

briefly with the poisonous properties of certain explosives, and thus in the smaller volume meets one of the few points of criticism in the review of his large treatise. He says that in the case of trotyl (T.N.T.) it is apparently that absorbed through the skin which is especially injurious; it passes in a combined form into the blood, and in some cases is eliminated from the system only very slowly. Hence the necessity for scrupulous attention to cleanliness.

Mr. Marshall has produced a very readable and interesting synopsis, and his small volume will undoubtedly prove of considerable service to those who require only an outline of the subject in connection with their work, and of interest to the general reader who wishes to enlarge his store of useful knowledge in a subject of such present-day interest.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

The Discovery of America, 1492-1584. Edited by P. F. Alexander. (Cambridge Travel Books.) Pp. xviii+212. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1917.) Price 3s. net.

THIS volume is one of a series which aims at illustrating the history of geographical discovery by means of selected voyages and travels. The books are intended for use as school readers as aids in the teaching of geography. With this end in view, spelling and punctuation have been modernised, though archaic words have been kept. A list of some dates in the history of geographical discovery and a few notes have been added. The present volume contains the first three voyages of Columbus, Sir Humphrey Gilbert's voyage of 1583, the voyage of Amadas and Barlow to Virginia in 1584, and Jacques Cartier's voyage to the St. Lawrence. There are a number of illustrations reproduced from old prints and woodcuts, and a few useful sketch maps. So far as the plan of the series goes, the present volume is well executed, but it is a little difficult to see what place such a book can find in the school curriculum. The English and style are scarcely suitable for the teaching of reading, while the geographical knowledge to be derived from the voyages is not sufficient to warrant the use of the volume as a text-book in geography. The limited time devoted to geography in most schools could be more profitably utilised. We trust, however, that some use may be found for the series.

Foods and their Relative Nourishing Value. By Prof. W. H. Thompson. Second edition. Pp. 38. (Dublin: At the University Press, 1917.) Price 4d. net.

If the British public has not acquired by the end of the war the art of adjusting its diet on rational and scientifically correct lines, it will not be for lack of sound instruction and good advice. There are no very definite external signs as yet of any widespread reform in this direction in the feeding habits of the mass of the people, but the popularity

of food literature is evidence at least that large numbers of people are desirous of acquiring information as to the possibilities of securing economy in food consumption without sacrifice of efficiency. Much of this literature is of the empirical cookery-book type and can scarcely survive the period of food stringency, but it is gratifying to find that a ready sale can be found for the more select and permanently useful literature in which the scientific principles which must underlie food economy are expounded for the benefit of the layman.

There are more pretentious works than, but none which gives as good value for the money as, this booklet by Prof. Thompson, which now appears in a revised, second edition. All the essential information is conveyed in its few pages in concise, lucid form, and is supplemented by a considerable range of diagrammatic and other illustrative matter. The modern views as to the essentials of adequate nutrition are clearly presented without the use of technical terms beyond the "protein" and "Calorie" which are fast acquiring a place in the popular vocabulary. The booklet is supplied to the public at the net cost of issue, and Prof. Thompson is to be congratulated upon the response which his generosity has already achieved.

A Rumanian Diary, 1915, 1916, 1917. By Lady Kennard. Pp. vii+191. (London: William Heinemann, 1917.) Price 5s. net.

THIS small volume is nothing more than it claims to be, a diary of life in Bukarest and Jassy before and after Rumania's entry into the war. It touches a phase of the war about which little has been heard in this country. Whatever merits it has are due to its vivid descriptions of conditions in Rumania, written from day to day when anxiety and hope, uncertainty and despair were the daily lot of the author. We gather that most of the diary was written by Lady Kennard, but that after she left Rumania she drew on letters from her friends to complete the story. There are no new facts in the book, but it should be read by anyone who wishes to realise what the intervention of Rumania cost that unhappy country and to what a sad plight she was reduced by the enemy invasion. The volume is illustrated by a few photographs.

How to Collect and Dry Flowering Plants and Ferns. By H. S. Thompson. Pp. 56. (London: G. Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1917.) Price 7d. net.

THESE practical hints on collecting, drying, and mounting plants will prove of real service to young botanists. The author recognises the improvement in the teaching of botany which has taken place in recent years, especially in secondary schools, and realises the importance of basing instruction, where possible, upon living specimens; but he makes out a good case for the herbarium, and we hope his booklet will meet with the success it deserves.