

Entomophagous Insects

By Curtis P. Clausen. (McGraw-Hill Publications in the Zoological Sciences.) Pp. x+688. (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1940.) 49s.

THE last thirty years, or thereabouts, have been productive of great advance in our knowledge of entomophagous insects. This accumulated information is largely the outcome of the increasing use made of the biological method of pest control, which has stimulated investigation of both parasites and predators. Mr. Clausen is a distinguished entomologist on the staff of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. His own studies have been mainly directed to the parasitic Hymenoptera and he is well qualified to write a book of this kind.

The subject-matter is arranged under the orders and families concerned, beginning with the Hymenoptera and ending with groups of lesser importance. The author adheres closely to the limits imposed by the title of the book, and consequently little or nothing is said regarding other carnivorous insects attacking various invertebrates, birds or bats or other mammals. As it is, the book is one of very considerable dimensions for so specialized a subject, but it is a veritable mine of carefully collated information. The extraordinary adaptations to various modes of life, and the great diversity of larval forms betrayed by so many of the insects under consideration, provide unique material for a most interesting biological story.

The book is one written essentially from an entomologist's point of view, and those who consult it will find therein a great deal of information that has not previously appeared in any manual. A feature of special value is the 46-page bibliography at the end of the last chapter. The general biologist who peruses its pages will feel some disappointment in the restricted treatment of the remarkable phenomena associated with insect parasitism and their theoretical implications. Notwithstanding this limitation, the author is to be commended on having written a valuable and, in some ways, unique volume. It is to be regretted, however, that it has been found necessary to price this work at so high a figure, thus placing it out of reach of many of the younger potential purchasers. A.D.I.

The West Highlands and the Hebrides

A Geologist's Guide for Amateurs. By Alfred Harker. Pp. xxiii+128. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1941.) 8s. 6d. net.

THE West Highlands and Islands had a warm admirer in Alfred Harker, and it is therefore not surprising that he had long contemplated the writing of a book by which he might share his knowledge of the region. Unfortunately, Harker died before his project was fully completed, but with the help of others the book is now published in homage to his memory. A pathetic interest is attached to the biographical sketch of Harker contributed by Sir Albert Seward; it was written shortly before his own death.

Harker's plan was to describe the region in terms which would appeal to travellers and others interested in geology and scenery. This has been accomplished in chapters arranged as a series of excursions, and his description of the richly varied character of its rock formations will prove useful to geologists and geographers alike. The volume is profusely illustrated by simple but effective outline sketches drawn by the author, and these have been augmented by the inclusion of geological and topographical maps. An excellent glossary meets the needs of the layman unfamiliar with the names of rocks and minerals.

There is little room for criticism; but the editor's omission of Kimmeridge rocks in the table of strata may be noted and, like the reference to the Permian, a footnote might have been inserted to explain that the greater part of the Durness Limestone is of Ordovician age.

The Annual Register

A Review of Public Events at Home and Abroad for the Year 1940. Edited by Dr. M. Epstein. Pp. xiv+478. (London, New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1941.) 35s. net.

SINCE 1758 the Annual Register has not failed to make its yearly appearance. The current volume maintains all the established traditions of the series. More than half the volume is occupied with the history of the year, first and in most detail British and Imperial, and then foreign history. For 1940 these chapters are virtually a history of the War and of Nazi intrigue. The story is told objectively. The remainder of the volume has the usual summary reviews of literature, art, finance and law, and obituaries of distinguished men and women. The public documents, printed in full, include notes regarding United States destroyers and naval and air facilities for the United States in British transatlantic territories; Memorandum of Agreement with General de Gaulle regarding French Forces; the Three-Power Pact of Germany, Italy and Japan; and the Norwegian Government's White Paper of April 1940 on German Aggression in Norway.

British Museum (Natural History). Instructions for Collectors No. 4A: Insects

Compiled by Dr. John Smart, with the assistance of other Members of the Staff of the Department of Entomology. Pp. vi+164. (London: British Museum [Natural History], 1940.) 1s. 6d.

THIS little manual is a great improvement on its predecessor and, for its very modest cost, provides practically all the information likely to be wanted for collecting and preserving insects. A useful addition is the well-illustrated section dealing with how to recognize the main groups of insects, when to collect and how to collect. The book should do much to aid potential and other collectors in obtaining material of scientific value and preserving it in a manner enabling the best use to be made of it. It can be highly recommended also to university and college students and to school natural history societies.