

viscosity of fluids, two on light, and one on sound. The exercises are illustrated by half-tones, but as no written description of the apparatus is given it is difficult in some cases to guess how the experiment is to be carried out. The student would often be at a loss if guided by these notes alone.

H. S. ALLEN.

SECRET OR MYSTERY?

(1) *The Secret of Personality: The Problem of Man's Personal Life as Viewed in the Light of an Hypothesis of Man's Religious Faith.* By Dr. George Trumbull Ladd. Pp. ix+287. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918.) Price 7s. 6d. net.

(2) *The Philosophy of Mr. B*rt*nd R*ss*ll. With an Appendix of Leading Passages from Certain Other Works.* Edited by Philip E. B. Jourdain. Pp. 96. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1918.) Price 3s. 6d. net.

(1) IT is said that the reader of a once famous book entitled "The Secret of Hegel" remarked when he closed the volume that whatever the secret might have been it had been very successfully kept. No difficulty of discovery is likely to baffle the reader of Dr. Ladd's "Secret of Personality." His secret is an open one, and in the author's genial treatment personality is not mysterious either in the sense of inspiring awe or in that of suggesting occult sources of knowledge. Philosophy itself throws a strange light on man's personality in the attraction it has for us in our youth and in our old age, with the eclipse of interest it undergoes in the stress of active life. So in this little book we feel the professor's keen enjoyment in his old age (he was born in the same year as M. Clemenceau), writing not to instruct us, not to guide us in metaphysical or psychological research, not even to console us, but to give expression to his own reflections on the problems of philosophy.

(2) Mr. Jourdain's satire on the work of a contemporary philosopher will afford much amusement to those who are familiar with that philosopher's method and with the kind of problems to the solution of which he devotes his energy and ingenuity. To those who do not know this work or are uninterested in it, not only will the humour be lost, but the object of the book will also be unintelligible. To such it will appear a cryptic puzzle not worth trying to solve. Yet some of the papers are excellent for their logical nonsense, and might themselves be set as subjects for a logical seminar. Particularly good is the one entitled "The Mortality of Socrates." What one cannot help feeling, however, in regard to the whole is that the author satirised is himself endowed with a very abundant fund of humour which makes its presence felt in the most ultra-mathematical and logical disquisitions, and many of Mr. Jourdain's brightest hits are jokes concerning his author's jokes. Moreover, a joke prolonged into a book tends to become so serious as to threaten to defeat its intention.

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OUR BOOKSHELF.

Mikrographie des Holzes der auf Java vorkommenden Baumarten, im Auftrage des Kolonial-Ministeriums. Unter Leitung von Prof. J. W. Moll, bearbeitet von Dr. H. H. Janssonius. Fünfte Lieferung. Pp. 337-764. (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1918.)

THE present part completes the third volume (dealing with the calycifloral section of Dicotyledons) of the detailed description of the minute structure of the wood of the tree species occurring in Java. It comprises the families Rhizophoræ, Combretaceæ, Myrtaceæ, Melastomaceæ, Lythraceæ, Samydaceæ, Datisceæ, Araliaceæ, and Cornaceæ, and includes the description of 124 species and varieties. At the beginning of the account of each family are given a list of the literature, an enumeration of the material examined, and a summarised description of the general characters of the anatomy of the wood and its constituent elements. Then follow, first, a discussion of the bearing of the results of the investigation on the systematic grouping of the genera and species within the family; secondly, a table in the form of a key for the determination of the species by means of characters afforded by their wood-structure; and thirdly, a detailed description of the characters in each species, with a block illustration of the first species described for each genus. The authors have brought together much detailed information on the minute structure of the wood of the species examined, and the work when completed will form a valuable contribution to the systematic study of genera and species from a point of view which hitherto has been insufficiently recognised.

Molecular Physics. By Dr. James Arnold Crowther. Second edition. (Text-books of Chemical Research and Engineering.) Pp. viii+190. (London: J. and A. Churchill, 1919.) Price 6s. net.

THE fact that a second edition of Dr. Crowther's little volume has been required so soon shows that the praise given to the first edition in NATURE for March 25, 1915, was not undeserved. A complete revision of the material has been carried out, and, in spite of the conditions of a great war not being favourable to theoretical research, some additions have been made. In particular, the results obtained in the laboratory of Sir Ernest Rutherford have increased our knowledge of the structure of the atom, and the author has added a special chapter on this profoundly interesting subject, while the chapter on the chemistry of the atom has been almost completely rewritten from the point of view of Sir J. J. Thomson's theory of valency and chemical affinity. The complaint as to the absence of an index in the earlier edition has been at least partly met by a subject index occupying a couple of pages. In its revised form it is certain that the book will be well received, and will be read not only by physi-