

ject of immense extent and one that must be treated objectively.

Broadly regarded, physiology and medicine are inseparable. Since the medical man's object is to remedy the various ills to which the human body is liable, every fresh discovery in physiology will sooner or later be serviceable to him in the preservation and repair of that wonderful structure. It is an extreme satisfaction to me that in honoring the memory of a great physiologist and man of science I am able to make use of ideas and facts which from a unique standpoint affording every prospect of success throw light upon the highest and most complicated portion of the animal mechanism.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS.

Lehrbuch der Anorganischen Chemie. Von Professor Dr. H. ERDMANN, Direktor des anorganisch-chemischen Instituts der königlichen technischen Hochschule zu Berlin. Vierte Auflage (neuntes bis zwölftes Tausend) mit 303 Abbildungen, 95 Tabellen, einer Rechentafel, und sieben farbigen Tafeln. Braunschweig, F. Vieweg und Sohn. 1906. Pp. 796. In Leinwand gebunden M. 17.

A long review of the second edition of this book appeared in SCIENCE in 1901.¹ The present edition has been thoroughly revised, and contains valuable additions to text, to illustrations and to tables.

The weaknesses and the strong points of the book remain practically the same, as both are inherent in the author's scheme. Erdmann believes that a text-book of inorganic chemistry should describe the occurrence, properties, reactions, manufacture and uses of all inorganic elements and compounds, with liberal illustration of instructive experiments, of apparatus and of technical processes. No other one-volume text-book is so complete, so well illustrated and so thoroughly up to date in these respects.

Erdmann does not believe in the introduc-

tion of physical chemical theory in the descriptive text, but makes a brief résumé of general chemistry in the 87 pages of the introductory chapter. There are those who will sympathize with Erdmann in this arrangement, others who may be reminded of the eccentric American author who left his book unpunctuated and put several pages of commas, periods, etc., at the end of the book for use as the reader might please. Certainly many phenomena in the field of inorganic chemistry find the clearest explanation by the application of the laws of physical chemistry, and remain obscure if such explanation is not given.

This objection, however, does not lessen the practical value of Erdmann's book, because there is no text-book of inorganic chemistry written from a physical chemical point of view which is comparable with Erdmann even in general descriptive data, still less in technical information. It is, therefore, to be expected that this fourth edition will meet the same cordial reception and large sales as its predecessors. E. R.

Vermehrung und Sexualität bei den Pflanzen. Von E. KÜSTER. Leipzig, B. G. Teubner. 1906. Pp. vi + 120. 38 figures.

In America one is accustomed to look with suspicion upon all books in which an attempt is made to popularize science. All too often this suspicion is justified, for who has not met with books in which scientific accuracy has been sacrificed to the sensationalism demanded by a certain class of the public or where the science is so diluted by allegory or fable as to be unrecognizable. The book before us is, however, of an entirely different type. It is one of a series of popular scientific works ('Aus Natur und Geisteswelt') in which each book is written by a specialist who knows his subject.

The subject of reproduction and sexuality in plants is a difficult one to handle so as to be comprehended by persons who have studied but little or no botany and it is in this connection that the chief criticism can be made, to the effect that it is to be feared that parts of the book will be found too technical to be

¹ SCIENCE, Vol. XIII., pp. 268-70.