

An Introduction to Comparative Zoology:
a Text-Book for Medical and Science Students. By
F. G. Sarel Whitfield and A. H. Wood. Pp. x+354.
(London: J. and A. Churchill, Ltd., 1935.) 15s.

HERE is a textbook for the Kitchener School of Medicine at Khartoum, and presumably the animals with which it deals form the syllabus of that School, together with some consideration of embryology, heredity, evolution, ecology and metabolism. The morphology of the types is done admirably. The size, print and especially the illustrations are exceptionally good. There may be a sufficient reason in the psychology of students for making the work so morphological in Khartoum, but the tendency in Great Britain is for the teacher to lighten morphology with a consideration, most elementary of course, of function in relation to the environment in which the animal dwells. Here much emphasis is laid on parasites, blood flukes, tapeworms, *Ascaris*, ticks and 'medical' insects being included besides all the types usual in Great Britain. This may be wise, for the applied side anyhow will have to be considered later by the student in a tropical country, where he will be seeing the effects of animal parasitism. In any event, parasites are not good forms on which to teach observation, which surely is of the first importance to the commencing student. If all these additional types are to be considered, why not omit the dogfish altogether? It has little to do with the Sudan and the course would be sensibly lightened without much loss.

(1) **A Manual of the Common Invertebrate Animals, exclusive of Insects**

By Prof. H. S. Pratt. Thoroughly revised edition. Pp. xviii+854. 7.50 dollars.

(2) **A Manual of Land and Fresh Water Vertebrate Animals of the United States (exclusive of Birds)**

By Prof. H. S. Pratt. Second edition. Pp. xvii+416. 6 dollars.

(Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son and Co., Inc.; London: J. and A. Churchill, 1935.)

THESE two books are thoroughly revised and greatly improved second editions, and are really two volumes of the same work. They aim at giving descriptions of the common invertebrates and vertebrates of the United States, by means of which their relationships and names may be determined. The insects are excluded, their half million or so of species obviously requiring separate treatment. The classificatory keys, the analytical tables and descriptions have been tested by us in several groups, and appear to be admirable, while the numerous illustrations (184 and 974 respectively) are well selected. They enable the visitor to the coast, mountain, plain or lake to name quickly any beasts that he may be watching in the open, or perhaps at home under magnification, with reasonable certainty, and this encourages him to observe. They are clearly books valuable in every classroom and library in North America, as similar synopses of the local fauna would be in any country.

West Coast Shells:

a Description in Familiar Terms of the Principal Marine, Fresh-water and Land Mollusks of the United States, British Columbia and Alaska, found west of the Sierra. By Josiah Keep. Revised by Joshua L. Baily, Jr. Pp. xi+350. (Stanford University, Calif.: Stanford University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1935.) 17s. net.

FIFTY years ago, conchology was a hobby both in Europe and America, and most large seaside towns had societies for its study. The infinite variety and the beauty of the shells were their attractions, and it was not unusual to pay several pounds for a prime specimen. Now shells are recognised as a part of the complex of every coast, often governing factors in its formation. This rewritten book of Josiah Keep, originally published in 1881, is 'tuned up' to a new conchology that may well some day be as popular as the old. Oysters, razors, limpets, borers, burrowers, clams, etc., as titles of chapters indicate its key, and the technique of their consideration is both simple and scientific. British natural historians may well read it, for on the coasts of Britain dwell each of the above groups, but such would be well advised to take old Keep's advice: "While you admire their lovely shells, think even more of the quiet and pleasant lives they spend in their ocean home".

Wild Life Studies

By Frances Pitt. (Argosy Books, No. 3.) Pp. iv+189+9 plates. (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1935.) 3s. 6d. net.

THIS is a series of studies of the private lives of certain birds and beasts, most of them common dwellers in the English fields and hedgerows—voles, weasels, hedgehogs, peewits, owls, hawks and such. There are also two chapters on puffins and seals. Miss Frances Pitt writes on all these animals with an intimacy and humour which ensure ease and enjoyment for the reader, and the perusal of the book should certainly add interest and pleasure to a Nature lover's rambles. The author directs attention to the useful work done by animals commonly known as pests in a manner refreshingly free from sentimental special pleading. The pen drawings by G. E. Collins are delightful.

The Life and Writings of Giambattista Vico

By H. P. Adams. Pp. 236. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1935.) 8s. 6d. net.

A BOOK on Vico in the English language has long been overdue. Mr. Adams, in giving us the benefit of detailed studies of living Italian scholars, has revealed to a wider circle of readers the greatness of mind of one recognised by Goethe as a patriarch of modern thought. Indeed, after a detailed analysis of Vico's writings, Mr. Adams shows how he has influenced the trend of modern philosophy, from the eighteenth century down to the contemporary Italian thinkers. Thus the book under review will be found of interest to the historians of philosophy as well as to those of literature and political theory. T. G.