

USEFUL BOOKS.

[We think that the REVIEW can be of use to teachers by bringing to their notice books likely to be useful in the school-room, in a fuller and more authoritative way than is possible in our regular book notices. With this end in view, we propose to devote a column or so every month to a detailed description of some one book, pointing out its advantages for the teachers' work, and giving some suggestions how it may be used. This month Professor H. G. Perry, whose authority on the subject will be admitted, recommends Mrs. Comstocks' book on Nature-Study.]

The Handbook of Nature Study, by Anna Botsford Comstock, Lecturer in Nature Study in Cornell University, stands unique among nature study writings, both in the manner of presentation and the comprehensiveness of subjects. Its bright, cheery, vivacious style breathes of the life of out-of-doors. There is motion, interest and joy in every sentence, and whole lessons in every paragraph. No other single book on nature-study fills so many needs of the school, and contributes so much to the information of the home in so clear and practical, and in so impressive and attractive a manner.

The book has been designed to meet the needs of the least-trained teacher, and through it she may learn precisely how to present the delights of nature. The facts that the teacher should know regarding each topic are given, or suggested as the "Teacher's Story"; this is followed by a lesson in which are outlined some of the observations to be made by the children. The great merit of the book lies in the fact that the interest of both teacher and pupil is aroused, and together they seek with keen delight the open book of nature.

There are two hundred and thirty-four lessons, with about one hundred and fifty bearing directly on Agriculture.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I treats of the Teaching of Nature-Study; Part II, of Animal Life, comprising such sub-divisions as, I, Bird Study; II, Fish Study; III, Batrachian Study; IV, Reptile Study; V, Mammal Study; VI, Insect Study; VII, Other Invertebrate Animal Study. Part III, of Plant Life, comprising, besides an extended introduction, I, Wild-flower Study; II, Cultivated-Plant Study; III, Flowerless-Plant Study; IV, Tree Study; and Part IV, of Earth and Sky.

The work is published by the Comstock Publishing Company, Cornell Heights, Ithaca, New York, and is a large 8vo. volume, with an attractive

green-and-black-check cloth binding with gold lettering, comprising xviii+938 pages, and adorned with over 1,000 illustrations.

The book may be had from the publishers as follows:—

The one volume edition sells for \$3.25, postpaid, \$3.65; bound in two volumes, \$4.00, postpaid, \$4.50. These volumes are sold separately at \$2.00 each, postpaid, \$2.25. Volume I includes Parts I and II; Volume II, Parts III and IV, mentioned above.

This work should be in every school library, and in the hands of every teacher and student of nature study subjects.

H. G. PERRY.

CURRENT EVENTS.

It will soon be possible to cross Central Africa by railway and the navigable rivers. The Germans have completed a line from the east coast to a point near Lake Tanganyika; and the Belgians are building lines to connect the navigable stretches of the Congo.

An American surgeon has discovered a new method of painless surgery which is believed to be of great importance. The area of operation, it is said, may be shut off from the brain for several days if necessary.

A new alloy of magnesium and aluminum will be useful where lightness is required. It has but one-third the weight of cast-iron, and a much greater tensile strength. Its power of conducting heat is fourteen times as great as that of iron.

A new telephone transmitter fits close to the mouth of the speaker and transmits the vibrations of the voice in the usual way, but allows no sound to escape into the room occupied by the speaker.

A wireless telegraph station using the Paulsen system is to be established at Newcastle, N. B. The central steel tower, which is being made in England, will be five hundred feet high; and there will be six other towers, each a hundred feet high. This station will send messages across the Atlantic to a station on the west coast of Ireland, and will form a link in an all-British service to extend around the world. The Paulsen system is the chief rival of the Marconi system, but differs from it so much that a Marconi instrument cannot receive its messages. The Marconi station in Cape Breton will still continue in use.

Exclusive of those things that are merely of transient interest, wars and rumors of wars make up the greater part of the current news of the day. The triumphs of peace are not so easily chronicled. A new invention or a new discovery may have a more important or a more lasting effect upon the future welfare of nations than a great war, and some of the most important contests are those that are not fought out on the field of battle, but are settled by diplomacy. Such events take place so quietly that they may pass unnoticed at the time. The clash of arms and the appearance of international questions that may lead to armed conflict will always demand attention.

The world or at least the English-speaking world and the nations of Europe, rejoiced when the war between