

CRUSTACEA OF NORWAY.

An Account of the Crustacea of Norway. By Prof. G. O. Sars. Vols. i.-v. Vol i., Amphipoda. Pp. 708; 248 plates. Vol. ii., Isopoda. Pp. 270; 104 plates. Vol. iii., Cumacea. Pp. 115; 72 plates. Vol. iv., Copepoda Calanoida. Pp. 171; 108 plates. Vol. v., Copepoda Harpacticoida. (Bergen: Published by the Bergen Museum, 1890-1908.)

THE monumental work under the above title by Prof. G. O. Sars, of Christiania, is still being added to, although the first parts appeared so long ago as 1890. It is indeed no small task that the distinguished author has set himself. From the first he proposed to give a description of all the species of Crustacea hitherto known from Norway, and furthermore, to accompany the diagnoses by accurate figures of all the forms. There was no doubt that a work so extensive and so profusely illustrated would prove of great value to all systematic workers, but there was also little doubt that the publication would spread over years, and the work extend to hundreds of pages and a great number of plates. This has proved to be the case, for the most recent parts published (parts xxiii. and xxiv. of vol. v., 1908) bring the total up to 1540 pages of letterpress and 724 plates.

It is seldom that a work of this kind has been so lavishly illustrated, but Prof. Sars rightly urged that trustworthy figures enable a species to be identified much more easily than the most elaborate descriptions. The plates have been produced by the "autographic" process, and while this falls short of first-class lithography, the figures are all of a good size, and quite sufficiently illustrate the points at issue. Those who have had occasion to use the plates for purposes of identification will agree as to the accuracy and care with which the drawings have been executed.

The first volume of this work—that on the Amphipoda—was published by a Christiania firm during the years 1890-95. The publisher not wishing to continue, there was some danger that the account would come to a premature end, until the Bergen Museum, with commendable public spirit, stepped in and undertook the responsibility of publishing the remaining volumes.

The scientific study of fishery problems is of comparatively recent growth, but nowadays a knowledge of the smaller Crustacea, which are so important a part of the food of fishes, is essential, and it is precisely these forms which Prof. Sars is making recognisable by his valuable work. British fishery experts cannot fail to find these volumes indispensable, for they refer to species a large proportion of which occur also in British waters.

It has been far too generally assumed that the Copepoda is a group containing principally pelagic forms. That this is by no means the case is emphatically shown in the present work. Vol. iv., dealing with the Calanoida, which are in the main plankton forms, contains descriptions of sixty-eight species. The yet incomplete fifth volume, devoted to the Harpacticoida, which are mostly true bottom forms,

has already treated of 182 species, without by any means exhausting the subject. When completed this will furnish the first adequate account ever published of this very extensive and important group.

Besides giving descriptions of a considerable number of new genera and species, the author has rendered perhaps even greater service by furnishing us for the first time with the means of identifying numerous species established by other writers, but only briefly described, and either unfigured or figured very imperfectly. It cannot be doubted that this work is one of the most important contributions ever made to our knowledge of the Crustacea, and that Prof. Sars deserves the thanks of the scientific world for publishing it in a manner which renders it so readily accessible.

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BRITISH FUNGI.

Synopsis of the British Basidiomycetes: a Descriptive Catalogue of the Drawings and Specimens in the Department of Botany, British Museum. By Worthington G. Smith. Pp. 531; 5 plates and 145 figures in text. (London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the British Museum, 1908.) Price 10s.

A MODERN handbook dealing in a concise form with all the larger British fungi has long been desired by mycologists in this country. The appearance of Mr. Worthington G. Smith's "Synopsis" meets this desire in so far as it contains in one volume descriptions of all the British Basidiomycetes (*sensu de Bary*).

The new work is of a more popular character than either Lister's monograph of the Mycetozoa or Crombie's Monograph of the British Lichens, references to literature and synonymy being omitted. The genera are provided with keys to the species, and the latter bear numbers which correspond to those of Mr. Smith's fine series of coloured drawings in the British Museum. The descriptions are almost without exception confined to field characters, and are for the most part brief. Each genus is illustrated by line drawings. The derivation of both generic and specific names is given, and a full glossary is appended.

As stated on the title-page, the synopsis is a descriptive catalogue of the drawings and specimens in the department of botany in the British Museum, and for this reason the sequence of genera is practically that of Fries's *Hymenomycetes Europœi* (1874). In Fries's arrangement of the Agaricaceæ the large genus *Agaricus* (comprising groups of subgenera arranged according to their spore-colour) is placed first, followed by a number of other genera, also grouped together according to the colour of their spores. Modern writers have given Fries's subgenera generic rank, and have modified his arrangement so as to bring all the genera together according to their spore-colour. The author of the present work treats Fries's subgenera as genera, but leaves them in the same sequence as the *Hymenomycetes Europœi*. To a number of amateur mycologists who are accustomed only to the more modern method, this arrangement will probably be somewhat inconvenient.