

## OUR BOOKSHELF.

*Economics in the Light of War.* By Prof. R. A. Lehfeldt. Pp. 56. (Johannesburg: The South African School of Mines and Technology; London: Wm. Wesley and Son, 1916.) Price 1s.

IN this slight, but well-reasoned, essay Prof. Lehfeldt contemplates the influence which the present war has had on economic theory. He deals only with consumption and production, "not," he says, "because the problems of distribution are not urgent, but because there seems to be less that is novel to say about them." This is surely a remarkable finding in view of the experiments in Germany and France. If there be little novel to say, there must then be many striking new proofs of old tenets of belief.

More attention will, Prof. Lehfeldt thinks, have to be given in the future to the human factor in economics. We are beginning to realise the necessity of a qualitative as well as a quantitative analysis of consumption. The human powers of production are more dependent than we have supposed on the human will to produce.

The essay is strikingly sound, if somewhat uninspiring; and it is refreshing after the cant which has been talked on the former and the absurdities which have been written on the latter to read the sound common sense of the author on the two problems of the size of the family and social welfare, and of the influence of taxation for the war loan on supplies of capital. It is, however, presumably popular in purport, and Prof. Lehfeldt does not venture on the treacherous currents of finance. A. L.

*Interpolated Six-Place Tables of the Logarithms of Numbers and the Natural and Logarithmic Trigonometric Functions.* Edited by H. W. Marsh. Pp. xii+155. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1916.) Price 5s. 6d. net.

THE publication of these tables helps to mark a change in the use of logarithms, both for teaching and practical purposes. Nowadays most teachers use four-figure tables for teaching purposes, even in the laboratory; on the other hand, the reason given for the issue of this volume is that in many technical problems five significant figures are essential, so that a six-figure table is necessary. The contents of the book are: (1) logs of numbers, with differences and full tables of proportional parts; (2) logarithmic sines, etc., interpolated to the second; (3) natural sines, etc., tabulated to the minute, with proportional part for the second; (4) lengths of circular arcs to radius unity; (5) various tables of length, specific gravity, etc. Change of a leading figure in a mantissa is indicated in an unusually clear way; the figures used are mostly "old faced," and, although rather fine cut, do not seem to be tiring. But in using the tables it will be almost unavoidable

able to use a card to guide the eye along the lines; this is suggested in the introduction, which gives other useful hints. It seems to us that it would add considerably to the convenience of the book to give the values and the logarithms of certain constants, such as  $\pi$ ,  $e$ ,  $\sqrt{\pi}$ , Euler's constant, and so on; this would not require more than a page.

*The World's Wonder Stories for Boys and Girls.* By A. G. Whyte. Pp. xiv+270. (London: Watts and Co., 1916.) Price 6s. net.

THESE stories take the form of brightly written and interesting answers to a number of questions propounded by the author. How was the world made? Where did the plants and animals come from? Who was the first man? are specimens of questions which provide the opportunity for giving much biological and geological information, and for introducing a simply worded explanation of evolution.

A second type of question is made to serve another and additional purpose. Where did all the religions come from? Where did the Bible come from? Where did right and wrong come from? are questions asked to enable the author primarily to give moral instruction on a rational basis.

The chapters throughout are written in easy English which young children can understand; the information is correct and modern; and the language is dignified and circumspect. Orthodox teachers and parents whose teaching of morality follows conventional lines would undoubtedly derive benefit from the method of presentation adopted, while no child could read the book without understanding something of the scientific method and what it has accomplished.

*Petit Atlas Céleste.* By G. Bigourdan. Five charts. Pp. 59. (Paris: Gauthier-Villars et Cie, 1915.) Price 2.75 francs.

AN admirable introduction to the study of the heavens is provided by this little book, which has been prepared by a distinguished member of the staff of the Paris Observatory. The constellations over the entire sky are represented in considerable detail in five excellent maps, the stars being shown in black on a white ground, and names and index letters in red. The introductory text includes a brief history and description of the constellations, and two very useful lists of stars. One of the catalogues is arranged in order of right ascensions, and is notable as indicating the spectra, in addition to the proper names, positions, and magnitudes, of 195 of the principal stars. The other is arranged according to constellations, in alphabetical order, and will be convenient as a means of quickly finding particulars of a star which is indicated only by its constellation and letter. The book is of a convenient size (9 in.  $\times$  5½ in.), and may be recommended as a handy work of reference for use in the observatory as well as to beginners in observational astronomy.