

phases the navigator can readily determine the position of his ship.

As a heraldic device for his book, or possibly for radio-telegraphy in general, the author had the happy inspiration to choose the graph of two superposed electric waves of different frequencies with the axis vertical. The effect is not altogether unlike that of the rod of Mercury with its intertwined serpents. There are not many misprints. On p. 54, however, the formula for the capacity of an ellipsoid is still given incorrectly—possibly because no one uses it. The u^2 should be u .

Sir William Ramsay as a Scientist and Man. By Prof. T. C. Chaudhuri. With an Introduction by Prof. P. Neogi. Pp. ix+66. (Calcutta and London: Butterworth and Co., 1918.) Price 1.8 rupees net.

THIS little book opens with a short but appreciative account of Sir William Ramsay's early life, education, and career, special attention being directed to his earnest efforts to impress on the Government the importance of scientific education and research and the necessity for co-operation between the Government and the scientific societies in connection with the war.

After a brief reference to Ramsay's early work on organic chemistry, and to his researches on physical and inorganic chemistry, there is a fuller account of the discovery of the inert gases.

The last three chapters are devoted to radio-activity, modern views on electrons and elements, and the question of the transmutation of elements, with especial reference to Ramsay's researches and views.

Readers will obtain a clear idea of the great part played by Sir William Ramsay in the development of chemistry, but the portrait is not well reproduced, and there are a few inaccuracies.

S. Y.

The Practice of Soft Cheesemaking. Fourth revision. By C. W. Walker-Tisdale and T. R. Robinson. Pp. 106. (London: John North, 1918.) Price 3s. net.

THE revised edition of this small volume appears at an opportune time, as there is a considerable demand for information as to the best means of utilising small quantities of milk. Full working details concerning the manufacture of soft cheeses are given along with chapters upon the production of clean milk, the preparation of cream, and the packing and marketing of the soft cheese. Those unacquainted with the terms used in dairying will find the explanations given in one of the sections of great help, whilst the regulations of the Board of Agriculture will be found useful for reference purposes.

This handbook can be strongly recommended to anybody who proposes to make soft cheese; and whilst some practical instruction is desirable, the directions are given so clearly and concisely that a beginner need not fear to make a start. The authors also give instructions how to make soft cheese from goats' milk.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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Substitutes for Platinum.

L'INFORMATION donnée dans *Metall und Erz*, et qui est reproduite dans votre numéro du 15 août, souffre d'une insuffisance de documentation qu'il me paraît utile de relever.

L'alliage nommé "platinité," employé dans les lampes à incandescence, n'est pas né de la guerre; sa découverte a fait partie de l'ensemble des recherches que j'ai effectuées au Bureau international des Poids et Mesures, à partir de l'année 1896, et pour l'exécution desquelles j'ai reçu l'aide la plus dévouée de la Société de Commentry-Fourchambault et Decazeville. Le platinité est entré dans l'usage courant de certaines usines françaises dès l'année 1900, et s'est répandu peu à peu dans les autres pays. Le détail de cet emploi est donné dans mon ouvrage, "Les applications des aciers au nickel," paru en 1904; je ne crois pas exagérer en disant que l'économie de platine réalisée jusqu'ici grâce au platinité dépasse cinquante millions de francs.

C'est également la Société de Commentry-Fourchambault et Decazeville qui a réalisé pour la première fois, dans ses aciéries d'Imphy, les alliages de nickel à fortes additions de chrome; leurs propriétés sont décrites dans l'ouvrage de M. L. Dumas, "Recherches sur les aciers au nickel à haute teneur" (1902); d'intéressantes applications en ont été faites.

Les métallurgistes américains de leur côté fabriquent, depuis quelques années, sur la même donnée, l'alliage "nichrome," dont l'usage s'est beaucoup répandu pour la chauffe électrique des appareils de laboratoire.

CH.-ED. GUILLAUME.

Pavillon de Breteuil, Sevres (S.-&O.),
10 septembre 1918.

Future Treatment of German Scientific Men.

I HAVE just read Lord Walsingham's excellent letter in NATURE of September 5, and agree with all he says as to what should be our line of action towards the scientific men of Germany. It is impossible we can meet them just as if nothing had happened since 1914. I quote this sentence (how true it is!):—"It is impossible to dissociate the mental attitude of the population of that country, by no means excepting the highly educated and scientific classes, from the world-conquering aspirations of their rulers, or from the barbarous atrocities committed by them in pursuit of that national ideal."

I have not heard of a single letter from the very large number of the above scientific classes in Germany to acquaintances in this country in which such acts have been denounced, nor have I seen any protest or condemnation of German methods coming from the Germans in our midst, of whom there are many who have enjoyed in this country friendship, hospitality, and even protection, such as no British subject could hope to receive in Germany. Any expressions of this kind would be well known, quoted, and notorious. I think I should have heard of them, although I now lead a very retired country life.

Instead of protecting objects of science and art by leaving them intact for the benefit of other nations and the world in general, the German has raised looting and destruction into a devilish art. Soldiers