

About a hundred species are dealt with according to their chief use and grouped as 'food plants', 'drink plants', etc. Many are illustrated by line drawings (without scale) and by eight pages of coloured and half-tone photographs of varying quality. The booklet ends with an article on present-day uses, a bibliography, and an index of vernacular names. A handy little volume for the tourist with an interest in ethnobotany.

D. R. HUNT

### Selected Botanical Papers

Edited by Prof. Irving William Knobloch. Pp. xiv + 311. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., and London: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1963.) 32s.

**P**APERS mostly of a rather general and philosophical kind, selected to illustrate the purpose and methods of a number of different branches of botanical science, make up this botanical digest for first-year university students. Emphasis is American and modern, but not exclusively so; Humboldt, Nehemiah Grew, Fabricius and Aristotle accompanying Merrill, Blakeslee, Erdtman and Went. As they appear in their 'digested' state, the papers are incomplete and I wish that more had been given of some of them instead of the irritatingly naïve little catechisms at the end of each.

The idea behind this book—that the first-year university course is too often no more than a background for subsequent more advanced courses, irrespective of whether the students will proceed to the latter, and that the first course should, therefore, be more broadly and more philosophically based—is a good one. The editor's confidence in the assertion in his preface, that large proportions of first-year students (82 per cent is quoted for botanists) in certain universities in the United States "never go further" in their subjects, seems questionable if it is based purely on academic records. It is possible to keep a worth-while interest in a subject without proceeding to advanced university courses in it.

J. P. M. BRENNAN

### Symposium on the Impact of Man on Humid Tropics Vegetation

Goroka, Territory of Papua and New Guinea, September 1960. Sponsored by the Administration of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea and the Unesco Science Co-operation Office for South East Asia. Pp. 402. (Canberra: A. J. Arthur, Commonwealth Government Printer, 1963.)

**T**HIS publication of the proceedings of the Goroka symposium (see *Nature*, 189, 24; 1961) should interest biologists, educationists and administrators throughout the tropics. It deals with the effect of untutored man on his environment. About forty papers are grouped under the seven headings of the physical and human background of the Far Eastern humid tropics, wild food, the effects of fire, of grazing, and of shifting cultivation, the secondary vegetation thus produced, and the consequences of these activities on land-management, human plight, and scenery.

Many of the papers are illustrated with maps and half-tone plates, and each chapter ends with the verbatim discussion which took place at Goroka. The scope is vast, the issues are various, and nowhere is there a clear picture of causation, because the few investigators in this enormous region from Thailand to New Caledonia are still obliged to study by observation and inference.

The sponsors are to be congratulated for this permanent record of pioneer conclusions, which J. S. Womersley has ably edited. I hope that the publication, which is the third on the humid tropics from the Unesco Science Co-operation Office in Indonesia, will influence Unesco not to overlook the clear-cut issue of the humid tropics in the re-arrangement of its overseas programme. The humid tropics stand for a biological richness which man, as yet, can only deplete.

E. J. H. CORNER

### Pathogenic Organisms in Relation to Pasteurized Cured Meats

By J. I. Anderton. (Scientific and Technical Surveys, No. 40.) Pp. 158. (Leatherhead: The British Food Manufacturing Industries Research Association, 1963.) 40s.

**H**AM is a product which has been produced for centuries past. Relatively large-scale production, different methods of marketing and retailing and the apparent demand by (or gradual conditioning of?) the 'average consumer' for less heavily cured products have all played their part in bringing about various changes over the years. In turn, the use of weaker brines, lower processing temperatures and the retailer's keenness to display the sliced product (with no guarantee that refrigerated storage conditions will be maintained until time of consumption) have been matters of concern to microbiologists in particular in recent years. In *Pathogenic Organisms in Relation to Pasteurized Cured Meats*, Anderton has critically reviewed the published literature relating to this potential hazard.

The first main section is entitled "Possible Sources of Contamination" and each of the main types of spoilage organism is discussed. Anderton then proceeds to survey each of the main processes involved, such as the effects produced during curing, smoking, boning, trimming, heat processing and storage. Other sections relate to the detection of food-poisoning organisms, bacteriological standards for canned hams and the effect of antibiotics. Most microbiologists will be aware that contamination is liable to occur at virtually any stage in the manufacturing process. This booklet will nevertheless be of considerable interest to them and should assist those of their number employed in industry, who may find it necessary to advise or warn processing staff who wish to make further changes in the manufacturing procedure. In fact this survey amounts to a warning for the future rather than a post-mortem after the damage has been done. Further, the attention directed to the gaps in the literature should be most useful to research workers in this field.

Two pounds may seem to some a high price for a booklet with a thin cover. When one considers, however, that the list of references at the end covers some seven pages it will be readily realized that its production represents a comprehensive survey of the literature of a 'delicate' subject.

D. PEARSON

### Brompton Hospital Reports

Vol. 31, 1962. (A Collection of Papers by Members of the Staffs of the Hospitals for Diseases of the Chest (Brompton Hospital and London Chest Hospital) and of the Institute of Diseases of the Chest.) Pp. xii + 292. (London: Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books), Ltd., 1963.) 15s. net.

**V**OLUME 31 of the *Brompton Hospital Reports* is again noteworthy for the collection of articles dealing with various aspects of the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the chest as well as a number of studies concerned with the embryology, histology and anatomy of the respiratory tract. The volume also contains an article by Dr. H. R. Barrett which was delivered as an address to the American Association for Thoracic Surgery at St. Louis, Missouri, in April 1962. It is concerned with the publication of scientific journals and shows that responsibility for the production of responsible publications rests as much with the readers as with the editors and publishers. Much wise advice is given to would-be authors, while all editors will respect the propriety of the rejection slip sent to a young graduate by a Chinese mandarin. It read: "We have read your manuscript with boundless delight. If we were to publish your paper it would be impossible for us to publish any work of lower standard and, as it is unthinkable that, within the next thousand years, we shall see its equal, we are, to our great regret, compelled to return your divine composition, and to beg you a thousand times to overlook our short sight and timidity". T. H. HAWKINS