

substantial than that subjective conviction, which is the best, as a rule, that most theories on this subject can produce.

During the last ten years, Sir Richard Paget has been engaged in elaborating a theory of the origin of language, and in collecting evidence from a wide variety of languages in support of his view that the movements of the tongue in producing certain sounds determine the meaning of the words they compose. To put it rather differently, the movements of the tongue are a variety of the sign language once widely used between primitive peoples and still, or at least until recently, surviving among, for example, the Indians of America. In this book, this principle is applied in some detail to the sounds of spoken English. One example will suffice. The sound *Sp*, corresponding with the motions of mouth and tongue in making it, expresses the meaning of a fine point as in 'spear', 'spin', 'asp' or 'wasp'.

It may be doubted how much of the author's interpretation is subjective, notwithstanding his many striking examples. This feeling grows when it is found that such terms as 'wellington' (boot), 'kit-kat' (picture) and others of a like derivation are found to fall in with the author's theories. He would explain them as a species of philological survival of the fittest.

## Philosophy and Psychology

### On Dreams

By William Archer. Edited by Theodore Besterman. Pp. xv+215. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1935.) 7s. 6d. net.

WILLIAM ARCHER is best known to us as a very loyal disciple of Henrik Ibsen and the editor of the English edition of his plays. It is therefore interesting to hear his views on dreams. He is not a disciple of Freud—indeed he thoroughly disagrees with a great deal of Freudian doctrine. It is, however, often difficult to accept Freud without being analysed.

To say that Freud is "misled by three influences; first, by a love of sweeping statements, with its correlative hatred of exceptions and reservations; secondly by a very natural tendency to forget that the great mass of his evidence is gathered from more or less brainsick people; thirdly, by an unfortunate obsession, which might very properly be made the subject of study by his own methods" is, we feel, not at all an accurate criticism. We have no evidence that Freud suffers from an obsessional neurosis; if he did, he would have been analysed and cured of it while Archer was still a young man.

The author gives us, among others, chapters dealing with visions and dreams, wish fulfilment, moral sense in dreams, sources of dreams and physically stimulated dreams. He then provides us with more than sixty dreams of his own which are very interesting. Throughout the book we are constantly reminded of the fact that for a layman, however erudite, to attempt to solve psychological problems without years of training in normal and abnormal psychology is little short of sheer waste of time.

### God and Creation: God, a Cosmic Philosophy of Religion

By Prof. John Elof Boodin. Pp. 240. 8s. 6d. net.

### God and Creation: Three Interpretations of the Universe

By Prof. John Elof Boodin. Pp. 519. 12s. 6d. net. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1934.)

WITH these two volumes, Prof. Boodin's world-philosophy takes shape definitely. His idealism, which has a strong taste of pragmatism in his earlier works, asserts itself more and more in the traditional vein inspired by Plato. The "Three Interpretations of the Universe" is a learned treatise of critical cosmology, while 'God' makes a more direct appeal to reason and the heart, in favour of a comprehensive idealist view of the universe and of Deity. In both works, Prof. Boodin shows a great earnestness of purpose, the more so as he believes that Protestantism will go on decaying theologically, unless it establishes its national foundations on the solid ground of an idealist philosophy. Even one who does not share the philosophical beliefs of the author has to acknowledge with satisfaction the masterly contribution of Prof. Boodin to the solutions of the higher riddles of the universe. T. G.

### L'Annee psychologique

Publiée par Prof. Henri Piéron. (Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine.) Année 34 (1933). Vol. 1. Pp. xxvii+432. Vol. 2. Pp. 433-1167. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1934.) 120 francs.

WE can do no more than bring to the notice of our readers this important annual publication, which gives a short but most helpful summary of all the works and memoirs on psychology published during the preceding year. The first volume contains also nine original memoirs on various problems of experimental psychology by H. Piéron, R. H. Gault, M. Foucault, C. Durup, R. Dellaert, P. Kucharski, A. Zaganczyk, S. Korngold and A. Lévy.

## Physics

### The Diffraction of Light, X-Rays and Material Particles:

an Introductory Treatment. By Prof. Charles F. Meyer. Pp. xiv+473. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; London: Cambridge University Press, 1934.) 22s. 6d. net.

A PROPER understanding of the principles of diffraction has never been so important to the student of physics as it is at the present time, and, with this in mind, Prof. C. F. Meyer has written a useful introductory work. That portion of the book which deals with the diffraction of light is indeed an excellent example of the treatment of problems in wave optics by the graphical method of the phase-amplitude diagram. Prof. Meyer uses this elegant geometrical method almost exclusively, and succeeds in giving a very lucid, and, within the limits of the method, which in his skilful hands are wide, a very detailed account of the various types of diffraction phenomena.