

not in the same degree. Comte's biography is the work of a professed disciple, but he seems unable to make the apostle of "Humanity" a sympathetic figure. There is a feeling of something lacking in the book in this respect. There is no evidence that it is intended only for the elect, and the ordinary reader may easily be repelled, even if he belongs to the class, so generally misnamed the proletariat, to whom Comte expected his social philosophy to appeal most powerfully. His Positivism certainly made a great impression on those of the working class who attended his free lectures on astronomy, the first science to become "positive" in Comte's view. The Positivist calendar, given as an appendix, is interesting, though to the general reader many of the names are quite unknown.

(3) This book is a really fascinating character-sketch of Huxley by his son, and the great "agnostic" stands out a vivid, rugged, but very sympathetic figure, an honest seeker after truth, a resolute opponent of "dogma." We meet also the outstanding personalities of his contemporaries, Darwin, with Hooker, Tyndall, and other members of the famous X Club. Had the question arisen forty or fifty years earlier, what would we not have given to be present at a symposium debating Einstein's theory of relativity? Huxley's indictment of "the Church" is as thorough as his championship of Darwin, and might be unanswerable could we altogether ignore the limitations of the human intellect. His logical conclusion that his views precluded the hope of future rewards as well as the fear of future punishments enforced on him the duty of living the most upright of lives, and Sir S. Walpole could not have been by any means the only one to endorse the verdict of the little girl who emphatically declared: "I think Prof. Huxley is the best man I have ever known."

W. W. B.

### Our Bookshelf.

*The Dyeing Industry.* Being a third edition of *Dyeing in Germany and America.* By S. H. Higgins. Pp. viii + 189. (Manchester: At the University Press; London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1919.) Price 8s. 6d. net.

IN the first edition of Mr. Higgins's book (*NATURE*, November 7, 1907, p. 4) the subject-matter presented was mainly novel in character, giving, as it did, the author's impression of the state of development of the dyeing industry in Germany, Austria, and the United States. A second edition was issued during the war period (*NATURE*, June 4, 1917, p. 303), and the present notice refers to a third edition.

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It is gratifying to find such a steady demand for technical literature, which presumably arises from new readers, but the revised title of the book, "*The Dyeing Industry*," may lead such to look for a systematic treatment of the various aspects of the industry. This is not attempted in the book, the only new features of which are the inclusion of some of the author's recent valuable contributions to current literature and an extension of the section dealing with the manufacture of dyestuffs—which, by the way, is a quite distinct industry.

It is to be hoped that the author will find an opportunity of producing a book dealing with the dyeing industry of the present day, since information gathered so long ago as 1907 is unlikely now to represent the position with regard to such a rapidly developing scientific industry as dyeing.

W. M. G.

*A Handbook of British Mosquitoes.* By Dr. William Dickson Lang. Pp. vii + 125 + 5 plates. (London: British Museum (Natural History), 1920.) Price 20s.

DR. LANG'S work makes it possible to determine with comparative ease most, if not all, British mosquitoes, including, so far as they are known, the larvæ in their various instars. The book consists mainly of three sections—(1) Introductory; (2) Identification; and (3) Systematic Account. In the introductory section are given the characters by which mosquitoes may be distinguished from gnat-like flies, a general account of the life-history, and such discussion of the morphology of the adults and larvæ as is necessary for purposes of identification. The second section is treated in an eminently practical manner, and the interpretation of the directions, lucid themselves, is rendered simple by the numerous excellent illustrations. In the third section the taxonomic aspect is considered, and our knowledge of each species summarised.

Dr. Lang's work will prove of great value to all interested in mosquitoes, and particularly to those who find the existing monographs on these insects too technical or involved. It gives a clear insight into the characters used in distinguishing these insects and their larvæ, but it must be remembered that the value of some of the points used, although great in separating the British species, is really exaggerated, and, therefore, neither they nor the sequence of instructions can be rigidly applied to foreign mosquitoes.

*Volumetric Analysis.* By J. B. Coppock. Second edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. 100. (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., n.d.) Price 3s. 6d. net.

THOUGH this volume has no special features to distinguish it from others of a similar type, it should prove useful to elementary students of chemistry preparing for examinations of Intermediate B.Sc. standard.