

Iceland Papers, Vol. 1

Scientific Results of Cambridge Expeditions to Iceland, 1932-38. Pp. vii+17 papers. (London: Oxford University Press, 1939.) 21s. net.

THERE is no better training for young men than to send them away from their families and teachers, giving them jobs that they feel to be incursions into the unknown. Such was the idea of the geographers of Oxford and Cambridge, but they found themselves restricted by university terms to the summers. Work in North Africa and to the south could be carried on at any season, but only in summer could the north be attacked. In consequence, we see year by year parties from Oxford going to Spitzbergen and from Cambridge to Iceland, while both universities, often using more experienced seniors, visit Greenland.

Geography includes nearly all science, and nothing comes amiss. In no section can much be accomplished in one northern season, and the torch is passed on from one party to another and so knowledge accumulates. In a series of separata, bound up together, we have the results of twelve Iceland visits from 1932 to 1938, usually two or three men together. They comprise five devoted to physical geography, six to birds, four oddments concerning spiders, worms, Collembola and freshwater algae, and two stronger accounts of the Central Desert and of Grimsey Islet, necessarily on botanical lines.

We wish success to these ventures, and we approve of Iceland, for great profit may be foreseen in similar summer expeditions for several decades.

L'Année psychologique

Fondateurs: Henry Beaunis et Alfred Binet. Publiée par Prof. Henri Piéron. (Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine.) Année 37 (1936). Tome 1. Pp. xxiii+448. Tome 2. Pp. 449-844. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1937.) 150 francs.

THIS yearly publication is always eagerly expected by psychologists, for it gives an accurate account of the research made in the various fields of psychology during the year. Reviews of books and of special articles are listed according to their subject; and the principal points in them are clearly explained. A series of specialized contributions add to the interest of this survey. In this issue might be mentioned those of Geblewicz and Shen (Rôle du temps dans la perception de la profondeur), of H. Piéron (Types d'intelligence), and of Fauville, Dewyn and Ellis (Aptitudes motrices et aptitudes perceptives).

T. G.

Urmass und Schöpfung

Neuentdeckte Gesetzmäßigkeiten. Von Ernst P. v. Schoen-Wildenegg. Pp. viii+235. (Berlin: G. Schoenfeld's Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1938.)

THE author investigates the origin of our system of numbers on the basis of biological facts. He attempts to prove the dominating existence of the

geometrical progression in living beings as well as in celestial phenomena. Investigating and confirming some well-known facts, such as the distribution of the planets, he derives a number of empirical relations between the bodies of the solar system. Apart from this section of the book, which bears quite a personal note, the book as a whole is quite stimulating to read for all those interested in the physical and biological foundation of our past and present concept of measurement and number.

Animal and Bird Painting

The Outlook and Technique of the Artist. By Charles Simpson. Pp. viii+136+68 plates. (London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1939.) 10s. 6d. net.

AN eminently readable book. The domain of animal painting has been little invaded by the 'wild men' of modern art, who would possibly be annoyed by the author's insistence on sincere observation, not only of animal structure and movement, but also of the landscape environment. Different classes of animals are treated in some detail, with short accounts of their origin and varieties. The student of animal painting will find help in the author's references to the particular snags and difficulties in the matter, and in his very practical advice on the method of catching and memorizing a special aspect of a moving subject. Considerable attention is given to the correct sequence of movements in walking and running animals. The influence of light in eliminating detail must not prevent close representation of essential form and solidity. Many paintings of animals should be called studies merely, in that the extreme details of anatomy are allowed to obscure the values in the picture as a whole.

The book is well and copiously illustrated by black-and-white reproductions of the works of old and modern masters of animal painting.

Physics

Physics for Technical Students

Sound, Electricity and Magnetism, Light. By Prof. W. B. Anderson. Third edition. Pp. x+361-796. (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1938.) 15s.

THE stumbling block for many advanced technical students is inadequacy of training in fundamental physics. Physics is undoubtedly a subject in which, to the physicist, there can be no compromise; for the man who is to become one of a number of kinds of engineer and not a physicist, there is much to be gained by selecting those aspects of physics which are likely to be of greater use to him than other aspects. What these aspects are experience must tell; technology is daily becoming more scientific and an adequate syllabus must be continuously brought up to date.

The present text-book is along the right lines, but may not be entirely suitable for English engineering