

are too near each other the suction of their propellers pulls them together, and they become uncontrollable," would certainly not command scientific justification. This technical inaccuracy does not detract from the interest of the book as a record of the actual experiences of an aviator during training and in flying over the enemy's lines. The greater part of the volume consists of such experiences and forms interesting reading. It is well that those who labour in the aeronautical world at home should have some idea of the actual fighting conditions at the Front, and the volume before us gives a very good account of the impressions of a pilot engaged in this thrilling phase of modern warfare. A detailed knowledge of the principles of flight is by no means necessary to enable a man to become an expert pilot, any more than a detailed knowledge of engineering is necessary to enable a man to ride a bicycle or drive a car.

The volume is essentially descriptive and non-technical, but it is, nevertheless, interesting to the scientific worker who wishes to obtain a mental picture of the actual conditions under which our airmen work, and of the wonderful part played by the aeroplane in modern warfare.

*The Born Fool.* By J. W. Byrd. Pp. 316. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1917.) Price 6s. net.

THIS is the record, in considerable detail, of the childhood and adolescence of an engineer and geologist who, born and moving in middle-class circles, convinces himself that it is his duty, on purely altruistic grounds, to marry a woman not only of lower social and intellectual status than himself, but also appreciably older. In parts the story is excellent (if this recalls the curate's egg, *absit omen*), and, despite some few *naïvetés* and trivialities—slight blemishes inseparable, perhaps, from the maiden production of any author—it is a very interesting study, abounding in natural touches and realistic incidents.

The atmosphere of the tale is to a large extent engineering and geological. The hero, at the age of twenty-one or thereabouts, becomes a fellow of the Geological "Institute," in consequence of a thesis of extraordinary merit and a discovery of unique importance. He also acts as resident engineer on water-supply undertakings of some magnitude. Precocity of this kind is, of course, not unusual in the realm of fiction. At the same time, the book envisages certain sociological, sexual, and religious problems in a way which will appeal to thoughtful minds, so that there is a wide and varied range of interest for many readers.

*Quantitative Chemical Analysis.* Adapted for Use in the Laboratories of Colleges and Technical Institutes. By Dr. F. Clowes and J. B. Coleman. Eleventh edition. Pp. xxiv+580. (London: J. and A. Churchill, 1918.) Price 12s. 6d. net.

THE eleventh edition of this well-known work of reference has been carefully revised and new matter

has been introduced in the Appendix. The results of typical analyses obtained in the laboratories of the authors occupy eleven pages, and will prove useful to analysts and others for reference and guidance; the list of important works of reference provided will also be equally serviceable.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts intended for this or any other part of NATURE. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]

#### Ramsay Memorial Fund.

WE are asking the hospitality of your columns to enable us to report the progress of the Ramsay Memorial Fund, which was instituted just a year ago with the object of raising a sum of 100,000*l.* as a suitable memorial to the late Prof. Sir William Ramsay. The fund has now reached a sum of just above 30,000*l.* The latest and most important donation to the fund has been a sum of 5000*l.*, contributed by Mrs. Wharrie. It may be remembered that Messrs. Brunner, Mond and Co. have promised a similar sum of 5000*l.* The honorary treasurers have received a large number of other sums, ranging from 100*l.* to one guinea. From this it will be seen that the Ramsay Memorial Fund has now passed its experimental stage, and is making good progress towards the sum which the committee aim at raising. The Executive Committee are confident that with the assistance of the large number of co-operating committees which have been formed in all parts of the British Empire and many foreign countries they will be successful in completing the fund of 100,000*l.*, but in order that this may be the case they must appeal to the generosity of the public for further donations, large and small. They hope that the generous example of Mrs. Wharrie and of Messrs. Brunner, Mond and Co. will be followed by others, but they will also greatly welcome gifts of any amount ranging from one guinea upwards.

The fund of 100,000*l.*, when raised, will be devoted to two objects of great national importance: the establishment of Ramsay Memorial fellowships for research in chemical problems as applied to industry, and the foundation of a memorial laboratory of engineering chemistry. Those who contribute to the Ramsay Memorial Fund are contributing in the most definite and direct way to the national prosperity after the war, in which the advancement of science must play an increasingly important part. Donations should be sent to the joint honorary treasurers, Ramsay Memorial Fund, University College, London, Gower Street, W.C.1.

RAYLEIGH,

Chairman of the General Committee.

HUGH BELL,

Chairman of the Executive Committee.

GLENCONNER,

J. N. COLLIE,

Honorary Treasurers.

#### The Beginnings of Porcelain in China.

IN the review of our publication by Dr. J. W. Mellor (*NATURE*, October 4, p. 88) there is a misunderstanding which we feel should not be allowed to pass in the interest of your readers. Dr. Mellor states that we regard the so-called Han pottery as porcelaneous, and as the forerunner of true porcelain. Such a statement has never been made; we always held, and still hold, that Han pottery is nothing but a common stoneware.