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... Off the Beat

light was the same in all unaccelerated frames of reference gave classical electrodynamics something of a nasty problem, but Professor Einstein fixed that with his special relativity. Quantum processes, which are the distinguishing mark of modern physics, were found, but they seemed to be regarded as a curiosity. It was when physicists had to face the structure of the atom, and find a theory for it, that it was widely understood there was trouble. Classical physics failed egregiously. Classical electrodynamics, even as amended by Einstein, predicted the swift collapse of the atom, a disaster that manifestly did not happen. Physicists reached for quantum processes to hold the atom up, and the revolution was on.

Physics may be over. Or it may be in the doldrums waiting for a new storm to blow up. We may already have seen the first catspaw winds of that new storm, but we may not know it yet. We could be in for 20 years of complacency in physics, during which all the bright young minds go into chemistry. Or a hurricane could strike next week.

— Dietrick E. Thomsen

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BIOGEOCHEMISTRY OF AMINO ACIDS

— P. E. Hare et al., Eds. Contains papers presented at a conference in Warrenton, Va., Oct. 29 to Nov. I, 1978. Most of the active participants in this interdisciplinary area gathered to discuss concepts, techniques and results. Wiley, 1980, 558 p., illus., \$56.

COSMIC LANDSCAPE: Voyages Back Along the Photon's Track — Michael Rowan-Robinson. One of the most dramatic changes in our perception of the cosmic landscape, the author says, has come in the past few decades with the opening up for astronomy of the invisible wavelengths: radio, microwave, infrared, ultraviolet, X-ray and gamma ray. Writing to explain these new areas tronomy to the general reader, the author uses the image of a series of voyages from earth in each of the main wavelength bands. Oxford U Pr, 1979, 149 p., \$12.95.

DEAFNESS AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
— Kathryn P. Meadow. The consequences of early childhood deafness are far-reaching and varied. A developmental approach to the study of behavior in deaf children can provide, according to the introduction, a needed perspective for those working with deaf children. U of Cal Pr, 1980, 236 p., \$12.95.

FLORA OF BAJA CALIFORNIA—Ira L. Wiggins. This treatise, based on 50 years of field work and research, covers all the native and introduced vascular plants ever recorded from the peninsula Includes descriptions and identifying keys for all families and genera and keys to all species. Stanford U Pr, 1980, 1025 p., illus. with line drawings. \$65.

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