

deposition, is enhanced by a discussion of the influence of climate on deposition; in Chap. ii., loess and marl receive fuller treatment than before; Chaps. iii. and iv., on chemical and organic deposits, contain noteworthy additions relating to deposits of potash-salts and gypsum, and to oolites, algal limestones, crinoidal limestones, chalk, and certain Lower Palæozoic limestones of England.

Among the more important changes in the five chapters comprising Part II. (pp. 155-383), on the metamorphic derivatives of the sediments, may be mentioned new sections dealing with oolitic iron-ores, hæmatite deposits, strain-slip cleavage, crush-conglomerates, fault-breccias, and "stress" and "anti-stress" minerals.

In minor details (amendments of headings and text, and references to literature) revision has been equally thorough.

A. B.

*The Statesman's Year-Book: Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1924.* Edited by Sir John Scott Keltie and Dr. M. Epstein. Sixty-first Annual Publication: Revised after Official Returns. Pp. xxxvi+1523. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1924.) 20s. net.

THIS admirable work of reference again makes a punctual appearance and shows the same commendable thoroughness of revision as in previous years. It can be no light task to revise the statistics of every country in the world; yet with few exceptions figures are given for last year or the latest year in which returns were made. As the new states of the world settle their affairs and get into working order the task of the editors has no doubt become less difficult. Even from Russia and Turkey a great deal of information is now available. The plan of former years has been maintained in the general arrangement of the book; and in spite of several additions, particularly with regard to changes in the constitution in Greece, Italy, Spain, and Turkey, the length of the book has been reduced by some fifty pages. Space has been saved by a revision of many of the lists of books of reference. By eliminating some of the less important titles in these lists, their value is enhanced. The additions and corrections contain facts and figures published so late as April of this year. The number of states has been reduced by one by the merging of Fiume in Italy. This indicates a reversal of the process of multiplication of states which has held for several years. There are coloured maps to show Turkey according to the Treaty of Lausanne and the Syrio-Palestine boundary according to the Beyrouth agreement.

*The Carbon Compounds: a Text-book of Organic Chemistry.* By Prof. C. W. Porter. Pp. ix+494. (Boston and London: Ginn and Co., 1924.) 21s. net.

DIVIDED into three sections, this is essentially a text-book for the student who has had already a good grounding in the principles of organic chemistry. After a consideration of theories of valency and of atomic structure, the author then proceeds to the study of the aliphatic hydrocarbons and their derivatives. The nitroparaffins, the amines, and the ketones

are dealt with before even the simple monobasic acids. The inclusion of a chapter on "the ammonia system," showing the analogies between water and ammonia, is unusual in a book devoted to organic chemistry.

In the second section of the book the carbocyclic and heterocyclic compounds are dealt with briefly, perhaps too briefly, but valuable chapters on steric influence and on free radicals are included.

The last section of the book is devoted to a general review of organic reactions. The fourteen chapters are really admirable summaries of such processes as oxidation and reduction, syntheses and rearrangements, and should be of the greatest interest to a student about to enter for a degree examination who wishes to find much useful knowledge in a small volume.

It is a most readable and instructive book, and one that should find a place in every college library. Its greatest value is not in a wealth of detail concerning innumerable compounds, but in its happy exposition of chemical theories and principles.

F. A.

*Alignment Charts for Engineers and Students: a Text-Book explaining the Theory and Construction of Alignment Charts.* By W. J. Kearton and George Wood. Pp. viii+220. (London: C. Griffin and Co., Ltd., 1924.) 16s. net.

ALIGNMENT charts have apparently fascinated the writers of engineering text-books to such an extent that they can write of nothing else. That they are interesting and useful cannot be doubted; but the basic principle is so simple, and the application so direct, that the production of so many text-books on the same subject all covering the same narrow field, with elaborate and tiresome explanatory details of familiar algebraic processes, implies a distinct weakness in the training of our engineers. Once the fundamental idea has been explained, there is little in most of these books that could not be developed by any intelligent second-year engineering student; yet engineers must buy them, else why do publishers produce them? Has this process of educational spoon-feeding become typical of engineering college training? In fairness to the present volume it ought to be added that this is one of the best we have seen. Some of the diagrams are rather sprawly, but generally the subject is well developed without too much needless detail. A very valuable series of 35 alignment charts is provided covering a wide field of engineering design.

*In Quest of El Dorado.* By Stephen Graham. Pp. xiii+346. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1924.) 12s. net.

MR. STEPHEN GRAHAM travelled on the trail of the Spanish adventurers of old from Spain to the West Indies, through Porto Rico, Haiti, and Cuba, and then to New Mexico, Panama, and Mexico itself. The book is full of colour and high spirits, with just enough of history to allow the reader to understand present conditions. In its vivid description and sympathetic insight, the book gives a far truer picture of tropical America and its inhabitants than most larger and detailed works. The author's reflections on present tendencies in Latin America add a practical value to a book that is full of charm.