LITERATURE.

Huxley, the Scientist.*

THIS is a highly commendable work, worthy to stand as a companion volume to the "Life and Letters" recently published by Leonard Huxley. The "Life and Letters" emphasizes the personality of Huxley, while this work emphasizes his attainments and labors as a scientist and publicist. It is written for the larger public, and the style is strikingly clear and simple. Even in the pages dealing with the more technical biological questions which are but rarely handled, except by a limited number of special investigators and of generalizers of science, the treatment is such that the layman of science may read and profit; something of the marvelous lucidity of Huxley himself has been communicated to these pages.

The author has sought particularly to reverse the judgment, some time ago so fashionable, that Huxley takes low rank as an original investigator. He insists (as also by the way, does John Fiske, in the February *Atlantic*) on the permanent and incomputable value of Huxley's original work, declaring that it "has been incorporated in the very body of science." "A large number of later investigators," he continues, "have advanced upon the lines he laid down; and just as the superstructures of a great building conceal the foundations, so later anatomical work, altho it has only amplified and extended Huxley's discoveries, has made them seem less striking to the modern reader." The author details at considerable length Huxley's distinctive contributions to science, laying perhaps the greatest stress on his work on the medusæ and allied pelagic life, which served as a basis for the complete overturning of previous classifications in zoology. Beginning as a student at the Charing Cross Hospital, and determined upon a career in medicine, Huxley was led into comparative anatomy through his work on the "Rattlesnake;" through his appointment as naturalist to the Geological Survey he was led into geology, and thence, despite strong natural disinclinations, into palæontology. In each of these divisions his keen analysis, his profound sense of form and structure, and his wonderful powers of co-ordination and classification, directed not only to particular details, but to broad and comprehensive schemes of systematizing physical knowledge, resulted in contributions of permanent value to science.

He made an auspicious beginning in discovering, at the age of 19, the layer in the inner root-sheath of hairs, now known as Huxley's layer; his first monographs on pelagic life raised him, within a year after his return from the "Rattlesnake" voyage, to an equal rank with the best names in English science, and this position he subsequently clinched by such work as his triumphant demonstration of the evolution of the horse and of man's place in nature. "His mind was, above all things," says the author, "orderly and comprehensive, and while in innumerable points . . . he added to the number of known facts, he did even more important work in co-ordinating and grouping together the known body of facts." We do not know of another book which will give the reader anything like so just and clear an idea of Huxley as a scientist and man of affairs as this one.

* THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY: A Sketch of His Life and Work. *By P. Chalmers Mitchell, M.A. (Oxon.)* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, $1.50.