

arrested by the heading "Be Magnetic." Our attention was at once caught, since we had not known that it was any part of a master's duty to emulate an electric eel, or a black cat stroked the wrong way on a frosty night. We were disappointed at finding that the recommendation merely was to understand the subject, to be earnest, and not to be listless, cold or formal. Let us seriously ask Mr. Hughes if he thinks any listless teacher would derive much benefit from being told this.

We are informed that much of the matter in these little works is to be found in similar manuals published in the States. Certainly we should be pleased to think that a Canadian Inspector of Schools is not chargeable with composing such rubbish, but it is questionable whether our national position is much bettered by the discovery that he considered the stuff worth appropriating,

"Convey, the wise it call,"

and issuing under his name. Probably the author regards himself in a dual capacity, like the famous Prince-Bishop in "Gengulphus," and while the *Inspector's* consequence may be a little lowered by this petty huckstering of empty books, the *individual* may feel a compensating weight in his breeches pocket that will console and help him to bear up against the remarks of what he, no doubt, considers a too-censorious world.

SCIENCE PRIMERS, *Introductory*, by Professor Huxley. New York: D. Appleton & Co.; *Physiology*, by Dr. Foster; *Astronomy*, by J. Norman Lockyer, F.R.S. Toronto: James Campbell & Son; *Geology*, by Professor Geikie. London: Macmillan & Co. Toronto: James Campbell & Son.

THIS series of Primers, some of which are mentioned above, is edited by Professors Huxley, Roscoe, and Balfour Stewart, and goes hand-in-hand with the kindred series of History and Literature Primers edited by Mr. Green and already noticed in our columns.

Taking them in the order we have given, we find Professor Huxley introducing the student to the general methods of science, and teaching the simple and fundamental

rules that should guide us in observing nature. A careless inquirer might think that, in reserving this general field for himself, the Professor had selected an easy task, and that it must be far harder to discourse on Geology or the Planetary system than to describe such simple subjects as Sensations and Things, Properties and Powers. But a very little thought will teach us that the very simplicity of the subject demands a great deal in the way of clearness and precision of statement. It is possible for a pedant to put forth a great show of knowledge over the orbit of Jupiter or the Devonian rocks, and yet be far from grasping the meaning of what he teaches, but if a man sets to work to tell you the properties of a glassful of water there can be no disguising any latent incapacity. He must either fail altogether, or else his comprehension of his subject must be as crystal clear as the fresh drawn contents of the beaker itself. There is nothing harder than to be scientifically correct in things of every-day life.

Running shortly over Mr. Huxley's little book, we find it divided into three heads. First comes a short dissertation upon Nature and Science, the eleven subdivisions of which carry us over the preliminary ground, defining sensations and things, properties and powers. It explains what we really mean by speaking of a law of nature, not, for instance, that stones fall to the ground in consequence of the law of gravitation, but that the law of gravitation is a "way of asserting that which invariably happens when heavy bodies at the surface of the earth are free to move." [p. 13.] We are shewn the effect these laws, when ascertained, have on our practical conduct; and the means by which they are discovered, Observation, Experiment, and Reasoning are laid before us.

Part II. treats of material objects, and is divided into two heads, Inorganic or Mineral Bodies, and Living Bodies. Part III. only contains a very few lines on the subject of Immaterial Objects, upon which the Professor refers his readers to the special work on Psychology.