

A Clinical Prospect of the Cancer Problem

By Prof. D. W. Smithers. (Monographs on Neoplastic Various Sites.) Pp. xv+232. (Edinburgh and London: E. and S. Livingstone, Ltd., 1960.) 37s. 6d. net.

MORE than five years ago Prof. D. W. Smithers undertook to act as general editor of a series of monographs on neoplastic diseases at various sites, and four books in this series have already been published, dealing with cancer of the lung, bladder, rectum and oesophagus. Other volumes dealing with the prostate, brain, larynx and pharynx are also in preparation. The justification for this piece-meal way of approach to the cancer problem is derived from the fact that, from the clinical point of view, cancer of each organ of the body has its own particular characteristics, affecting aetiology, pathology and treatment.

Each volume in the series of monographs on neoplastic disease at various sites is edited by someone with special experience in this particular field, and this series of books is proving to be of exceptional value to those doctors who are engaged in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer of the different organs of the body selected for inclusion in the series. But to fill in the gaps another monograph was also obviously needed, one which would survey the cancer problem as a whole yet still preserve the clinical point of view. This necessary introductory volume has now been written by Prof. D. W. Smithers himself.

He has unique qualifications for this task. Not only is he the general editor of the whole series (and incidentally the originator of the idea) but also his work as director of the Radiotherapy Department of the Royal Marsden Hospital and Institute of Cancer Research has brought him into contact with clinicians and research workers concerned with every aspect of human cancer.

Prof. Smithers begins by saying that his book presents "a personal view of the cancer problem". It tends to be "speculative and philosophic" in character. It is certainly original, stimulating and provocative, and provides an admirable introduction to this useful series of monographs.

Cosmology

By Prof. H. Bondi. Second edition. (Cambridge Monographs on Physics.) Pp. viii+182. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1960.) 30s. net.

THE call for a new edition of this book is a tribute to the excellence of the book itself and also an indication of the vitality of its subject. Ever since the 'modern' work in cosmology was started by Einstein in 1917, or thereabouts, as soon as it has seemed to some workers that a stage had been reached when little more could be done, other workers have revitalized the subject by some major idea or discovery. Thus, for example, Prof. Bondi and his colleagues produced the ideas of continual creation and of steady-state cosmology in 1948, Walter Baade discovered the need for a far-reaching revision of the distance scale in 1952, and this year Prof. M. Ryle and his colleagues have published their new surveys of remote radio sources. To some of us it seems indeed that the subject still awaits the key discovery that may be expected to show the significance of all that has been done hitherto. Anyhow, anyone wanting to make a serious study of the subject at

present, and probably for a long time to come, needs to know all that is contained in this book, and he is fortunate indeed in being given the material in such a clear, vigorous and stimulating form.

W. H. MCCREA

The Use of Organic Reagents in Inorganic Analysis

By A. I. Busev and N. G. Polianskii. Translated from the Russian by J. T. Greaves. Pp. vi+76. (London and New York: Pergamon Press, 1960.) 21s. net.

THIS translation from the original Russian has been produced, for reasons of celerity and economy, by non-letterpress setting and photolithography. The final result, although lacking the attractiveness of conventional printing, gives a quite legible text.

No booklet of seventy pages could possibly present a detailed practical description of the many applications of organic reagents in the analytical field. The present volume provides extended abstracts of the more important papers on the use of organic reagents, these abstracts being supported by a comprehensive bibliographical and reference section.

The first chapter of the book is devoted to general problems associated with the use of organic reagents, for example, specificity, functional groups, masking reagents, effect on redox potentials, and on catalytic reactions, etc.

The determination of cationic elements is dealt with sequentially according to the group system of the Periodic Classification, the presentation being both lucid and informative. No mention is made of anion-reagent complexes.

This is a useful reference book for the practising analyst or researcher in analytical methods, and it also gives an interesting indication of the keen interest taken by Russian chemists in the work on the application of the newer organic reagents to quantitative analytical problems.

D. T. LEWIS

Die Cactaceae

Handbuch der Kakteenkunde. Von Curt Backeberg. Band 5: Cereoideae (Boreocactinae). Pp. xxxix-xliv+2631-3544+ tafeln 212-255. (Jena: Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1961.) 107 D.M.

HERR BACKEBERG'S fifth volume concludes his vast systematic treatment of the Cactaceae with the remaining groups of the Cereoideae. A final supplementary volume with indexes is announced for next year. The present one is bigger than its predecessors because of the account of the important genus *Mamillaria*, which occupies more than 400 pages. The author recognizes 301 species and then adds descriptions of more than 100 "Wenig bekannte Arten", in alphabetical sequence, in accordance with the similar list in R. T. Craig's Handbook (1945). Herr Backeberg's adoption of the spelling *Mamillaria* rather than the original *Mammillaria*, to be regarded as an orthographic error, will be hotly contested by many botanists, who will read his discussion in the lengthy footnote on p. 3091. Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary certainly quotes *mamilla* as an incorrect form of *mamilla*, the diminutive of *mamma*. The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, however, retains the spelling *Mammillaria* in its list of *Nomina Generica Conservanda*.

N. Y. SANDWITH