

## Our Bookshelf.

*Methodik der wissenschaftlichen Biologie.* Herausgegeben von T. Péterfi. Band 1: *Allgemeine Morphologie.* Pp. xiv + 1425. Band 2: *Allgemeine Physiologie.* Pp. x + 1219. (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1928.) 188 gold marks.

THE aim of the editor and his forty-two expert collaborators has been to produce an account of the most trustworthy methods which have been employed in biological investigation. The first volume opens with an introduction to the mathematical treatment of biological questions including graphic methods, and this is followed by chapters on microscopical optics, including measuring, drawing, polarisation and ultramicroscopy, on vital staining, tissue culture, microdissection and microisolation, and on the methods for making permanent preparations and sections. The next part, on cytology, by Dr. K. Bělař, is noteworthy for the lists of the most suitable animals and plants for the study of cytoplasm, and in the succeeding part on methods for the examination of Protozoa he is equally helpful in indicating the most suitable examples for study. Chapters follow on histological and histochemical methods, on embryological and anatomical material, and on the micro-technique of invertebrates.

In the second volume the opening chapters on zoological and botanical museum technique are followed by others on the collection of living animals of various groups, and the keeping of them in fresh-water or sea-water aquaria, or in vivaria; special attention is devoted to insects (with an appendix on Lymantriidæ and Saturnidæ) and to mammals. The culture of algæ and fungi, and the keeping and rearing of higher plants as objects for the study of heredity or for physiological work, are considered. Excellent accounts are given of methods of illustration for natural history purposes by photography, microphotography, and cinematography. A chapter follows on variation, correlation, proving the agreement between empirical and theoretical figures, the analysis of inheritance factors, etc. The developmental mechanics of plants and of animals, including methods of artificial parthenogenesis, and the more important physiological methods as applied to animals and plants, are the subjects of the concluding chapters. An appendix gives technical names in German, English, French, and Italian.

This is a valuable work of reference for biological laboratories; advanced students and investigators who turn to it will find helpful information and suggestions over a wide range of biology, and the list of published works at the end of each section directs the reader to memoirs with further details. The chapter on the collection of living animals deals only with fresh-water and terrestrial examples; some account of the methods of collection of the more important marine animals would have been welcome.

The work is excellently produced and each volume has a good subject index.

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(1) *The Excavations at Ur and the Hebrew Records.* By C. Leonard Woolley. Pp. 61. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1929.) 2s. net; paper, 1s. net.

(2) *Biblical Anthropology compared with and illustrated by the Folklore of Europe and the Customs of Primitive Peoples.* By the Rev. H. J. D. Astley. Pp. vii + 262. (London: Oxford University Press, 1929.) 12s. 6d. net.

(1) THOSE who know Mr. Leonard Woolley's "Sumerians" will turn with interest to his Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture on the bearing of his discoveries on Biblical history. Mesopotamia is, of course, a long way from Palestine, and "the periods with which we have to deal are sometimes far removed in time from those which interest most the Bible student", yet the link is there. The two points of contact which concern us most would seem to be the flood narrative and the story of Abraham. Of the first we read that "such archaeological data as we possess, and the traditions of the Sumerians themselves, are most easily explained and best reconciled by the assumption that the Flood was the epoch-making historical event which they believed it to be". As for Abraham, the chief point of interest is that "living at Ur, so far from being a primitive Bedouin accustomed only to the wide spaces of the desert, he was the heir to an age-old civilisation sharing the complex life of a great trade centre". Another interesting point is that "it would not be even fanciful to hold that Jacob's dream was based on tales he had been told of the ziggurat of Ur, where on festivals the priests went in procession up and down the long stairways which led from earth to Heaven".

(2) The comparatively new science of anthropology, or the study of man apart from religious and cultural prepossessions, has also shed much light on story and custom in the Bible, as Sir James Frazer's monumental "Folk-lore in the Old Testament" has shown. Canon Astley's book is in part a collection of articles contributed to such periodicals as the *Hibbert Journal* and the *Modern Churchman*, and should prove most interesting material for the Biblical student who is fascinated by anthropological parallels between what he finds there and religious custom in other parts of the world.

J. C. H.

*Colloid Chemistry.* By Prof. The Svedberg. Second edition, revised and enlarged in collaboration with Arne Tiselius. (American Chemical Society Monograph Series, No. 16.) Pp. 302. (New York: The Chemical Catalog Co., Inc., 1928.) 5.50 dollars.

THE first edition of this book was reviewed in these columns in 1924, and this new edition is a revised version with some fifty pages of additional matter. The original scheme of the book, in so far as relatively greater space is devoted to the author's own investigations, is retained, and in consequence there is a freshness and reality in presentation which a mere compilation so frequently lacks. The amendment of the old text has been thoroughly carried out, and the strange method of printing some of