

**Language, Truth and Logic**

By Alfred J. Ayer. Pp. 254. (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1936.) 9s. net.

THIS excellent compendium of the views and doctrines of the new positivism derived from the scientific empiricism of the Vienna circle and an extreme interpretation of the aims of logic, will no doubt rejoice the increasing number of thinkers who have discovered lately that there is no philosophy at all. Carrying to its limits the methodological scepticism of Hume, the new positivism holds that sense-data are the primary elements of science, from which things and forces are its highly probable inferences. But as regards metaphysics, it should be put out of the way at all costs. Indeed, the imaginative and constructive functions of philosophy must give way entirely to its analytic function: thus the only real aim of philosophy is to get the propositions of science clarified and self-consistent.

The enthusiasm with which the author develops these points is evidence of the strength gained in Great Britain by these new theories. It should be pointed out, however, that such aims make the business of philosophy appallingly incomplete and uninspiring. For if sense-perceptions are the elementary data of knowledge, there are also intuitions of values and of general principles which are just as real facts as are the sense-perceptions themselves. The greatness and interest of philosophy consist in trying to harmonize such intuitions with sense-perceptions, and thus to give an adequate and systematized picture of experience as a whole. Jokes and jibes may enliven a discussion; but they cannot command an intelligent assent, especially when they are aimed at time-honoured values which are mainly responsible for the existence of philosophy, and also of logic, as such.

T. G.

**Jouannet :**

Grand-père de la Préhistoire. Par Dr. André Cheyrier. Pp. 101+3 plates. (Publiés sous les auspices de la Société Historique et Archéologique du Périgord.) (Brive: Chastrusse, Praudel et Cie., 1936.) 15 francs.

FRANÇOIS-RENÉ-BENIT VATAR, SEUR DE JOUANNET (1765-1845), a native of Rennes, who settled in Périgord in the early years of the Revolution, is here celebrated as a forgotten pioneer in the study of prehistoric archaeology, and a precursor of Boucher de Perthes. In 1810, while investigating a Gallo-Roman cemetery near Périgueux, Jouannet discovered a neolithic station, which there is reason to believe is the first ever described. As the author shows by dated references, Jouannet was first in the discovery of palæolithic caves and of a Solutrean site, as well as of the association of worked flints with fossilized animal remains. He was also the first to classify antiquity into stone, bronze and iron ages, and to distinguish two phases of the stone age. In experimenting in working flint and in analysing chemically fossil bones and bronze axes he initiated scientific methods of archaeological investigation. His reports, which were submitted to local scientific academies or appeared in the Dordogne Calendar, are here reprinted with an account of his career.

**Eclipses of the Sun**

By Prof. S. A. Mitchell. Fourth edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. xvii+520+81 plates. (New York: Columbia University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1935.) 25s. net.

PROF. MITCHELL'S book on eclipses of the sun is so well known that detailed notice of the new edition is not necessary, the more so because it differs from the third edition only by the addition of a new chapter dealing with the eclipses of 1932 and 1934. A few minor additions have been made, but there has been no general revision. It is odd to read, in a volume bearing the date 1935, a passage such as this: "The author is going to be rash enough to predict that the 1932 corona . . . will show the minimum type of corona". There are a number of other passages which should have been revised. It would perhaps have been better if the results derived from the observations at the recent eclipses had been given as an appendix.

Although the excellent work of Lyot, at the high-altitude station at the Pic du Midi, is for the first time making it possible to study the corona when the sun is not totally eclipsed, it seems probable that astronomers will continue to be dependent upon observations at times of total eclipse for the solution of many solar problems. Prof. Mitchell's treatise remains the best and most complete account of the methods and results of eclipse observations.

**Grundzüge der Vererbungslehre**

Von Prof. Dr. Friedrich Alverdes. Pp. viii+143. (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1935.) 5 gold marks.

THIS is a simply stated introduction to Mendelian inheritance with a biological background. Early chapters deal with cell and nucleus, egg and sperm, fertilization, genotype and phenotype, race and species: "Unter einer Rasse verstehen wir eine Gruppe von Individuen (Pflanzen, Tieren oder Menschen), die in ihren wesentlichen Erbanlagen übereinstimmen". The Mendelian laws are expounded, as well as sex determination, recombinations, linkage, and the basis of these phenomena in the chromosomes. The last two chapters give a short survey of heredity in man. The account is clear but occasionally oversimplified, as in the statement that there are two pairs of factors for eye-colour and three for skin-colour in man.

**The Psychology of Human Behavior**

By Prof. J. H. Griffiths. Pp. xxi+515. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1936.) 12s. 6d. net.

THE author of "The Psychology of Human Behavior" is to be congratulated on the production of an extremely readable and well-constructed elementary text-book of psychology. The addition of questions for discussion at the end of each chapter is a most helpful feature and adds enormously to the value of the book from a teaching point of view. The supplementary readings at the end also of each chapter will prove a great help to those who wish to pursue their study of psychology further. This is one of the very best books on the subject.