

valuable matter on the subject he has taken in hand, and he puts it before the reader with clearness and precision. Should another edition be called for, some of the valuable results obtained by Dr. Bashforth and the more modern work in ballistics, which has been carried on in the United States of America, in Germany and in England, might be introduced with advantage.

F. J-S.

*THE COMPLETION OF ROSCOE AND SCHORLEMMER'S ORGANIC CHEMISTRY.*

*Roscoe-Schorlemmer's Lehrbuch der Organischen Chemie.*

By Jul. Wilh. Brühl, Professor in the University of Heidelberg. Seventh Part, in conjunction with Eduard Hjett and Ossian Aschan, Professors in the University of Helsingfors; O. Cohnheim, O. Emmerling and E. Vahlen, Privatdocenten in the Universities of Heidelberg, Berlin and Halle. Pp. xxxii + 527. (Brunswick: F. Vieweg und Sohn, 1901.)

THE seventh part of the above text-book, which forms the ninth volume of the entire work, brings to a close the publication of that standard treatise of which two of the earlier volumes were reviewed in these columns on a former occasion (November 14, 1901, Supp. iii.). Beyond an indication of the contents of the present volume, there is not much to add in the way of general remarks to the statements already made. The whole work of translating and editing the early volumes and of writing the later ones has cost Dr. Brühl and his coadjutors five years' labour. As one result of the task which the editor first took in hand in 1896, chemical literature has been enriched by a series of valuable monographs written by specialists, these monographs, some of which were noticed in NATURE at the time of their appearance, being separate issues of certain sections of the present and former volumes. Chemists are no doubt familiar with the works on five- and six-membered heterocyclic systems (1898 and 1899), on vegetable alkaloids (1900) and on albuminoid substances (1900), all of which have originated in the manner indicated.

This concluding volume of the great treatise which first saw light in this country is one which appeals most particularly to physiologists. The four groups of compounds with which it deals are all, strictly speaking, and in the narrow sense, "organic," *i.e.* of vital origin. Dr. Cohnheim's contribution, "Die Eiweisskörper," is already known in its separate form; it occupies more than 300 pages of the volume. The same author contributes a section of some twenty pages on the compounds found in animal gall secretion. The third section, of more than 100 pages, comprises Dr. Emmerling's monograph on enzymes, and the concluding section, which is by Dr. Vahlen, deals with the ptomaines and toxines. It must be stated also that the present volume, in addition to its own subject-matter, contains a general synopsis of the contents and a general index for the whole seven volumes of the treatise on organic chemistry.

As regards the treatment of the subjects dealt with in this concluding instalment of the work, it need only be repeated that the names of the writers are vouchers for their completeness and accuracy. As compared with

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this and the volumes formerly noticed in these columns the earlier volumes are, of course, now much behind our actual state of knowledge. But as standards fixed by the dates on the title-pages, these seven volumes represent the most complete and coherent descriptive treatise on the chemistry of the carbon compounds as yet offered to the scientific world. We shall be curious to see how our German colleagues will grapple with the literary difficulty of keeping a work of this exhaustive character *au courant* of the rapid progress which is being made in this department of science. As the editor reminds us in the preface, organic chemistry as a distinct branch of our science was born and has grown to its present magnitude during the nineteenth century. In congratulating Dr. Brühl and his collaborators on the completion of their task, we can assure him that there is every prospect of his wish that organic chemistry should develop as much during the twentieth as it has during the preceding century being fulfilled. We may further assure him that his hope that the work which he has been instrumental in giving to chemists may contribute towards this future development is amply justified. Of the original authors, one is happily still with us; to the memory of the other, this treatise will serve as an enduring monument.

R. MELDOLA.

*JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY.*

*Japanische Mythologie. Nihongi "Zeitalter der Götter."*

Von Dr. Karl Florenz. Pp. ix + 341; mit Illustrationen. (Tokyo, 1901.)

DR. FLORENZ is well known as a writer on Japan, and in his present work he adds one more volume to the many which he has published on that interesting subject. Some years ago he gave to the world the translation of a part of the "Nihongi," one of the earliest productions of Japanese literature, and in his present volume he takes the mythological portion of that work and by the aid of notes helps to throw considerable light on the very dark places of Japanese mythology.

The "Nihongi" yields in antiquity to only two other works, *viz.* the "Kiujiki," which was compiled in A.D. 620, and the "Kojiki," which was completed in 712. Eight years later the "Nihongi" was laid before the Empress Gemmio as a complete work. The "Nihongi," or the "Records of Japan," is said to have been written by Shotoku Daishi, and it is certain that only an author as well versed in Buddhist lore and Chinese classical literature as he was could possibly have written it.

To both of these wells of learning constant references are made, and throughout its pages the influence of Chinese thought is everywhere apparent. The opening sentence in the book contains the Chinese philosophical terms *Yin* and *Yang*, the male and female principles of Nature, which form a strange introduction to the mythology of a foreign land. The Chinese metaphor for the State, the temples of "The Earth and of Grain," also find frequent mention in its pages, and even a long dying speech originally uttered by the Chinese Emperor Kaotsu is put into the mouth of the Japanese sovereign Yuriaku. As Dr. Florenz says:—