

other hand, the second and third sections should be of value to chemists and pharmacologists as well as to pharmacists.

*Paleontology.* By Prof. Edward Wilber Berry. Pp. xii + 392. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc.; London: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Ltd., 1929.) 17s. 6d. net.

THE author, in his preface, describes the scope and intention of this book, which is to lay emphasis on one hand on the evolutionary story that the study of palæontology tells us, and on the other to illustrate the adaptation of animals to their environment. The author further states that his purpose is "to interest rather than to repel the beginner—a pedagogical principle all too frequently ignored". In these aims he appears largely to succeed, and the book compares well with others of its class. Naturally, in a book which deals with the whole of palæontology from Protozoa to man in 364 pages, there must be either compression or omission, and the second alternative has wisely been chosen, with the result that the reader, who is supposed to be a beginner, is at all events saved from mental indigestion.

Of the figures and diagrams, a good proportion, especially in the chapters on invertebrates, are the author's own, are refreshingly new, and remind the reader that extinct animals were once alive. In the various tables of affinity and descent a cautious position is held. Here and there a captious critic will find that the author has not always been able to keep up with the flood of recent discovery, but from some slips and errors no writer of a text-book can hope to be free, and there is none that prevents the book from being recommended to a student as a jumping-off ground to larger and more detailed works.

*Trailing the Giant Panda.* By Theodore Roosevelt and Kermit Roosevelt. Pp. xi + 278 + 33 plates. (New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.) 16s. net.

THE giant panda (*Ailuropus melanoleucus*) is rather like a bear, with black spectacles, saddle, forearm, and quarters of dark brown, and the rest of the body white. He lives in steep bamboo jungle, on which he feeds, sleeps in a hollow tree, and ranks as a sahib because he does not cry when shot. No civilised man had ever seen him alive until the present authors tracked down an old male, with fatal results for the panda. Scarcely better known is the takin (*Budocras taxicolor*), half goat, half antelope. Very rare is the golden monkey. These and other rare species were the quest in a successful expedition, by the Bhamo route from Burma into the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Szechuan, penetrating a wild region to northward of the Yangtze-kiang and leaving by way of Indo-China, a journey of about two thousand miles.

Among the numerous and excellent photographs is one of Mt. Koonka, mapped here by some optimist as thirty thousand feet high, pending more careful survey. The country as a whole, however, is un-surveyed, large parts of it unexplored by Europeans,

although inhabited to the last possible limits of saturation, partly by Chinese, but mainly by semi-independent tribes, not always cordial to visitors. The present work deals mainly with the adventure, but contains a great deal of interesting material, while the scientific staff, collecting for the Field Museum at Chicago, will doubtless publish their results through the usual channels.

*The Biochemistry of the Amino Acids.* By Prof. H. H. Mitchell and T. S. Hamilton. (American Chemical Society Monograph Series, No. 48.) Pp. 619. (New York: The Chemical Catalog Co., Inc., 1929.) 9.50 dollars.

IN this monograph the authors have given a detailed account of the chemistry and physiology of the amino-acids, their preparation, determination and properties, and the part they play in metabolism and nutrition. They have examined the available evidence very critically, more especially in the physiological chapters, so that the work forms a very useful review of our present knowledge. The fact that the monograph is of the size of many text-books of physiology indicates the extent of the literature dealt with. The chemical chapters account for about one-third of the volume: the remaining two-thirds give an up-to-date account of the digestion of the proteins and the absorption of their constituent amino-acids, the catabolism of these compounds and their relationships with carbohydrate and fat metabolism, the breakdown of the individual amino-acids being considered in detail. Finally, there are chapters on their specific dynamic action, on the catabolism of tissue protein, and on the nutritive values of proteins and the protein values of foods in nutrition. The book will be of great use as a work of reference by research workers, and also to all advanced students of biochemistry and physiology.

*A Challenge to Neurasthenia.* By Doris Mary Armitage. Pp. 52. (London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 1929.) 5s. net.

THIS book is principally an appreciation of the late Dr. L. S. Barnes. It describes his attitude to neurasthenia and his method of treating the neurasthenic, which appears to have been by the application of his own strong personality in encouragement, coupled with an appeal to the patient's intelligence. Apart from the statement that Dr. Barnes considered all neurasthenic troubles to originate in fear, there is no indication of what he considered to be the etiology of functional nervous disorders. This defect, and a lack of detail regarding the line of treatment, will hamper other physicians attempting to follow the same method of psycho-therapy. The book does, however, encourage doctors to pay serious attention to the neurasthenic, and provided the tendency to regard the subconscious mind as a sort of separate personality is not taken too literally, it will also encourage patients to believe that neuroses are susceptible to treatment. It is a matter for regret that Dr. Barnes did not live to publish his own views on psycho-pathology and psycho-therapy.