
BOOK NOTICES

More Biological Symposia

This second volume puts into print addresses on Speciation, Defense Mechanisms in Plants and Animals, The Biological Basis of Social Problems, and Regeneration. In the section on speciation, Hebbs reports that the results of experimental hybridization in fish conform to Galtonian rather than to Mendelian genetics. He believes that the environment has an effect in producing characteristics associated with different living conditions. For example, concerning blind cave fish he says, "Something that is inherent in life in absolute darkness not only permits but forces the degeneration of the eyes and of pigment." In contrast, Dice states from his work on *Peromyscus* the more generally accepted view that "the variability of species and subspecies, at least in mammals, is not primarily due to direct influence of the environment upon the individual animals, but is based upon variations in heredity." As there is good evidence that some subspecies of

Peromyscus had a polyphyletic origin it is suggested that a subspecies should be considered an ecologic trend in place of the current concept of a subspecies as a unit of descent. Among other chapters in this section is a mathematical treatment by Sewell Wright.

The three chapters on defense mechanisms deal with local responses to parasites, immunity to viruses, and reactions to injected foreign substances.

Regeneration in the annelids occurs in different ways in different genera. In some genera where neoblasts are plentiful head regeneration does not occur while in others head regeneration does occur without involving neoblasts. It seems that regeneration is not accomplished from undifferentiated embryonic cells but from dedifferentiated tissue cells.

The lectures on the biological basis of social problems contain much that is controversial. The opening chapter is a denial of religion. In another chapter the "ethics of enmity" is described as a useful instrument in evolution in a world where there are so many creatures whose interests are essentially antagonistic. When applied to human behavior serious objection may be made to the comparison presented of defensive warfare to defense from a pack of wolves. The chapter on A Biologist's Appreciation of Religion as a Factor in Social Evolution closes with two suggestions for the "secularization of morals." Of one the author says it "might work, but I am afraid that it will not," and of the other that it is "contrary to the American idea of personal freedom." This is the dilemma of a people who "break away from the teachings of religion and permit their morality to become as lax as ours has become."—*B. Davidheiser.*

Biological Symposia, volume II, edited by Jaques Cattell. Lancaster, Penn.: The Jaques Cattell Press. 1941. \$2.50.

Birding Along the Maine Coast

This fascinating book by the wife of one of the country's leading ornithologists is an account of first-hand experiences with the oceanic birds that breed on the rocky islands off the Maine coast. It not only contains a great deal of information about the life history and habits of these birds, but is full of vivid anecdotes on the trials and tribulations of a field ornithologist. The reader will not get far in the book before he will begin to share the author's enthusiasm, and will almost see, hear, and smell the scenes described.

The book tells of the author's early interests and experiences in bird study, and of her trips with her husband to various islands off the Maine coast to study and photograph puffins, petrels, cormorants, gulls, terns, great blue herons, ospreys, and other birds. Most of these studies were made in the vicinity of Muscongus Bay, Maine, and near the mouth of the Bay of Fundy. The Cruickshanks have spent the past five summers at the Audubon Nature Camp, located in Muscongus Bay, where Mr. Cruickshank is instructor in bird study and Mrs. Cruickshank is camp photographer.

Throughout the book the reader can feel the author's deep interest in birds and conservation. She describes some of the work that is being done for the protection of the birds along the Maine coast, and the results that have been obtained. Though not obviously so, the book is an eloquent appeal for the conservation of these oceanic birds.

That the attempts of the Cruickshanks to secure good bird pictures were successful is attested by the fifty photographs which illustrate the book. These photographs, by Allan D. Cruickshank, are among the finest of hundreds he has taken. They are for the most part excellently reproduced, though the gannet picture opposite page 114 seems a rather poor reproduction of a very striking photograph. The illustrations would probably be more effective if they were better distributed through the book. The only picture of the author appears between pp. 50 and 51, where she is shown holding a gull about to be banded.

This is a book which everyone interested in birds or the out-of-doors will greatly enjoy.—*D. J. Borror.*

Bird Islands Down East, by Helen Gere Cruickshank. xii plus 123 pp. New York, The Macmillan Company. 1941. \$2.50.