

The Annual of the British School at Athens

No. 46, 1951: Papers presented to Prof. Alan Wace to commemorate Fifty Years of Work in Archaeology. Pp. vii+252+25 plates. (London: British School at Athens, 1951.) 63s. net.

SEVENTEEN British and thirteen foreign scholars have contributed papers to a volume which appropriately and deservedly commemorates the work of a colleague who during fifty years has laboured in the field of archaeology with outstanding success. The papers, many of them illustrated by plates, cover many different branches of archaeological study and need for reviewer a scholar with knowledge and interests as wide as those of Prof. Alan Wace himself. They range from a survey of preclassical Greece by C. W. Blegen to notes by D. Talbot Rice on post-Byzantine figured silks and R. M. Dawkins on modern Greek folktales. Prof. Dawkins's paper and a few others—Sir Ellis Minns's on a Greek manuscript in the library of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and Miss H. L. Lorimer's on stars and constellations in Homer and Hesiod—fall outside the normal scope of archaeology, but they are as fitting a tribute to the broad interests of the scholar in whose honour they are written as those on archaeological subjects which fill most of the volume. The width and variety of Prof. Wace's learning are recognized in the graceful Greek elegiacs with which D. S. Robertson dedicates the volume, and demonstrated by the impressive bibliography of his published papers and reviews with which Helen Waterhouse concludes it.

The book is well produced and indexed. Thus does the British School at Athens do honour to one who was closely associated with it, first as student then as director, for more than twenty years at the beginning of the century, and who has since then done so much in other spheres to promote archaeological work.

A Short History of Radio-Activity

By Dr. T. W. Chalmers. Pp. 78. (London: *The Engineer*, 1951.) 8s. 6d.

SEVERAL series of articles dealing with chemical and physical developments during the past hundred years have recently been contributed to *The Engineer* by its consultant editor, Dr. T. W. Chalmers. The first series was reprinted and published in book form in 1949 under the title of "Historic Researches: Chapters in the History of Physical and Chemical Discovery". The booklet under review is a similar reprint of the second series of articles and deals with Becquerel's discovery of the radioactivity of uranium; the work of the Curies and Rutherford; alpha-particles, beta- and gamma-rays and the radioactive disintegration series. The fourteen chapters in the volume correspond to the fourteen separate articles which appeared in *The Engineer*. The original double columns and type are retained.

The emphasis is on historical detail, but the subject-matter is treated from a modern point of view. In particular, where modern or more recent research during the past twenty years has produced additional or conflicting evidence, this is briefly mentioned. Artificial disintegration and nuclear research, the subjects of much interesting research and important discoveries during the past decade, are given only passing reference; but, doubtless, these will be dealt with in considerable detail in the third series of articles which, it is promised, will, after appearance

in *The Engineer*, be reprinted in due course as a companion volume to the two already issued.

The booklet can be recommended to those who already possess a background of knowledge of atomic physics and wish to read a refreshing, not very mathematical, but technical and in some places somewhat difficult, account of the discovery of radioactivity and its subsequent development during the Rutherford era.

S. WEINTROUB

Chemical Control of Insects

By Dr. T. F. West, Dr. J. Eliot Hardy and J. H. Ford. (*Frontiers of Science Series*.) Pp. xi+211. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1951.) 15s. net.

A SMALL book such as this, which covers a wide field, must of necessity be lacking in detail; but it provides a useful survey, and a surprising number of the more important facts have been included. Most of the recent text-books on this subject have come from the United States, and there has been a tendency in them to omit references to the work done in other countries. This book may serve to rectify this tendency, since many references are given to British work, though the American and other work is not by any means neglected.

Some statements might be questioned, such as, "In general, however, cultural methods are, at the best, palliatives", and the word "paraffinity", meaning content of paraffin hydrocarbon, would appear to be of doubtful extraction. The advances in the field of insecticides are so rapid that some sections are already out of date; for example, hexaethyl tetraphosphate (HETP) is the only organo-phosphorus compound dealt with, and there is no mention of parathion or the phosphorus-containing systemic insecticides. The chapters on rotenone and pyrethrum are particularly good, and it is a pity, especially in view of Dr. West's own contributions to this subject, that the older versions of the formulae for the pyrethrins and cinerins are first given and that the correction for the modern versions is in the form of an addendum.

Leaving aside these minor criticisms, the book should be very useful both to workers in the field of plant protection and others with a general interest in the subject.

C. POTTER

Spotting British Birds

By S. Vere Benson. Pp. 231+33 plates. (London and New York: Frederick Warne and Co., Ltd., 1951.) 17s. 6d. net.

THIS book is for the amateur, and a beginner at that. It is a volume which will be very helpful to the novice not only with the identification of species but also by advice on what to look for, where to look for it and how to look for it. The remarks about methods of work are sound. The illustrations are from photographs by well-known bird photographers and line drawings by the author. The frontispiece is a colour-photograph of a red-throated diver on her nest and is in vivid hues. The little line-drawings are illustrations in the literal sense of the term and many of them are quite excellent. The subject is treated by district and locality, chapters being devoted to birds in the garden, birds of the woods, by rocky streams, birds of moor and mountain, etc. The book finishes with a classified list, a schedule of bird notes and songs and a comprehensive index. In the descriptions of individual birds will be found many personal observations and experiences which add much to the value of the whole.

FRANCES PITT