

horticulture. In his volume on "Tulips," Mr. Jacob has successfully surmounted the difficulties of the pioneer—for this is stated by the editor of the series to be the first book on the tulip published in English—and has produced a delightfully readable as well as practical treatise on this interesting genus and its cultivation in times past and present.

F. CAVERS.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

Catalogue of the Serial Publications possessed by the Geological Commission of Cape Colony, the Royal Observatory, the Royal Society of South Africa, the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, the South African Museum, and the South African Public Library. With an Appendix containing a List of the Serials in the Bolus Herbarium of the South African College. Pp. 54. (Cape Town: South African Public Library.)

IN a "Foreword" to this work it is stated that "this list is the outcome of a suggestion first made by Dr. T. Muir, F.R.S., in NATURE." The list, which contains the names of about 1100 serials, must be of great service to workers in science in Cape Town; it is arranged in seven columns, the first containing the names of the serials and the remaining six references to the libraries in the following order: South African Library, South African Museum, Royal Observatory, Royal Society of South Africa, Geological Commission, and the South African Association for the Advancement of Science. There is also an appendix containing a list of the serials in the Bolus Herbarium of the South African College.

This arrangement is obviously applicable to cases in which only a small number of libraries are included, but it gives space to indicate the actual volumes which are accessible; thus, in the case of the Smithsonian Annual Reports the six columns have the following entries:—

| 1862-1909 (inc.) [=incomplete] | 1872-1909 (1874 missing) |
| 1856- | 1880-1910 | — | 1881-1909 (inc.) |

In the Royal Society's subject indexes, where there are references to nearly thirty British libraries (indicated by symbols), the serials which are incomplete are marked *i*, which gives a very small amount of information and must be regarded merely as a caution.

In the catalogue under notice there is only one case of a serial occurring in all the six libraries, and it is not surprising that this is the Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa. It is well known that Dr. Muir has inveighed against the multiple sets of the same serials in neighbouring libraries, and has pointed out that it would be better for only one of the libraries to have a complete set of a serial, which would enable some in the vicinity to use their resources in obtaining serials not possessed by others, and his influence in this direction has probably been felt in South Africa.

Union lists of serials have already been prepared in many cities and countries, and we may congratulate the trustees of the South African Public Library in adding to their number.

The Mineralogy of the Rarer Metals: a Handbook for Prospectors. By Edward Cahen and W. O. Wootton, with a foreword by F. W. Harbord. Pp. xxviii + 211. (London: Charles Griffin and Co., Ltd., 1912.) Price 6s. net.

THIS convenient and carefully prepared manual supplies a want that has long been felt. Many of the elementary substances, long regarded as merely chemical curiosities, are now finding useful and often extensive applications in the arts. In the manufacture of filaments for electric lamps, in the preparation of mantles for gas-lighting, in various cases in which hardness or infusibility are desiderata, and especially in the production of steels with special qualities, a large and ever-increasing number of the so-called "rare metals" are finding familiar uses.

The authors in this handy volume have compiled, from the best and latest sources of information, statements of the nature, uses, and properties of these various metals, together with an account of the characters, distribution, methods of detection, and commercial value (where this can be ascertained) of the various minerals which constitute the sources of these rare metals. In view of the ever-increasing demands for many of these metals, and the fact that some which have not yet found useful applications may do so in the future, the appearance of this manual is distinctly opportune. The information, though given in concentrated form, appears to be in nearly every case clear and sufficient; and the book cannot fail to be of very great service to prospectors and others, who are now no longer confined in their researches to seeking for sources of the hitherto limited classes of so-called "precious metals" and "useful metals."

Not the least valuable characteristic of the book is due to the fact that, in its printing and binding, the question of its suitability for being carried in the pocket, for use in the field, has been carefully provided for. Our satisfaction at the appearance of this valuable book is somewhat marred by the information we have received that science has lost a promising worker by the death, since the book was finished, of the author whose name stands second on the title-page. J. W. J.

Education and National Life. By Dr. Henry Dyer. Pp. 112. (London: Blackie and Son, Ltd., 1912.) Price 1s. net.

DR. DYER'S wide experience of educational affairs in this and other countries should ensure for him many attentive readers. The more important aspects of a question of vital national interest are handled in an inspiring manner, and the essays should prove of value and assistance to professional and business men who have no specialised knowledge of education.