

evidence drawn from many centres throughout Great Britain.

Apart from the more obvious effects of an adequate soil lime status upon crop yields, the important influence it has upon the mineral status of forage and other crops, and hence upon animal nutrition, is described with several illustrative tables in the last chapter. An appendix to the main text contains a number of statistical tables and a miscellany of useful data, and there is an adequate index.

Each of the chapters has an attached reference list which should enable the inquiring reader to pursue the subject-matter in greater detail if necessary.

The book is well written and produced, and can be recommended not only to the farmer but also to the student of agriculture, while the teacher and adviser will find much of value condensed within its pages.

W. N. TOWNSEND

GLOSSARY OF COLLOQUIAL AND DIALECT ROCK TERMS

English Rock Terms

Chiefly as Used by Miners and Quarrymen. By Dr. W. J. Arkell and Dr. S. I. Tomkeieff. (University of Durham Publications.) Pp. xx+140. (London: Oxford University Press, 1953.) 21s. net.

IN this little book the authors have striven to record and explain the many colloquial and dialect words still commonly used by quarrymen, miners, farmers, boring contractors and others that are either not found in standard dictionaries or are not there accorded the special sense in which such craftsmen use them. The terms included are those used for describing rocks in the widest sense, rock units and structures affecting rocks. Modern scientific rock names, such as those ending in -ite and those based on place names, are, with few exceptions, omitted. Though they list the principal glossaries consulted, the authors emphasize that their aim has not been to make a compilation from these glossaries but to collect terms from their original sources in early works on geology, mining and natural history.

The preparation of this work has extended over a number of years, and it is evident that the sources consulted extend far beyond the limits of the glossaries listed. The "Oxford English Dictionary" and the "English Dialect Dictionary" have been consulted in respect of every entry. With most entries, source references to early usage are given and, frequently, etymological notes, too. There is also a subject index of the terms included.

The text has been read by Prof. Bruce Dickins, who contributes a preface. In this he points out that, though every craft has its specialized vocabulary, this is rarely recorded in literary use and sparsely recognized even in the great dictionaries. The authors have remedied this defect in so far as geology, mining and related crafts are concerned.

There is always the temptation, in examining a work of this sort, to look for errors of commission and omission—it would have been interesting, for example, to have included a definition of Haggis Rock for comparison with that of Puddingstone—but this would be quite unfair to the compilers. They have performed a most useful service in making available to the public, in book form, the results of their researches. One mild criticism is offered. The

title may be regarded, by some, as misleading, and is calculated to bring down the wrath of the Scots, not to mention the Welsh and Irish, on their head. The rock terms include many of Scottish, Welsh and Irish origin, so that the book might more aptly have been entitled "British Rock Terms". This apart, it can be recommended as likely to prove useful to geologists, mining engineers and others whose work brings them into practical contact with geology. It may well prove of interest to philologists, too.

V. A. EYLES

CARING FOR THE OLD

Our Advancing Years

An Essay on Modern Problems of Old Age. By Dr. Trevor H. Howell. Pp. 192+28 plates. (London: Phoenix House, Ltd., 1953.) 16s. net.

IN this book Dr. Trevor H. Howell has given a very comprehensive picture of the organizations caring for the needs of old people in Great Britain at the present time. Since the whole problem of an ageing population has only recently been brought forcibly to light, many palliatives and plans are still in the nature of experiments. Throughout the book it is clear that there is grave lack of co-ordination of the services provided, resulting in wastage and inefficiency. Dr. Howell's recommendations, therefore, of a unified service for old people throughout the country and co-ordination of existing facilities is of special interest.

The chapter on the aged sick should prove of great value to those laymen who are faced with the care of their infirm old relatives. It must, however, be remembered that the problems are largely sociological and only to a small degree medical. Ninety-eight per cent of the ageing population live in their own homes, most of them normal, happy old people, often indeed in need of better housing conditions, but not problem cases. Dr. Howell quotes at length Aristotle's description of the mental changes observed in older people and expresses the opinion that it is as true now as when it was written. Older people are stated to be cynical, small-minded, miserly, fearful, selfish and subject to quick, feeble fits of passion. That this is true now of any but a minority, most people will not agree. There is no redeeming feature in it—Was it ever true? Possibly the reason for this pessimism is that the happy, useful and—it might be added—normal old person is far less in evidence than those whose faults and disabilities make them obvious and difficult. But they were probably always difficult.

The rehabilitation of the old—geriatrics in medical jargon—has greatly improved, but there is little evidence in this book that much is being attempted for those old people who wear out in mind rather than in body. Many of the ills of old age are psychological rather than physical in origin and, for both, prevention is the humane and economical course. Much of the work done is, of necessity, palliative rather than curative; but unless premature ageing is anticipated and prevented, the younger part of the community may well be swamped with the effort and expense required to meet the necessities of those old people whose minds and bodies have been allowed to fail unnecessarily.

The book merits careful study and is obviously written from first-hand knowledge, especially of the medical side.

MARGARET HILL