

Wild Nature's Day

By Frances Pitt. (The 'Greenjacket' Books.) Pp. 200+27 plates. (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., 1936.) 3s. 6d. net.

MISS FRANCES PITT has done great service for her generation, in her endeavours to show the entrancing interest to be derived from the study of birds and beasts in their native wilds. There are very few who can compare with her in her ability to captivate those who have a kindly feeling for these creatures, but little or no time for first-hand observations of their ways. In this, her latest book, she has, we venture to think, surpassed all her previous efforts. Herein she presents the creatures of her choice as they are to be found during morn, noon and night. Even those who may claim to have more than a passing knowledge of the birds and beasts she describes will find something new that is worth knowing about their ways.

From a book as full of charm as this, it seems impossible to choose passages for special mention; for once the attempt was made whole pages would have to be quoted. Of the three parts into which the little volume is divided, perhaps the first and the last will be most enjoyed, since few of us are energetic enough to rise at daybreak, as Miss Pitt has a habit of doing, to note the gradual awakening of the birds; and the homeward journeys of creatures such as the badgers! Again, few of us are enthusiastic enough to stay out, when night has fallen, to watch the habits of bats and badgers, and others which hunt while the world sleeps; or to find out where the birds "go to bed"!

This is a book professedly written for boys and girls—we would add 'old, and young', for it is surely one of the best of its kind ever written. In a way that few other natural history books have ever done, it will arouse an interest that will last a lifetime.

W. P. P.

Index Generalis 1937:

the Year-Book of the Universities, Libraries, Astronomical Observatories, Scientific Institutes, Museums, Academies, Learned Societies. Issued under the direction of Dr. R. de Montessus de Ballore. Pp. vii+BE232+US232+F180+2500. (Paris: Masson et Cie., 1937.) 275 francs.

THE new edition of this annual handbook, indispensable to universities, research institutes, libraries, etc., maintains the high standard achieved by the previous edition. Nearly two thousand pages are devoted to the constitution of the universities, technical institutions and other educational establishments throughout the world. Such information contains the officers, professors (with their subjects), number of faculties and students, etc. This is followed by more than seven hundred pages describing the constitution, staffs, etc., of astronomical and other observatories, museums, academies, institutions and learned societies. Valuable information concerning the most important libraries is also included. Altogether there are 6,500 entries.

Appended is a useful list of men of science and others who wish to exchange their publications with other workers in the same field. This list has been extended. A list of publishers is given; but the section dealing with Great Britain, at any rate, is of little value, for several well-known publishers are omitted. A new feature in this edition is a list of Nobel laureates since the foundation of the prizes in 1901. The index of names contains 95,000 entries, which make reference an easy task.

This volume, as a book of reference, is invaluable to workers in all branches of academic life.

The Engineer's Year-Book of Formulæ, Rules, Tables, Data and Memoranda for 1937:

a Compendium of the Modern Practice of Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Marine, Gas, Aero, Mine and Metallurgical Engineering. Originally compiled by H. R. Kempe and W. Hanneford-Smith. 43rd. Annual Issue, revised under the direction of L. St. L. Pendred. Pp. lxi+xiv+2676. (London: Morgan Bros. (Publishers), Ltd., 1937.) 31s. 6d. net.

WE welcome the forty-third edition of this annual. The editor has picked out the sections on machine tools, metallurgy, aeronautics, paints and varnishes for revision, and the names of the contributors are a surety for the accuracy of the information given. We are so familiar with this work that we have long ceased to consider its unwieldiness. But it is an outsize in handbooks, and so it is probable in the future that it will split into two or more volumes, suffering what physicists call atomic disintegration.

The editor tells us that the forty-second edition is sold out and that this is not due to the astuteness of the publisher in estimating the probable demand or because intensive sales methods are used. He infers that because it goes well it gives the kind of information the purchaser needs. A survey of the book shows that his deduction is probably correct. The descriptive sections, a useful feature of this year book, contain full particulars of various products of a number of engineering firms.

Leçons de zoologie

Par Prof. M. Prenant. Prochordés: Amphioxus, Tuniciers. (1. Ascidies). Pp. 71+3 plates. 15 francs. (2. Pyrosomes), (3. Doliolides), (4. Salpes), (5. Appendiculaires). Pp. 49. 12 francs. (Actualités scientifiques et industrielles, 379, 380.) (Paris: Hermann et Cie., 1936.)

THE Protochordates have been dealt with in a general way by Prof. M. Prenant in these two brochures. *Amphioxus* and the simple and compound Ascidiarians in one (No. 379) and *Pyrosoma*, the Salps and the Appendicularians in the other (No. 380). Each is a straightforward and well-illustrated account of the animals indicated in the title, prepared in the light of present-day knowledge. Both are well indexed and after each group is a select bibliography of most important monographs and recent memoirs relating to it. The numerous illustrations are all in the form of text figures and quite clear. The two publications constitute a useful addition to a well-known series.