

## BOOK NOTICES

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**Lectures in Abstract Algebra, Vol. 1. Basic Concepts.** Nathan Jacobson. D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., New York. 1951. xii+217 pp. \$5.00.

This is the first volume—*Basic Concepts*—in a projected series of three, the other two being subtitled *Linear Algebra* and *The Theory of Fields and Galois Theory*. This book is clearly written in an economical style which usually requires the active participation of the reader. Most proofs are succinctly presented and exercises occur frequently. The book is well-suited as a text for a graduate course in modern algebra. In the following the titles of the chapters are given and parenthetically their content or important topics: Introduction: concepts from set theory (a brief summary), the system of natural numbers (postulates and elementary properties). Semi-groups and groups (including factor groups, homomorphisms). Rings, integral domains and fields (ideals, homomorphisms). Extensions of rings and fields (fields of fractions, polynomials, simple extensions). Elementary factorization theory (principal ideal and Euclidean domains). Modules and ideals (Hilbert basis theorem, Noetherian rings, prime and primary ideals. Lattices (Boolean Algebras).

LEONARD TORNHAIM

**Textbook of Inorganic Chemistry.** J. R. Partington. Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London. Sixth Edition. 1950. x+996 pp.

The new edition of this well-known textbook continues in the tradition of previous editions in both format and style. The sections on atomic structure and electronic theory of valency have been extended, and new sections on directed bonds and resonance added. Sections on pH, hydrolysis, titration, indicators, buffer solutions, and modern theory of electrolytes have been added to the chapters on chemical equilibrium and the sections on rarer elements considerably extended. The questions given in previous editions have been omitted.

The book is sound as to content. However, it seems to the reviewer that the inclusion of so much historical material and of actual experimental details makes the book needlessly extensive in terms of the material presented. Furthermore, an unimaginative style of writing, dull format, and poor illustrations make the book unattractive and, to a high degree, soporific. The author makes little use of electronic, molecular, and crystal structures in explaining the properties of substances and ignores much of the chemistry of the last three decades. For example, he does not mention in the chapter on water such items as hydrogen bonding, molecular structure of water, structure of ice, or the explanation for the abnormal properties of water. The book still follows the traditional Mendeleeff periodic chart. This book is of value to teacher and student as a source of descriptive data of inorganic chemistry.

HARRY H. SISLER

**Southeast Asia.** E. H. G. Dobby. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York. First Edition. 1951. 415 pp. \$5.00.

This publication not only fills in a serious gap in English geographic studies of the Asiatic Realm but appears at a critical period in the affairs of southeastern Asia. The author, professor of geography at the University of Malaya, Singapore, states his purpose as follows: "The aim of this book is to present a picture of environmental conditions and human adaptations in Southeast Asia which shall provide the student with a basic text and at the same time stimulate the sociologist, the administrator, the politician and the businessman to see the relation of their work to the general field." Such an aim is commendable but perhaps a bit too ambitious, especially as regards those individuals engaged in business, administration, or political enterprises.

The text, divided into three parts, "The Natural Landscape of Southeast Asia," "The Countries of Southeast Asia," and "The Human Geography of Southeast Asia," is a storehouse of information. Through the author's method of presentation one feels his intimacy with the land and its people. Some questions must be raised however regarding the order of the several political divisions and the somewhat inconsistent arrangement of materials; also the overemphasis on Malaya and Burma, even though both may be of special interest to the writer.

Numerous charts, sketch maps, and tables add much to the desirability of the book, but no information has been given to the sources; proper crediting should have been considered. The addition of major topographic features to the general end paper maps would be of great assistance to the reader. Unfortunately, a good informative sketch map was not provided for each political division; the value of such a series of maps should not have been overlooked. Photographs, common to most American geographic publications, are lacking. The bibliography is a worthwhile contribution and should prove highly useful to those interested in a more intensive study of Southeast Asia.

CURTIS M. WILSON

**Hormone Assay.** C. W. Emmens (Ed.). Academic Press, Inc. New York, N. Y. 1950. vii+556 pp. \$10.00.

The rapidity in the increase of knowledge of hormones is apparent when one considers the vast amount of material pertaining to this field which has appeared in the past decade. Until this book was published, no reference was available which adequately presented the methods for the quantitative determination of these important substances. This volume fills the need. Although usable as a text, its nature will cause it to be widely used as a reference and as a manual.

Under the editorship of C. W. Emmens, eighteen well qualified persons have contributed to the publication. Each section describes the specific methods available for the quantitative determination of certain hormones. The latest and more accurate methods available for all of the hormones in question are stressed; each method is precisely and thoroughly described. In addition, the editor has added a brief, understandable chapter on the use of statistics in biological and chemical assay.

The book is not light reading, nor was it intended to be. For the person interested in hormones, or for the research worker in endocrinology or physiology, this collection of assay methods should be a valuable addition to his library.

EDWARD F. GODFREY

**The Housefly, Its Natural History, Medical Importance, and Control.** Luther S. West. Comstock Publishing Company, Ithaca. 1951. xi+584 pp. \$7.50.

The first chapter entitled "Flies and Men," presents an interesting historical sketch of how man became aware of the dangers and hazards of the house fly to human health. This is followed by a series of chapters which contain thorough discussions of the morphology, physiology, and behavior of the house fly, its life-history, taxonomic status, and geographical distribution. Several of the ecological requirements such as food, temperature, humidity, and light relationships, and the inter-relationship of the fly with parasites, predators, symbionts, and commensals are then presented.

The author next introduces the house fly as a menace to public health, and its relationship to human disease, stressing particularly myiasis and the transmission of typhoid fever, cholera, bacillary dysentery, diarrhea, anthrax, conjunctivitis, tuberculosis, leprosy, plague, and virus diseases.

One chapter is devoted to a treatment of the fly as an experimental animal especially in insecticidal testing work, and to the discussion of field, museum, and laboratory techniques.

The latter part of the book deals with control measures such as garbage disposal and the newer insecticides, with emphasis upon the uses and dangers of DDT.

This well-written book contains an abundance of excellent illustrations and a comprehensive bibliography. It should be of value as a reference book especially in connection with public health training and medical entomology and could serve as a manual in specific courses in either of these fields of work.

DWIGHT M. DELONG

**The Reptiles of Ohio.** Roger Conant. The American Midland Naturalist. University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana. Second edition, 1951. xxxviii+284 pp. \$3.50.

The first edition of this work was published in 1938 (see excellent review: J. W. Price. Ohio Jour. Sci., 1938, 38: 334). Dr. Price's statement of the need for this work has been proven by its continued demand. Contemplating a second edition, the editors were faced with producing (1) a sweeping revision or (2) a reproduction of the 1938 text with a revisionary addenda. Wisely, the latter was chosen, thereby keeping the revision within the price range of most of us.

The Revisionary Addenda portion of 84 pages includes a brief introduction, data accumulated since 1938 on 4 lizards, 27 snakes, and 10 turtles, 3 pages of additional bibliography, and 12 plates. Two forms, the subspecies *Opheodrys vernalis blanchardi* and the species *Thamnophis radix radix*, have been added. The many changes in the scientific names made since 1938 are adequately explained in the text under each form. Problems created by referring to two widely separated accounts of a species are largely solved by having these two key references in bold type in the Index. The new data are excellently presented with few typographical errors. The new maps bring the Ohio distribution of each species to date.

This book makes an important contribution to our knowledge of Ohio reptiles, and is a valuable reference work for those interested either in Ohio vertebrates or in the herpetology of Midland America.

MILTON B. TRAUTMAN