

*Life in Lesu: the Study of a Melanesian Society in New Ireland.* By Dr. Hortense Powdermaker. Pp. 352+13 plates. (London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 1933.) 15s. net.

LESU is an island on the east coast of New Ireland, one of the islands of the Bismarck Archipelago, in which Dr. Powdermaker resided for ten and a half months for the purpose of anthropological investigation. The village belongs to one of the nine linguistic groups of the island, but its dialect had not previously been recorded. The inhabitants are the tall and usually well-built Melanesians typical of New Ireland.

Dr. Powdermaker was engaged more particularly in the study of the social anthropology of the village. It is evident that she has a gift of fraternisation with natives. She has brought back a wealth of detail on every phase of native life, much of it of a most intimate character which could have been obtained only on the terms of a close and confidential relationship with her informants. Her book, especially in its sense of proportion in estimating the relative importance of customs and social and religious regulations in daily life, is a valuable addition to the growing literature of the functional anthropologist.

*Life-Histories of the Frogs of Okefinokee Swamp, Georgia.* By Albert Hazen Wright. (North American Salientia (Anura), No. 2.) Pp. xv+497+45 plates. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932.) 8 dollars.

THIS fresh-water swamp, some 660 square miles in area, lies in the coastal plain of the south-eastern United States, and still retains in a large measure primitive conditions of environment, rapidly changing under the hands of the lumber-men. The volume forms part of a biological reconnaissance of the swamp and includes very full accounts of the systematic characters and of the habits and the life-histories of the eighteen species of *Salientia* which have been found there. Photographs illustrate the life-histories as well as the adult appearance. Unfortunately the absence of the author from the area during the autumn and winter months has precluded any observations or discussion about hibernation, but there is much information regarding the calls of the different species and the relationship of croaking to temperature and moisture.

*See for Yourself: a Field-Book of Sight-Seeing.* By Edmund Vale. Pp. xii+276. (London and Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1933.) 5s. net.

THIS book is indeed archæology 'without tears'—a sightseer's handbook which deserves commendation not only for the originality of its conception, but also for the manner in which that conception has been carried out. The sightseer is conducted, a little breathlessly perhaps, through the whole range of British archæology, from earliest prehistoric times down to the eighteenth century

of our era, and persuasively instructed what to look for as the characteristic features in our ancient monuments. A chapter is devoted appropriately to the works of preservation undertaken by the Office of Works; and glossaries, a table of scripts, and a list of useful dates—the whole illustrated by line sketches and diagrams—complete an excellent and really helpful work of popularisation.

*The Making of the State.* By M. Ruthnaswamy. Pp. 503. (London: Williams and Norgate, Ltd., 1933.) 21s. net.

THIS textbook of political science is of special interest to English readers at the moment. The author, a lecturer in history and politics in the University of Madras, in bringing forward anthropological fact in support of his views on the origin and growth of society, has drawn freely on his knowledge of Indian institutions in the light of history and as they work in practice to-day. His views on caste will be found particularly interesting, especially as in noting relaxations in the regulations affecting the higher castes he does not draw the same inferences as to the weakening of caste as have been drawn by some recent writers. His views are the more convincing in that they are not intended to have a topical reference but are strictly incidental to the main purpose of his book.

*The Foundations of the Universe.* By A. L. Warham. Pp. 43. (London: The C. W. Daniel Co., 1933.) 1s. net.

IT is to be hoped that the reactions of this author to the many accounts that have appeared in the past decade of recent advances in astronomy and physics are not typical of the lay public in general. He quotes and abstracts sometimes from popular works, and sometimes from authorities: Einstein, O. W. Richardson, J. J. Thomson, Dirac, Sir Oliver Lodge and Dr. R. L. Waterfield appear successively on but six pages. The author interlards his quotations and abstracts with his own remarks, which cast doubt upon his ability to comprehend his sources. Where the author is correct he is commonplace, and where he is original, he is wrong.

*The Conductivity of Solutions.* By Dr. Cecil W. Davies. Second edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. x+281. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1933.) 15s. net.

DR. DAVIES'S book, the first edition of which was reviewed in *NATURE* of September 20, 1930, p. 429, under the title "Strong and Weak Electrolytes", has been revised, and enlarged by about eighty pages, but without any corresponding increase in price. In addition to a general revision of the text, two new chapters have been added, dealing with conductivity titrations and other applications of conductivity measurements. The merits of the work are therefore fully maintained and the second edition is likely to be even more useful than the first.