.

Although the present book is not quite the first and only attempt at interpreting Whitehead, it is assuredly the fullest and most understanding yet produced. If, some forty years ago, one could have had Prof. Palter's work at hand when reading "An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge" and "The Concept of Nature", many hours of frustration might at least have been shortened. In a sense, the later publications were easier to grasp, because their purpose was clearer, and the author's goal more squarely in view.

As things are now, it seems likely that Whitehead's method of extensive abstraction and his philosophy of organism will prove of current interest, and these are well discussed and illustrated in the present volume. Moreover, the latter subject is set fair to offer an epistemological basis for the coming biophysics. In this context, the quotations from Whitehead, copious as they are, fit naturally into the picture, without being tedious or destructive of the author's careful exegesis. An example is the way in which Whitehead is shown to be fully aware that

natural science means the observation of things as they are, and that to rely on formal mathematical concepts alone is to perpetuate the errors of the scholastics. In fact, a few lines before this remark, Whitehead states bluntly that "If there be no stuff to appear, there can be no space" ("The Principle of Relativity", p. 39). All this shows that he was no pedant with regard to natural science.

A footnote to p. 5 rescues, from rather out-of-the-way sources, Whitehead's pregnant hint to the effect that some day aesthetics will become founded on symbolic logic. There are straws in the wind that way already.

Finally comes the concept of 'fields'. At the weakest, this means "any theory involving continuous distribution in space of some physical magnitude . . .", and at the strongest, any expression of fundamental laws as partial differential equations. It could scarcely be better said, and subsumes most of the substance of the great period of aether physics.

However complex, nothing can detract from the peculiar beauty of Whitehead's prose. His preface to "The Principles of Natural Knowledge" is pathetically lovely in its restrained sense of poignant sorrow.

I was with "A. N. W." shortly before his death: the mind was clear and the memory nearly perfect, as he looked into the Great Unknown.

F. I. G. RAWLINS

THE NEW FOREST

The New Forest

By Juanita Berlin, Edwin Cohen, Dr. Gordon J. Copley, H. L. Edlin, Oliver Hook, Juliette de Baitaceli Levy, F. E. W. Venning, H. Widnell, W. R. Myers, and Sir Berkeley Pigott. Pp. x+201+27 plates. (London: Galley Press, Ltd., 1960.) 30s. net.

IN view of the wealth of material and scholarship that could have been drawn on, as well as the publicity given to this book, one had reason to expect an authoritative work on the New Forest. Instead, we are presented with an odd and unbalanced assortment of topics that fail to fulfil the claims put forward by the chairman of the Forestry Commission in his foreword.

In an opening chapter entitled "The Background", brief references are made to Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age cultures, and to some of the commoner place names, but there is no attempt to recount or explain the fascinating history of the Forest or the communities who came to settle within its precincts. On the other hand, the chapter on "The New Forest Commoners" deals adequately with the remarkable, if complicated, administration that has evolved through the centuries.

The geology is inadequately dismissed in four pages, and as the contributor admits, much of it is "very briefly and crudely summarized". The distribution of the distinctive Forest soil types is omitted altogether. The same chapter contains a much larger section entitled "Botany", but this deals almost exclusively with pure floristics, and misses completely the opportunity to elaborate the general vegetational pattern in relation to geology and topography. Much later in the book, and separated from the general botanical section, is a rather whimsical, but