

beings, people that get sore fingers and probably swear sometimes and go out to lunch with you. That Britisher who worked ten years to make billiard balls out of gun cotton, castor oil and camphor, I'll wager said something stronger than "My word" when he found out that somebody had beaten him to it by just leaving out the castor oil.

I think the jokes in this book are better than the illustrations, maybe because the writer made up the jokes himself.

As minor criticisms, I noted "cannot only" in place of "can not only" in one place, although I could not find the page afterward. Also in some of the munition pictures the munitionettes are plainer than the chemistry, but maybe the author meant it that way.

I cannot understand why, and this is a major criticism, the author feels the way he does about Nature. To improve on Nature is all right, but I do not see why this should give a man a grudge against her. Probably one reason Nature is unpopular with the chemists is because she likes to tear down what they are trying to build up, but I gather from this book that her chief offense is foisting on the public some of her cruder things in place of pure chemical syntheses. I was brought up to regard Nature as a model, but I believe that if somebody gave this author a mirror to hold up to Nature he would try to hit her over the head with it.

One thing which makes this book interesting is the large sums of money it tells about. In most college scientific books the only dollar sign you see is in the book advertisements on the cover. The large sums quoted by our author were created by Chemistry, but before the war seemed to have been mostly collected by Germany. We hope they will be more evenly divided from now on. Anyway, after you have read page after page telling of the millions Chemistry has saved and will save in the future, a sum like the price of this book seems such a mere bagatelle!

*Creative Chemistry*, by Edwin E. Slosson.  
The Century Co.

## O You Chemistry!

### Dr. Slosson's "Creative Chemistry" as a Sophomore Would See It

This book looks like a text-book, but is interesting to read. Text-books tell you what you ought to know, "Creative Chemistry" tells you what you want to know. Jules Verne also wrote interesting scientific books, but he had the future to draw on and could put in a lie whenever he felt the need of it, while Dr. Slosson has handicapped himself by sticking to the past, the present and the truth. So it seems to me that he has done mighty well to make Sunday reading of a subject you used to think only stuff fit to be digested into college credits. He is a literary catalyst, an agent which transforms dry facts into a palatable substance, and, like the chemical catalysts, he does not lose anything of himself in doing it—at least the last chapter is as good as the first. I could not have thought up a comparison like this—of a writer and an enzyme—before I read this book.

The author not only enlivens chemical discoveries, but he humanizes the discoverers. I have always thought of a great scientist as a sort of disembodied spirit hovering around books and test-tubes, and only coming to long enough to have its picture taken. But Dr. Slosson's chemists are real human