

the several countries included, and it also offers a comprehensive bibliography. Finally, one is thankful for a handy glossary of botanical terms illustrated with a number of illuminating figures.

The key to the families is entirely artificial, and follows that, now becoming familiar, devised by Mr. Hutchinson and employed in his earlier work already referred to above. C. E. C. F.

*La question eugénique dans les divers pays.* Par Dr. M. T. Nisot. Vol. 1. Pp. 513. (Brussels: Librairie Falk Fils, 1927.)

DR. NISOT has had the useful idea of collecting all the available information on eugenic activities and tabulating it by countries. The present volume contains the information for Great Britain, the United States, and France, and is introduced by a comprehensive historical sketch. Volume 2 is promised shortly, and will include the facts for most other nations.

The author has, it must be confessed, thrown her net rather widely. Not only does she include eugenics in the usually accepted sense of attempts to improve the germplasm of the race; not only birth-control, and the regulation of immigration, which both obviously can have potent effects for good or for evil upon that germplasm; but also all sorts of activities devoted to improving the health and conditions of the individual, such as organisations for combating venereal disease, tuberculosis or alcoholism, the education of mentally subnormal children, infant welfare centres, and so forth. It seems a pity that these were included. For one thing, they have no direct eugenic bearing in any proper sense of the word, and for another, if they are included, why are not all organisations aimed at ameliorating the conditions of life included? Venereal disease, in spite of the possible transmission of the causative agent to the offspring, is not an affair of eugenics, but of public health; and if the education of mentally deficient children is included, why not education in general? As matters stand, the presence of these sections in the book only confuses the issue.

On the side of eugenics proper and of the associated topics of birth-control and immigration control, however, the book will be found very useful. It is extremely desirable to have such sources of information available. The historical account for each country, though brief, is valuable; and nowhere else in convenient form will be found a statement of what organisations exist in each country.

*O povaze věci.* Napsal Sir William Bragg. Přeložili Prof. Dr. Antonín Šimek a Dr. Hannah Šimková-Kadlcová. Pp. 136 + 32 tabulky. (Prague: Jednota Československých matematiků a fysiků, 1927.) Kč. 22.80.

OF the three Czechoslovak universities, those at Prague and Brno possess faculties of science. The University of Prague dates from 1347, but the Masaryk University of Brno, at which Dr. Šimek is professor of physical chemistry, was only founded after the War. It has therefore no traditions,

and before schools of research are established it has been necessary for such leaders as Prof. Šimek to inculcate the spirit of scientific inquiry both by their academic lectures and by presenting the students with a literature in their own language.

Instead of writing a new book, Prof. Šimek has elected to translate Sir William Bragg's "Concerning the Nature of Things," which was the subject of his Royal Institution juvenile lectures in 1923. These lectures, Prof. and Mrs. Šimek point out in the preface to their translation, were inaugurated by Michael Faraday, and are models of approaching the subject to young minds since they retain and stimulate scientific accuracy. The high standard set by Faraday, for example, in his "Chemical History of a Candle," has been maintained by his successors, and Prof. Šimek was so impressed with the inspiration to be derived from those by Sir William Bragg that he decided to translate the book for the benefit of his own students.

Of additional interest is the fact that the last chapter on the nature of crystals deals with the results obtained by Sir William and Prof. W. L. Bragg in their X-ray studies of crystal structure. Prof. Šimek enthusiastically compares the lectures to Lucretius's poem "De rerum natura," with the important difference that the present work is no idle fantasy, but rests upon the sure foundation of scientific fact. J. G. F. DRUCE.

*Elementary General Physical Science.* By W. R. Jamieson. Pp. xi + 63 + 88 + 147 + x + 16 plates. (Melbourne and London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1927.) 8s. 6d. net.

'SCIENCE for All' is the reaction against undue specialisation in the schools, but there is the danger of making the subject so discursive that it ceases to be science. Mr. Jamieson's attempt to provide a broader survey of science for Australian schools consists in the main of an account of some of the great discoveries in chemistry, physics, and astronomy, with adequate and interesting historical details; while every opportunity is seized to introduce pieces of information. Thus, thirty-seven pages on energy include the spectrum, voltaic cells, Gay Lussac's law of volumes, oxidising agents, hydrocarbons, isomorphism, magnetism, galvanometers, dynamos, radium, lenses and telescopes, and end with the periscope of a submarine. While much can be said in favour of such a course, we suggest that to sacrifice depth of culture to obtain breadth is not a scientific method of producing a good harvest.

*Chemistry.* By W. H. Barrett. (Clarendon Science Series.) Pp. viii + 151. (Oxford: Clarendon Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1927.) 5s. net.

MR. BARRETT's book gives a clear account of some of the simpler chapters of chemistry, with indications of their bearing on everyday life. There is a good chapter at the end on the modern theory of atomic structure. The book is suitable for the general reader who wishes to obtain some idea of modern chemistry.