

The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne
 Edited by Prof. A. A. Luce and Prof. T. E. Jessop.
 (Bibliotheca Britannica Philosophica.) Vol. 2: The
 Principles of Human Knowledge; First Draft of the
 Introduction to the Principles; Three Dialogues
 between Hylas and Philonous; Philosophical Corre-
 spondence with Johnson. Edited by Prof. T. E.
 Jessop. Pp. vii+294. (London and Edinburgh:
 Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1949.) 30s. net.

THE second volume in this admirable new edition of Berkeley (see *Nature*, October 15, 1949, p. 634) contains his most important philosophical works: the "Principles", the most systematic exposition; and the "Three Dialogues", more popular and one of the best essays in philosophical dialogue since Plato. Berkeley's "First Draft of the Introduction to the Principles" is placed very suitably in this volume, for comparison with the final version, rather than tucked away among minor writings in later volumes. The "Introduction", of course, is not the usual sort, but contains an important part of his argument. The letters at the end of the volume are disappointing, in the sense that Berkeley's American friend, Samuel Johnson, extracted no fresh arguments in reply to objections. For the most part, Johnson is referred to work already published. However, the letters do show that, twenty years after the first edition of the "Principles", Berkeley was satisfied that he had no fresh arguments.

Prof. T. E. Jessop considers that the "De Motu", "The Analyst" and "Aleiphron" contain substantially the missing three parts that Berkeley had in mind when he published the "Principles" as Part 1. This removes the suspicion that something has been lost—a suspicion roused by Berkeley's remark that he had lost MSS. on his travels and was unwilling to rewrite. For all its brilliance, penetration and close reasoning, Berkeley's work is disappointingly negative. We know exactly what he objected to; we know far less of what he adhered to. As Prof. Jessop says, he wrote as a controversialist, refuting "corporeal" or "minute" philosophers, or else meeting objections to his own statements. Those of us who come from east of St. George's Channel assume that controversy is natural to every Irishman, but we cannot help regretting that their greatest philosopher ran so true to type.

A. D. RITCHIE

Simple Organic Practice

By H. Middleton. Pp. viii+172. (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1949.) 7s. 6d.

MANY teachers of organic chemistry, indebted to H. Middleton for his safe and reliable test for nitrogen, will examine his latest practical book with more than usual interest—and will not be disappointed. Space precludes details of the contents, but Middleton describes: the preparation and properties of about eighty simple compounds—including such a novelty as adipic acid of nylon fame; the determination of physical constants; and a systematic scheme for the identification of simple organic compounds.

The author is obviously a skilful chemist and experienced teacher. He knows the limitations of the laboratory and of student's time and other difficulties. He himself has made first-hand acquaintance with all the procedures and preparations he describes. Thus, while he wisely omits preparations which take up a disproportionate amount of time, he makes many others on a small scale. The subject-matter is

clearly set out in paragraphs and sections with bold headlines; this is especially helpful to a student using the scheme of analysis. The reviewer ventures to suggest that Middleton should, in the preparation of oxalic acid, replace sucrose by glycol, as being more instructional and also expressible by an equation.

This book of undoubted worth is sold at a very reasonable price, and all students and teachers of organic chemistry should make themselves acquainted with it.

G. F.

Birds in Action

By Eric Hosking and Cyril Newberry. Pp. 128 (69 plates). London and Glasgow: Wm. Collins, Sons and Co., Ltd., 1949.) 16s. net.

THE advent of the high-speed electronic flash-lamp, with its application to photography, has placed new power in the hands of the ornithologist with a camera. For many years it seemed as if bird photography could go little further. So far as the British Isles were concerned, most of the breeding species had been photographed again and again. Bird photographers sighed for fresh subjects, or at any rate new aspects of old ones, and sighed in vain until the coming of this high-speed apparatus. "The flash can be made as short as 1 micro-second, that is, a millionth of a second, but in practice is usually arranged to last about 1/10,000th second."

This is a quotation from "Birds in Action", a volume of pictures with descriptions by Eric Hosking and Cyril Newberry, illustrating the results obtained by them when using the electronic flash in the photography of birds.

Whereas, in days gone by, movement was the bugbear of the photographer, we here see it as his delight. Birds in flight, birds in every sort of swift action, are portrayed in crispest detail without blur or distortion. For the details of this collection of remarkable and beautiful pictures, the reader must be referred to the book itself, where he will also find a description of the apparatus employed to obtain them.

FRANCES PITT

Wild Flowers at a Glance

By M. C. Carey and Dorothy Fitchew. Pp. xi+275. (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1949.) 10s. 6d. net.

THIS is one of the very few flower books that aid recognition in a non-botanical way which we would recommend. Here 264 flowers are portrayed in colour, and are grouped according to colour of flower—five groups in all, namely: white; greenish-white, green or greenish-yellow; yellow; blue; red, shades of pink or purple.

All the illustrations have been prepared by Miss Dorothy Fitchew, and are accurate reproductions from actual specimens. Within each colour group, the flowers are arranged according to family. Each floral picture appears on a separate page, which also carries the common and botanical names, name of family, habitat, time of flowering, height of plant, a general description of the whole plant and its parts, and finally the derivation of generic and specific names.

A beginner will find this a most useful aid with his field work, and probably having had no formal botanical training beforehand, will soon find his interest sufficiently aroused to delve more deeply into the science of botany.