

ficult of interpretation. In such cases the educated taste would be of great help.

The final chapter is given to descriptions of different colorimeters which are used.

This little work will be a great help to analysts, who do not have the larger works referred to by the author, and even those who have them at hand would find this compilation time saving. It is evident that much light may be thrown upon the composition of potable spirits by careful chemical investigations. Fortunately, however, in all civilized countries potable spirits are subjected to the strictest fiscal regulations, and by reason of this supervision it should not be difficult in any case to trace a sample to its origin, and to determine by the inspection of the public records whether it is a pure, straight pot-distilled liquor, or an imitation article made from neutral spirits, artificially colored and containing such substances as the compounder may see fit to use.

H. W. WILEY.

ELECTRICITY IN AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE. BY PROF. S. LEMSTROM. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co. Price, \$1.50.

This book of 72 pages is devoted to a description of experiments in the application of electricity to agriculture and horticulture. The author conducted his original experiments with the old electrical machines of Holtz, and gives a number of data showing the effect of electrical influences upon vegetation. The object was not to produce an electric light in order that the period of work of the chlorophyll cells might be lengthened, but to subject the plants and the soil to the emanations of the ordinary Holtz electrical machine. The author has constructed a special electrical apparatus which is described in detail, to take the place of the Holtz machine. The experimental part is followed by a discussion of the question, "How does electricity exercise its influence on the plants?" The author draws the following conclusions: "The electric current produced by the influence machine when its positive pole is earthed goes from the earth through the plants to the points of the insulated wire-net, and back to the negative pole. This causes an ascent of liquid or juice in the capillary tubes of the plants, and produces in such a way an augmentation of the energy with which the circulation of the juices is going on."

It is hardly to be expected that the data and methods described

should be seriously regarded as any real, practical aid to agriculture. The connection between the electrical influence exercised and the growth of the plant is surely not demonstrated to such an extent as to warrant the conclusion above drawn. There is one conclusion of the author, however, with which we all most heartily agree, namely: "The better and more scientifically a field is cultivated and manured, the greater is the increased per cent. On poor soil it is so small as to be scarcely perceptible."

This little book will prove interesting to experimenters along agricultural lines, and I am far from desiring to say that there is not much in it which is valuable. Its suggestions are at least worthy of respectful consideration.

H. W. WILEY.

CORRECTION.

The price of the "Phase Rule," by Alexander Findlay, is \$1.60 instead of \$1.25 as given in the Review in the March number of this Journal.