

book, as we have already reviewed the first editions in *NATURE*, and also, on two occasions, Prof. Fleming's more comprehensive treatise on wireless telegraphy. We ventured then to predict that both these books would become standard manuals on the subject, and our forecast is shown to have been correct by the recurring necessity for the issue of new editions. There is not much difference to be noted between the present volume and its forerunners, but certain additions have been made to bring it up to date.

No doubt when the present war is over much valuable experience which has been gained of the use of wireless telegraphy both in sea and land operations will, by degrees, become public, but one does not look for such information at present. It is to be hoped that this experience may be turned, in due course, to more peaceful ends, in which case one may look forward to a fresh edition of Prof. Fleming's book. In the meantime, it remains the best introduction to the subject for all students, and a sufficient manual for those who intend to take up the practical application, but who do not wish to go too deeply into the theoretical and mathematical side. The book is well and amply illustrated, though some of the process-blocks are not so clear as could be wished.

M. S.

An Inquiry into the Statistics of Deaths from Violence and Unnatural Causes in the United Kingdom. By Dr. W. A. Brend. Pp. v+80. (London: C. Griffin and Co., Ltd., 1915.) Price 3s. 6d. net.

THE object of this book (a thesis approved for the M.D. degree, University of London) is to examine the official statistics relating to deaths from violence and unnatural causes in the United Kingdom, to investigate their usefulness and the accuracy of the returns, and to suggest modifications in the present system.

Several different authorities (Home Office, Board of Trade, Local Government Board, Registrar-General, etc.) compile the returns, but the different reports do not seem to be co-ordinated. Thus during the same period the deaths from alcoholism in Liverpool are given by the Registrar-General as 36, by the Home Office as 113; the Local Government Board records deaths from "starvation and privation" as 94, the Home Office ("want and exposure") as 231, and the Registrar-General ("cold and starvation") as 146, and these instances might be multiplied!

More accurate returns are needed in many instances. The importance, for example of trustworthy information concerning infant mortality from overlying and deaths of children from burning is obvious.

Dr. Brend's analysis shows that there are classes of deaths of which our knowledge, both statistical and otherwise, is seriously inadequate. At present, for example, the records of coroners' courts are practically inaccessible: the suggestion is made that all the records should be sent to a central office where they could be further analysed.

NO. 2439, VOL. 97]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts intended for this or any other part of *NATURE*. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]

The Universities, the Technical Colleges, and the Army.

A COUPLE of months ago it occurred to myself and the staff of the Heriot-Watt College that the first-year engineering course for the diploma would—with a few modifications—form an excellent preliminary scientific training for boys entering the Army who might hope for promotion to an officer cadet unit, the course at the same time still to remain an integral part of our diploma course.

The suggestion did not meet with local approval, but while thinking out the details, I also brought the matter before the Board of Education and the Association of Technical Institutions, where, I gather, it is meeting with some attention. I also found that similar suggestions had already been made by Mr. Darling in *NATURE* (January 20 and February 10) in some communications which I had missed, and also that a similar scheme was being carried out in certain English public schools.

Among those to whom I wrote was the Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University, and I have just heard from him that in his hands the whole scheme has taken a wider aspect, the idea being to devise courses of training which, while valuable as a preliminary scientific training for boys entering the Army, will at the same time be allowed to qualify as part of the course required for a university degree. It is on account of this wider aspect given to the matter by Principal Sadler that I venture to write to you on the matter.

The idea, which I believe originated with Lord Haldane, of drawing upon the universities for officers in the Army, and the establishment of the O.T.C., is no doubt a sound one. At the same time, at that stage the conception seemed to be to allow a student to go on with his ordinary university course while giving him in his spare time a certain amount of military training on the lines required by an officer.

It seems to me that among us we have evolved a much sounder conception of the duties of the university towards the Army, and that is, to give the boys such a scientific training as will be of value to them when they go to their special military training. There can be no harm in giving them a little drill, but the main object of the universities and the technical colleges should be to devote the time at their disposal principally to laying the foundations of the scientific knowledge of which modern warfare is an application.

A. P. LAURIE,

Principal.

Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, July 18.

The late M. Joseph Déchelette.

OF the many scientific men who have fallen in the present war none calls forth a deeper note of regret than the eminent and promising French archaeologist and anthropologist, M. Joseph Déchelette, who was killed while leading his company to attack on October 4, 1914. A committee, embracing all the leading archaeologists and anthropologists of France, has been formed "de conserver son effigie et de glorifier sa mémoire." The committee has secured the co-operation of the sculptor, M. Henry Nocq, to prepare a portrait plaque with, on the reverse: "L'épée moderne