of it relates to insects which are found in Europe as well as in America, and it appears to be accurate and trustworthy. We may, however, dispute the statement which we meet with here, not for the first time, that the small cockroach (*Blatta germanica*), called in America the croton bug, "is supposed to have been brought to England by soldiers from the Crimea," if this is supposed to imply that it was then first introduced into England, for it was well known as an inhabitant of most parts of Europe, England included, long before that time, though it may perhaps have become commoner after the Crimean War.

Frequently the information is directly addressed to the children who are supposed to be instructed, as:—

"Mollie wants to know why it would not be a good plan for people who live where there are many mosquitoes to raise dragonflies?"

"That is a very sensible idea, Mollie, and it has been tried."

Mrs. Comstock is already well known as an entomologist, especially as the illustrator of her husband's "Manual for the Study of Insects," &c. Her book consists of a series of ten popular articles on entomology, most of which have previously appeared in magazines. The subjects are "Pipers and Minnesingers" (mosquitoes, cicadas, crickets, &c.), "A Little Nomad" (*Incurvaria acerifoliella*), "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing" (*Basilarchia archippus* mimicking *Anosia plexippus*), "The Perfect Socialism" (bees, ants, termites and wasps), "Two Mother Masons" (Pelopæus and Eumenes), "The Story we Love Best" (*Ceratina dupla*), "A Dweller in Tents" (*Pantographa limata*), "A Tactful Mother" (Chrysopa), "A Seine Maker" (Hydropsyche), and "Hermit and Troubadour" (Cicada).

The book is written in a popular and attractive, but not childish, style, and is very nicely illustrated. There are forty-seven illustrations altogether, several of which occupy a full page.

OUR BOOK SHELF.

Catalogue of Books, Manuscripts, Maps, and Drawings in the British Museum (Natural History). Vol. i., A—D. Pp. 500. (London: Printed by Order of the Trustees, 1903.)

FEW even of the *habitués* of the Natural History Museum have any adequate idea of the extent and value of the collection of books on natural history (in its widest sense) subjects contained within its walls. Nor is this difficult to account for. Owing to the exigencies of work, the collection is split up into a zoological, a geological, a mineralogical, a botanical, and a general library, the latter containing all those works which treat of subjects belonging to more than one department of the museum. But even this subdivision by no means expresses the real facts of the case, the various departmental libraries being further divided into subsections. For instance, the bird room, the spirit building, the entomological department have each libraries of their own, while even individual officers who have charge of one group of animals possess a collection of books in their own rooms.

In these circumstances there can be no question but that the director has been well advised in recommending the Trustees to sanction the publication of the "Catalogue," of which the first volume is before us, since it is certain that such a series of volumes will be of great interest and value not only to workers in the museum, but likewise to naturalists and bibliographists all over the world.

The collection had its origin in the departmental libraries of the establishment at Bloomsbury, and was largely augmented by purchase, by means of a special Parliamentary grant, at the time of, and subsequent to, the transference of the natural history collections to South Kensington. An important addition was the bequest of the Tweeddale library, some years after the transference. In spite of certain gaps, the collection is believed to be one of the finest in the world. When complete, it is estimated that the catalogue will include some 60,000 entries, the present volume containing about one-fourth of this number.

The editing has been confided to Mr. B. B. Woodward, who, in the present volume, appears to have discharged an arduous task with conspicuous success. Although the work is only an "author-catalogue," many of the entries contain information with regard to the contents of the works, their dates of publication, or other bibliographical detail. It should be added that, on account of their special interest and importance, four subject-headings, namely, atlases, dictionaries, encyclopædias, and gazetteers, have been included. R. L.

A Class Book of Botany. By G. P. Mudge and A. J. Maslen. Pp. xvi + 512. (London: Edward Arnold, n.d.) Price 7*s.* 6*d.*

THE scope of this book is somewhat ambitious, for although it is limited to the requirements of intermediate examinations, it takes up in considerable detail the four main branches of botany. Morphology and anatomy are treated in the course of a series of types; classification with special chapters on floral morphology and physiology occupy the second and third parts of the book. Judging by experience, the relegation of morphology to the amount which is distributed throughout the discussion of a series of types is injudicious, because a sound knowledge of external morphology is necessary to the elementary student, partly as a preliminary to anatomy and generally as a foundation for other branches of the subject. It should be pointed out that the authors have not tied down the types to one or two specimens, but, where necessary, additional examples are given; nevertheless, the specific training value of a morphological introduction is wanting. Further, by adopting the type system, the authors provoke comparison with the admirable book written by Dr. Scott, more especially since the cryptogamic types are practically the same in both cases, and Mr. Mudge is not endowed with the same happy power of expression, nor does he display the accuracy which distinguishes the "Structural Botany." The style is, indeed, too rigid, and this only serves to emphasise the numerous mistakes or to give rise to misconceptions. To mention a few instances we find p. 13, "a root . . . always . . . grows downward"; p. 16, "spines have become enlarged and form thorns"; p. 60, "the petiole is polystelic"; and p. 80, a samara is described as a "winged, one-seeded capsule."

Turning to the chapters dealing with classification and morphology of the flower, for which Mr. Maslen is responsible, these are much more satisfactory, and both in choice and arrangement of subject-matter the author's judgment commends itself. The physiological section might with advantage be more practical, and would be much improved by some rearrangement. It is not obvious why the consideration of the absorption of food material by the roots should