Reviews


The author's extensive work on sun-spot periodicities has led him to develop many useful short-cuts in computing. In these tables he gives the coefficients in thirteen Fourier series from nine to twenty-one terms in length. The tables are intended for "exploring" work and hence are given to two places only. Ample illustration is given of their use, with criteria for interpreting the value of any resultant periodicity. The compilation should encourage the use of harmonic analysis by anyone who is searching for possible periodicities in long series of observations.

O. J. L.


This little volume of the "Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature" presents a very acceptable résumé of the present state of our knowledge of the sun. The inspiring introduction sets forth in a telling way the part which the sun has played in the actual march of science. "Very many of our theories radiate from it and find in it, as in a great physical laboratory, their first and most striking application." Then follow chapters on "Radiation," "The Sun as the Mechanical Center of the World," "The Spectroscope," "The Sun's Surface," "Periodicity," "Eclipses," and "The Sun as a Star," which pretty well cover the whole of what assiduous research has revealed. Inaccuracies are few indeed; there are no serious omissions; it is well balanced, and written in attractive, even brilliant, style. A fair sample of nicely turned phrase is the characterization of the determination of stellar parallax, as "a debt of honor, which since the acceptance of Copernicus's theory, science is called upon to pay."

The volume might very fittingly be used in teaching, to elaborate somewhat the chapters on the sun found in the usual textbook.

P. F.