

forth in the book before us, is that the conceptions of the sciences are in themselves no more than inadequate ideal constructions of what can only be described finally as spiritual reality.

In a short notice it is impossible to give any detailed account of the whole book, but some reference may be made to the fourth chapter, entitled "The Liberating Influence of Biology." The author is in full agreement with those biologists who now claim that biology must be regarded as a science with a distinctive working hypothesis which separates it from the physical sciences. The basis of this claim is simply that it is not possible to describe and interpret the distinctive facts of biology in terms of the working hypothesis of physics and chemistry: the conception of life itself must be employed as a fundamental working hypothesis. In referring to this claim he is careful to dissociate himself from what is ordinarily understood as vitalism, and to show that the claim goes much farther than that of the vitalists, who occupy what seems to him an untenable position. While he agrees, for instance, with Driesch's criticisms of the mechanistic account of life, he points to radical weakness in Driesch's own vitalistic position. The "liberating" influence of biology results from the fact that the new biology treats as mere working hypotheses of limited application what had come to be regarded as absolute truths established by physical and chemical investigation. He points out that a similar liberating influence has resulted from recent discoveries as to the nature of atoms. There is thus no reason now for concluding that in ultimate analysis the phenomena of Nature, including human activity, must be reducible to an interplay of material particles, in accordance with the metaphysical theory which he designates as "naturalism." The way is left open to interpretations on a higher plane, and each of the sciences is left free to use its own special working hypotheses.

Perhaps most scientific readers will be inclined to think that the author under-estimates the strength of the position of what he calls the "old guard" of mechanistic biologists; but, however this may be, his treatment of the whole subject, and references to Darwin, Huxley, Bergson, Driesch, and other writers, will be found to be of much interest.

The book may be recommended confidently to all those who wish to understand modern philosophical idealism and the grounds for its uncompromising rejection of "naturalism."

J. S. H.

#### OUR BOOKSHELF.

*Highways and Byways in Wiltshire.* By E. Hutton. With illustrations by Nellie Erichsen. Pp. xvii+463. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1917.) Price 6s. net.

This book, with its charming illustrations from pen-drawings, is more nearly a guide to the ecclesiastical and monastic architecture of the Middle Ages in Wiltshire than any other yet published. It is not, it is true, in the form of a guide-

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book, but is arranged more or less as a description of a series of walks, taken by the author from different centres, beginning with Salisbury and South Wiltshire, which is treated of far more fully than the northern portion of the county.

The author has, indeed, an eye for natural scenery and dwells thereon at length on occasions; but his real interest lies in medieval architecture and in Church life previous to the Reformation, which for him is the end of all things good in Wiltshire or in England. As for Puritans, Protestants, Anglicans, they are, with scanty exceptions, anathema to him. George Herbert, Richard Hooker, and the "White King" are, it is true, amongst the exceptions, but for everybody even remotely connected with the destruction of the monasteries, for Seymours, and Thynnes, and Hungerfords, and especially Bayntons, he can find no words to fit their baseness. The only greater criminals are the modern restorers of churches. Of the restored statues in the West Front of Salisbury Cathedral he remarks: "Is it not monstrous that ignorance and imbecility should be allowed to disport themselves on such a work as this?" Yet, for all his violent preferences, he writes well and very readably, and for those whose interests lie in the same direction as his own there is a vast deal of architectural information, very largely taken, as he acknowledges, from the pages of the *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*. But it is a pity that the proofs were not more carefully read by the author. There are many misspellings and misprints, some of which make nonsense of the passages in which they occur. The index is good.

*The Vegetable Garden.* By Ed. J. S. Lay. (The Pupils' Class-book Series.) Pp. 144. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1917.) Price 1s. 6d.

ELEMENTARY education is indebted to Mr. Lay for a number of school books on various subjects intended to train children to do more and think more for themselves. Were school gardening made a subject of scientific study as well as of manual instruction, it would teach children to think as well as to work. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, and, even in the counties where most is done to encourage observation and experiment, many gardening teachers find it difficult to get away from rule of thumb. If only to help such, Mr. Lay's book is to be welcomed. Intended for class reading to accompany outdoor work, it not only describes the operations, crops, insect pests, etc., of the garden, but also puts, in an interesting way, the problems that have to be faced, and leads the children to make simple experiments through the results of which many of the problems can be tackled intelligently. As a class reader it is the most useful gardening book that has yet appeared in this country, and its use should greatly enhance the value of school gardening as a means of real education. It comes at an opportune time, for in connection with the food production campaign school gardens are being multiplied, so that a host of new teachers will be grateful for its guidance.