

*Boy's Own Arithmetic.* By Raymond Weeks. Illustrations by Usabal. New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1924. xvi+188 pp.

If Professor Weeks is to be criticised for writing this work, the criticism should first take the form of condemnation for cruelty to cataloguers. To decide under what category it is to be placed may well put any expert on the rack. Is it intended as a piece of belles lettres? Then it should rank among the gems of humorous writing of our generation. Ought it to have place among arithmetics? Then it should be kept from every boy who has lessons to study, for he will study nothing else until he has finished this. Is the work intended as a contribution to educational theory and practice? Then it should be starred as one of the best works on pedagogy of our time, —although the pedagogues will be compelled, as a matter of self-preservation, to decline to admit this in public, much as they will enjoy its pleasant sting in private. Shall it be looked upon as a mathematical treatise, worthy of review in a periodical of scientific standing? Well, probably not; but it is safe to say that it will be read with delight, from cover to cover, by every mathematician who has the good fortune to keep it from his children long enough to do it. After he has finished laughing over the contents, if he ever does, it will probably dawn upon him that there is a moral to the tale, and that it refers to him.

DAVID EUGENE SMITH

*Scientific Papers.* By S. B. McLaren. Cambridge, University Press, 1925. viii+112 pp.

The scientific researches of the late Samuel Bruce McLaren extended into several branches of mathematical physics and it is very useful to have, in this volume, concise and well thought out presentations of his results by experts who have acted under the guidance of Sir Joseph Larmor. The book is not simply a collection of reprints of papers published in journals. Instead, selections have been made from these papers and the most valuable parts have been carefully edited and completed with the aid of some unpublished manuscripts.

Section I, edited by Dr. J. W. Nicholson, is devoted to McLaren's work on radiation and his theory of gravity, most of which was included in an Adams Prize Essay. This section shows considerable analytical power and originality. Section II, edited by Professor H. R. Hassé, deals with electromagnetism and, in particular, gives an account of a theory of the magneton which has proved inspiring to more than one writer. Section III, edited by Professor T. H. Havelock, is less revolutionary in its ideas but here some difficult analytical problems are skilfully solved and the work represents a useful contribution to the theory of the propagation of an arbitrary disturbance in a dispersive medium. The book also contains a fine appreciation of McLaren by Professor Hugh Walker, an obituary notice by Dr. Nicholson, and a handsome portrait. It is a graceful tribute to a man who heroically gave up his life that others might live.

H. BATEMAN