

the bottom of each page is excellent, but, although it is realised that a full bibliography is impossible, fuller references to the more recent work, especially in regard to the nervous system, would have been a distinct advantage.

The logical way in which the facts are put forward, the short allusions to the history of the subject and to comparative physiology, together with a freedom from any attempt to compile a book for examination purposes, will recommend it to the purely scientific worker.

Generally, the book is well written and produced, but the language, which contains many Americanisms, leaves no doubt as to its nationality, and does not enhance its literary value. The author does not acknowledge any help in the preparation of the volume, which must have entailed an enormous amount of work. We congratulate Prof. Burton-Opitz on its completion, and wish his excellent and ambitious text-book every success.

Our Bookshelf.

The Planting, Cultivation, and Expression of Coconuts, Kernels, Cacao, and Edible Vegetable Oils and Seeds of Commerce. A Practical Handbook for Planters, Financiers, Scientists, and Others. By H. Osman Newland. (Griffin's Technological Handbooks.) Pp. vi+111+xi plates. (London: Charles Griffin and Co., Ltd., 1919.) Price 6s. net.

MR. NEWLAND scarcely gave himself a fair chance when, to quote his introduction, he was "prevailed upon to issue as a separate book the chapters on 'Ground Nuts,' 'Palm Oil and Kernels,' 'Cacao,' and 'Shea Nuts,' which originally formed part of a volume on *West Africa*." In doing this he has added chapters on coconuts and other edible oil-nuts found throughout the Empire, and has adopted for the whole a comprehensive title, the promise of which it would require unusual skill in compression to fulfil in a book of 111 not very closely printed pages. Moreover, the space at the author's disposal is not well distributed; thus the important oil-seeds soya bean, cottonseed, and sesame are disposed of in one chapter of seven pages, whilst an equal number of pages are given to reprinting Imperial Institute reports on strephonema, n'gore, n'kamba, n'kula, kamoot, and dika nuts. Interesting though these products may be, they are not of commercial importance at present, and reference to them is out of place in a book of this description. The illustrations are the best feature of the volume. T. A. H.

The Flora of Chepstow. By W. A. Shoolbred. Pp. x+140. (London: Taylor and Francis, 1920.) Price 10s. 6d. net.

In number and quality the local Floras of this country probably excel those of any other, and afford a satisfactory measure of the enthusiasm with which systematic botany is pursued by

British naturalists, including a large number of amateurs who are wholly free from any stigma of superficiality.

Indeed, the greatest authorities on the species of the British flora are nearly all amateurs, very few professional botanists, outside the great museums, having either the time or the inclination to devote themselves to this specialist study.

Among these authorities Dr. Shoolbred holds a place, and his "Flora of Chepstow" is a praiseworthy addition to floristic literature. The area of the lower Wye has long been a favourite hunting-ground among botanists, for its position and topography give it an uncommon richness.

While the author takes a thoroughly exclusive view of the size of species, still, a list of 974 Angiosperms alone is pretty good for an area of, roughly, 65 square miles, now seriously threatened by industrialism.

The critical genera are fully treated, and Dr. Shoolbred has had the advantage of assistance from such men as Marshall and Ley in dealing with their many difficulties. Mosses are also included, a feature worthy of further resuscitation.

Electricity and Magnetism: Theoretical and Practical. By Dr. C. E. Ashford. Third edition. Pp. xii+303. (London: Edward Arnold, 1920.) Price 4s. 6d.

THE chapter on Röntgen rays which has formed a part of previous editions of this school textbook has been replaced in the present edition by one on the passage of electricity through gases. In this some account is given of the broad generalisations which have followed from the work of Sir J. J. Thomson and his school, and the application of these theories in the thermionic valve. A few articles have been rewritten, and an appendix on Ohm's law has been substituted for the original description of apparatus. The popularity and worth of this book are reflected in the fact that it has been through the printers' hands no fewer than thirteen times since the first edition was published in 1903, and during that period has been twice revised to meet new requirements of theory and practice.

A Text-book of Geology. By Philip Lake and R. H. Rastall. Third edition. Pp. xiv+508+xxxiii plates. (London: Edward Arnold, 1920.) Price 21s. net.

A COMPLETE revision of this standard work has been carried out since the first edition was reviewed in NATURE for June 22, 1911. The account of coral reefs has been modified in accordance with modern theories, the chapter on ore-deposits has been rewritten, and sections on concretions, petroleum, and natural gas have been added to that on sedimentary rocks. In the stratigraphical section of the book the account of the Carboniferous system has been largely rewritten, and Mr. Rastall has contributed a new chapter on the history of igneous activity in the British Isles. Numerous other minor alterations have also been made.