

services is then dealt with. Finally the author asks: What are the gains and the losses in national health? Some of the gains are obvious, but there are failures and losses also: failure to get ignorant people to recognise quackery, and loss in average fitness through success in saving feeble infants of the type that used to contribute to the infant mortality rate. Here, as the author implies, we come upon a problem which has its moral as well as its medical aspect.

*Common Pests: how to Control some of the Pests that affect Man's Health, Happiness and Welfare.* By Rennie W. Doane. Pp. viii + 397. (Springfield, Ill., and Baltimore, Md.: Charles C. Thomas & London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1931.) 21s. net.

THIS book sets out to be a handy manual for the farmer, stockman, gardener, and the householder. Being intended for American readers, it deals exclusively with American pests, and much of the information given is of little value to readers outside the United States. It contains many Americanisms, and descends at times to a childishness which is extremely irritating. Little is left to the intelligence of the reader; for example, on p. 119, the author, referring to the use of hydrocyanic acid gas, remarks: "As this gas is deadly to all animal life, rats, mice, and all kinds of insects will be destroyed. Any cats, birds, or other household pets left in the house while the fumigating is being done will, of course, suffer the same fate."

The field which the author has attempted to cover is too large to admit of satisfactory treatment, and the ambitiousness of the project defeats its own ends. Spiders, mites, insects, parasitic worms, birds, and mammals are all included. In many cases the descriptions are too meagre to be of use to any but the specialist, and much of the matter is unintelligible to any but the scientific reader. Nevertheless, a vast amount of interesting information is given, much of it very useful to those for whom it is intended, particularly in the chapters on insecticides and the control of insect pests. The matter is well arranged and convenient for reference, and the book is profusely illustrated.

J. O. C.

*Applied Personnel Administration.* By J. E. Walters. Pp. ix + 338. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1931.) 18s. 6d. net.

ALL human affairs seem to be in process of reorganisation, notably the industrial situation. The contrast between the inter-relationship of master and man to-day and prior to the year 1832 is marked. Formerly, the employee was normally regarded as a mere producing factor, without human interest to the employer. A pioneer in humanisation was Robert Owen, who not only pointed, but also led, the way on the path of Christian socialism in industrial affairs. Sir Walter Besant's later efforts in the same direction met with a practical response in the People's Palace which Mr. Beaumont established in Mile End,

but this, unfortunately, became side-tracked. The United States, as Mr. J. E. Walters shows in this well-arranged and comprehensive book, has gone steadily forward on lines of industrial progress; and though some may consider that there is an excess of officialdom and of official methods, yet the practical outcome of the movement has been beneficial, not to employees and employers alone, but also to the public at large. It may well be that the swing of the pendulum has been excessive, and that a certain tendency towards over-guidance and over-control has resulted; this may, however, presently swing slightly backward, whereby individual self-dependence will be better established.

P. L. M.

*The History of the Maya: from the Earliest Times to the Present Day.* By Thomas Gann and J. Eric Thompson. Pp. x + 264 (26 plates). (London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931.) 8s. 6d.

THIS brief history of the Mayas should do much in helping to stimulate interest in the archæology of Central America. Notwithstanding the fact that one British and several American expeditions are now at work each season on Central American sites, very little interest is taken in the results by the English public. Yet the work of these expeditions is adding rapidly to our knowledge of a remarkable civilisation, of which the problems are as fascinating as they have proved baffling. The authors of this little book have not attempted to discuss controversial matters, nor have they aimed at a detailed description of the sites. They give a historical outline of Maya history as revealed by the most recent discoveries of the earliest and latest dates of occupation of the Maya settlements, and sketch briefly the main features of Maya art, industry, daily life, and religion. The book, in fact, contains in readable form exactly the information which will give the background essential for the appreciation of the character and bearing of the discoveries now being made by scientific exploration.

*Social Organisation and Ceremonial Institutions of the Bomvana.* By P. A. W. Cook. Pp. xi + 171 + 16 plates. (Cape Town and Johannesburg: Juta and Co., Ltd., n.d.) 10s. 6d.

THE Bomvana are a Bantu people of the Transkei who, according to their own tradition, are derived from the Amanguema, a people said to have lived in Natal. It is probable that it was somewhere about the middle of the sixteenth century that they were driven out of Natal and settled among the Pondos, with whom they remained until the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is evident that although all call themselves Bomvana, the tribe is composite. Mr. Cook has made a very thorough study of their social organisation, religion, and ritual. While their institutions generally conform to type, it is indicated very clearly that, speaking broadly, no generalisation about the Bantu peoples of South Africa is sound. Each must be studied individually. This warning is not unnecessary, even for anthropologists, and still less for the administration.