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tion, mass suicide, unprecedented, catastrophe, etc.; and in the optimism inherent in the profound reliance (on the part of some of the authors) on "the arbitrament of reason," and phrases such as "no doubt plans are being made" and "no reason to suppose that it cannot be solved"; and in the courageous extrapolation "Until . . . has been solved . . . any forecast . . . would be little more than guesswork. In spite of this, it is perhaps worthwhile . . ." on which the next three pages (and an organization chart in the Appendix) follow.

The remarks above are not intended harshly for, indeed, these are precisely the reasons why this book might be considered valuable. No one who has consistently followed the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists will find here any surprising new facts or conclusions; but he will find, in about 120 pages and between two covers, a picture of the first two years' work on the international control of atomic energy. More usefully, for someone new in the field, who may not have a complete file of the Bulletin available nor the patience to go through it if he had, this book along, say, with *One World or None*, the Acheson-Lilienthal Report, and (once thus prepared) Blackett's book, would provide a rather straightforward and satisfactory reading course on the subject of the international control of atomic energy.

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Atmosphere

THE ATMOSPHERES OF THE EARTH AND PLANETS, edited by Gerard P. Kniper. 366 pp. University of Chicago Press, 1949. \$7.50.

Appearing at a time when important advances may be expected in our understanding of the earth's atmosphere, of the solar system, and of cosmogony, this collection of fourteen authoritative monographs is well timed. By the liberal use of references, and aided by Professor Kniper's well written introduction, the contributors have presented an exhaustive summary of present knowledge of the circulation of the earth's lower atmosphere, the study of the upper atmosphere by means of rockets, meteor observations and spectroscopy, and the latest observations of the planets. Theoretical contributions serve to consolidate this wide variety of material under three broad topics: a description of the earth's atmosphere, its origin, and a description of the atmospheres of other planets. The book is especially valuable for its quantity of data and for the numerous research problems it poses in the fields of meteorology, physics, astronomy, chemistry, and geology.

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Salvaged

THE RESCUE OF SCIENCE AND LEARNING. The Story of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars. By Stephen Duggan and Betty Drury. 214 pp. The Macmillan Company, New York City, 1948. \$3.00.

This is the moving story of one of the heroic and inspiring efforts of our time—the rescue of scientists and

scholars from the Hitler hell. It is an inside story, for Dr. Duggan and Miss Drury are, respectively, the chairman and executive secretary of the emergency committee that organized the work of salvaging some of Europe's best brains from the Nazi-Fascist disaster.

The authors start out by recalling that nearly five hundred years ago, in 1453 when Constantinople fell to the Turks, there was another great displacement of scholars who moved West and spread culture and science. Those Byzantine refugees were, to an enormous extent, responsible for the Renaissance in Italy and in Western Europe in general. The Hitler barbarism, the book reminds us, was "far worse than the Turkish," but the men of intellect it expelled were not inferior to their medieval predecessors.

This later terror against the human mind began in 1933 and soon spread to fascist powers other than Germany. At first the victims were mostly Jews, but others soon fell under the Nazi-Fascist axe. Altogether six hundred and thirteen scholars and scientists were saved and brought to this country, and of this number somewhat less than half were Jews. But, as the authors point out, although the financial support of the committee came almost exclusively from Jewish sources, "it never made any distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish scholars" in its aid.

The scholars and scientists were brought over, given assistance, and placed either in institutions of learning or in private industry. Although they were faced with the linguistic and other obstacles to be expected under the circumstances, most of them became rather quickly an accepted part of the American intellectual community. The group represented most of the intellectual disciplines, including a high percentage of physical and social scientists. For the United States these scholars were, of course, pure gain. Their contribution to the atomic energy project, for example, was incalculable.

One hopes that the world will be spared another catastrophe like that of 1933-45, but if it should befall civilization, perhaps the first steps to be taken should be to rescue the best scientific brains. They are more precious, for mankind as a whole, than territories or physical possessions. This is the lesson taught by the admirable book which Dr. Duggan and Miss Drury have written.

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Correction

The Technology Press at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was jointly responsible with John Wiley & Sons for publication of Norbert Wiener's "Cybernetics." We regret having failed to mention the Technology Press in heading John von Neumann's review in the May issue of *Physics Today*.

Books Received

EINFÜHRUNG IN DIE ATOMPHYSIK. By Wolfgang Finkelburg. 339 pp. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1948. DM 28.

ELEMENTS OF ELECTROMAGNET WAVES. By Lawrence A. Ware. 203 pp. Pitman Publishing Corporation, New York, 1949.