

Introduction à la biochimie générale

Par Prof. Marcel Florkin. Deuxième édition. Pp. 372. (Liège: Éditions Desoer; Paris: Masson et Cie., 1943.) n.p.

Précis de biochimie humaine

Par Prof. Marcel Florkin. Troisième édition. Pp. 442. (Liège: Éditions Desoer; Paris: Libr. Maloine, 1944.) n.p.

L'Évolution biochimique

Par Prof. Marcel Florkin. Pp. 210. (Liège: Éditions Desoer, 1944.) n.p.

Vitamines et carences alimentaires

Par Prof. Georges Mouriquand. (Sciences d'aujourd'hui.) Pp. 462+65 plates. (Paris: Albin Michel, 1942.) 98 francs.

L'Organisation nerveuse

Par Prof. Remy Collin. (Sciences d'aujourd'hui.) Pp. 530+40 plates. (Paris: Albin Michel, 1944.) 150 francs.

THE five books considered here are all war-time products of France and Belgium.

Prof. Florkin's two volumes on general and on human biochemistry are on standard lines, suitable for university students. His "Évolution biochimique" proposes to correlate a biochemical aspect of zoological evolution with the morphological.

Prof. Mouriquand's "Vitamines et carences alimentaires" is especially recommended for its concise descriptions of the vitamins, their assay, properties and effects. The interrelation of the vitamins with other dietetic factors at different ages is considered separately, and this offsets the impression, so often given in popular books on this subject, that vitamin-deficiency diseases are always clear-cut entities.

Prof. Collin's "L'Organisation nerveuse" is a description of the embryological formation and of the histological and anatomical structure of the nervous system in relation to its function.

These last two volumes are well illustrated and are excellent additions to the series "Sciences d'aujourd'hui" which many will remember from pre-war days.

De la stratosphère à l'ionosphère

Par Daniel Barbier et Daniel Chalonge. (La science vivante, No. 4.) Pp. 156+8 plates. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1942.) 25 francs.

THIS little book, published in Paris in 1942, under the German occupation, is a most fitting member of the series "La Science Vivante". It describes a realm of science the exploration of which has in the main been accomplished during and between two great wars. As in most fields of science, men of many countries have shared in the work, bringing to it knowledge and skill of varied kinds—meteorologists, physicists, mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, radio-physicists among others. Researches undertaken mainly under the impulsion of individual interest in particular aspects of the upper atmosphere have gradually converged to form a body of knowledge already largely coherent and mutually confirmatory, though many problems still remain. The subject proves to be rich and multifarious in detail and variety, and in many ways its investigation has great promise (and much present performance) in rendering practical aid of economic value in human affairs. This admirable little book gives a clear and wide summary of the subject, and though no two men can be really expert in so great a variety of studies, the authors have omitted little of special interest, and show good

judgment in their occasional critical pronouncements on the more disputed topics.

In their closing chapter on the problems of the future, the authors stress the need for extending past attacks (which have in the main been individual or only slightly co-ordinated sorties on particular points) according to a grand strategy embracing the whole globe. The following words on the problems of the future have an application not confined to France, where signs of new life and activity are indeed manifest in many fields of science: "Can one make it known in high places that scientific research is stifled in the scanty bounds of old laboratories, old observatories, dusty and out of date, in which French men of science vegetate in an atmosphere of another age; and that it requires equipment on an industrial scale, and many technicians". In the words of ancient wisdom: There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

The Mathematical Discoveries of Newton

By Prof. H. W. Turnbull. Pp. vii+68. (London, Glasgow and Bombay: Blackie and Son, Ltd., 1945.) 5s. net.

THIS little book is based on two lectures delivered about three years ago, the first at the Newton tercentenary meeting of the Edinburgh Mathematical Society, and the second at a subsequent meeting of the Mathematical and Physical Society of the University of Edinburgh. It is not concerned with Newton's work on gravitation or optics, but solely with his pure mathematics, and is addressed to those who have themselves a certain knowledge of this subject. The twelve sections deal respectively with early influences, the binomial theorem, the method of fluxions, the "De Analsi", the "De Quadratura", the "Geometria Analytica", the solid of least resistance and the curve of quickest descent, angular sections, interpolation and finite differences, the "Arithmetica Universalis", cubic curves and geometry in the "Principia". Certain conjectures have been confirmed from a closer study of the works of Wallis and of the manuscript papers of Newton's friend, David Gregory. The author does not deal with the controversy between Newton and Leibniz as to who discovered the calculus, considering it unnecessary to add to the long-existing discussions of this subject until all the relevant documents on both sides have been published.

Trees and Shrubs of the British Isles

By N. Barrie Hodgson. (Crowther's Rambler's Books.) Pp. 82 (19 plates). (Bognor Regis: John Crowther, Ltd., 1945.) 6s. net.

THIS book is one of a series on common plants and animals, most of them being concerned with enabling the amateur to recognize the more familiar types. The present volume deals with fifty-nine native and introduced trees and shrubs. The choice of species is good; but if the whortleberry is included as a shrub then there are several other plants which have equal claims.

The illustrations are of rather unequal merit, but with the description they will probably enable anyone to recognize the trees described. As there is no key the identification depends on comparison with the illustration. This method must be deplored, but the descriptions are in the main good and do give in some detail the characteristics of the bark and the buds. The general form of the book is pleasing.