

Properties of Matter, by F. C. Champion and N. Davy. Third edition, Philosophical Library, New York, 1959. xvi + 334 pages. \$10.00.

The distinguishing feature of this book lies in the thorough treatment of an assortment of topics which are only mentioned or even omitted from the usual general physics texts. The danger always inherent in such a selection is that in its random specialization it does not cater for any one class of scientist. However in this case, approximately one-third of the chapters are devoted to topics which can be construed as being of direct interest to geophysicists.

Among these might be mentioned the sections on gravity, elasticity, compressibility of solids and liquids, seismic waves, and statistics of errors in measurement. This latter chapter, and those on units and dimensions, capillarity, kinetic theory, osmotic pressure, diffusion and viscosity, as a group have less of a specialist interest, and contain many informative paragraphs not suggested by the book's title. A case in point is the comprehensive section on the production and measurement of high vacua. The chapter on units and dimensions is brief, but provides several interesting examples on the method of dimensional analysis.

The most widespread use for the work might well be as a useful supplement to reading provided by general texts for advanced students of physics.

Peter Schwerdtfeger, McGill University

Eléments d'histoire des mathématiques, by N. Bourbaki. Collection "Histoire de la pensée - IV" Hermann, Paris 1960. 276 pages. 18 NF.

Mathematicians will be pleased to have the historical notes of the "Eléments de Mathématique" collected in a small volume. In an accompanying circular the publisher introduces the work as follows. "Les données les plus importantes de l'histoire des mathématiques révélées par le plus grand mathématicien contemporain. Ces réflexions, qui n'ont pas la prétention de constituer une histoire complète des mathématiques, offrent aux mathématiciens et aux historiens des sciences un tableau remarquablement clair de l'histoire et du développement d'une partie des mathématiques. Le public cultivé y verra comment, depuis les Babyloniens jusqu'à nos jours, se sont affermies et amplifiées les notions de nombre, d'espace, de relations et de structure.

The book contains a really penetrating study of the historical development of a number of mathematical disciplines; not a "History of Mathematics", rather a collection of essays, in each of which "on retrace