

BOOK REVIEWS

TISSUE CULTURE. By E. N. Willmer. London, Methuen & Co., Ltd.; New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1954. xx, 175 pp. \$2.25.

Dr. Willmer's second edition of this little book fulfills his stated purpose "... to correlate some of the numerous fragments of scattered data which have so far been obtained and to orientate them in such a way as to illustrate the more fundamental contributions which the method has made to physiological knowledge, and to show the manner in which a change of outlook has already been brought about, or in which such a change is likely to be necessary in the future."

The monograph makes no pretense of being either a cookbook or a compendium of all facets of tissue culture, although the basic principles are included and are well documented by an extensive and discriminate bibliography. Rather does it emphasize certain advantages when the method is used as a tool in the investigation of certain biological problems instead of as an end in itself. Dr. Willmer has understandably emphasized the dynamic character of cells and the dependence of their functional and morphological attributes on their immediate environment. In so doing, he has accented the need for proper biological tests to determine the nature of cells in culture rather than the reliance on form alone.

The book is well printed, its line drawings are few and simple but illustrative, and the photographs are adequate. The inclusion of a glossary of biological and chemical terms in a book designed for biologists seems unnecessary but it may prove of value to some readers.

If one wishes to learn how to do tissue culture, this book is inadequate; it is excellent if one desires to know some of the things that can be done using the method.

WILHELM S. ALBRINK

THOMAS YOUNG, NATURAL PHILOSOPHER. By Alex Wood and F. Oldham. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1954. 350 pp. Illus. \$6.00.

Thomas Young's genius made him eminent in every field of scientific endeavor. The man had as many facets as a diamond, and indeed, was the centerpiece in the British scientific crown, though unappreciated in this light by many of his contemporaries. A list of his investigations and accomplishments would fill an encyclopedia, as in fact they did, particularly the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, to which he was a contributor.

The transition from natural philosophy to physics took place when natural philosophers forsook the comforts of the drawing room and set up their lathes. Thomas Young was one such philosopher. He had the happy faculty of being drawn into controversial scientific issues, analyzing them mathematically and building instruments to prove his findings. He made powerful friends and powerful enemies. Because of his clear insight into the problems he encountered and his modern method of presenting his facts, he was maligned, misunderstood, and deliberately misquoted. Only as a physician and as a result of his love for "the more exact sciences" did he play a