common in the philosophical sociology of the beginning of this century rather than in the language of the observational sciences. Such phrases as "the polar opposites of the idea of unity, arising out of the very same balance of social forces that make unity possible", or the suggestion that Tale society is "a mosaic counterbalanced by cleavages" can have no possible verification in terms of the recorded data or the formalized views expressed by the people themselves. Is it not possible that younger generations of anthropologists, lacking Fortes' scientific training, may come to believe that the framing of a logical system of human relationships and its diagrammatic presentation are more valuable than the analysis of the cases which make for variation? In other words, may not such work lead to the minimum of observation rather than to the maximum amount? It was the fashion twenty years ago to rail against the 'arm-chair anthropologist'. Will not such work lead to a movement which might be described as 'Back to the arm-chair'? For this reason the present reviewer regards Fortes' book as an important, stimulating, and in many ways a brilliant book, but also, from the point of view of scientific method, a somewhat disturbing one.

A. I. RICHARDS

[1] Fortes, M., and Fortes, S. L., "Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi", *Africa*, 9, No. 2 (1936).
[2] Evans-Pritchard, E. E., "The Nuer" (Oxford University Press, 1939).
[3] Malinowski's analysis of culture into a series of 'aspects' and 'institutions' centred in fundamental biological needs is described in its final form in his posthumous book "The Scientific Study of Culture", 1944.

THE WAR EFFORT OF A GREAT ENGINEERING ORGANISATION

Men and Volts at War

The Story of General Electric in World War II. By John Anderson Miller. (Whittlesey House Publication.) Pp. xi+272+123 plates. (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1947.) 19*s*.

THE sub-title of this volume is "The Story of General Electric in World War II", but in content it goes a good deal beyond this scope, and tends to become rather a history of the American war-machine, in which one sees at every turn the applications of the products of the General Electric Co. and the achievements of its scientific workers and engineers in dealing with new war problems. Although the author has avoided saturating his volume with statistics, one is struck by the immensity of the war output from the General Electric Group of factories with their 175,000 workers—output stated to be three times that previously attained.

While many new devices were developed for war purposes by the Company, a great proportion of its effort involved only a modification of its existing products to meet special war requirements; and the great problem in this connexion was the organisation of plant, tools, productive equipment and personnel to meet the stupendous output involved. Such organisation required continual adjustment to satisfy the ever-changing war requirements. Only a company possessing very great resources in scientific and technical personnel, production organisation, and plant and equipment could effect the adjustment required in so incredibly short a time, and in so efficient a manner. The existence of this and other great manufacturing companies was one of the most vital of America's war assets, because they could so rapidly be adapted to war needs. The rapidity with which emergency problems arising in remote theatres of war were solved was remarkable. It is interesting, also, to note that the technical developments that had been undertaken many years previously were of immense war-time usefulness, electrical ship propulsion and the turbo supercharger being two such developments. The author correctly points out that whereas the First World War was largely mechanical in its engineering character, the Second World War was marked by electrical engineering applications, notably in radar, signalling, communications, aircraft, gun ranging, a multiplicity of instruments, welfare, health and medicine.

In a foreword, Charles E. Wilson, president of the General Electric Co., says that since it would be impossible to mention all to whom credit is due, the story of the Company's war-work has necessarily been written without emphasis on the contributions of particular individuals. This is rightly so; but one would like to pay special tribute to the management of this great engineering organisation which had the courage, initiative and resource to shoulder staggering burdens under the greatest possible pressure of time, and with the minimum opportunity to assess in detail the extent of the problems involved in relation to the facilities of materials and personnel available.

The volume is a fine work, well written and excellently produced with many small 'packets' of well-titled illustrations on art paper inserted at intervals. There is a good index and the appendixes which describe General Electric Co. plants and their war production are noteworthy.

A. P. M. FLEMING

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN MEDICAL AND AGRICULTURAL PHYSIOLOGY

The Problem of Fertility

Proceedings of the Conference on Fertility held under the auspices of the National Committee on Maternal Health. Edited by Earl T. Engle. Pp. viii + 254. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1946.) 21*s*. net.

THE practical application of the science of the physiology of reproduction lies in two distinct fields, that of human medicine and that of animal husbandry. The bringing together of workers in these two fields to discuss recent research on the problems of fertility, the results of which are set forth in this book, should have important repercussions in the future, not only for applied, but also for pure science. It is evident from a study of the various chapters that a comparison of the reactions of different species throws considerable light on their different physiological balances and opens the way for advances in disentangling the mechanisms involved. Striking differences exist between species in respect to the methods whereby ovulation can be induced and in the biology of the spermatozoa. In this book recent research work on these subjects has been described in papers by different specialists, and the discussion which followed is reported.

Among the various papers presented, Asdell describes the different patterns of œstrous cycles, and