

by an alphabetical list of the same museums arranged according to a symbol, for example, 'AkHi' is the Alaska Historical Library and Museum. Books of a general character head the next list and this is followed by details of the literature on the biological and earth sciences arranged according to subject-matter. References to both authors and subjects are included in the index.

Such a book will be of service to many and especially to those engaged in research for it will facilitate the use of authoritative information sources. It will also give much welcome publicity to the museums concerned and bring to the notice of teachers, students and librarians the wealth and variety of museum publications.

F. S. WALLIS

Rembrandt and Spinoza

By Dr. Leo Balet. Pp. x+222+4 plates. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962.) 4.50 dollars.

THE author of this book is an art historian, born in Rotterdam, who has had wide experience in Europe, culminating in the tenure of an official position in Bremen. His subject is seventeenth-century Holland, with its vehement tensions, political, ecclesiastical and artistic. Much of what he has to say is of interest, and well documented. Unluckily, however, his enthusiasm leads him to write a form of English which, in parts, is almost unintelligible, and made still worse by numerous, and most inappropriate, colloquialisms. More serious is an obsession for polemics, enough to weary the patient reader.

The central theme is the battle for freedom, both intellectual and artistic; hence the two great figures, Rembrandt and Spinoza. Neither was prepared to come to terms with society as he found it. Rembrandt exposed human character with a ruthlessness almost unrivalled, whereas Spinoza carried the quest for truth to a degree of refinement seldom, if ever, equalled. There is always a certain heroism about Jewish philosophy, and Spinoza's thought—atheistic as it was—is in line from Avicenna via Maimonides. Where the two great men of the Netherlands resemble one another is in the totality of their message. To dissect the genius of either of them is to destroy it. The drawings of Rembrandt illustrate this better than the well-known pictures which Dr. Balet describes.

If one could penetrate beneath the tiresome style, there is substantial erudition to be discerned, especially the attempt at the end to see the essentials in terms of the algebra of relations. Here, a capital Y seems to be missing, which makes the demonstration not too clear.

F. I. G. RAWLINS

Scientific Russian

By Dr. A. Holt. Pp. xv+195. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1962.) 36s. net.

TO begin with outward appearance, this book is clearly printed on good quality glossy paper, an important fact for the novice meeting the strange Cyrillic alphabet for the first time. The discreet use of dark and light types is also an aid to comprehension and to memorizing.

Part 1 (pp. 1-78) contains 22 lessons, dealing systematically with the main features of Russian grammar, each lesson being illustrated by a passage from an appropriate scientific text. The grammatical survey begins with nouns and adjectives and their

declensions and ends with verbs with their aspects, tenses, participles and gerunds. The illustrative Russian passages for reading and translation are all taken from works on chemistry and they have been chosen with care and understanding.

Part 2 (pp. 79-195) contains short notes on transliteration and Russian chemical nomenclature, a concise summary of grammar, 37 translation exercises drawn from the fields of chemistry, physics and biology and finally a glossary and index.

This book undoubtedly has good qualities but it invites criticism by the very fact of its aiming to teach 'scientific' Russian. Much of this 'scientific' Russian is in fact an international language which every scientist, with the ability to transliterate from the Cyrillic alphabet, could, in fact, guess. The most useful approach for a scientist wishing to read or translate Russian scientific literature will always be an elementary knowledge of the Russian language and access to a good dictionary of scientific terms—there are dictionaries for each branch of science.

Accepting the fact that there is a public which demands text-books of scientific Russian, this one is a good one and to be recommended especially for chemists, for whom it is primarily compiled.

S. I. TOMKIEFF

Essays on Probability and Statistics

By Prof. M. S. Bartlett. Pp. viii+127. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd.; New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962.) 21s. net.

THIS welcome little volume contains eight survey articles and occasional lectures written by Prof. Maurice Bartlett during the period 1949-56. Some of these have previously been published in the records of symposia and the like, but to most readers not on the author's mailing list the material collected here will be new. The author considers that they represent collectively a consistent and comprehensive view of statistical theory, whatever the field in which it may be applied. As such they are of special value because of the author's unique preoccupation with both the dogmas of statistical inference and the applications of probability theory (and especially stochastic processes) in biological and physical science.

The first article (a reprint from *Dialectica*) is a review of the foundations of probability theory and is remarkable for a clear and early statement of the true role in the frequency theory of the strong law of large numbers (forcing on us an interpretation for probabilities $p < 1$, once the interpretation of $p = 1$ has been admitted). The second article (a talk to the Manchester Statistical Society) has some historical interest for its account of the controversy in 1944 when the Royal Statistical Society was criticized in some quarters for its (successful) attempt to institute a diploma examination. The third article, on factor analysis in psychology, is from an Uppsala symposium.

Two articles on stochastic processes follow: one an extremely readable general survey and the other, more technical, concerned with the difficult estimation and testing problems in this area. The book concludes with an address delivered before the third Soviet Mathematical Congress in Moscow, with a study of irreversibility from the statistical point of view, and with a brief comment on the present controversies surrounding the subject of statistical inference.

DAVID KENDALL