

Short Notices

The Generic Names of the Holarctic Butterflies. By Francis Hemming. Vol. 1: 1758-1863. Pp. viii+184. (London: British Museum (Natural History), 1934.) n.p.

THIS book aims at providing a list of generic names proposed for the holarctic butterflies between the years 1758 and 1863, inclusive. It also attempts to give the correct fixation in so far as typical species, or genotypes, are concerned. Mr. Hemming has based his results and conclusions on an exhaustive first-hand examination of the whole of the literature concerned. Entomological workers have long been hampered by doubts obtaining relative to the correct names of so many of the insects they study. Among these uncertainties, generic names are paramount, while specific names are of lesser importance and would prove of little difficulty once uniformity of generic nomenclature could be attained.

With few exceptions, the strict application of the present International Code of Nomenclature has been followed; in certain instances—widely used names, especially those of insects of economic importance—the strict application of such rules would result in unnecessary confusion. It is, therefore, suggested that with regard to seven well-known genera, the application of the rules be suspended and that such names be placed in the list of *nomina conservanda*. In the appendix at the end, the relevant articles of the nomenclature code that have been followed are given and are thus available for ready reference. It is to be hoped that the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature will, as soon as may be possible, exercise its plenary powers and decide in favour of the recommendations put forward. Mr. Hemming has evidently carried out his task with great care, and the result of his labours will be welcomed by lepidopterists of both Europe and North America.

Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries. By A. Lucas. Second edition, revised. Pp. xii+447. (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1934.) 16s. net.

IN this volume the author has published with a change of title a second edition of his "Ancient Egyptian Materials" (1926). Those who are acquainted with the book in its earlier form will scarcely need assurance of the merits of the revised edition. The author has incorporated much fresh material, which has accrued from his further researches. Three chapters have been added as the result of much expansion and rearrangement; and the ancient industries, which received little more than mention, have now been treated in some detail. Among the industries with which Mr. Lucas deals are faience- and glass-making, metal-working, pottery-making and stone-working, while among the new materials added are coral, cosmetics, perfumes and mother-of-pearl. Many additions have been made to the references from the Greek and Latin writers, and the chemical analyses, now much expanded, again appear as an appendix.

Electrolytes. By Prof. Hans Falkenhagen. Translated by R. P. Bell. (International Series of Monographs on Physics.) Pp. xvi+348. (Oxford: Clarendon Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1934.) 25s. net.

DESPITE the existence of some excellent English works on the subject, this translation of Prof. Falkenhagen's treatise is a very opportune addition to physical literature. The book is thoroughly physical in its outlook, and the mathematics employed serves to clarify and to emphasise the physical concepts.

A notice of the work would become a mere catalogue if it attempted to give the reader an adequate notion of the topics dealt with; suffice it to say that the book begins with Faraday, and, after discussing ideal dilute solutions and weak electrolytes, proceeds by way of Lewis's theory of activities to a study of those theories involving interionic actions which have, during recent years, dominated the subject.

It is sufficient commentary on the rapidity with which the subject is developing to note that this volume—a translation of the German edition of 1932—has been brought up to date by the addition of sections dealing with recent extensions of Bjerrum's theory, with Onsager's treatment of the dissociation field effect, and with applications of quantum mechanics to electrode processes.

Scholarly and very fully-documented, the book is indispensable to any serious student of electrolytic phenomena.

A. F.

Palestine and Israel: Historical Notes. By Sir Flinders Petrie. Pp. 99+16 plates. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1934.) 3s. 6d. net.

SIR FLINDERS PETRIE here describes in popular form the contacts between archaeology and scriptural narrative of early Israelitish history, mainly in the results of the excavations of the British School of Archaeology in Egypt in Southern Palestine. The cardinal point of his argument, however, is the consistent character of the patriarchal narrative, when the years of the Biblical account have been subjected to amendment on lines for which there is strong grounds of probability. The later dating of the Exodus is then shown to fall into place.

The treatment of the Biblical text throughout is essentially conservative. The author holds that the results of textual criticism are largely irrelevant. The narrative is not a jumble of sources little better than fortuitous, but, he maintains, can be shown to be a carefully considered selection from a variety of sources in the construction of a complicated, but consistent, story.

WE regret that in referring to "The Kinetic Theory of Gases", by Prof. Leonard B. Loeb, in NATURE of March 9 (p. 390), the publisher's name was incorrectly given as Messrs. Chapman and Hall, Ltd. The book is published by The McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Ltd., Aldwych House, Aldwych, London, W.C.2.