

is not a good catalyst for reactions such as general catalytic hydrogenation. However, this is unavoidable; and the results obtained with tungsten can in many cases, although with some presumption, be applied to good general catalysts such as platinum.

The book is to be recommended. There is, in parts, some overlap in the matter presented in individual sections, but this is incidental and indeed conducive to clarity.

E. B. MAXTED

The Dorset Coast

A Geological Guide. By G. M. Davies. Second edition. Pp. vii+128+7 plates. (London: Adam and Charles Black, Ltd., 1956.) 9s. 6d. net.

THE appearance of a second edition of "The Dorset Coast" will be welcomed alike by the amateur and professional student; to quote from the preface to the first edition, "it enables the lone hunter to find his quarry without having to refer to the scattered literature on the subject". The format of the book remains unchanged, a feature being the division of the coast into western, central and eastern sections, with numerous day excursions based on Bridport, Weymouth and Swanage, respectively. The author's extensive experience of conducting geological expeditions, as well as the breadth of his knowledge, are placed at the reader's disposal, so that the resulting guide-book presents a fascinating picture of a coast-line where "the beginner sees folds and faults as clearly recognizable as in text-book diagrams, while the advanced student finds many problems still inviting investigation".

The plates have been carefully chosen and are well produced; the frontispiece to this new edition contains striking views of Lulworth Cove and Stair Hole. The maps and diagrams supplement the text and include appropriate tables of strata and zones of fossils. In particular, the diagrammatic sections which illustrate the various excursions greatly assist in the identification of strata.

The young and active of all ages will find in "The Dorset Coast" a happy combination of serious study and stimulus to exploration, which will enrich and repay a visit to one of the finest stretches of English coastal scenery.

Flore des Spermatophytes du Parc National Albert

3: Monocotylées. Par Dr. Walter Robyns, avec la collaboration de Roland Tournay. Pp. 571 (76 plates). (Bruxelles: Institut des Parcs Nationaux du Congo Belge, 1955.) n.p.

THE third volume of the Flora of the Albert National Park in the Belgian Congo maintains the high tradition set up by the two former volumes. The production of the volume is of a very high standard, the printing being excellent, and the botanical treatment is that to be expected from a botanist of Prof. W. Robyns's international reputation.

The present volume is concerned with the monocotyledonous plants of this vast area, lavishly illustrated by excellent line-drawings and half-tone plates. Without doubt this work will find a place in all institutions concerned with the vegetation of Africa, and it can be recommended to the numerous visitors to one of the show-places in the Belgian Congo.

N. L. BOR

Reports on the Progress of Applied Chemistry Vol. 39: 1954. Pp. 1125. (London: Society of Chemical Industry, 1955.) 60s. (40s. to members).

PRINTING difficulties have not, fortunately, greatly delayed the appearance of this well-known yearly expected survey of applied chemistry. The publication by the Society of Chemical Industry of this comprehensive and authoritative annual review is the result of a remarkable effort of collaboration by the hundred or so contributors, the indexers and the editor.

In these days, applied chemistry has wide ramifications among related sciences, and one finds in these pages sections on antibiotics, on the control of agricultural and horticultural pests, on general microbiological processes and on toxicological hazards; although, as one would expect, attention is mainly given to such topics as acids, alkalis and salts, metals, fuels, tar, petroleum, organic chemicals, intermediates and drugs, to mention only a few. Indeed, all aspects of applied chemistry are covered in sections of appropriate length, and the usefulness of the compilation is enhanced by the provision of very extensive bibliographies with each section (that on petroleum, for example, has five hundred references to original literature) and a detailed subject index for the work as a whole.

Every chemical library will need this volume; every active chemist, no matter what his speciality, will find it a source without rival of digested, up-to-date knowledge.

Ciba Foundation Symposium on Porphyrin Biosynthesis and Metabolism

Edited by G. E. W. Wolstenholme and Elaine C. P. Millar. Pp. xii+308. (London: J. and A. Churchill, Ltd., 1955.) 30s. net.

THE Ciba Foundation symposium on porphyrin biosynthesis and metabolism in February 1955 covered a wide field of biological interest. About one-third of the nineteen papers dealt with the biosynthetic pathway in haem synthesis and the role of δ -aminolævulinic acid, porphobilinogen and porphyrins in haem formation. A paper on the succinate-glycine cycle stressed the view that the formation of δ -aminolævulinic acid represents a major aspect of glycine metabolism.

To the bacteriologist and plant biochemist the papers on the formation of porphyrins by photosynthetic bacteria and of porphyrins and chlorophyll in the alga *Chlorella* will be of interest. There are two papers on aspects of haemoglobin metabolism which should prove of particular note to the haematologist. The reports of the properties of δ -aminolævulinic acid dehydrase, of the metabolism of δ -aminolævulinic acid and porphobilinogen and of the mechanisms of experimentally produced porphyria are of importance to the eventual understanding of the human diseases of porphyrin metabolism. There are also papers on the biosynthesis of haemin chromoproteins in animal tissues, with special reference to cytochrome c, and also one on the synthesis of uroporphyrin II and IV.

The full reports of the lively discussions after each paper add much to the value of this book. They reveal the areas of acceptance and controversy and clearly suggest fruitful lines for further work in this rapidly developing field.

A. GOLDBERG