

Organic Syntheses : an Annual Publication of Satisfactory Methods for the Preparation of Organic Chemicals. Frank C. Whitmore, Editor-in-Chief. Vol. 7. Pp. vii + 105. (New York : John Wiley and Sons, Inc. ; London : Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1927.) 7s. 6d. net.

THIS series has attained a recognised position as a useful adjunct to research workers and others who are engaged in the practice of organic chemistry. The latest issue contains precise directions, which have been independently checked in each instance, for carrying out thirty organic preparations. Although the contributors to this volume are mainly American, the international character of the undertaking is indicated by the fact that the list of authors includes the names of Holleman (Amsterdam), Lapworth (Manchester), Reverdin (Geneva), and Ziegler (Marburg). Among interesting substances the preparation of which is described are chloroacetamide, *p*-chloromercuibenzoic acid, diphenic acid, furan, furfuralacetone, guanidine nitrate, nitroguanidine, α -methyl mannoside, pentene-2, triphenyl stibine, xanthone, and anhydrous hydrogen cyanide. In the last-named preparation mention is made of Gattermann's interesting recommendation "that the operator smoke during the preparation, for he found that a trace of hydrogen cyanide is sufficient to give the tobacco smoke a highly characteristic flavour. This preliminary warning is useful in case of leaky apparatus or a faulty hood." Most of the methods given are based on known reactions, but considerable alterations in the published conditions have often been found necessary in order to secure satisfactory yields. In the case of anhydro-2-hydroxymercuri-3-nitrobenzoic acid, here described by Whitmore, Culhane, and Neher, no method of preparation has hitherto appeared in the literature.

Veneral Disease : its Prevention, Symptoms, and Treatment. By Hugh Wansey Bayly. Third edition. Pp. xv + 242 + 3 plates. (London : Faber and Gwyer, Ltd., 1927.) 10s. 6d. net.

THE third edition of this book does not differ in general arrangement from the second. Dr. Wansey Bayly continues to emphasise the need for more drastic steps in the campaign to prevent venereal disease, particularly urging the encouragement of self-disinfection and a scheme for notification and segregation under State control. While the latter suggestion may not meet with unanimous approval, it will be generally regretted that the recommendations of the Trevelthyn Committee should be completely ignored. The chapters on treatment have been extended to include references to scabies, pediculosis, diathermy, and the modern methods of dealing with dementia paralytica. The quoted results of induced malaria treatment recorded at one hospital are not encouraging, but they are not representative of general experience ; Dr. Bayly cautiously refrains from dogmatic statements, but indicates two extreme views on the subject. The number of illustrations in the book has been considerably increased.

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(1) *The Weather : an Introduction to Climatology.* By Dr. C. E. P. Brooks. (Benn's Sixpenny Library, No. 145.) Pp. 79. (London : Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1927.) 6d.

(2) *Börnsteins Leitfaden der Wetterkunde.* In vierter Auflage neu bearbeitet von Walter Brückmann. Pp. vi + 284 + 22 Tafeln. (Braunschweig : Friedr. Vieweg und Sohn A.-G., 1927.) 15 gold marks.

(1) DR. BROOKS'S little book is worthy of a wide public, and is an admirable example of popular exposition of science. Readers in whom it arouses a wider interest in meteorology and climatology are guided to further sources of knowledge in English books.

(2) Those who can read German can benefit also by Börnstein's well-known treatise, which has been largely revised by W. Brückmann in the fourth edition. It covers a wide field in great detail (considering the size of the book) ; the forms of clouds are indicated in a set of sixteen beautiful photographic plates which form a very attractive feature of the book.

Die heimische Pflanzenwelt in ihren Beziehungen zu Landschaft, Klima und Boden. Von Prof. Dr. Felix Rawitscher. Pp. ix + 238 + 12 Tafeln. (Freiburg im Breisgau : Herder und Co. G.m.b.H., 1927.) 6.80 gold marks.

THIS small book deals in a most interesting manner with the plant life of central Europe, and gives an extremely good idea of the modern tendencies of geographical botany. The environmental factors are concisely analysed, and their effects on the vegetation and flora are adequately illustrated by specific examples. The vegetation is described under the three main headings : forest, forest-free areas, and waters (fresh and sea). The geological history of the flora is summarised with special reference to the Glacial and post-Glacial periods. Eleven plates, of 21 excellently selected photographs, accompany the text, which is further illustrated by 64 black-and-white figures. These last include many outline distributional maps of very clear design. References to literature are given at the ends of the chapters and as foot-notes, and an index is provided. The work has a wider scope and a more general interest than is indicated by its title.

W. B. T.

The Light of Experience : a Review of some Men and Events in my Time. By Sir Francis Younghusband. Pp. x + 305. (London : Constable and Co., Ltd., 1927.) 15s. net.

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND'S latest book begins with a short sketch of his life, and ends with a philosophical judgment on his experiences. The book, in fact, is partly an autobiography and partly a philosophical treatise. A man's philosophy is generally founded on his personal experiences, but it is not often that the two are set down together. If the practice were more common, we might obtain some interesting glimpses of the origins of various philosophies.