

**Lehrbuch der anorganischen Chemie**

Begründet von A. F. Holleman. (34-36, wesentlich umgearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage.) Bearbeitet von Prof. Egon Wiberg. Pp. xxviii+661. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and Company, 1955.) 28 D. marks.

**T**RANSLATIONS of the late Prof. A. F. Holleman's books on inorganic and organic chemistry have instructed generations of students. They were characterized by clarity and a wise selection of fundamental material. Although as Prof. Egon Wiberg says, his revision bears little relation to the original "Holleman", it preserves the good points of its ancestor.

The text is thoroughly modern, the electronic theory of valency being amply used in it, and the old formulations of inorganic compounds have been replaced by present-day ones. Physico-chemical principles, such as the phase rule and the theory of equilibrium, are freely used. The newer aspects of the subject come at the right places in the text, and difficult topics are dealt with in stages. The theoretical parts of the book are modern and correct. The treatment of the individual elements and compounds is concise yet thorough, and includes more advanced topics of considerable interest, such as the structure of the silicates, the metal carbonyls and the hydrides of boron. The rarer elements find a satisfactory place, and there are brief but good descriptions of industrial processes. There are many tables of physical properties and an excellent index, so that the book is very convenient for reference.

The text is divided into short sections with clear headings, which will facilitate study, and the treatment of each element follows a regular order of occurrence, preparation, physical properties, chemical properties and uses. The nomenclature is based on Stock's scheme, which is becoming more used in all quarters. The illustrations are mostly curves, diagrams of structure and technical apparatus, ordinary preparative laboratory apparatus, even of a specialized type, not finding a place. This book is clear, systematic, sufficiently detailed, and highly informative. It can be warmly recommended.

**British Wild Flowers**

By Dr. John Hutchinson. Vol. 1: Pp. 492. Vol. 2: Pp. 493-947. (Pelican Books Nos. A.330 and 331.) (Harmondsworth, Mddx.: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1955.) 5s. each volume.

**D**URING the past few years Dr. John Hutchinson has been occupied in a revision of Bentham and Hooker's monumental "Genera Plantarum", but this enormous task has not prevented him from writing a number of volumes dealing popularly with the British flora. His first three works in the Pelican series were written expressly for those with no knowledge of botany but who wanted to learn the names of the wild plants of the countryside. Undoubtedly these convenient manuals provided a simple and easy introduction to the study of our native plants. They had no systematic arrangement, though plants belonging to the same family were kept together. The latest volumes, which include the contents of the three earlier books with some additional species, correct this unsatisfactory situation, and the sequence of the species described and figured follows the author's system of classification.

The work certainly gives a good general survey of the British flora, though the inclusion of so many adventive species is perhaps unfortunate as there are

significant omissions among the native plants and some indigenous genera get rather scant treatment. This is certainly so in the case of aquatic plants. The genus *Callitriche* is entirely omitted, and other groups are poorly represented. Under *Utricularia* it would have been better to refer to the work of Lloyd, who showed convincingly that the bladders were not the static organs they were supposed to be, but ingenious traps which could be set at tension ready to be sprung by contact on sensitive hairs.

The two volumes, in conjunction with C. E. Hubbard's "Grasses" in the same series, can be recommended to amateur field-naturalists needing an authoritative and inexpensive guide to wild flowers in Britain.

**Further Outlook**

By F. H. Ludlam and R. S. Scorer. Pp. 174+13 plates. (London: Allan Wingate (Publishers), Ltd., 1954.) 15s. net.

**I**T is the avowed aim of the authors of this interesting and unusual book "not to write a text on the science of meteorology . . . but rather to explain a philosophy of the science of weather study which will enable us to understand its probable future achievements". The result of this laudable purpose is that the essence of the contents is likely to be fully savoured only by the meteorologist, who will be delighted by the novel treatment of certain parts of his subject but occasionally surprised by quite reckless pronouncements. Surely few forecasters would agree with the authors that the geostrophic wind equation is "the only theoretical result which is constantly put to practical use", or that "no great forecaster has ever written a tract that has found a place amongst the teaching texts of meteorology".

The authors are distinguished for their work in cloud physics and on mountain waves, respectively, and the chapters headed "Exploiting the Atmosphere" and "Weather Control" are those most likely to interest the general reader. The first of these deals with the development of thermals and wave clouds and with the techniques of soaring flight; there is an intriguing analysis of the dynamic soaring of the albatross. The other is concerned with ways in which weather may be artificially modified, in particular with the physical processes involved in cloud seeding and with the difficulties of assessing whether or not rain-making experiments are effective. The book is illustrated by very fine cloud photographs.

JAMES PATON

**Dancers of God**

By Noël Ballif. (Translated from the French by James Cameron.) Pp. 213+32 plates. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1955.) 15s. net.

**T**HE author, M. Noël Ballif, in company with a team of anthropologists and cinema technicians, and with the backing of the Musée de l'Homme, organized an expedition into the forest country of the French Congo to study the pygmies of the region and to make film and sound recordings of their way of life. The book is essentially a travelogue, delightfully written and well translated, and with an interesting account of the daily life of the pygmies with whom they were lucky enough to make friendly contact.

This is in no sense a serious anthropological work, but the description is useful in the same way as are the descriptions of remote peoples by the early