

use, recognizing the imperfections of these data but seldom admitting total defeat in his efforts at rational analysis. The writing is interspersed with remarks of refreshing directness and practicality: ". . . if our purpose is to analyse data realistically, we must face the anomalous situations which all too frequently occur rather than pretend that they do not exist. If the information is not precise, it is usually necessary to make some subjective judgments, and the best place to make them is where they have the least influence on the information extracted. If the assumptions turn out to be wildly different from the physical facts, the conclusions will be bad too, but the fault will be with the person who made the assumptions—not with the method of analysis".

Chapters on analysis of variance and on orthogonal polynomials are more conventional in pattern, though still containing ideas that too many authors neglect. The account of multiple comparison procedures is much condensed; some may wish that the author had brought his admirable critical sense to bear on this complex of methods, instead of simply accepting one, even though that one is possibly among the most useful. Later chapters attempt little more than to direct attention to aspects of regression on which further research is needed. Although Prof. Acton disclaims all intention of writing a text for class use, neither students nor their teachers could fail to gain from his book; both the novelty of its content and a style of writing that is vivid, unafraid of the telling metaphor or colloquialism, yet never obscure or verbose, should commend it both for its own sake and as an example.

D. J. FINNEY

THE PARANORMAL: A FRENCH VIEW

Treatise on Parapsychology

Essay on the Scientific Interpretation of the Human Phenomena known as 'Supernatural'. By René Sudre. Translated by C. E. Green. Pp. 412. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960.) 35s. net.

THIS book is an attempt to provide the general reader with a survey of the whole field of psychical research from early times until the present day. It was first published in Paris in 1956, and its plan was clearly to allow other than English-speaking people to know something of what has been done in this field both in Great Britain and the United States, where the general attitude towards parapsychology is not the same as in France, Italy and other countries on the European continent.

M. Sudre is well equipped for the task he has set himself, for he has long been one of the most distinguished exponents of that point of view common in France early in this century but now being superseded. Closely associated for many years with Prof. Richet, Dr. Geley and others connected with the Institut Métapsychique in Paris, he has seen much and his attitude is typical of this group of French inquirers, being keenly critical of any theories savouring of spiritism, while at the same time somewhat credulous as to the reality of the phenomena to be interpreted.

After a brief historical survey the author proceeds to a discussion of the phenomena, linking them with sudden changes in what he calls the 'psychological

personality', an alteration he terms 'prosopopesis'. He then passes to a consideration of telepathy, clairvoyance ('metagnomy') and the relation of a supposed psychic fluid to mesmerism, radiations and telergy. From consideration of this supposed action at a distance he then goes on to discuss 'teleplasty', or the objectivization of forms, and concludes his study by dealing with spontaneous cases, haunts, mysterious behaviour in animals and phenomena claimed by spiritists to be striking indications of survival after death.

M. Sudre's own opinions are anchored to his faith in the reality of the so-called physical phenomena. He believes in materialization, even going so far as to credit the partial dematerialization of mediums' bodies in séances: he believes in psychic photography and has many good things to say about such dubious mediums as Guzik, Kluski, Florence Cook, Reese, Kahn and even Kraus, although he does not give Kraus's name nor let the reader know that this person confessed to his frauds in an unpublished memoir. He even maintains that the phenomena at Borley Rectory were 'incontestably genuine' and this in spite of incontrovertible evidence to the contrary.

Since the author is convinced that certain human beings are endowed with these astonishing faculties, he finds the spiritistic explanation of little value and the evidence for survival, so painfully collected by the British and the Americans, he brushes aside as simply examples of 'perceptive metagnomy' and 'collective psychism', while at the same time he defends the theory that the so-called telepathic apparitions are objective and that the hallucinatory nature of these experiences cannot be maintained.

The book is well produced and translated, although it lacks an index of subjects, and some of the mistakes and misprints in the French edition (for example 'Mac-Aba' for 'MacNab') have been carried over into the English version, where more care in the standardization of references would have improved the book.

E. J. DINGWALL

A CENTURY OF NAVAL ARCHITECTURE

The Institution of Naval Architects, 1860-1960

An Historical Survey of the Institution's Transactions and Activities over 100 Years. By K. C. Barnaby. Pp. 645 + 11 plates. (London: The Royal Institution of Naval Architects, 1960. Published in association with George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.) 105s. net.

IN 1791 a laudable attempt was made to found a 'Society for the Improvement of Naval Architecture', but the venture was premature and therefore short-lived. By 1860, however, sail and steam were in competition, iron was challenging timber as a ship-building material, the mercantile marine was expanding rapidly and an era of swift technical advancement had begun. In these circumstances, the Institution of Naval Architects was brought into being by a small group of founder-members. It has been stated that the history of the Institution is the history of naval architecture, and the Institution, now 100 years old, has been honoured by its new title of the 'Royal Institution of Naval Architects' and has celebrated its centenary by meetings in London and by the production of this excellent and fascinating volume.