

Grundriss der Ethnologischen Jurisprudenz.—ALBERT HERMANN POST.—Two Vols.—Oldenburg and Leipzig, 1895.

Ethnologische Studien zur Ersten Entwicklung der Strafe.—S. R. STEINMETZ.—Two Vols.—Leiden and Leipzig, 1894.

In these two carefully prepared and thoroughly reasoned works we have for the first time an unbiased application of the facts furnished by ethnology to an analysis of the evolution of jurisprudence. The study of them will prove of the greatest profit to the advocate, the anthropologist and the philosophic student of the growth of society.

Dr. Steinmetz, in his over 900 large octavo pages devoted to the subject, pursues the idea of punishment through all the forms under which it appears in early conditions, such as personal revenge, blood feuds, compounding of offences, family, totemic and social punishment, the vengeance of the gods, and religious chastisement. The foundation for this historic analysis is laid in the earlier pages of the first volume by an able excursus on the psychological motives which underlie the thirst for vengeance and the passion for cruelty. This furnishes a philosophic basis on which the author constructs his conclusions by an inductive study of all the forms of punishment and penalty found in primitive and early peoples. With this he is contented, and with a temperance worthy of high commendation, he refrains from committing his work to one or another 'school' by applying it to the defence of some pet doctrine of popular sociology, which would at once limit its usefulness. He rather says: "Here are the psychic motives; and here are the results to which under various conditions they have given rise. Let the facts present their own inferences."

This impartial spirit also thoroughly pervades the more comprehensive study of Dr.

Post. It is considerably over a thousand pages in length and is an exhaustive analysis of the whole notion of rights, of the person, the family, the clan and the state, as they apply to both persons and things. In the second volume he traverses in his investigation of penalties much of the ground occupied by Dr. Steinmetz, and a comparison of their methods and results is quite interesting. The author's reading is immense, and the care with which he cites his authorities is most praiseworthy. While fully aware of the distinctly philosophic nature of his subject,—for a people's abstract conceptions of ethics are embodied in their concrete forms of laws,—he withstands the temptation to theorize on these points and keeps himself strictly within the limits of objective and inductive inquiry.

Of both these works it may be said that they represent the purest scientific method, and that they stand in the front rank of the contributions to Ethnology in its true sense which have appeared of late years.

D. G. B.

Flora of Nebraska.—Edited by members of the Botanical Seminar of the University of Nebraska.—Introduction and Part 1., *Protophyta-Phycophyta*; Part 2, *Coleochaetaceae, Characeae*.—Lincoln, Nebraska, Published by the Seminar, 1894. 4to, pp. 123, pl. 36.

The beautiful work here noticed must long hold first place in the published results of the exploration and study of a local flora. It is hard to find words in which to express our gratification at its appearance, and we have tried in vain to find any point which is fairly open to adverse criticism. Beginning with a synopsis of the larger groups, including families, and an introduction contributed by Professor Bessey, in the details of which there is room for much difference of opinion, there follow concise descriptions of the classes, orders, families, genera,

species and varieties of Protophyta and Phycophyta found within the State, contributed by Mr. DeAlton Saunders, and of the Coleochætaceæ and Characeæ by Mr. Albert F. Woods. The descriptions are well drawn, the typography excellent and the plates accurate and well executed. We tender our cordial congratulations to all concerned in the production of the book and to all who may have opportunity to use it.

N. L. B.

NOTES.

THE SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

THE programs of the mid-winter meetings of the several scientific societies promise large attendance and many important papers. The American Society of Naturalists meets at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and in conjunction with it the American Morphological Society and the American Physiological Society. At the same place and time the American Society of Geologists meets. During the same week the Anatomists meet at Columbia College, New York; the American Psychological Association meets at Princeton; the American Folklore Society meets at Washington, and the annual meeting of the American Mathematical Society is held at Columbia College. These meetings will be fully reported in SCIENCE.

PHYSICS.

ACTUAL trial trips with flying machines have recently been made by Mr. Maxim and Prof. Langley. Mr. Maxim's machine was fastened to rails to prevent its rising, and sailed 500 feet at the rate of 45 miles per hour. Prof. Langley's aeroplane was allowed to fly over the water at Quantico, Md., on December 8th. Both Mr. Maxim and Prof. Langley use light steam engines in preference to storage batteries.

THE Société Internationale des Électriciens established a central laboratory at Paris about seven years ago. The principal

object of the laboratory was the preservation of electrical standards, and to afford practical electricians an opportunity for testing their various instruments. It is evident that such a laboratory offers special advantages for the investigation of questions belonging to the science and industry of electricity. These facilities have been to some extent utilized; but, in order to increase the usefulness of the institution, the Society has added to it a School of Applied Electricity. This school, which will be opened on December 3d, has been constructed on a plot of land granted by the city of Paris, the funds for the building having been raised by private subscription. Purely practical instruction will be given at the school. There will be two chief courses, one dealing with the industrial applications of electricity, and the other with electrometry. It is hoped that the school will be a training ground for higher work in the Central Laboratory, to which it is attached.—*Nature*.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

DR. CHARLES L. DANA's address on *Degeneration and its Stigmata*, delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the New York Academy of Medicine, Nov. 28, 1894, has been printed in the *Medical Record*, of Dec. 15th. Dr. Dana traces with much skill the historic development of the scientific method that discovers mental traits and especially mental degenerations from their physical manifestations.

THE charges made against the management of the Elmira Reformatory have been dismissed by Governor Flower. The majority of the commissioners who examined the charges report that the institution stands preëminent among the reformatories of the world and that its success in the reformation of criminals has been extraordinary. This confirms the views of the leading criminologists and reformers.