

BOOK NOTICES

An Autobiography. *Sir Arthur Keith.* Philosophical Library, Inc., New York, 1950. vi+721 pp. \$4.75.

From the very first page of his autobiography, Sir Arthur Keith carries out his intention of exercising his heart as well as his head. He writes with the desire that in coming years "Young men who devote their lives to tracing the evolutionary rise of mankind may care to know what one of their predecessors thought and did as the nineteenth century turned into the early decades of the twentieth."

Sir Arthur began his autobiography two weeks after his 81st birthday. There are glimpses of his boyhood, excellent pictures of Scottish farm-life in the eighteen seventies and eighties; beautifully simple bits of student life at Marischal College; and exciting sketches of Victorian life and of Sir Arthur's contemporaries—men of science and men of letters. Out of this careful writing of achievements and adventures, of a lifetime of research into the nature and habitat of anthropoids and *Homo sapiens*, has evolved a clear picture of his theories of the development of mankind.

An Autobiography has many facets: it is one of the most engrossing personal stories the writer of this review has ever read, it offers a complete list of research and printed material relating to the author's work; and it should provide material of worthy interest for the student who is interested in the period, as well as for one interested in the subject of the evolutionary rise of mankind.

PAUL W. KING.

Man's Physical Universe. *Arthur T. Bowden.* The Macmillan Company, New York. Third Edition, 1950. xv+822 pp. \$4.75.

This is a college textbook for survey courses in the physical sciences. The third edition is a distinct improvement over the first, at least insofar as the author has omitted some of the verbosity in the introductory pages; in addition, many factual errors have been corrected. The author points out in the preface that his aim has been "continuity and panoramic completeness," and that "Breadth is striven for, rather than depth." Although he does give a very complete picture of the physical sciences, the panorama presented is flat. In the reviewer's opinion it is regrettable that the author has shied away from giving the material *depth*, thus failing in his attempt "to present much more than mere 'tid-bits' of knowledge."

The chapter titles and paragraph headings are simple statements of facts, entirely too elementary to suit the taste of a mature mind. Such headings are a hindrance rather than a help to the college or university student who tries to integrate these masses of information into a meaningful mental image.

It is to be expected that this book will find ready adoption in those institutions where an academic and philosophical attitude of mind are not among the foremost requisites.

NICHOLAS MOGENDORF.

General Biology. *Gairdner B. Moment.* Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York. Second Edition, 1950. xvi+680 pp. \$5.00.

This second edition of a popular text book has many good features. It seeks to acquaint the student with the fundamental properties of living things but with special emphasis on the human body, a most desirable feature when the egocentric human mind is considered. The author does not run through the usual plant and animal types to present their elementary structures and functions. Unity of all life is admirably preserved in principle by emphasizing the biologic aspects of physiology and genetics. References to classic discoveries and experiments are adequately given so the student may gain a historical perspective.

Under metabolism the author gives in simple terms recent findings in biochemistry, but discusses the catalytic action of enzymes in unconventional sociological concepts of marriage. Modern research on vitamins and recent discoveries on hormones bring the book up to date. The comparative viewpoint is largely used in discussing the higher animals. Bacteria and disease are considered under the general heading of environment with a brief mention of epidemics, antiseptics, and immunity.

The section on plant life is confined largely to two chapters: Chapter 8 treats reproduction of plants with just enough morphology to explain the life of a seed plant; Chapter 9, "Plant Behavior and Growth," presents the usual tropisms, nutrition, photoperiod, etc., with the latest information on plant hormones. A final chapter, "History of Life on This Planet," gives a rapid survey of plant and animal paleontology with maps, and cuts of fossils.

At the end of each chapter there is an admirable reading list of both classic and contemporary authors.

H. H. M. BOWMAN.