book on cybernetics quoted with its short title and French publisher on page nineteen, and then with its full title and American publisher (whose name is mis-spelt) on page twenty-eight. Defects such as these might be unimportant were it not for the generality with which the author treats his subject, a generality which, despite Mr Trevett's translation, appears to English eyes as vagueness and prolixity. As a result, the argument is not easy to follow. This is a pity, because Père Dubarle finds the origins of modern science in 'a great and almost painful insistence on the integrity of thought when face to face with things' (p. 71), and he writes with a keen appreciation of the dignity of the scientist's vocation and of the benefits which technical progress can bring.

MICHAEL HOSKIN

THE LIFE OF ARTHUR STANLEY EDDINGTON. By A. Vibert Douglas. (Nelson; 25s.)

This is a quietly efficient book such as Eddington would have liked. Men of his type are not easy to portray in biographies for the general public. His outward life was thoroughly uneventful: like so many other dons he found his relaxation in walking, cycling, and climbing, had one close friend, and was liked by all he met. He lived for ideas, and ideas in mathematical astronomy are not easy to express in non-technical language. Dr Vibert Douglas gives a good outline of the publications which made Eddington's name as a great scientist, but he does not possess Eddington's sometimes misleading power of popularization, and untrained readers will find his book fairly heavy going. But it is an important contribution to the task of assessing this controversial and rather enigmatic figure, and it is good to know the quiet background to the often heated discussion of his work that still continues twelve years after his death.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

AN APPROACH TO MODERN PHYSICS. By E. N. da C. Andrade. (Bell; 25s.)

This is a revised version of the author's *Mechanism and Nature* (1930) taking into account most of the fundamental advances in physics that have been made since then. Its scope includes practically the whole of physics from the classical divisions of heat, light, sound, electricity and magnetism through the quantum theory and the atom to the nucleus and cosmic rays. The fundamental ideas of each are described lucidly and non-mathematically, often with helpful analogies. Many of these ideas, however, are better explained by diagrams than by

words, and there are only seven of these in the whole book, supplemented by a few excellent photographs.

Probably the people who will find it most useful are science sixth-formers and undergraduates; it is doubtful if anyone without scientific training would have the fortitude to persevere to the end. This is a pity, for Professor Andrade has many useful things to say, but in his laudable effort to mention as much as possible he has little space left for the personal reminiscences of distinguished scientists and accounts of how they made their discoveries which can do so much to make a book of this sort more readable and enlightening. The facts are all there, selected and arranged in a masterly way, but somehow the whole story never comes to life. This of course is not easy to bring about, but it can be done. It is so important that science should be known as a thrilling adventure of the human mind in search of knowledge, and not as a sort of sausage machine for churning out more and more information.

The final chapter is devoted to a few brief, sensible reflections on the philosophy of science. Sience is finding out about things; and while Professor Andrade recognizes the limitations on measurement in the nuclear domain, he does not introduce those quite unnecessary causeless events that so often find their way into books of this sort and rightly infuriate philosophers and make science seem a lot more mysterious than it really is.

PETER E. HODGSON

A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY SCHOOL BOOK. Edited by William Nelson. (Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press; 25s.)

This work has hitherto only existed in a single British Museum manuscript, here edited for the first time. It makes an interesting addition to the large collection of English 'vulgars', schoolmasters' handbooks for teaching Latin by the so-called direct method, which we already possess, though the present edition is robbed of much of its interest because we are only given the English versions, with a few of the corresponding Latin exemplars as an appendix, so that this book does not show us much about its author's Latinity. What there is confirms what we already know from such scholarly editions as that by Miss Beatrice White of the Stanbridge and Whittinton vulgars, that Tudor teachers were much concerned to flog into their pupils a Latin purged of every taint of the Middle Ages: 'thanks be to God' becomes 'alti throno sit gratia', for example. Is there any surviving disputation on such matters between a pedagogue and a parish priest? One would dearly like to read it. The editor identifies the author and his school with Oxford, though this has already been questioned: but