

committees, associations, and individual observers. The author shows not only that much progress has been made towards the solution of the problem, but also that some of the methods which have been tried, such as the score-card method of inspection, are by no means so useful as some enthusiasts on this side of the Atlantic have proclaimed.

The author is justly impressed by the merits of the North system (p. 78), the object of which is to prevent contamination of the milk at the time of milking by simple but essential precautions which can be taught to any farmer, the part of the work which cannot safely and economically be carried out at an ordinary farm being undertaken at well-equipped stations.

The quality of the milk is determined by the amount of butter-fat and the number of bacteria. A premium is paid for milk containing less than 10,000 bacteria per c.c., and also when the butter-fat exceeds a certain standard—say, 3.7 per cent.

Notwithstanding many repetitions, the book is interesting from beginning to end, and is written in a clear and popular style, which to an English reader derives a certain quaintness from its Americanisms.

SHERIDAN DELÉPINE.

### Our Bookshelf.

*The Whole Truth about Alcohol.* By George Elliot Flint. With an introduction by Dr. Abraham Jacobi. Pp. xii+294. (New York: The Macmillan Co.; London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1919.) Price 6s. net.

THE writer of this book is an uncompromising anti-prohibitionist, and a whole-hearted supporter of St. Paul's dictum with regard to the use of alcohol. He considers that alcohol has been greatly maligned, that many of the vicious attacks upon its use have no basis of real evidence, of reason, or of common sense, and that its influence for evil and as a deteriorator of the human race has been, at least, greatly exaggerated. He discusses *seriatim* the many statements that have been advanced regarding the deleterious action of alcohol, even in the most moderate doses, and the better state of total abstinence, and he adduces many arguments and some facts contravening these.

On the whole, the tenor of the book is reasonable, and the conclusion is that moderation never hurt anyone, and in some respects is better than total abstinence. With many of the author's views we are in sympathy, and we fully agree that prohibition is not the best route to temperance. Like him, we doubt if the moderate use of alcohol is in any sense deleterious; but the difficulty is to define what is moderation, and we are sure that many who take alcohol in what they regard as strict moderation are exceeding the harmless

NO. 2639, VOL. 105]

dose. For anyone who desires the anti-prohibition view the book will furnish a wealth of matter, but it is written largely from the American point of view.

Dr. Jacobi contributes a brief but interesting introduction, in which he states that in the worst cases of sepsis and toxæmia—e.g. in diphtheria and puerperal fever—alcohol in the largest doses furnishes the only salvation. With this view we largely agree; but the use of alcohol in disease is of course on a very different footing from the general use of alcoholic beverages in health.

R. T. H.

*The Geography of Plants.* By Dr. M. E. Hardy. Pp. xii+327. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1920.) Price 7s. 6d. net.

THE present volume is a continuation of the introduction to plant geography by the same author issued in 1913 as one of the series of the Oxford geographies designed by the late Prof. and Mrs. Herbertson. It may be regarded as an expansion of part iii. of the earlier work; the slight survey of the continents given there has served as the plan for the new book, which embodies a discussion of the conditions in which plants flourish, and their distribution in the great geographical divisions of the earth. The great continents are considered in successive chapters—Asia, North America, South America, Australia, Africa, and Europe—and each chapter gives a concise account of the physical features and climate, the bearing of these upon the extent and character of the vegetation, and their relation to the support and development of mankind. The book is profusely illustrated with maps and a well-selected number of photographic reproductions of aspects of vegetation. There is a geographical index, and also one of plant names, in which the scientific and popular names of the plants referred to are arranged under the different continents. The little volume should interest alike students of geography and botany, and botanists especially will welcome it as filling a gap in their series of text-books.

*A Handbook to the Vertebrate Fauna of North Wales.* By H. E. Forrest. Pp. v+106. (London: Witherby and Co., 1919) Price 6s. net.

MR. FORREST, the author of "The Vertebrate Fauna of North Wales" (1907), has now published this shorter "handbook," convenient for naturalists and interested visitors. It deals with 28 prehistoric mammals, 8 mammals extinct during the historic period, 43 existing mammals, 227 birds, 5 reptiles, 6 amphibians, and 151 fishes. Under each species is a brief summary showing its status and distribution in the area. Trustworthy information has been collected from many observers, and the whole work is marked by careful precision, an indispensable quality in faunistic census-taking.