

*Geographie der Moose.* Von Prof. Dr. Th. Herzog. Pp. xi+439+8 Tafeln. (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1926.) 27 gold marks.

WHILE many writers have published works on the anatomy and taxonomy of mosses, Prof. Th. Herzog has struck out on a new line in his recently published volume and given an account of their geographical distribution together with that of the Hepaticæ. He has done for the mosses what Dr. H. Christ did for the ferns in his "Geographie der Farne." Unlike the older writers on plant distribution, he does not give his results in statistical tables but follows the examples of Prof. E. Warming in his "Oecology of Plants," and in the first 74 pages gives an interesting account of the factors, both internal and external, which influence the choice of a habitat, and distinguishes between distribution by spores and by asexual vegetative means. By this method it becomes easy to realise why some species have a wide range while others are confined to a restricted area.

The section dealing with the substratum upon which mosses grow is of special interest and contains lists of species which are confined to either acid, neutral or basic rocks, or to two of them, or (like *Brachythecium rutabulum*) will thrive equally well on any of the three. The epiphytic species are also dealt with in this section. This is followed by 136 pages, in which the distribution of the various families is discussed in detail.

The third section deals in a similar way with the geographical regions and gives numerous examples of the species characteristic of them. A few maps are inserted; that on p. 214 shows clearly the parallelism in distribution in widely separated areas of Gigaspermum and the genus *Callitris* belonging to the Cupressineæ, namely, north-west Africa, South Africa, and Australia. This Herzog terms "Disjunktionen." The book, which concludes with a classified bibliography and two indexes, one geographical, the other of genera and species, is illustrated with 151 text figures and 8 plates, Fig. 70 showing the various forms of thallus which occur in Aneuræ. The work should form a stimulating contribution to the literature of bryology.

C. H. W.

*The Relation of Nature to Man in Aboriginal America.*

By Prof. Clark Wissler. Pp. xx+248. (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1926.) 16s. net.

IN the text of this volume Dr. Clark Wissler follows closely a course of lectures at the Wagner Free Institute of Science, Philadelphia, which he delivered under the Richard Westbrook Free Lectureship Foundation. It is an admirably lucid exposition of the method of attacking anthropological problems by the study of distribution, and as such it is deserving of careful attention apart from the application of that method to the specific problems of aboriginal America to which the earlier chapters lead. The subjects reviewed are samples of the material culture, segregated distribution, social traits and somatic traits, and finally distribution form and its meaning.

The method is one of special importance in the study of American culture, where indeed there is a peculiarly favourable field for its employment. Its application to

the somatic problem is especially instructive in view of the conclusion generally held by American anthropologists as to the homogeneity of the aboriginal population, notwithstanding differences such as that found in head-form. On the ecological side of the inquiry, Dr. Wissler's conclusion is that there is good ground for suspecting that the principle of concentric distribution is an ecological phenomenon universal to the more specialised form of plant and animal life, including man. Dr. Wissler's book is a most valuable and stimulating contribution to the method of anthropological study, but why will he, in common with many other scientific writers, especially in the United States, treat the words *fauna* and *flora* as if they were feminine singular nouns and endow them with an entirely superfluous plural in *æ*?

*The Pedigree of the Human Race.* By Prof. Harris Hawthorne Wilder. Pp. xiv+368. (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1926.) 3.25 dollars.

IN spite of its title, Prof. Wilder's book refers to the races of mankind only in the last chapter. It is a compilation of a great deal of interesting information relating to the comparative anatomy of the Primates. But it scarcely fulfils the expectation the title suggests, for there is relatively little serious discussion of the pedigree. In a work dealing with man's ancestry, it is rather surprising to find no mention of *Propliopithecus*, perhaps the most interesting link in the chain, and an absence of reference to the leading works on the subject of the book.

The classification of the Primates is peculiar. The Tarsiidae are included in the sub-order Anthropoidea. Though much might be urged in excuse of such a course, it can only create unnecessary confusion; and the student who critically studies the differential tables on pp. 25 and 26 will certainly be at a loss to discover why *Tarsius* is put under the heading Anthropoidea and not under Lemuroidea, seeing that it is cited as exceptional in respect of every feature enumerated and in most of these agrees with the Lemuroidea. Then again, alongside this ultra-modern treatment of *Tarsius* the antiquated idea with regard to *Chiromys* is retained. This specialised member of the *Indrisinæ* is removed from its own family and a special sub-order is made for its reception.

The book contains a large series of useful illustrations.

*The Annual Register: a Review of Public Events at Home and Abroad for the Year 1925.* Edited by Dr. M. Epstein. Pp. xiv+330+180. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1926.) 30s. net.

THIS invaluable work of reference again gives a complete survey of the world's history during the past year in a small compass and a readable form. The customary arrangement is followed, of considerable sections devoted to Great Britain and the Empire, with smaller sections on other States. There are also surveys of the literature, science, art, drama and finance of the year, and a record of events. Appendices give the full text of the Locarno Treaties, the Irish Boundary Agreement, the Irish Bill 1925, and the Russo-Japanese Treaty. The work has now reached its 167th annual issue.