

Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters

Vol. 29 (1943). Pp. xiii + 606. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1944.) 5 dollars; 28s. net.

THIS volume contains a number of papers in botany, forestry, zoology and other fields.

Two of the botanical papers deal with the marine algae of Hong Kong and comprise the genera *Herposiphonia* and *Polysiphonia* by C. K. Tseng, University of Michigan. There is also an account of "Some Resupinate Polypores from the Region of the Great Lakes" which is the fifteenth number of a monograph on this subject. The paper contains an extensive key to the principal white resupinate polypores in culture. These fungi are discussed in three groups: (a) white, (b) brown, (c) those other than white and brown. The present paper, in which the first group is treated, is based largely upon studies of the rate of growth in culture and other features. It is intended to serve as a guide to the principal white resupinate polypores in North America.

Under the heading of geography is a paper on "Some Applications of Aerial Photographs to Geographic Inventory" by J. A. Russel, F. W. Foster and K. C. McMurry. It contains an extensive key by which an interpretation from air photographs can be carried out. The key contains features due to topography, drainage, soils, coasts and shores, plant life. Other sections are devoted to the characteristics of occupation such as rural production, transportation and urban forms. The section on plant life is detailed and should be of considerable value in the interpretation from aerial photographs of the distribution of different types of vegetation.

Den Danske Dyreverden

Dyregeografisk og indvandringshistorisk belyst. Af Ragnar Sparck. Pp. 116. (København: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1942.) 7.50 kr.

IN this book Ragnar Sparck has written an excellent summary of the general problems connected with the present distribution of the Danish fauna. At the present day, Denmark possesses a very uniform climate and a topography without extremes, and as would be expected under such conditions the majority of the species comprising the fauna are distributed over the whole area wherever they may find suitable habitats. A number of species are, however, confined to the southern districts and islands, some with a westerly and some with an easterly distribution. Ragnar Sparck has studied the distribution of these species in order to determine whether such distribution is due to human interference, climatic or ecological factors, or whether it has some reference to the period at which the species entered the country. The species considered are mostly vertebrates, but consideration is given to the distribution of a number of invertebrates, and there is a chapter on the fauna of the surrounding sea.

There is an excellent series of maps showing the distribution of certain species in Denmark, but it is a pity that these are confined to Denmark alone and that the distribution of the species in the Scandinavian Peninsula or elsewhere in Europe is not shown.

This book will be of great interest to all who are concerned in problems connected with the zoogeography of Northern Europe and post-glacial migration of the European fauna.

Language as a Social and Political Factor in Europe By Stanley Rundle. Pp. 207. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1946.) 12s. net.

AS an example of the serious misunderstandings that can arise from lack of a common tongue Mr. Rundle quotes, among a number of instances, the English padre in the First World War who offered a benediction to some French troops in the words "Que Dieu vous blesse", and the story is characteristic of a book that treats a technical subject in a way that cannot fail to appeal to the non-specialist reader while conveying to him much sound and thoughtful information. The first part of the book sets out the difficulties caused by language differences, which Mr. Rundle summarizes in eight points. In the second part he gives a quantity of statistical and other material on the languages of Europe, and in the third he deals with the various projects for overcoming the difficulties, whether by learning a variety of languages, or agreeing to adopt one existing language, or forming a new, "artificial" language. To each of these suggestions he applies the test of his eight points, and though he offers no final conclusion the ideas he throws out are stimulating and provocative. His suggestion of three simple international languages, based on the division of Europe into three main language groups, Romance, Teutonic and Slav, though put forward almost as an afterthought, is at least as worthy of consideration as some of the other projects which he summarizes, and in passing he has some interesting suggestions to make about the teaching and learning of languages.

MAURICE BRUCE

The Chemical Composition of Foods

By Dr. R. A. McCance and Dr. E. M. Widdowson. (Medical Research Council, Special Report Series No. 235.) Second edition. Pp. 156. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1946.) 6s. net.

DURING the six years of its existence McCance and Widdowson's "The Chemical Composition of Foods" has come to be justly valued as the most comprehensive and authoritative compilation of its kind in Britain (and, indeed, in some respects, such as the mineral contents, in the world). The call for a second edition has prompted the authors to expand, and occasionally to modify, their initial findings. The expansion has swelled the number of entries from 541 to 609, the additions mainly stemming from war-conditioned alterations in the British dietary. Thus where two flours (white and wholemeal) were sufficient in 1940, no less than sixteen varieties have been entered in the 1946 edition. Among other newcomers are dried egg, household dried milk, chopped ham, and "sausage (1943)"—an ominous description that is belied, at least nutritionally, by the analytical data given. Several "economical" variants have been added to the long and useful list of cooked dishes, while the number of recipes has been correspondingly enlarged. This section of the Report, which takes into consideration such significant details as mechanical losses of raw materials during mixing, will be invaluable to dietitians. Catering, as they do, for a wide range of users, the authors continue to express compositions per ounce as well as per 100 "grammes" (but why this archaism?).

One notable change in this edition is that the 1940 table of "available" (ionizable) iron contents has been dropped—a step reflecting recent changes in our ideas about iron availability.

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