SHORTER NOTICES

Naturwissenschaften, Mathematik und Medizin im klassischen Altertum.
By J. L. Heiberg. (Aus Natur und Geisteswelt, No. 370.) Leipzig

Mathematics and Physical Science in Classical Antiquity. By J. L.
Heiberg. Translated from the German by D. C. Macgregor. New York,

This little volume from the well known series Aus Natur und Geistes­
welt (No. 370) maintains the high standards set by the previous volumes
of the series. The name of the distinguished author is sufficient guar­
antee that the contents is authoritative. It is also, however, of peculiar
interest, in spite of its brevity and avowedly popular character. The
readers of the Bulletin are doubtless all more or less familiar with the
main features of ancient Greek mathematics; they are probably acquainted
also with the principal results Greek astronomy and the physical spec­
ulations of the great philosophers of classical antiquity. It may be
doubted, however, if many have ever read a connected account of
scientific development as a whole during this period. The reviewer at
any rate admits joyfully that much of the contents of this monograph
(it is little more than that) was a revelation to him and a very in­
teresting and illuminating one. This must be the justification, if any
is needed, for giving space to such an elementary popular little book.

The chapter headings (taken from the English translation) are as
follows: I. Ionian Natural Philosophy; II. The Pythagoreans; III. Medi­
cine in the Fifth Century. Hippocrates; IV. Mathematics in the Fifth
Century; V. Plato. The Academy; VI. Aristotle. The Lyceum; VII. The
Alexandrians; VIII. The Epigoni; IX. The Romans; X. Greek Scientific
Literature of the Empire. Byzantium. It will be noted that the arrange­
ment is chronological rather than topical, so that the reader is given
for each period a general view of scientific thought at that time. One
of the omissions that seems a bit strange is the fact that no mention
whatever is made of Lucretius in the chapter on the Romans or any­
where else for that matter.

The English translation is the second volume of the series Chapters
in the History of Science, which is appearing under the general editor­
ship of Professor Charles Singer. The translation is free rather than
literal, and is throughout readable. The reviewer personally dislikes
the word “researcher” which appears at frequent intervals, “goings-on”
would sound more familiar to American ears than “on-goings” and the
“propugnacula” of exact research are a little terrifying, but the original
verdict stands: The translation is well done and may be recommended
to any one who desires to spend a couple of hours in pleasant reading
of interesting material.

J. W. YOUNG