

truly represent the original compounds, the task becomes quite easy. It follows naturally from these assumptions that the acids determined in the mineral are found insufficient for the lime present; the existence of organic acids is therefore next assumed, and "organate of lime" appears in the author's analyses as an ingredient of mineral phosphates!

R. W.

### LIGHT SCIENCE

*Anecdotal and Descriptive Natural History.* By A. Romer.—*The Ivy.* A Monograph. By Shirley Hibberd.—*Buds and Blossoms.* Stories for Children.—*Fairy Mary's Dream.* By A. F. L. (Groombridge and Sons.)

IT is very gratifying to see works of the above class brought out,—books which it is supposed, are calculated to amuse as well as instruct. Ten years ago they would have been a dead loss to the publisher, and their publication now is one of the surest proofs that science is permeating all classes and is appreciated by persons of all ages.

Mr. Romer's beautiful book explains in the introductory chapter in a clear and simple manner the classes and orders of the Animal Kingdom, and then goes on to describe the haunts and habits of the best known frequenters of the jungle and prairies, such as the lion, cheetah, and rhinoceros, giving particular attention to the monkey tribe and bears. The book is enlivened by numerous anecdotes and contains coloured plates and wood engravings.

"The Ivy" is a monograph comprising the history, uses, characteristics, and affinities of the plant, and a descriptive list of the garden ivies in cultivation. The book is most luxurious and tasteful, both in binding and letterpress. The plates, coloured with great delicacy, represent the various kinds of ivy, and so natural are the leaves, that one is almost tempted to take one up. A coloured sketch of the Entrance Gate of Conway Castle, surrounded by specimens of ivy, forms the title-page; the letterpress is thickly interspersed with sketches of "ivied castles, and churches, and quotations from Virgil, Euripides, Harleian Manuscripts, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and the modern poets." An interesting part of the work is the author's historical and literary memoranda from the times when the ivy was called "the plant of Osiris" by the Egyptians down to the time when its praises were sung in that famous song, by Charles Dickens, "The Ivy Green."

"Buds and Blossoms," a book containing ten stories, will be a welcome addition to a child's library; the last, called the "Fir-tree's Story," being particularly pretty. This little volume contains several coloured plates and woodcuts, and the title-page is gracefully illuminated.

"Fairy Mary's Dream," another charming book for children, is in the form of a poem. The illustrations are well done. The colouring of the peacock's feathers on the title-page and in the plate "Till on a green fern's nodding crest" is exquisite; and besides the plates there are many engravings descriptive of the butterfly's journey.

W. L.

### OUR BOOK SHELF

*Pathologische Histologie der Luftwege und der Lunge.* Von Dr. Albert Thierfelder. Atlas of six plates (Leipzig, 1872).

ALTHOUGH death and disease are as much a part of Nature as life and health, yet it is found convenient to separate the study of living structures under morbid conditions from the rest of biology, so that a work like the present must in these pages be more briefly noticed than its importance would deserve.

It is more than fifteen years since the publication of the late Prof. Förster's Atlas of Morbid Histology; and when we consider all that has been done in that time, represented in such volumes as those of Virchow, of Förster himself, of Rindfleisch, of Cornil and Ranvier, we see ample reason for the issue of a new series of plates illustrating the subject. The present *Heft* is the first instalment of the complete work, which is to consist of ten such, each complete in itself. The drawings are admirably executed both by Dr. Thierfelder and by the engraver. The text is strictly limited to explaining them, and is therefore much shorter than in Eiker's physiological atlas, for instance; but in the present state of pathology we regard this as a merit. The selection of subjects for illustration is always difficult: it might be objected that some of these drawings (*e.g.* fig. 2 of Pl. I.) represent little but normal tissues; but, on the whole, practical pathologists will not have room to complain on this score. Some patriotic anatomists will be glad to see "die von den Engländern supposirte Basementmembrane" taking its place without question here. The price of these beautiful plates is very moderate, and we heartily wish Dr. Thierfelder success in completing his work.

*Coalfields, Western Port.* Report of the Board to the Colonial Government, Victoria.

THE Government of Victoria are determined to find a workable coal-field in that colony, and, apparently not satisfied with the examination of the mesozoic rocks made by the extinct Geological Survey, have had the same strata re-examined by a mining engineer acting under the direction of a Board. The results of these further investigations are embodied in this final Report, but they add little or nothing to our previous knowledge. Indeed the Report seems to be for the most part a work of supererogation. The geological age of the coal-bearing strata had already been definitely ascertained by Mr. Selwyn and his staff, yet the Report goes into this question at considerable length as if it was quite a novelty. Then, as regards the extent of the actually proved coal-seams, Mr. Selwyn, as is well known, expressed an unfavourable opinion. Upon his geological map of Cape Patterson the coal-seams exposed upon the coast are protracted inland so as to show the approximate area over which they extend, and this is only some 106 acres. So experienced a geologist as Mr. Selwyn was not likely to misread the evidence which is so clearly and abundantly developed along the coast. But the Board believe that "any calculations based on the bearings of the strike of seams in this locality are unreliable." There does not appear, however, to be anything specially mysterious and abnormal about the coal-bearing strata of Cape Patterson, nor is there any reason why they should not "behave" like similar deposits elsewhere. The Geological Survey's map shows a very small area of workable coal, and perhaps this is why the strike and dip on the well-exposed coast at Cape Patterson are considered unreliable—the wish in this case being father to the thought. Mr. Selwyn and Professor M'Coy both believed it possible that at some considerable depth below the coal-seams of Cape Patterson a better coal-field might be got. The Board, however, does not think this likely. Here, again, we should be inclined to pay more deference to the opinion