

Arnoldia Reviews

Methods of Hydrobiology, by Jürgen Schwoerbel

The author of this work defines hydrobiology as a part of biology concerned with the life of organisms in water and does not admit it as a separate discipline. However he then limits his consideration to the methods of study of the ecology of accumulations of fresh water in lakes, ponds, or even holes in trees as well as to standing, running or underground waters. The emphasis in the volume is on the methods of possible study ranging from the type of equipment to procedures and to techniques of analysis and of calculation. Comparisons and evaluations of each topic are made freely and frankly. Although this book is directed to the professional scientist involved in studies of fresh water in the field, a student familiar with the vocabulary of hydrobiology will find in it much of value. The reader without this knowledge must recognize that this is not an elementary textbook nor a book for the identification of polluting organisms.

This is the first English edition of a work published originally in German. Following the text are appendices describing the methods of preservation and fixation of aquatic organisms and the techniques for the culture of such forms of life. A list of firms which make hydrobiological apparatus includes only companies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The references supporting the text are listed in an appendix and arranged according to the chapters. They may be referred to in the text or be supplementary suggestions. References are given to papers published as recently as 1967, a remarkable feat for a translated volume. As might be expected the majority of the references are to papers published in the German language. As western hemisphere authors and publications are not cited frequently this volume is a useful reference to European literature and research.

R. A. H.

Jürgen Schwoerbel. *Methods of Hydrobiology. Freshwater Biology.* Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1970. 200 pages, 100 figures. \$8.00.

**The Story of the Royal Horticultural Society,
by Harold R. Fletcher**

There is an old saw to the effect that those who will not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. We horticulturists are fortunate that we have *The Story of the Royal Horticultural Society* to instruct us. This great society, founded in 1804, has seen gardening fashions come and go. It has survived financial disaster. It has endured wars and rumours of wars. Begun and served by the elite of British horticulture, it has come to have one of the largest general memberships of any horticultural society. Its publications set the standards against which all horticultural literature is to be judged. Its exhibitions are the envy of other societies. Its awards to plants, to exhibitors, and to horticulturists take pride of place before all others.

Service to Horticulture is perhaps the unwritten motto of the Society. From the beginning the Royal Horticultural Society was active in the propagation of knowledge about plants — and in the importation and dissemination of new kinds of plants from abroad. John Reeves and Robert Fortune introduced Chinese plants. David Douglas explored the American West Coast. Thomas Knight grew exotic plants, and bred new varieties of fruits at home. A series of conferences, on orchids, primulas, chrysanthemums, dahlias, daffodils, conifers, to name only a few, have given occasion to survey the state of knowledge of taxonomy, nomenclature, culture, and breeding of many horticultural groups. The examinations for the National Diploma in Horticulture, and the resultant training programs at Kew and Wisley, and elsewhere, have done much to maintain the high standards of competence associated with British gardeners.

Dr. Harold R. Fletcher, late Director of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, has completed the task so ably begun by Mr. A. Simmonds, and has given us a masterly, and very readable survey of the history not only of the Royal Horticultural Society, but also of horticulture in Britain.

G. P. DEW., JR.

Harold R. Fletcher, *The Story of the Royal Horticultural Society, 1804–1968*, London: Oxford University Press, 1969. 564 pages. £5.25

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 1670–1970, by Harold R. Fletcher and William H. Brown

The Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, had its beginning in a Physic Garden, established in a garden plot in the grounds of Holyroodhouse by two Edinburgh physicians, Andrew Balfour and Robert Sibbard. Its original purpose was to provide demonstration materials for medical classes in the University. After many years, and numerous vicissitudes it was finally established on a portion of its present grounds about 1822. Throughout its history it and its staff have been involved with teaching — first with the teaching of material medica to medical students, and most recently with the teaching of plant taxonomy.

In the early part of this century, the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, was much involved with plant introduction from eastern Asia, especially from the Himalayas and China. Primulas, lilies, and rhododendrons, particularly, have been the forte of the garden and its staff. The names of George Forrest, the collector, and Bailey Balfour and William Wright Smith, the taxonomists and Directors, are inextricably intertwined. In recent years Peter Davis has taught us much about the flora of Turkey.

As with the *Story of the Royal Horticultural Society*, H. R. Fletcher and W. H. Brown have built upon foundations laid by their predecessors and given us a most readable and detailed story of the triumphs and tribulations that have made the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, the outstanding institution that it is today.

G. P. DEW., JR.

Harold R. Fletcher and William H. Brown, *The Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, 1670–1970*, Edinburgh: H. M. Stationery Office, 1970. 309 pages. £3 12s od [£3.60] net.



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