

freed from the control and stretching backwards towards the cabinet curtains. This is the first piece of photographic evidence illustrating this manoeuvre, although its constant occurrence has been suspected for many years. In another photograph Mr. Willi Schneider is shown in the early stages of his 'mediumship' in the process of demonstrating an alleged materialisation attached to a curtain by a safety-pin!

As regards the supposed psychic interruption of infra-red rays as recorded by Dr. Osty, Mr. Price states that, although results were obtained with one piece of apparatus, with another much more sensitive instrument supervised by officials from the Radiovisor (Parent) Co., Ltd., no abnormal changes whatever were registered.

Such are the new facts in the history of the Schneider mediumship. The theories of confederacy and the freeing of one hand from the control have both received further support; and nothing of any importance has been added to indicate that Mr. Rudi Schneider possesses any supernormal faculties whatever.

### Francis Bacon

*Francis Bacon: a Biography.* By Mary Sturt. Pp. xvi + 246 + 12 plates. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1932.) 10s. 6d. net.

IT is many years since we were last given a life of Francis Bacon and in the interval science has come to play an essential part in the very machinery of the State as in its structure and every-day business. We have reached a stage in the world's development when its continued progress demands that the man of science assume those ruling functions which Bacon portrayed him as exercising in the "New Atlantis". While, therefore, the "Novum Organum", the "Advancement of Learning" and the exquisite fragment the "New Atlantis" have a meaning for us which the Victorian age could scarcely have sensed, the general impression of Bacon is derived largely from his own essays, coloured by Macaulay's brilliant but unbalanced polemic.

In the present volume, Miss Sturt endeavours to restore the balance and set the figure of Francis Bacon in a true perspective against the passions and prejudices, the schemings and struggles for power in the midst of which he moved for fully forty years. The story is indifferently told and the biographical material is second-hand, but we see

the essential Bacon as he may have appeared to his contemporaries—cold, always old for his years, ambitious, indefatigably industrious, shrewd and competent; a man whose talents inevitably led him to the highest legal office, yet much more than the mere lawyer, for his interests extended to literature, to philosophy, to the theory of science, to gardening; and whatever he touched he adorned.

The pageantry of Elizabethan and Stuart life against which Miss Sturt sets her subject is apt to distract or confuse the mind, but the book gives a popular version of Spedding's work which, if disdained by the scholar, should be of value to the general reader.

From the point of view of the scientific worker, the space devoted to Bacon as a philosopher of science is all too meagre. A skilful exposition of Bacon's contribution to the philosophy of science should indeed be of value in the present age when every laboratory might be decorated with his texts and every international society turn to him for a motto. Of Bacon as a philosopher Miss Sturt writes with sympathy and insight, but a brief, popular exposition of his views on science as set forth in the "Advancement of Learning", in the "Novum Organum" and in the "New Atlantis", so sadly neglected by most scientific workers, is long overdue. Even the brief outline contained in the present work, however, should serve as a timely reminder of Bacon's place as one of the true prophets of modern science and induce scientific workers to consider anew his attempt to formulate a technique of discovery, and his vision of a State where the man of science is ruler and where knowledge is harnessed to man's needs.

This vision, born of Bacon's closing years of adversity—he died on April 6, 1626—has the human qualities so often disregarded in ideal commonwealths, and reveals Bacon as one who first in the modern world looked full at facts. To him there was no sphere of life to which scientific thought did not penetrate and he saw too that the scientific method did not rob life of its human values. This vision and the balance of his mind suggest indeed that it is perhaps to a combination of the legal mind trained to assess values, and the scientific mind with its capacity to explore the facts, that we must look for the quality of mind demanded of leaders in the modern State, of whom Francis Bacon himself is both forerunner and type.

R. B.