responding to a determinate charge diminishes rapidly during the first few seconds, and then varies almost as the terms of a feebly convergent geometrical progression. The law of variation varies with the substance, and is not always the same for disks of the same substance. The values of the specific inductive capacity obtained after as short a charge as possible are different for substances which are apparently identical, but are always sensibly the same disk.

BOOK-REVIEWS.

The Law of Equivalents in its Relation to Political and Social Ethics. By EDWARD PAYSON. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. 12°. $2.

THE title of this book is forbidding, and as inappropriate as it is forbidding. The author's 'Law of Equivalents,' which he announces in such a formal manner, is nothing but the familiar truth that if we wish to attain any end, no matter what, we must use the means appropriate to that end; and that if we use the wrong means, we shall not attain the end, even with the greatest exertions. The truth is one of great practical importance; but its announcement in such a form, and as if it was a new discovery, is not fitted to attract the reader. The author's style, too, though generally clear, is too dithyrambic for a philosophical work, passages like the following being not infrequent: "Family — the very word itself is redolent of sweetness. It is a holy, yea, a wholly divine word. It fairly outtops every other word in the language. It is not so much an apothegm as a treatise, not so much a treatise as a text, not so much a text as a sermon, not so much a sermon as a poem," with much more of the same sort. The defects of style are aggravated by the too frequent use of interrogative sentences where declaratory ones would be more appropriate. But when these deductions are made, there is much in the book that is good, and may prove useful. Mr. Payson's special concern is moral improvement; and he insists that men are prone, and Americans especially so, to use the wrong means for this purpose; as, for instance, when they try to make men good by legislation, or to make them learned by simply establishing libraries and schoolhouses. In such cases, he says, we do not offer nature the right equivalent, we do not use the right means to reach the desired end. He rightly insists, also, on the importance of time as a condition of moral and intellectual improvement, reminding us that such improvement must necessarily be slow, and that changes in the beliefs and practices of a nation can only take place when the progress of events has prepared the way. He finds in the American people a tendency to look for some great spiritual movement as wonderful in its way as the great material advance of the past hundred years, and resulting in the regeneration of society; and he maintains that such expectations are unwarranted. Mr. Payson's views are in the main in accord with those of most judicious thinkers; but his work would have been more interesting and more useful if it had been written in a soberer and more philosophical style.

Lectures on Geography. By Lieut.-Gen. R. STRACHEY. London and New York, Macmillan. 12°. $1.25.

THE University of Cambridge, about a year ago, accepted the proposal of the Royal Geographical Society to provide a lecturer on geography with the aid of funds to be supplied by that society. As an introduction to the lectures on this science, new to the Cambridge University, the council of the society was requested to arrange a course of lectures illustrative of the general character and scope of the instruction in geography suitable for a university course. In compliance with this request, a course of four lectures was delivered by Gen. R. Strachey, president of the Royal Geographical Society, which have now been published in the form of a book. Strachey designates as the aim of geographical science, to investigate and delineate the various features of the earth; to study the distribution of land and sea, the configuration and relief of the surface, position on the globe, and so forth, — facts which determine the existing conditions of various parts of the earth, or which indicate former conditions; and to ascertain the relations that exist between those features and all that is observed on the earth. On account of this point of view, the book is especially valuable. Since the importance of physical geography has become recognized, the tendency has been to underestimate the value of topography, in the same way in which systematic botany and zoölogy became neglected when biology became the favorite study. Strachey first discusses the astronomical relations of the earth, its form and magnitude, and the history of its measurement. Appended to this is a chapter on map-making, in which he dwells upon Tissot's projections, the principles of which are unfortunately not yet sufficiently known either in England or in America. After a brief historical sketch of the development of our geographical knowledge, he passes to a brief review of physical geography and to considering the relations of vegetable and animal life to terrestrial features. He concludes with some remarks on the influence of geographical conditions on man. The book is clearly written, and we hope it will be widely read, as the author, by his terse and interesting treatment of the subject, impresses the reader with the importance of disseminating and promoting the science of geography.

Les Formes du Terrain. By G. DE LA NOË. Paris, Imprimerie Nationale. 4°.

LIEUT.-COL. D. DE LA NOË, of the geographical service of the French army, has prepared, with the collaboration of M. Emm. de Margerie, an elaborate treatise on the forms of the ground. It is of both geological and geographical interest. Under the first heading we should place the argument for the derivation of land-relief by sub-aerial denudation, the evidence for the origin of valleys by stream-erosion essentially independent of fractures, and other discussion of processes; under the latter heading we should include the description of plateaus, valleys, and other topographic elements, in connection with the conditions of their origin and development. The deductive considerations are fully supplemented with illustrations in a large volume of plates, many of which are reproductions of excellent topographic maps, chiefly of French localities. The relation of the activity of streams to their controlling base-level receives much more explicit attention than is common with European authors, and the sections in which this large problem is discussed are very profitable reading. The same may be said of the explanation of cross-valleys such as occur in the Jura Mountains. They are shown to traverse the anticlinal ridges where the structural arch, if complete, would be lowest. The list of authors quoted is remarkably full, and American writers receive a large share of notice.

Leibniz's New Essays concerning the Human Understanding. By JOHN DEWEY. Chicago, S. C. Griggs & Co. 16°. $1.25.

THIS work is the latest issue in the series of 'German Philosophical Classics for English Readers,' now publishing under the editorship of Prof. G. S. Morris. The plan of the series does not contemplate the complete exposition of any philosopher's views, but only of some one of his masterpieces. This plan has some advantages, but also some disadvantages; and these latter are specially prominent in the case of Leibniz, whose mental activity was so multifarious. He was by no means a mere philosopher, and even in philosophy the 'New Essays' present but a small portion of his views. Professor Dewey has seen this, and endeavors, so far as his space permits, to remedy it. He remarks that "Leibniz, like every great man, absorbed into himself the various thoughts of his time, and in absorbing transformed them. He brought into a focus of brilliancy the diffused lights of truth shining here and there. He summed up in a pregnant and comprehensive category the scattered principles of his age." Some of us will regard this encomium as a little extravagant, yet, at all events, it shows what Leibniz attempted to do, and hence Professor Dewey has found it necessary to enlarge his plan a little, and give some account of those doctrines of his author not presented in the 'New Essays.' He has, we think, given too much attention to the theories of monads, and pre-established harmony, which are products of imagination rather than of reason; while, on the other hand, he has taken no notice of Leibniz's attempt to reconcile Infinite Goodness with the existence of evil. In dealing with the 'New Essays' themselves, which were written in reply to Locke, Professor Dewey has to present the views of both philosophers to a considerable extent; and in doing so he clearly reveals his own philosophical standpoint. He is a disciple of Kant and Hegel, and looks upon Leibniz as their forerunner, while Locke's work is in his eyes little