

Mr. Deerr sets out with the object of "presenting in one consecutive whole a general view of the cane sugar industry," and it may be said at once that he achieves this object fairly successfully.

The arrangement of the volume coincides with the sequence of operations in the production of sugar, the earlier chapters dealing with such subjects as cane varieties, cultivation, influence of soil and climate, manuring and so on, and the later chapters with the harvesting of the cane, its transport to the factory, the extraction of the sugar, processes for the preparation of the commercial varieties of sugar, the disposal of molasses, the analysis of sugar products, and so on.

The objection might be made that some of these later chapters, notably those relating to the use of the polariscope, the estimation of "glucose," and the analysis of sugar-cane products are not sufficiently detailed to enable a novice to carry out the operations described, and yet are so full as to be tedious to anyone merely desirous of grasping the general principles upon which the processes are based.

The book will, however, be found useful by planters and sugar-estate managers who desire to be *au courant* with the progress made on the scientific side of their industry.

The volume is well illustrated—in this connection particular mention may be made of the coloured plates showing stems of some of the principal varieties of cane—and the text is remarkably free from errors, which is perhaps to be attributed to the fact that the book "was seen through the press" by the publisher, Mr. Norman Rodger.

My Strange Pets, and other Memories of Country Life. By R. Bell. Pp. vi+308. (Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons, 1905.) Price 6s.

"It is well known that the emu is a native of Australia, where on its vast plains they might have been seen in vast numbers" (p. 2). "The kick of an emu is a serious if not a dangerous one. . . . When sporting they spring up in the air, kicking sideways." Sentences like the above occurring close together at the beginning of a volume, and followed later by others of the same type, make one wonder whether the publishers or their printers keep a proof-reader on their establishments. But grammatical slips of this nature are not the only faults by which the work is disfigured, and the classically educated reader will scarcely fail to experience a severe mental shock when he finds the statement on p. 51 that "'lemur,' in the language of Madagascar, means 'night-wandering ghost.'"

Apart, however, from blemishes, Mr. Bell's book contains much interesting information with regard to the ways of many kinds of foreign creatures—from emus and rheas to jerboas and snakes—in confinement, accompanied by valuable hints as to the best manner of keeping them in health. The author, indeed, claims to have been the first to breed emus in Scotland, and it is perhaps a little characteristic of his nationality to find that the experiment undertaken for amusement turned out a financial success. The subject of foreign "pets" forms, however, only a portion of the volume, and the author records a number of more or less commonplace observations regarding the animals of his own country. As he appears to be an experienced angler, the statement of his disbelief in the theory that fresh-run salmon never habitually feed while in the rivers is worthy the best attention of the officials of the Scotch Salmon-Fishery Commission.

Throughout his life the author appears to have been specially interested in travelling menageries, and in

a chapter on this subject he reproduces a long extract from the *Scotsman* of April 10, 1872, describing the sale of Wombwell's menagerie in that year. In this extract Wombwell is stated to have purchased the first rhinoceros and the first pair of giraffes ever imported into this country. As regards the former animal this statement is not strictly true, as witness the Indian rhinoceros described by Dr. Parsons in the early days of the Royal Society. If the statement with regard to giraffes be trustworthy, the fact has been generally overlooked by writers, George the Fourth's giraffe, received in 1827, and the four young animals obtained by the London Zoological Society in 1836, being generally regarded as the earliest importations. Wombwell's giraffes, it is stated, died before they were publicly exhibited. Although containing little that is absolutely new, the book is distinctly readable and entertaining. R. L.

Simple Lessons on Health for the Use of the Young. By Sir Michael Foster, K.C.B., M.P., &c. Pp. vii+114. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905.) Price 1s.

MANY writers have tried their hands at the production of a small work which shall suitably present to a child's mind those elementary facts of healthy living which, as now generally recognised, should form an essential part of education; but it must be said that hitherto no one has wholly succeeded. Many have failed from an unnecessary elaboration of scientific detail, and others from a faulty presentation of the subject-matter.

Sir Michael Foster's manual makes no pretence at covering the whole of the necessary ground. He makes it clear in the preface that his object is to show how the reasons for *some* of the rules which ought to guide us in the physical conduct of life may be explained even to the very young. The subjects dealt with are:—fresh air, food and drink, light and cleanliness. The physiological basis of certain health principles could not be more happily expressed; but as to how the individual can best meet his hygienic needs in his daily life and circumstance the writer has little—far too little—to say. With this reservation it may be said that Sir Michael Foster's little book is a model of what simple lessons on health to the young should be, and that, as an illustration of how these matters should be presented to young children, it is unequalled by any other book with which we are acquainted. For this reason, if for no other, all those who are likely to have the important duty cast upon them of instructing the young on these vital matters should carefully study its simple, clear, and wholly satisfactory method of treatment.

Actualités scientifiques. By Max de Nansouty. Pp. 365. (Paris: Schleicher Frères, 1905.) Price 3.50 francs.

SUCH a collection of short readings in French as is here provided will prove of service to young students of science who are either learning French or are desirous of keeping up their knowledge of the language by reading which will not take them far from their serious work in science. There are eighty-four popular essays, each of three or four pages, divided into seven groups dealing respectively with physics and chemistry, astronomy and meteorology, electricity and its applications, agriculture, hygiene, psychology and physiology, and applied sciences.

The volume may appeal to a few general readers interested in popular accounts of progress in pure and applied science. There are no illustrations.