

*The Statesman's Year-Book: Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1933.* Edited by Dr. M. Epstein. Seventieth Annual Publication: Revised after Official Returns. Pp. xxv + 1,471. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1933.) 20s. net.

ONCE more this carefully edited volume presents a summary of the statistics of every aspect of activity in all the States of the world. Beyond the revision of the figures and other information, there appear to have been no material changes in the book and its size remains unaltered.

To many students and men of affairs the volume is an indispensable companion: to others it can be recommended for the wealth of information it contains and for the ease with which any fact can be found. One turns to this book not merely for figures of population, production, finance and trade, but also for the form and methods of government, state of education, distribution of occupations, conditions of transport and even the weights and measures used by every country.

This year the two maps show respectively international radio telephone communications and the routes of air mail services. There are the usual introductory tables dealing with the world's shipping, petroleum, iron and steel production, and motor output. The editor notes in his preface that in the seventy years of publication of this book, the monarchies in Europe have been reduced from eighteen to eight and the republics increased from one to eleven; the population of England and Wales has almost doubled and the trade of Great Britain almost trebled.

*Thomas Johnson: Botanist and Royalist.* By H. Wallis Kew and H. E. Powell. Pp. xi + 151 + 13 plates. (London, New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1932.) 8s. 6d. net.

IN this attractive little volume the authors have gathered together all that is known of Thomas Johnson, the seventeenth-century apothecary, who edited Gerard's "Herbal" in 1633. Those interested in the history of British botany will be grateful to the authors, not only for providing the first biography of Gerard's admirable editor, but also for the light they throw on Johnson's little-known and extremely rare "Mercurius Botanicus, . . ." (1634-41). It is conclusively shown that this work, and not How's "Phytologia Britannica" (1650), should be considered the first Flora of Britain. Its neglect hitherto is largely due to the fact that Pulteney, when he described the "Phytologia" as the "first English Flora" in 1790, possessed only the first part of the "Mercurius". Subsequent authors have copied Pulteney's statement.

The book is illustrated with portraits and figures from Johnson's works, and contains an absorbing account of the operations at the siege of Basing House, in which Johnson lost his life in 1644.

*Die Buchenwälder Europas.* Redigiert von E. Rübel. (Veröffentlichungen des Geobotanischen Institutes Rübel in Zürich, Heft 8.) Pp. 502. (Bern und Berlin: Hans Huber, 1932.) 25 francs; 20.80 gold marks.

THIS symposium on European beech forests is the outcome of a proposal, made at a meeting during the International Phytogeographical Excursion in 1923, to carry out phytosociological research on beech forests in different countries on a uniform scheme of work.

The results of these researches were discussed at the International Botanical Congress at Cambridge in 1930, and are now brought together under the editorship of Dr. E. Rübel. There are fourteen chapters (eight of them in English), on the ecology of the beech in different countries, including a full account of British beech woods by Dr. A. S. Watt and Prof. A. G. Tansley. There is a concluding summary by Dr. Rübel, who divides the *Fagion silvatica* "Assoziationsverband" (of Braun-Blanquet) or "Föderation" (of Du Rietz) into ten *Assoziationen*, with such designations as *Fagetum asperulosum*, *F. melicosum*, *F. mercurialosum*, *Südalpines Fagetum*, etc., according to the nature of the undergrowth and other ecological characters. The whole volume represents a most interesting and successful attempt at co-ordinated synecological investigation.

*The Blue Book, 1933: the Directory and Handbook of the Electrical Engineering and Allied Trades.* 51st edition. Pp. 1,442. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1932.) 25s. net.

THE "Blue Book" is well known to the electrical engineering and allied trades as an excellent directory and handbook. It has now reached its fifty-first edition, so it started practically at the same time as the electrical industry. The matter is excellently arranged. All electricians and manufacturers are given individually. The latter are also arranged under the headings of meters, lamps, switches, etc., so one sees at a glance all the manufacturers of these accessories under one heading. Colonial and Continental alphabetical sections are also given. We have found the book very useful.

*Quantity Surveying for Builders.* By Wilfred L. Evershed. (The Directly-Useful Technical Series.) Third edition, revised. Pp. xix + 278 + 10 plates. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1932.) 10s. 6d. net.

IN this book Mr. Evershed has justified his claim, that he has combined the consideration of theory and practice. Issue may, it is true, be joined here and there, but the one supreme objection to the preparation of bills of quantities by *ad hoc* surveyors, is their excessive indulgence in itemising the 'labours', whereby the employer is subjected to heavier expense than is really warranted. An architect's bills are more likely to prove just to both parties.

P. L. M.