

**Études et recherches sur les phytohormones**

Première réunion organisée en collaboration avec l'Union Internationale des Sciences biologiques, Paris, 1 et 2 octobre 1937. Pp. xiv+126. (Paris: Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1938.) 35 francs.

**I**N spite of the great interest in the phytohormones which has been aroused in recent years, their mode of operation and full significance are still far from being fully understood. In the hope of clearing up some of the problems concerning them, and in order to discuss them generally, an international conference of experts who have specialized in the study of phytohormones was held at Paris in 1937. The conference was under the auspices of the International Union of Biological Sciences in collaboration with the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation. Papers were read by each of the following: Prof. M. J. Sirks (introduction); Prof. F. Kögl (chemistry of phytohormones and other plant growth substances); Prof. Niels Nielsen (phytohormones in different groups of plants); Prof. V. J. Koningsberger (phytohormones and metabolism); Prof. G. S. Avery, jun. (the concept of phytohormones and their relationship to plant irritants); Prof. R. Bouillene (the action of phytohormones on growth, cell division and the genesis of organs); Prof. R. Boysen Jensen (phytohormones and plant movements); Mlle. C. Zollikofer (the influence of animal hormones on plants); Prof. R. Dostal (correlations and phytohormones). The report under review contains each of these papers in full, with an account of the discussions which followed. It is worthy of careful study by all those who are interested in this aspect of plant physiology.

C. R. M.

**Methodik der Hormonforschung**

Von Dr. Christian Bomskov. Band 2: Ovar (Follikelhormone, Gelbkörperhormon), Hoden, Hypophysenvorderlappen. Pp. xxix+1016. (Leipzig: Georg Thieme, 1939.) 89 gold marks.

**T**HE second volume of Bomskov's work on the methods used in research on hormones deals with the sex glands and the anterior lobe of the pituitary. A third volume dealing with the posterior lobe of the pituitary, the anti-pernicious anemia factor and vasodilator substances is in preparation. This second volume has been produced in a year and a half, and it is easy to believe the author when he says in his preface that it has meant a great sacrifice of personal freedom. The book sets out to describe all the surgical, histological, biological and chemical methods used in the study of hormones. The details are usually given in the form of a direct translation from the original description, so that it is often unnecessary to refer to the original work. There are about 3,000 references, 274 beautifully reproduced figures and 276 tables.

This book will be an invaluable source of information to all workers in this field. It can be criticized on the ground that it contains too many facts. The full description of a number of different ways of doing the same thing necessarily involves a certain

amount of repetition but increases the usefulness of the book. The writings of Dr. Bomskov have covered a very wide field (he has written a similar book on vitamins) and it is natural that those whose expert knowledge is deeper, but narrower, should find matter for criticism. Such general reviews do for scientific workers, however, what Baedeker has done for tourists: the traveller finds them very useful, and the settler prefers other sources of information, so long as he is in his own small field.

**A Textbook of Pharmacognosy**

By T. C. Denston. Third edition. Pp. xvi+583. (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., 1939.) 20s. net.

**T**HIS text-book is primarily intended for the use of students preparing for the chemist and druggist qualifying examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. The subject-matter covers the syllabus for this examination, and is arranged in a systematized, concise manner so that the student can readily grasp it. The drugs dealt with are classified according to their morphological nature under barks, roots, seeds, fruits, etc. This enables the student to compare and contrast similar morphological structures by their macroscopic characters. Microscopy is limited, so as to fulfil the above examination requirements, to starches, calcium oxalate crystals, epidermal trichomes, hairs and fibres used in surgical dressings, and filtering materials. Attention is given to recent work on the identifying and evaluation of drugs, the use of the ultra-violet lamp, methods of cultivation, collection, stabilization, drying, preservation and the detection of adulteration and of insect invasion. Reasons are given for the standards of purity laid down by the British Pharmacopœia.

The illustrations are numerous and of a high order. The drawings set a standard which students would do well to emulate. Both author and publishers have collaborated to produce a volume of which they may justly be proud, and which can be recommended with confidence to those for whom it is written.

W. O. HOWARTH.

**An Introduction to Vertebrate Anatomy**

By Harold Madison Messer. Pp. xvi+406. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938.) 16s. net.

**I**T is often profitable to present old knowledge in new ways, and this Prof. Messer has done by rejecting the method of teaching zoology by means of selected types and treating the systems of organs from a comparative point of view. The book is a compilation, and makes no claim to originality of knowledge or treatment. But the author maintains that the 'systemic method' is more satisfactory than the 'type-study method' both in the lecture room and the laboratory. The American student taking a one-year course is taught the comparative embryological, histological and anatomical aspects of each system of organs from cyclostomes to man, without, so far as can be ascertained from the book, studying a system in detail in any one animal or relating that