

*Text-book of Pastoral and Agricultural Botany: For the Study of the Injurious and Useful Plants of Country and Farm.* By Prof. J. W. Harshberger. Pp. xiii+294. (Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son and Co., 1920.) Price 2 dollars.

A KNOWLEDGE of the useful and poisonous plants on a farm is an essential part of the equipment of the agriculturist, but hitherto the requisite information has been to a large extent scattered and difficult of access. In the present volume the account of the stock-killing and poisonous American plants is thorough and comprehensive, a specially useful feature being the inclusion of methods of treatment where they are known. It is a pity that the photographs of affected animals are not reproduced more clearly, as several of them fail to illustrate their point.

The crop plants are dealt with sufficiently, though briefly, and the bibliography at the end of each chapter assists the student to follow up any requisite line of inquiry. It may be suggested that in future editions an "author index" would greatly enhance the value of the book, as at present it is not always easy to determine if a reference is included. The laboratory exercises which follow each chapter are very practical and well thought out, and render the book serviceable to the private worker, as well as to the class student. The same object is attained by the inclusion of a glossary with the detailed index. Prof. Harshberger is to be congratulated on the production of a much-needed working manual, the value of which lies not only in the well-arranged and clearly written information it contains, but also in the suggestiveness which renders it adaptable for use in countries other than America. W. E. BRENCHLEY.

*This Wonderful Universe: A Little Book about Suns and Worlds, Moons and Meteors, Comets and Nebulae.* By Agnes Giberne. New illustrated edition, completely re-written. Pp. x+182. (London: S.P.C.K.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1920.) Price 6s. 6d. net.

MISS AGNES GIBERNE is well known for her charmingly written books on elementary astronomy. This is a new edition of an earlier work, carefully brought up to date, some excellent photographs of the moon, Mars, eclipses, and nebulae being reproduced. The celestial phenomena are described in clear and vivid language, the difficulties likely to occur to a beginner being answered in anticipation. The book is made more interesting by the inclusion of a certain amount of legitimate speculation on the development of worlds and systems, and the probable condition of the different planets. The concluding section, "Immensity—and Man," deserves thoughtful study.

A few slips should be corrected. P. 69: One of our athletes would only jump 2.6 times as high on Mars as on Earth. "Over a good-sized house" is misleading. P. 84: The paragraph about TG

misses the chief interest of the Trojan group of planets—the equilateral configuration with Sun and Jupiter. P. 108: Neptune's orbital speed should be 200 times that of an express train—not three times. P. 124: Two upright sticks a yard apart are not strictly parallel, since both point towards the earth's centre. P. 134: Sun's density is wrongly stated to be less than Saturn's. P. 138 (plate): Date of Mina Bronces eclipse was 1893—not 1889. A. C. D. CROMMELIN.

*Practical Physiological Chemistry.* By S. W. Cole. With an introduction by Prof. F. G. Hopkins. Sixth edition. Pp. xvi+405. (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd.; London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, and Co., Ltd., 1920.) Price 16s.

IN spite of the fact that a fifth edition of this valuable book was reviewed in NATURE of August 28, 1919, another edition has rapidly become necessary. The volume has been revised and enlarged, and several new methods have been introduced, of which the most important is a modification of McLean's method for the determination of blood sugar. Other additions include Van Slyke's method for the estimation of blood chlorides, and the soya bean method for the estimation of the urea in blood. Six editions of the book have now appeared in sixteen years; this should be a sufficient guarantee of the worth of the contents.

*Coal.* By J. H. Ronaldson. (Imperial Institute: Monographs on Mineral Resources, with Special Reference to the British Empire.) Pp. ix+166. (London: John Murray, 1920.) Price 6s. net.

MUCH information relating to the coal deposits of the British Empire is recorded in this book. The geology of the deposits is described, and the statistics of production and reserves in various countries of the world are given. Apparently the most important coal resources of the world are in the northern hemisphere, particularly in countries near the Atlantic Ocean. Roughly three-quarters of the world's coal supplies are located in North America, principally in the United States, while the British Empire contains less than one-fifth of the known coal deposits of the world. The monograph concludes with a list of references to publications dealing with the coal resources of the Empire.

*Science German Course.* By G. W. Paget Moffatt. With a glossary by J. Bithell. Third edition (sixth impression). (Science Text-books.) Pp. xii+270. (London: W. B. Clive: University Tutorial Press, Ltd., 1920.) Price 5s.

THE third edition of this book is not very different from the first, which was noticed in NATURE of November 21, 1907. All the extracts in Gothic type have been removed to the end of the book, and in place of the separate vocabularies a complete vocabulary of all the words occurring in the extracts for reading has been inserted.