

Our Bookshelf.

Hiroshige. By Yone Noguchi. Pp. ix+38+19 plates. (New York: Orientalia; London: Elkin Mathews, 1921.) 25s. net.

WE thank Mr. Elkin Mathews for sending us this charming volume. We have admired once more the delicate art of Hiroshige, and we have read Mr. Noguchi's criticism with interest (Mr. Noguchi is always interesting); but we are left wondering why a work of such purely artistic content was submitted for review in a scientific journal. And, as we muse, the question takes form. Is there, after all, so great a difference between the artistic and the scientific approach to Nature? The multitudinous facts and ideas that make up the manifold variety of the world must flood and overwhelm any mind that attempts to grasp the whole. Most of us are saved from seeing too much, if not by native blindness, then by the blinkers of custom and education; but the penetrating eye of the artist or the philosopher looks for safety to the guidance of selection. He is, to quote Mr. Noguchi, "like Hiroshige himself who paid no attention to the small inessential details, when he grasped firmly the most important point of Nature which he had wished before to see, hold and draw." Perhaps the man of science may learn from the great artist, Hiroshige or another, that the searcher after Nature's secrets must frame a clear idea of what he wants to know; that he must not be led astray by facts, useful enough in their time and place, but irrelevant to his quest; that he must make himself the master and not the slave of his facts, so as, without falsifying Nature, to transcend her. It is the fearless vision, the intelligent choice, and the controlling imagination that produce alike the inspiring picture, the supreme poem, and the conquering theory of science.

Do you not agree? Well then, let us simply yield to the fascination of Hiroshige's balanced colour and of Mr. Noguchi's curiously expressive prose.

The Way of a Trout with a Fly, and some Further Studies in Minor Tactics. By G. E. M. Skues. Pp. xvi+259. (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1921.) 18s. net.

THOSE who fish for trout with a fly will find that this book raises most of those problems which anglers debate so earnestly, if sleepily, after a day by the river. Mr. Skues claims no finality in his solutions, but that is not the only or the chief objective. His work is in the true line of descent from Izaak Walton and the Dame—that of one who loves and observes most patiently the secret processes of fish-life in our chalk-streams.

Some pages are devoted to the advocacy of what, on a "dry fly" water, is usually regarded as heresy. When a trout is feeding under the surface Mr. Skues will suit his taste with a sunk fly. Omar Khayyám held drunkenness and sobriety in equal abhorrence. Mr. Skues scorns

the insobriety of the mere "lure" angler, who will play on any fishy weakness, as much as the asceticism of the "dry-fly purist." If your trout be only feeding on larvæ or nymphs, then have at him under water with a "legitimate" imitation and our author's blessing. And if Viscount Grey or the shade of F. M. Halford shake a deprecating finger, Mr. Skues merely taps his basket, full of fat two-pounders.

The Study of Geological Maps. By Dr. Gertrude L. Elles. (Cambridge Geological Series.) Pp. viii+74+7 plates. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1921.) 12s. net.

DR. ELLES has lectured for several years past on this subject to women students at the University of Cambridge, and the well-printed and fully illustrated book under notice is based upon the course of instruction that she adopted. The relations of outcrop to contour-lines are shown in a series of boldly drawn maps, each with a section of the selected bed below. The details in these are intended to lead students to construct similar exercises on their own account. The shaded drawings of outcrops in relation to topography are excellent. British examples are used as types; and include the cauldron-subsidence of Glen Coe and the reversed fault in the Clifton gorge. Evidently the travels of the author throughout our islands have been aptly utilised. Some account might have been added of the methods adopted by the Geological Surveys of various countries for recording geological features on maps, especially in regard to the differentiation of superficial (surficial) deposits, since the range and variety of geological maps of our own islands are still unknown to many workers.

G. A. J. C.

The Land and its Problems. By Christopher Turnor. (A New Series on Economics.) Pp. 254. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1921.) 7s. 6d. net.

MR. TURNOR is well known as an enthusiast in agricultural matters, and in this small book he sets out his ideas in a clear and moderate manner. His purpose is to lay stress on the vast importance of the land as the greatest imperial and national asset, and to show that if a permanent consolidation of the Empire is to be achieved this can be effected only by giving the necessary care and thought to the development of our land resources.

The author is a great believer in small holdings. He does not, however, suggest that the United Kingdom should be devoted entirely to this purpose, but he emphasises the national and social importance of maintaining a number of these holdings—i.e. farms of about 50 acres and under—and on the need of improving living and business conditions of the small-holders. He further insists on the necessity for increasing the area of ploughed land. The book is illustrated by charts showing the changes in British agriculture during recent years.