

Short Reviews

The Butterflies of the Malay Peninsula: including Aids to Identification, Notes on their Physiology and Bionomics, and Instructions for the Collection and Preservation of Specimens under Tropical Conditions. By Dr. A. Steven Corbet and H. M. Pendlebury. Pp. v+252+vi-xxiv+18 plates. (Kuala Lumpur: Kyle, Palmer and Co., Ltd., 1934.) 4.50 dollars.

THIS handbook, though primarily designed for the Malayan collector, contains biological and bionomic matter which should be of service to students of the Lepidoptera of other regions. In the portions of the work that are concerned with the collecting, preparation and preserving of specimens, the tropical conditions prevailing in the Malay Peninsula are fully recognised, and the directions given bear the stamp of practical experience.

The authors do not attempt to describe or illustrate more than a selection of the commoner Malay species; they give, however, a complete list of all the species at present recorded from the Peninsula. In the remainder of the book space has been found for matters of wider interest, such as the external anatomy and classification of butterflies, their life-history and geographical distribution. A chapter is devoted to protective resemblance and mimicry; and a brief, but within its limits adequate, account is furnished of the phenomena of Mendelism. This chapter, if read with attention, will provide the field naturalist with ample suggestions for advancing knowledge materially by experimental breeding.

The book will encourage collectors to use their opportunities to scientific purpose. The photographic plates are a good help to the identification of species.

Grondbeginselen van de Hedendaagse Natuurkunde. Door Dr. J. A. Prins. Pp. 240. (Groningen, Den Haag, Batavia: J. B. Wolters, 1934.) 4.90 guilders.

IF teachers of elementary physics are to keep up to date and to render their courses of instruction attractive, it is essential that they should be able to obtain accurate information of recent advances and their incidence on old knowledge, in a readable form. This little book appears to provide such information. It deals with the fundamental concepts of physics in a way which undoubtedly has great pedagogic value. The subject matter is attractively arranged, nicely set forth, very well illustrated, and the book provides a singularly neat introduction to present-day physics, in which practically all the important results of modern research have been incorporated.

If it can be translated into English and put on the market at a reasonable price, it should find a warm welcome. In this case it is to be hoped that the excellent tables now inserted in the cover band will also be included.

Conjugate Functions for Engineers: a Simple Exposition of the Schwarz-Christoffel Transformation applied to the Solution of Problems involving Two-Dimensional Fields of Force and Flux. By Prof. Miles Walker. Pp. v+116. (London: Oxford University Press, 1933.) 12s. 6d. net.

BY means of a transformation due to Schwarz and Christoffel, the interior of a polygon can be mapped on an infinite half-plane. Problems of two-dimensional flow (of liquids or electric currents) can thus be transformed into problems more amenable to treatment. The present book gives a quite elementary discussion of this transformation and an ingenious method of visualising the process. A variety of illustrative problems are then worked in great detail so that the engineer can at once appreciate the practical application of this powerful method. The book can be heartily recommended to those who have to deal with such problems in engineering practice.

Organic Syntheses: an Annual Publication of Satisfactory Methods for the Preparation of Organic Chemicals. Vol. 14. W. W. Hartman, Editor-in-Chief. Pp. vii+100. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1934.) 10s. 6d. net.

AMONG the twenty-six preparations given are decamethylene glycol (from ethyl sebacate), β -diethylaminoethyl alcohol (from diethylamine and ethylene chlorohydrin), 2:6-dimethylpyridine (from acetoacetic ester, ammonia and formaldehyde), glycine ester hydrochloride (from methyleneamino-acetonitrile, made in turn from formaldehyde, sodium cyanide and ammonium chloride), and *DL*-methionine (from β -chloroethyl methyl sulphide and sodium phthalimidomalonate). Vol. 14 includes later references to preparations described in earlier volumes, and the index covers the contents of vols. 10-14. J. R.

Our Primitive Contemporaries. By Prof. G. P. Murdock. Pp. xxii+614. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1934.) 14s. net.

As an account of 'primitive' man intended for the general reader and the student, this book is written on a novel plan. Instead of attempting a generalised account, the author has taken eighteen peoples—not all contemporary or primitive in the strict sense—and describes their life as they live it day by day in its framework of material, social and religious organisation. It is scarcely necessary to say that the author does not claim first-hand knowledge. His account of the Haida of north-west America, however, has been checked by his own personal field-work. In other instances his material has been drawn from authoritative descriptions. The bibliography appended to each chapter indicates a critical appreciation by the author of his authorities.