

new edition of the old dictionary, but did not write those in the supplement.

R. E. B. MCKENNEY

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Diopetrographic Tracings in Four Normæ of Fifty-two Tasmanian Crania. Transactions of the Royal Society, Victoria. Vol. V. (Part I.) 1909. By RICHARD J. A. BERRY and A. W. D. ROBERTSON. Pp. 1-11 notes, 211 plates.

The volume at hand is an exceptional publication, but perhaps justified under the circumstances. It consists of a large series of plates with well executed diopetrographic drawings of 52 Tasmanian crania, without measurements and with none or but the scantiest descriptive notes. Forty-one of these crania are new to science, having been discovered in private collections or excavated by the authors. As the total number of Tasmanian crania known before amounted to only 79, the new material can well be regarded as a precious addition. But the very value of it augments the wish for a thorough report. The plates will be useful and both the authors, as well as the Royal Society of Victoria, have earned the thanks of anthropologists for their publication, but they are by no means sufficient. Measurements on drawings or photographs, even though these be of "natural size," can never be taken with accuracy and be used with the confidence of those secured by accurate instruments and according to the standard methods on the specimen itself. Besides that, numerous measurements of importance, such as the surface arcs and the circumference, can not be even approximated on illustrations.

But it is specially the lack of descriptive notes which will be felt. The illustrations of Skull No. 9 may be cited as an example. In 9B, frontal view, and 9D, back view, there is visible a depression over the upper portion of the parietals. Such a feature may be due to the pronounced elevation of the sagittal region, but it may also be due to senile changes.

In the absence of description one is left in uncertainty. The sutures on the specimen are represented as if free from obliteration, but they are thus shown on practically every skull in the series, and yet some of the jaws indicate an age where more or less obliteration could be expected. The illustrations of the teeth, as general in drawings of this nature, are entirely unsuitable for study. The position of the dacryons does not seem in all the cases to be accurate—for instance in plates 12B, 15B, 21B and 23B. In a number of the cases, such as 36C, one would like to know more than the pictures show as to the characteristics of the supraorbital ridges or arch. Theinion point is difficult to determine with accuracy, it differs in position, and it does not generally represent the posterior terminus of the maximum glabella-occipital diameter, hence the prominent part given to it is scarcely deserved; etc.

It is to be hoped that the authors will furnish in time a good descriptive account of the valuable specimens in their hands and in their reach.

ALEŠ HRDLÍČKA

The Plant Life of Maryland. By FORREST SHREVE, M. A. CHRYSLER, FREDERICK H. BLODGETT and F. M. BESLEY. Maryland Weather Service, Volume III. Pp. 533, pls. 39. Baltimore, 1910.

This report on the plant life of Maryland is a valuable contribution to plant geography and ecology. The introduction by Shreve describes the general geography of the state together with a discussion of its climate and physiography, while he gives a statement of the purposes of the work from the botanic standpoint. Dr. Shreve in Part II. gives in detail the general results of the survey of the state, as to its floristic plant geography, while in Part III., the ecologic plant geography is discussed from the regional aspect. The vegetation of the coastal zone, eastern shore district, is given by Shreve, that of the western shore district by Chrysler, while Blodgett has written the section on the upper midland district of the state, followed by a description of the mountain zone by Dr. Shreve. Not the least valuable