

Short Notices

An Index to the Genera and Species of the Diatomaceae and their Synonyms, 1816-1932. Compiled by Frederick Wm. Mills. Part 1: *A-Ac*. Pp. 74. Part 2: *Ac-Am*. Pp. 75-148. Part 3: *Am-At*. Pp. 149-222. Part 4: *At-Bi*. Pp. 223-296. Part 5: *Bi-Ch*. Pp. 297-372. Part 6: *Ch-Co*. Pp. 373-448. Part 7: *Co-Cy*. Pp. 449-526. Part 8: *Cy-Di*. Pp. 527-606. Part 9: *Di-Eu*. Pp. 607-684. Part 10: *Eu-Ga*. Pp. 685-762. Part 11: *Ga-He*. Pp. 763-840. Part 12: *He-Me*. Pp. 841-920. Part 13: *Me-Na*. Pp. 921-1000. Part 14: *Na-Na*. Pp. 1001-1080. Part 15: *Na-Na*. Pp. 1081-1161. Part 16: *Na-Ni*. Pp. 1162-1240. Part 17: *Ni-Pl*. Pp. 1241-1320. Part 18: *Pl-Rh*. Pp. 1321-1400. Part 19: *Rh-St*. Pp. 1401-1480. Part 20: *St-Sy*. Pp. 1481-1570. Part 21: *Sy-Z*, *Appendices*, *Supplement*. Pp. 1571-1726. (London: Wheldon and Wesley, Ltd., 1933-1935.) 10s. each Part.

Two groups of minute plants, the Desmids and the Diatoms, have long been subjects of study for those attracted by the elucidation of microscopic detail, and in both cases numerous species have been described and a complex synonymy has resulted. An index to the species and synonyms of Desmids was published by Nordstedt in 1896 and has been of great value to workers on the taxonomy of these forms. The fact that nothing altogether comparable has up to the present time been accomplished for Diatoms is no doubt to be ascribed to the wider range of literature to be traversed and to a more entangled synonymy. The labour involved was in fact much greater and Mr. Mills, whose index has been compiled over a long span of years, is to be congratulated on the successful achievement of so arduous a task.

Since a work of this kind has a permanent value rather beyond the average, one cannot but regret that it is not printed, for even at this early date an appreciable proportion of the pages of the typescript bear so feeble an imprint that it may well be doubted whether they will be readily decipherable fifty years hence. It is to be hoped that before then means will be found to secure a more permanent reproduction, for which the Royal Microscopical Society, to the fellows of which the work is dedicated, may perhaps be able to raise the requisite funds. The first part contains numerous typographical errors, a defect which is to be regretted since this part includes the principal bibliography. The final part contains a supplement with additional literature and a series of species omitted in the main body of the work.

F. E. F.

Ancient Ireland: a Study in the Lessons of Archaeology and History. By Prof. R. A. S. Macalister. Pp. xii+307+24 plates. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1935.) 10s. 6d. net.

In introducing "Ancient Ireland" to his readers, Prof. Macalister explains that it is in effect a supplement to his "Antiquities of Ireland", which appeared

in 1927. He now approaches the material with which he dealt in the earlier work from a more anthropological point of view. He has here essayed a reconstruction of the cultural history of Ireland from prehistoric down to historic times, including in his survey the renaissance of Celtic art in Christian times and the early churches and castles. For the detailed evidence, upon which this reconstruction is based, the reader is referred to the earlier volume. On certain topics, however, such as the origin and purpose of the prehistoric forts of Aran, the origin and meaning of New Grange, oghams and other matters, fresh evidence or a change of view have necessitated a restatement and recapitulation.

One of the most important of such matters to which the author has given reconsideration is the break in bronze age culture, which the evidence of pollen analysis, not available to him at the time of writing, has now shown to come at the close of a climatic optimum. In attributing the cultural eminence of the early bronze age not merely to wealth in gold, but also to the effects of a more favourable climate, the author has stressed an influence which he sees at work throughout Ireland's cultural history, and holds responsible for the cultural break between north and south—a break marked from the earliest times as in the distribution of the horned cairn, down to the present political division between Northern Ireland and the Free State, in which a bracing north-east is opposed to the enervating south and west.

On many questions—not least, perhaps, on the Celtic problem itself—Prof. Macalister finds himself at a loss, in view of the gaps in systematic study of Irish antiquities. The present activities of the State may possibly hold out promise of better things. In the meantime, Prof. Macalister, with his many and often brilliant suggestions, offers a plenitude of material for further discussion. He never fails to be provocative, even when most convincing.

Hormone und innere Sekretion. Von Prof. Dr. Fritz Laquer. (Wissenschaftliche Forschungsberichte, Naturwissenschaftliche Reihe, herausgegeben von Dr. Raphael Ed. Liesegang, Band 19.) Zweite verbesserte und bedeutend erweiterte Auflage. Pp. xii+368. (Dresden und Leipzig: Theodor Steinkopff, 1934.) 18 gold marks.

THE second edition of this very thorough work of reference follows seven years after the first. Dr. Laquer (who should not be confused with Dr. Laqueur, the distinguished Dutch physiologist working in the same field) has himself been very active in hormone and vitamin research, and it is all the more creditable that this should not have involved the restriction of his bibliographic activities.

The present book is an extremely useful consequence of those activities, covering, with abundant references and literature indexes, the whole field of endocrinology in its chemical and physiological