

the median side of the axillary artery; in Fig. 13 the coraco-brachialis muscle is shown on the median side of the musculo-cutaneous nerve; and in Fig. 51 the outer head of the musculus accessorius is omitted. These matters can be readily amended in any further edition, and scarcely detract from the value of the book, which in its length and simplicity is a not inadequate *riposte* to the larger and more elaborate manuals.

W. W.

*Splendours of the Sky.* By Isabel Martin Lewis. Pp. vii+343. (London: John Murray, 1920.) Price 8s. net.

THIS book can be warmly recommended to readers who desire to obtain a popular non-technical summary of the advances made in physical astronomy in the present century. The author's position as a computer for the American Nautical Almanac ensures an accurate knowledge of geometrical astronomy and of problems relating to distances and motions; and she writes in an enthusiastic tone that evinces a deep admiration for the "splendours of the sky."

The planets are reviewed in order. In discussing the vexed question of the rotation of Venus the author's judgment leans to the twenty-four-hour value, which implies a physical condition not unlike that on the earth. Prof. W. H. Pickering's explanation of the Martian canals as being due to the deposition of moisture by storms following fairly definite tracks is favoured as the most plausible one, but Lowell's irrigation theory is also described.

The remarkable solar work accomplished at Mount Wilson comes next, including the study of the sun's magnetic field, vortices round sunspots, and the recently named "hydrogen bombs." There is also mention of Einstein's prediction of the gravitational deflection of light, and the preparations made to test it at the eclipse of 1919. But the book went to press before the results were available.

The chapters on the stars include such recent work as Dr. Shapley's determination of the distances of clusters. It is necessary to criticise the suggestion on p. 247 that the M and N types are alternative routes to extinction. The galactic concentration of the N stars is proof of great distance and high luminosity; they are therefore giants, not dwarfs. A protest must be made against the use of the words "billion," "trillion," etc., in the American sense in a work published in London. An international agreement on the meaning of these terms would be welcome.

A. C. D. CROMMELIN.

*Peetikay: An Essay towards the Abolition of Spelling: Being a Sequel to "Some Questions of Phonetic Theory,"* part i., 1916. By Dr. Wilfrid Perrett. Pp. 96. (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd., 1920.) Price 6s. net.

It is refreshing to find nowadays a scholarly essay written in a style so attractive as to engage the

interest of even a casual reader. Dr. Perrett, in his quest for a land free from the horrors of orthography, is a hearty knight, who will merrily break a lance, if not a crown, with any pedant who comes along. He will have none of your "reformed" spelling, which is but one more shuffle of the historic pack of twenty-six letters among some forty sounds. He does not want to reform spelling indifferently well, so he creates a new alphabet, which is called "Peetikay," a word composed of his three first consonants and three first vowels. The basis of his vowel notation is the pitch of the whispered vowel, and he evolves a system of characters which are "real," giving at once some indication of both vowel quality and vowel length. His classification of consonant sounds starts from the voiceless mutes "p, t, k," being arranged finally in order of their place of formation. Particularly interesting, and frequently provocative of discussion, are his remarks upon the English sounds "h" and "r."

By means of his new notation Dr. Perrett aims at a just correspondence between signs visible and signs audible, so that English writing shall be English language in counterfeit. It is a book full of learning, well seasoned with humour, and brimming over with originality; it is a powerful blow at those who bleat about "vulgarity, degeneracy, and corruption of English," and an earnest appeal for "less professorism, and a little more shrewd insight and informed, constructive teaching."

A. LL. J.

*A History of English Philosophy.* By Prof. W. R. Sorley. Pp. xvi+380. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1920.) Price 20s. net.

In this very useful and handy volume we are given, in chronological order, a short record and brief epitome of the men of British birth who have a claim to be remembered on account of their philosophical writings. It begins with the medieval scholastics who wrote in Latin, and whose British birth is merely of biographical interest, and it ends with writers several of whom are still living, and among whom the author of this book is himself entitled to take rank. The attempt, however, to present this succession of British-born philosophers as a history of, or as material for a history of, English philosophy is not, and in the nature of the case cannot be, a success. In the history of philosophy English philosophy has denoted two distinct movements at definite periods. In the eighteenth century it denoted, throughout the intellectual world, the system of Newton and the principle of Locke. At the end of the nineteenth century English philosophy meant the evolution theory of Charles Darwin and the method of Herbert Spencer. In this book Newton and Darwin are mentioned as having given a direction to philosophy, but they are given no place among the philosophers. On the other hand, William Gilbert (quite rightly) is included, but this makes the omission of the two former only the more remarkable.