

supplies of food and covering to a sufficiently elevated bivouac, and those presented by the mountain itself. The former of course will be overcome as the country is opened up, but it is evident that Mount Cook is equal in difficulty to most of the first class Alpine peaks. Mr. Green first attacked it by the southern ridge, but, after reaching a height of 7500 feet, found that route impracticable. An attempt was then made to reach the north-eastern face of the mountain by a route which also had to be abandoned. Mr. Green then mounted by a ridge on the left bank of the Hochstetter Glacier, and, after bivouacking at a height of about 7000 feet, succeeded in attaining the summit by a circuitous and difficult climb near the ridge connecting Mount Cook with Mount Tasman. His usual ill-fortune pursued him. The weather was bad, as it seems often to be in these parts—and the approach of night compelled him to return without actually setting his foot on the very highest point. The ascent however was practically accomplished, only a slight detour to avoid a crevasse and a little more plodding along a snow ridge remained; but even the quarter of an hour or twenty minutes which this would have added to the expedition could not be spared. The summit of Mount Cook is not the place on which to spend a night in bad weather, nor is it a peak which can be descended in the dark. As it was, notwithstanding their utmost exertions, the travellers were compelled to halt for the night at an elevation of some 10,000 feet above the sea, on a ledge so dangerous that they dared not sleep—even one at a time!

Mr. Green afterwards visited the neighbourhood of Mount Earnslaw, a high peak south of Haast Pass, but his usual ill-fortune pursued him, and the weather prevented him from doing more than make a reconnaissance.

We lay down this volume with regret that the Fates were not kinder to Mr. Green in giving him the opportunity of writing a longer tale of adventure. He tells his story so well and pleasantly that we regret he could not carry further his explorations of New Zealand peaks and glaciers. He is evidently a close observer and devoted student of nature, so that without any attempt at book-making he has contrived to incorporate with his narrative many interesting facts relating to the natural history and physiography of these remarkable islands, which raises his work far above the level of an ordinary book of travel.

T. G. BONNEY

DOBSON'S "MONOGRAPH OF THE
INSECTIVORA"

A Monograph of the Insectivora, Systematic and Anatomical. By G. E. Dobson, M.A., F.R.S. Parts I. and II. 4to. Pp. 1-172, 22 Plates. (London: Van Voorst, 1882-83.)

THE Insectivora constitute an order of Mammals at the same time but little known and of great scientific interest. Until recently they were not considered an attractive group. Small in size, shy and retiring in habits, difficult of capture, none of them of commercial value or capable of domestication, they have received little notice even from professed zoologists, and to the general public their existence, except in the case of two or three of the commonest species, has been almost un-

known. The fact, however, on which Prof. Huxley insisted many years ago, in his lectures at the College of Surgeons, that in this order we find some of the most generalised members of the Eutherian or placental Mammals, little-modified representatives of what appear to be ancestral forms, whose study is an excellent introduction to a knowledge of the more modified or specialised members of the class, has done much to elevate them in the eyes of naturalists who are seeking the key to unlock the history of the evolution of the Mammalia. Mr. Dobson, whose excellent work in the Chiroptera is familiar to all zoologists, has done well then to take up the Insectivora, and to give us, for the first time, a thoroughly reliable and exhaustive monograph upon them.

Aided by wisely-bestowed grants from the Government Fund administered by a committee of the Royal Society, and with the assistance of numerous scientific friends, he has been enabled to collect abundant materials, and publish the results of his investigations in a copiously illustrated form. To facilitate comparison and avoid repetition, Mr. Dobson commences with a detailed account of the anatomy, paying especial attention to the myology, of two species, *Gymnura rafflesii* and *Erinaceus europæus*, which have been selected, the former as the nearest representative of an undifferentiated Eutherian, and the latter as being a well-known species, easily obtainable for examination. With these the anatomy of the species subsequently described is compared and contrasted. With regard to the general classification of the group, a knowledge of which can of course only be obtained from a thorough examination of their structure, Mr. Dobson has wisely reserved his views until the work is completed, adopting provisionally that which has been gradually elaborated by Peters, Mivart, and Gill.

The two first parts of the work already issued contain the families *Erinaceidæ*, *Centetidæ*, *Solenodontidæ*, *Potamogalidæ*, *Chrysochloridæ*, and *Talpidae*, each family, genus, and species being treated of fully, both anatomically and zoologically. The difficult group *Soricidæ*, as well as the *Macroscelidæ*, *Tupaiidæ*, and the aberrant *Galeopithecidæ*, will form the subject of the third and concluding part. If this part should be, as we have every reason to believe it will, equal to its predecessors in thoroughness of detail and beauty of illustration, we shall have a work which will do great credit to its author, and rank among those solid contributions to knowledge which form landmarks in the progress of science.

W. H. FLOWER

OUR BOOK SHELF

Manual of Mathematical Tables. By the Rev. J. A. Galbraith and the Rev. S. Haughton, F.R.S. (London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin.)

"Now what so pleasing can there be, if a man be mathematically given, as to calculate or peruse Napier's logarithms, or those tables of artificial sines and tangents, not long since set out by mine old collegiate, good friend, and late fellow-student of Christchurch in Oxford, Mr. Edmund Gunter, which will perform that by addition and subtraction only which heretofore Regiomontanus's tables did by multiplication and division?" We shall not take up the cudgels against quaint old Burton, but will simply say that, for those to whom the subject is a "pleasing" one, here is an exceedingly handy and neatly got up