

valuable information, and will be greatly hampered if he should attempt to enlarge his ideas by reading current biochemical literature.

A large amount of new information has been incorporated into the text; thus glutathione, thyroxine à la Harington, and the irradiation of cholesterol are all included. On the other hand, oxidation-reduction potentials and the bacterial production of acetone and butyl alcohol from starch seem not to be mentioned. A. H.

*Home Fires without Smoke: a Handbook on the Prevention of Domestic Smoke.* Edited by Cyril Elliott and Marion FitzGerald. Pp. xvi+59. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1926.) 3s. 6d. net.

THIS small book is of the popular type setting forth in simple language the existing methods available for preventing domestic smoke. There is a useful foreword by Sir Napier Shaw, and four chapters by different authors. Solid fuels are dealt with by Dr. M. Fishenden, gas by Mr. F. W. Goodenough, electricity by Major F. H. Masters, and the general housewife's problem by Miss Bushell and Miss Gordon. The book should help those desirous of knowing what they can do to eliminate domestic smoke.

Dr. Fishenden is a strong advocate of coke as a fuel for continuous use. Mr. Goodenough gives a very clear review of the possibilities of gas. He directs attention to a point not sufficiently realised when comparing the cost of gas for domestic use with that of solid fuel, that is, the saving of the time of the housewife. The case for electric heating and cooking is naturally supported strongly by Major Masters; he makes a good deal of the efficiency with which electricity is converted into heat and utilised, but no stress is laid on the necessity first to convert coal into electricity, with a heavy loss in the process. In his foreword, Sir Napier Shaw emphasises the scale of the smoke problem, a point often forgotten. Referring to the possibility of substituting gas and soft coke for the large amount of coal burned each year in domestic fires, he directs attention to the problem of disposing of the gas if sufficient coal were treated.

It is stated by Mr. Goodenough (p. 18) that gas "is probably available to something like 95 % of the population of these islands," and, on the same page, that "some forty million tons of coal are still burned in British dwelling-houses every year." These two statements taken together show that the disposal of the gas would be a real difficulty.

The book is not provided with an index, although a fairly complete list of contents is given.

J. S. OWENS.

*Les physiciens hollandais et la méthode expérimentale en France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle.* Par Prof. Pierre Brunet. Pp. ii+153. (Paris: Albert Blanchard, 1926.) 14 francs.

THE legacy of Newton and his contemporaries of the seventeenth century has often been described. This was the century, too, that saw science organised through its societies on rational lines that

at the same time made possible international relationship and collaboration on a scale hitherto impossible. The excellent volume before us deals with the handling of this legacy by the continental physicists of the eighteenth century. It is perhaps insufficiently realised that international relationship has affected the progress of science almost as often as it has the progress of peoples; and the historian of science who is concerned with the development of the broader aspects of his subject is confronted with continual illustrations of this. The French Descartes lived his scientific life in Holland; Huyghens was a Dutch philosopher who worked in France and visited England; 'S Gravesande, of Leyden, was a member of the delegation of 1715 sent to England to congratulate George I. on his accession. Desaguliers was a Dutch philosopher who was educated in England. Here are but a few of the ingredients of international relationships in science. The eighteenth century was notable for the rise of the Dutch experimental school of physicists, and the story of the development of the experimental method in Holland, and of its influence on the mathematical methods of the French school, is dealt with by Prof. Brunet with a sympathy, a penetration, and an understanding that has resulted in a volume of unique value to all students of the history of science.

I. B. H.

*Mongrel Virginians: The Win Tribe.* By A. H. Estabrook and I. E. McDougale. Pp. 205+2 plates. (Baltimore, Md.: Williams and Wilkins Co.; London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1926.) 13s. 6d. net.

THIS study of a group of Indian-white-negro crosses is a sociological and eugenic study of a group which has lived in the same locality in Virginia for more than a hundred years. It originated from a white-Indian union, with later introductions of 'mean-white' and negro strains. The group consists of about five hundred individuals in an area approximately eight miles long by four miles broad. They are mostly living on the land. The original white family, judging from its social and economic position, was probably above the average. The descendants are almost without exception below the low white in average ability.

One hundred and forty-five pages of the book are taken up with a history of the individuals so far as it has been possible to recover it, and this is followed by certain deductions from the data as to fecundity, consanguinity, legitimacy, and the like. As a sociological record this material has value; but as a scientific study it leaves much to be desired. The fact that a large number of the females have been prostitutes, and that white men from outside have resorted, and continue to resort, to the area, introduces an element of uncertainty into the data. Further, it is to be regretted that advantage has not been taken of such a promising opportunity to examine on anthropological and genetic lines such exceptional material for the study of a number of problems relating to heredity, inter-breeding, and racial crossing.