

### The Electronic Engineering Master Index

A Subject Index to the Contents of Electronic and Allied Engineering Publications printed throughout the World from January through December 1949. Pp. xvi+296. (New York: Electronics Research Publishing Co., Inc., 1950.) 17.50 dollars.

THE 1949 edition of the "Electronic Engineering Master Index" is the fourth volume in a series covering the electronic and allied literature published throughout the world since 1925; it deals with material from nearly four hundred scientific magazines, journals and proceedings. The titles of all the articles appearing in foreign languages have been translated into English. In addition, a list is given of all the patents in this field granted in the United States during the period concerned, and there is a bibliography of books on subjects related to electronic engineering. The cumulative cross-index at the end of the book serves as a guide to the present volume as well as to all of the previous editions.

In view of the very large number of articles on electronic matters which appear yearly, this index will doubtless be found useful by many of those engaged in research and development work on such matters.

J. A. S.

### Finding Out about Atomic Energy

By J. L. Michiels. (Thrift Books, No. 6.) Pp. 124. (London: Watts and Co., Ltd., 1951.) 1s. net.

### A Signpost to Mathematics

By Arthur Read. (Thrift Books, No. 8.) Pp. 123. (London: Watts and Co., Ltd., 1951.) 1s. net.

THREE of the first four volumes in the Thrift Books series (see *Nature*, 167, 1004; 1951) dealt with biological topics. The next four, which have recently been issued, have a rather wider appeal. No. 5 deals with English literature, No. 7 with the history of the past three decades, No. 6 with atomic energy, and No. 8 with mathematics.

The author of "Finding Out about Atomic Energy", Dr. J. L. Michiels, is a nuclear physicist with considerable experience not only of the scientific aspect of his subject but also as a writer, and, as honorary general secretary of the Atomic Scientists Association, of the social, moral and political implications of atomic energy. Dr. Michiels concentrates upon giving the relevant scientific information which it is necessary for the non-scientist to have in order to appreciate the various political and social problems raised by the discovery of atomic fission. The historical development of the subject and details of experimental techniques are omitted. Nuclear reactors and nuclear power, radioisotopes, the fission bomb and the hydrogen bomb are discussed in some detail. The proper technical terms are introduced and used after clear definition, and the reader is led, somewhat rapidly perhaps, to understand what happens when nuclear energy is liberated and what the subsequent consequences may be. Possibly the lasting effects of nuclear radiation on human beings may be, with present knowledge, exaggerated, but they certainly should not be under-estimated. This is a good, semi-technical book for those who read to learn.

Mathematics in some form or another is used by almost everyone; but, nevertheless, the mathematician is still regarded by a large number of people with great respect and very often with awe, particularly so when the mathematician claims to be doing research in mathematics. It is to this awe-stricken section of the community that Mr. A. Read,

lecturer in mathematics in the University of St. Andrews, addresses his remarks in "A Signpost to Mathematics". Whether or not he succeeds in making clear what prompts the mathematician to think of, and to juggle with, more and more abstruse problems is somewhat doubtful; but he has certainly written an interesting, stimulating and very readable book.

S. WEINTROUB

### Principles of Weed Control

By Prof. Gilbert H. Ahlgren, Prof. Glenn C. Klingman and Dale E. Wolf. Pp. vii+368. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1951.) 44s. net.

THIS book does for agriculture in the United States what G. H. Bates did for Great Britain in his book "Weed Control" (London: E. and F. N. Spon, Ltd., 1951; for *Farmer and Stockbreeder*). A brief historical summary is followed by an outline of the theoretical basis of weed control. The chapters on chemicals used in weed control demand a considerable knowledge of organic chemistry and plant physiology, but, granted this, the descriptions of chemical composition and properties of weed-killers are clear and are related to the uses of the substances and the precautions necessary in handling them.

The authors consider 2,4-D (2:4 di-chloro-phenoxy-acetic acid) to be the most useful herbicide available at present, and the properties, uses and methods of application of the substance in its various forms are dealt with at length. Nevertheless, a balance is preserved between traditional and modern methods of weed control, and throughout the book the authors emphasize that weed-killers should supplement, but not supplant, weed control by good management. The problems of weed control in different types of crop and in special habitats such as highway verges, timber yards and irrigation channels are considered, and the destruction of some of the more pernicious weeds is discussed in relation to their biology.

The principles of weed control are of universal application; but the practical details given here are for conditions in various parts of the United States. Weeds are referred to in the text by their American common names, but a list with the corresponding scientific names is given in the appendix. The references listed at the end of each chapter are almost entirely American, and this reduces the value of the book to readers outside the United States.

J. M. THURSTON

### An Introduction to Psychology

By Gardner Murphy, with the assistance of Herbert Spohn. Pp. xix+583. (New York: Harper and Brothers; London: Hamish Hamilton, Ltd., 1951.) 4.25 dollars.

PROF. G. MURPHY has now provided the student of psychology with a new introductory text-book which differs from the usual kind in that it sets forth and interprets the facts in the context of the life of a person. In adopting this expository device, he follows in the 'personalistic' tradition of William Stern and G. W. Allport. The student is likely to find that such a treatment facilitates the assimilation of a wide range of material which might otherwise seem to lack coherence, and at the same time it brings the subject-matter of psychology near his own experience. Prof. Murphy knows how to present complex topics with a light touch, and his book is assured of the popularity won by his earlier text-books.