States. We have asked the European circulation managers to provide us for this purpose with extra copies of articles published in their countries. A complete series of recent numbers of the *Bulletin* of the Astronomical Instituts of the Netherlands has already been mailed to England; another set has gone to Canada.

The council of the Royal Astronomical Society has accepted the offer of our committee to send on to the circulation managers in continental Europe copies of current British publications. Eight copies of a recent issue of the *Monthly Notices* of the Royal Astronomical Society and some of the Publications of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory have already been sent on in this way.

Directors of observatories and editors of astronomical journals are urged to send to the committee a dozen copies of every publication for distribution abroad. The committee is already receiving the generous cooperation of the editors of the *Astrophysical Journal*, the *Publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific*, *Popular Astronomy* and the *Telescope*. A small grant from the American Astronomical Society is paying for the current costs of mailing, but the committee will have to ask for further support if it is to continue its work beyond the summer.

B. J. BOK, *Chairman*
H. R. MORGAN
J. STOKLEY

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

VITAMINS

What Are the Vitamins? By WALTER H. EDDY. iii + 247 pp., with six illustrations. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp. 1941. $2.50.

WITH the tremendous increase in our knowledge of and interest in vitamins a large number of books on this subject are appearing. Most of these books may be grouped into two large classes: those which give a very complete and detailed picture of one vitamin, such as Williams and Spies on Vitamin B_1 and Reed, Struck and Stick on Vitamin D, and those which contain only the significant facts about all the vitamins. "What Are the Vitamins?" by Eddy falls into the latter class and, as the author states, it is the result of his personal effort to condense the subject of vitamins without sacrificing accuracy. With the exception of a few minor errors the author has accomplished the task he set for himself.

After two introductory chapters, which contain an excellent list of the known vitamins and a brief outline of the relation of vitamins to enzymes, each individual vitamin is discussed. In each case a complete description is given of the various symptoms which one may expect to find during a deficiency of the vitamin in question. Some attention is given to the daily human requirements for each of the vitamins, but the survey of the experimental evidence upon which these figures are based is not extensive. A fairly complete table of vitamin values of foods is given in the appendix.

There is some repetition in the book since chemical formulae for the same vitamin appear in several different parts of the book. Each chapter contains a fairly complete bibliography, although in a few cases papers referred to do not appear in the references. The author seems to have some difficulty in getting the structural formulae exactly correct. On page 66 a CH_2 group is omitted from the thiamin molecule and on page 119 the formula for the hydroxy acid part of pantothenic acid is somewhat deformed.

Any one interested in obtaining the latest information about vitamins in the shortest time possible will do well to consult this book.

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COMMERCIAL TIMBERS

Commercial Timbers of the United States, Their Structure, Identification, Properties, and Uses. By H. P. BROWN, professor of wood technology, New York State College of Forestry, and A. J. PANSHIN, assistant professor of forestry, Michigan State College. First edition. 554 pages, 387 figures. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. 1940.

THIS book, which supersedes the "Identification of the Commercial Timbers of the United States" by the same authors, is another addition to the growing list of the American Forestry Series of books which are prepared under the guidance of Professor Walter Mulford, University of California, as consulting editor. It is intended, as the authors say, for use by students in forestry and plant anatomy and also by others who wish to become thoroughly conversant with wood.

It covers the anatomy of wood beginning with the grosser features visible with the unaided eye, such as sapwood and heartwood, annual rings, pores, resin canals, grain and texture, and leading the student into the finer structure visible only with a microscope, such as the shape, size and configuration of the different types of cells found in wood, and briefly into the ultramicroscopic conceptions of the cell wall as determined by x-ray diffraction. The general discussion of wood anatomy is not limited to native species but has universal application.

In addition to the discussion on anatomy, ten pages