

The Countryman's Week-End Book

By Eric Parker. (Week-End Library.) Pp. 416. (London: Seeley, Service and Co., Ltd., 1946.) 12s. 6d. net.

ERIC PARKER is well known as a writer on natural history for his ability to interpret natural lore in language which makes it freely available to all. Here he has attempted to produce a book especially for leisure hours, and has been very successful. It is meant to be a book for any odd ten minutes and for reading both forwards and backwards. Its merit is that no matter where one dips there is something of interest to while away the awkward moment before one's next engagement.

There are sections on building a house and the best wood for wood fires, and the best creepers and climbers. Parker will advise on the choice and care of a dog, while on the recognition of birds and the way to entice them to the garden he overleaps himself to be helpful. British mammals, reptiles, insects and wild flowers form other parts of this conversation in words, while, to take a different tack, he provides some useful and revealing information about country crafts and industries. Nor is he afraid to offer advice on forecasting the weather, or what books could be read with advantage on country matters. Even his facts about the record weights of fish and birds and the sports records of athletes do not exhaust this compendium for the aspiring countryman, for his final section includes a valuable account of the legal snares which await the innocent townsman taking up country pursuits. In simple terms Parker explains the Game Act of 1931, how and when and what to shoot, the laws that must be observed when engaging fish or domestic servants, as well as the law of trespass. And, lest the man of science thinks that this is a scrappy collection of superficial miscellanies, let him be reminded that Parker's information has been collected in a life-time of acute observation in the country. During that period he has used a discerning eye to note the kind of information which interests most men and women, and "The Countryman's Week-End Book" is an interesting record of his discrimination.

T. H. HAWKINS

Electric Discharge Lighting

By F. G. Spreadbury. Pp. viii + 136. (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., 1946.) 15s. net.

THE title of this little book is misleading. It deals not at all with the principles or practice of lighting, but is merely an account of some of the properties of modern electric discharge lamps. In the last fifteen years, the search for high luminous efficiencies and coloured light sources has led to rapid development of these lamps, and there are now about a dozen principal types available commercially in Great Britain. The author, therefore, in the small amount of space at his disposal, has clearly attempted to give only a very superficial treatment of what is now an extensive subject.

Judged in this light the book has merit. Chapter 1, on fundamentals, is clear and concise; although there are some mistakes, it will serve as the sort of introduction to the subject required by a layman. There follow three chapters in which low-pressure lamps (both cold-cathode and hot-cathode types), high-pressure mercury vapour lamps, sodium vapour lamps and fluorescent lamps are dealt with. While the next two chapters, concerned with circuits and the design of circuit components, are not free from fault, they provide in a clear manner information that many readers will find useful and interesting.

The last chapter is called "Technical Applications of Discharge Lamps"; the reviewer can only wonder why this was written and how it found its way into a book on lamps.

Those who have no special knowledge of the subject, but have a general interest in knowing something about the discharge lamps which are being increasingly used for lighting, will probably find the book suitable for their purpose. It is not recommended for those who require anything more than a very general introduction to the subject. The production is good and the figures and diagrams (122 in all) are excellent, but the almost complete omission of references detracts from the value of the book even for the general reader. V. J. FRANCIS

Heaviside's Electric Circuit Theory

By H. J. Josephs. (Methuen's Monographs on Physical Subjects.) Pp. viii + 116. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1946.) 4s. 6d. net.

IN following the standard set in this series of monographs, the author gives us a tidy, critical, and slightly historical account of the basis of operational calculus as devised by Oliver Heaviside. It should be a great help to students, because it is in the initial stages that the difficulties are most severe. There is a slight parallel between Heaviside and the author, for the latter, without paper qualifications, has risen to be an effective exponent of his master's subject, a corner of the field of mathematics which is not densely populated by authors.

Indeed, Mr. Josephs seems to have read more deeply into the works of his master than others, for he has found a new theorem, "Heaviside's Last Theorem", which he shows to be a unifying theorem for much other work, including Carson's integral equation and the rigorous derivation of the remaining Heaviside operational processes of use in electric circuit theory.

L. E. C. HUGHES

The Warlis

By K. J. Save. Pp. x + 280 + 15 plates. (Bombay: Padma Publications, Ltd., 1945.) 10 rupees.

THE Warlis tribe is a branch of the better-known Bhil tribe, and this account of it by the Special Officer for the Protection of Aboriginal and Hill Tribes in the Thana district of Bombay is for practical purposes an excellent factual account of a primitive tribe slowly being absorbed into Hinduism. Though the Brahman is beginning to take the place of the tribal priestess, the power of the tribal shaman is still very great, and in the opinion of the author is no less a stumbling block to progress than the Warli love of drink and their economic depression to the position of landless labourers living from hand to mouth. The author deals in detail with the daily life, society, organisation, mythology, religion and language of the tribe and incidentally with their material culture. In so far as it is documentary, as distinct from interpretative, the account given is commendable and thorough. There are forty-three photographs, but unfortunately reproduced on too small a scale to be really satisfactory, an index and a glossary; there are also a few text cuts, but no detailed drawing of the rather remarkable horn-pipe, the favourite musical instrument of the tribe. Except for rather too numerous misprints and misspellings, the printing is good. The author is to be congratulated on a painstaking piece of very useful ethnographical work.