

in the present, and yet in some unexplained way "projected efficiency" decides the issue. When we look facts in the face we find that our anti-materialistic philosophy is not saving us from entering upon the same ruinous course on which the French nation has already proceeded far. Our diminishing birthrate shows that there has already begun among our people that artificial limitation of fertility which must, if it continues, bring national decline with it.

We all wish that these evils should come to an end and that the English-speaking peoples should have a magnificent future before them. Towards this, no doubt, an anti-materialistic philosophy is a help. Materialism is incompatible with real greatness in an individual or a nation. So far we may go with Mr. Kidd. But we cannot allow that he has found a formula in which all our great problems—the problems of evolution, civilisation, religion—find their solution. The problems remain as they were.

F. W. H.

GALLS.

British Vegetable Galls, an Introduction to their Study

By E. T. Connold. Pp. xi + 312. (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1901.) Price 10s. 6d. net.

THIS beautiful book is a great disappointment. The title, the nice paper, with its broad margin and excellent print, and, above all, the majority of the one hundred and thirty full-page plates paraded, and by no means unjustly so, on the title-page, all promise so much, and yet—on looking beneath the surface we find no depth. Typical examples of the disappointments in store for the reader are furnished by Plates 14 and 15; it would be difficult to over-praise the beauty of the process-work of the former plate, and yet practically all the information the author gives is confined to a few meagre lines on pp. 58 and 60, chiefly concerned with a note as to where the specimen was found. True, more careful search shows that Plate 47 is concerned with the same subject, and somewhat more scientific hints are appended to this on p. 126; but why, in the name of all knowledge, are we not told something of the structure and development of these galls and their contents? Unless we are mistaken, or misled by synonymy, the very example here referred to is a classical one. Did not Dujardin describe the mite in the hazel-buds in 1851? and did not Miss Ormerod and Schlechtendal show that witches' brooms on the alder arise from the irritation set up by similar species? In this connection, also, excellent illustrations of the witches' brooms themselves are given on Plates 1, 16, 17 and 18, with such irritating gossip as "this very interesting tree stands just within the confines of the Park"—"Park," with a capital P!

Now, if we may be permitted to direct the attention of the author (who is the honorary general secretary to the Hastings and St. Leonard's Natural History Society) to the grand opportunity he has missed, pointing out at the same time that scientific experts rarely obtain the chance of putting forth their text illustrated in the superb style of this book, some service may be done in advocacy of the cause of that most useful branch of biology

—good descriptive field-work in the domain of the borderland between zoology and botany.

It is scarcely too much to say of the present book that if the text to these excellent plates had been nothing more than even a fair account of the insect and its gall, such as is given in a handbook like that of Frank, it would have been one of the most worthy and useful books on the subject—how much more so had the text risen to the level of Adler's admirable study of oak-galls! If local natural history societies would only resist the temptation to be popular, in the sense which implies being merely attractive to superficial and "smart" people, what an immense amount of valuable work might be done along the lines suggested by the present volume, which, disappointing though it is, is sufficiently good to show that the author must be capable of far better work.

We sincerely hope that in a second edition the author will give such notes concerning the structure and development of the galls, the habits of the insects producing them, and their effects on the plants infested by them, as could be obtained from such authors as we have quoted, and from the works of, for instance, Küster, Molliard and other modern investigators; such an account, added to the more extensive notes on field-work which Mr. Connold could evidently bring together—as may be judged from the present samples—should be worthy of the subject, and would be far more welcome to his fellow-lovers of nature than these pages of desert margin with their oases of meagre information, however excellent the latter may here and there be in itself. We are the more constrained to urge this because we understand that the author contemplates a separate book on oak-galls. If the illustrations are as good as these, and the text far better, we shall anxiously look for that book.

THE EVOLUTION OF LIFE.

L'Évolution de la Vie. Par le Dr. Laloy, Sous-Bibliothécaire de la Faculté de Médecine de Bordeaux. Pp. xiii + 240. (Paris: Libraire C. Reinwald; Schleicher Frères, 1902.) Price fr. 2'50.

THIS volume is the third of a series being issued in France under the designation of the "Petite Encyclopédie du XX^e Siècle." The object of the work, as set forth in the preface, is the very praiseworthy one of spreading a sound knowledge of the achievements of modern science among the intelligent public in a popular way. As the author points out, the mental equipment of the man of culture of the present time consists of art, literature and *belles-lettres*. Of modern science he knows nothing and cares to know nothing. Even among scientific workers themselves the extreme specialisation necessitated by original work often prevents a general perspective of the whole subject being gained. The trees prevent the individual hewer of wood from seeing the forest as a whole. We have long recognised the need for imparting scientific "culture" to the reading and thinking public in this country, and many excellent series of popular works by our foremost men of science might be mentioned. How far the present work is likely to give French readers a sound idea of modern