tion of a difficult subject. We are glad to receive 'The Briefe Course' (Holt), revised by Professor G. W. Fitz, of Harvard University, and to commend it cordially. The book has been corrected throughout and a chapter added on growth and nutrition. The three appendices, which occupy nearly one fourth of the book, are all open to criticism. They are on 'Emergencies,' 'Alcohol and Tobacco' and 'Demonstrations and Experiments.' 'Emergencies' make up part of the examination in physiology which may be taken for entrance to Harvard College, but it is not evident that a school boy will profit intellectually or practically by being told how to treat apoplexy. The demonstrations and experiments, also part of the Harvard examination, may in their present form be useful for the teacher, but scarcely for the student. The reviser states that the appendix on narcotics is retained against his judgment. The injurious effects of narcotics must be foolish laws be taught in most public school courses on physiology; but it would be possible to prepare a statement that would be scientifically correct, even though its teaching might be ethically obnoxious. The statements in this book are not exactly incorrect, but they would produce false impressions on young students. The results of excess are pictured, and the boy is left to infer that the final state of his father, who drinks a glass of wine for dinner, will be delirium tremens. But the boy will be more likely to conclude that physiology is not an 'exact' science.

MINERVA, 'A Yearbook of the Learned World,' is indispensable to the editor and useful to every one who wishes to keep informed on the progress of education and science. As is well known, the book contains accounts of universities, libraries, museums, learned societies, etc., throughout the world. The names of over 25,000 officers of these institutions are given, and with an accuracy that is truly remarkable. The eighth volume, 1899, which reaches us from Messrs. Lemcke and Buechner (12 Broadway, New York City), is thoroughly revised from official sources, and is enlarged and improved in several respects, including the addition of a number of Canadian institutions. Programs of the various international scientific congresses are promised for next year. The importance of the great universities of the world cannot be judged from the number of students, as the data are not comparable, but in this respect the order of the first ten is given as follows: Paris, 12,047; Berlin, 10,306; Madrid, 6,148; Vienna, 5,710; Naples, 5,103; Moscow, 4,461; Budapest, 4,407; Munich, 3,997; Harvard, 3,674; St. Petersburg, 3,615. As a matter of fact, Harvard, with over 5,000 students all told, is probably now the fourth in size of the universities of the world, being surpassed only by Paris, Berlin and Vienna. There are thirty universities having over 2,000 students, and, of these, nine are in the United States, four in Russia and in Great Britain, three in France, in Germany and in Austria-Hungary, two in Italy and one in Spain and in Greece.

Another useful work of reference is Who's Who? edited by Mr. Douglas Sladen and published by Black in London and by Macmillan in New York. It contains brief bibliographies of people talked about in Great Britain, including all the leading men of science and a complete list of the members of the Royal Society. Americans are also noticed, but only in small numbers. Presidents Gilman and Harper are included, but not President Eliot. The late Professor Marsh is the only American man of science whose name we have noted.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Sydney. Edited by A. Liversidge. Sydney, Published by the Association. Pp. lxi+1161. 10s. 6d.


The frontispiece of the *Osprey* for February is a plate of the Hairy Woodpecker by Fuertes; the first article, 'Notes from North Dakota,' by E. S. Rolfe treats of egg collecting in the vicinity of Devil's Lake. Mr. Geo. F. Breninger has an article on 'Gambel's Quail;' and Rev. W. F. Henninger discusses 'The Scourge of Egg Collecting' in a manner perhaps a little over-zealous, but with an array of facts that merit serious consideration. The feature of the number is Dr. Gill's long letter headed 'A Great Work Proposed,' wherein he lays before the readers at some length a number of suggestions for a new history of North American birds. The publication of the *Osprey* for March brings this magazine down to date; Julia S. Robins contributes an article on Wilson entitled 'Behind the Wedding Veil,' and Witmer Stone follows with a too short paper on 'An Old Case of Skins and its Associations,' being notes on one of the earliest ornithological collections in the United States. In 'Snap Shots with Pen and Camera,' E. S. Rolfe gives us half a dozen views of birds and nests, with accompanying text. 'The Gourdheads in the Cypress Swamp of Missouri,' by Otto Widmann, tells of the habits of the Wood Ibis, gourdhead being a local name for this bird. W. B. Davis has some suggestive notes on 'Odd Actions of Birds Unexplained,' and the customary notes, editorials and reviews complete this unusually good number.

**SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.**

*CHEMICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON.*

The regular meeting was held on February 9, 1899.

The first paper of the evening was read by Mr. F. D. Simons, and was entitled 'The Detection of Caramel Coloring Matter in Spirits and Vinegar,' by C. A. Crampton and F. D. Simons.

The paper states that the two principal tests given in the books for the detection of caramel coloring matter are, first, the reduction of Fehling's solution, and second, the precipitation of the caramel by means of paraldehyde. Neither of these tests has given satisfactory results in the hands of the authors.