

the entertaining and interesting descriptions of the longer journeys will be anxious to possess the present volume, and will, we predict, not be disappointed with the contents. Should it, however, run to a second edition, the words and phrases from various foreign languages scattered through the book might be expunged or corrected. It is rather odd to find a priest or monk designated as "Signor Canonico"; and an extra syllable in *Beleuchtung* does not improve it. There is, too, an unfortunate slip in the preface and on page 133, Elephantine Island being referred to as the Island of Elephanta.

W. B. H.

OUR BOOK SHELF.

Elements of Psychology. By James Mark Baldwin, Professor Elect in Princeton College. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893.)

UNDER the above title Prof. Baldwin has written a shorter text-book which, as he states in the preface, differs from his larger work, the *Handbook of Psychology* (reviewed in these pages vol. xliii. p. 100, and vol. xlvi. p. 2) mainly in its omissions. Like its larger predecessor, this book deals largely with "apperception" regarding, erroneously as we think, the selective synthesis observable in mental products as something wholly different from anything which is to be found in other departments of natural knowledge. "In the physical world," he says, "we find no such unifying force as that known in psychology as the activity of apperception." Although there is much in this work, as in its predecessor, with which we are in hearty but friendly disagreement, it appears to us to possess the great merit of giving abundant evidence of independent thought and treatment. It will, in the hands of senior students, stimulate them to thought and criticism—such criticism as the teacher who is in earnest welcomes like a breath of keen fresh air. The chief fault of the book is that its pages are somewhat unduly crowded with details.

C. L. M.

An Introduction to the Study of Geology. By Edward Aveling, D.Sc. (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 1893.)

DR. AVELING has compiled a volume better, in many respects, than any of its kind. His arrangement of matter has much to commend it, and his descriptions are of the concise character regarded with favour by those who incline to a pabulum consisting of concentrated essence of knowledge. The book is another of that large class "specially adapted for the use of candidates for the London B.Sc. and the Science and Art Department Examinations." Intending examinees would do well to obtain it, but the student who loves geology for its own sake will hardly find the contents to his liking.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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The Publication of Physical Papers.

AS most people seem afraid to enter on this discussion, it is appropriate for others to rush in. I have not, however, anything very much to say, except (1) that it seems to be a subject which in its intersectional aspects is suited to oral discussion at a meeting of the British Association, and (2) that if the *Beiblätter* were regularly and intelligently translated a good deal of the necessary physical abstracting would *ipso facto* be done.

Abstracting on a large scale is difficult work, and the English genius scarcely runs in that direction. It seems to me a pity for a greater number of competent persons to be engaged on it than it is really necessary, and if the Germans are good enough to do it for the world, why should we not recognise their work and utilise it to the utmost?

It will be answered, so we do; everyone sees the *Beiblätter*. Yes, and I suppose about half a dozen effectively glance through it. Not everyone is capable of taking in a page of German at a glance, as one can English, and, for myself, I find that what I have half-read in a foreign tongue has a fatal facility for slipping from the memory.

I need not labour the point, it is simply this—that whereas a weighty paper of known and conspicuous importance in one's own object can, if necessary, be worked at and utilised in almost any ordinary language, papers of uncertain value or of only approximate interest must be skipped altogether unless they can be skimmed; and that the skimming process in a foreign language is impossible to all but a few favoured physicists, whatever may be the case with chemists.

If an English edition of the *Beiblätter* were regularly published, the only abstracts that would remain to be done by us would be the contents of Wiedemann's *Annalen* and possibly of a few American or provincial publications.

But there are other questions besides that of abstracts; and chief among them is the question of central publication of all the English papers of importance which at present are difficult to procure.

These occur mainly in connexion with the Societies of Dublin, Cambridge, and Edinburgh. Few other Societies in the British Islands claim or possess a monopoly over papers presented to them. Nearly all except these three are, I suppose, now used chiefly for contemporaneous or *ad interim* publication, and any serious results are communicated by the author to some central organ. If that is not so it ought to be so. If an author has a good result which he will not publish, he can hardly be compelled. It ought, however, to be clear that mere printing in a half-known local journal is not proper publication at all; it is "printing for private circulation." Biologists are, I am told, given to err in this direction, each small society pluming itself on publishing memoirs in order to receive "exchanges," a ghastly and polyglot form of literature which may be catalogued but can hardly be read. However, biologists are doubtless the best judges of their own procedure, and what is suited to a copious and readily illustrated subject is not likely to be well adapted to physics.

Coming to the really central organs (whether general or special), the Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society, the *Philosophical Magazine*, and NATURE; most British and Colonial physicists can see them without trouble, and the *Phil. Mag.* is seen all over the world. Merely a few slight changes are needed in connexion with these organs. The Proceedings are largely a journal of the doings of the Royal Society, and as such are not specially edifying to outsiders. In consequence of this, perhaps, and also in consequence of the multifarious nature of the subjects treated simultaneously, the papers included therein do not get widely known. The Transactions are all published as separate memoirs, so that there need be no difficulty for an isolated worker not a Fellow to procure a copy, if the contents are freely advertised. But I would suggest that the cost of these separate copies and of each number of the Proceedings, is much too great. As one not at all behind the scenes, I am ignorant of the reasons for this high price, but I should think it might be a proper expenditure of some of the Society's wealth if their publications could by a considerable reduction in price, even to a nominal figure, be made much more widely available.

For most societies the method of publication invented, or at any rate adopted, by the Physical Society of London, seems to me well worthy of imitation. Until this is done, there remains the question of making the valuable papers which occasionally, or perhaps frequently, appear in NATURE or other weeklies, in the Transactions of the Cambridge, Dublin, and Edinburgh Societies,¹ and sometimes in the Proceedings of the Manchester and other provincial societies, more accessible to foreigners and incidentally to ourselves. This could be done by central reprinting, either in a new special publication, or in some extra

¹ I do not specifically mention the semi-technical societies, such as the Institution of Electrical Engineers, though often it is difficult to draw the line, and some of their papers, too, might be included.