

matters of detail in a book of this kind, but it is a little disturbing to see a picture of the cyclotron with a sub-title: "Dr. E. O. Lawrence and associates at the University of California," when neither of the individuals shown happens to be Professor Lawrence.

On page 12 there is an implication, of course unintentional, that the droplets in a cloud chamber are produced by condensation on the charged ray which is under investigation rather than by condensation on the charged droplets resulting from ionization. However, such defects are of minor importance. The elementary reader will not be harmed, because the details of his picture must be incomplete anyhow, and the advanced reader will not be harmed, because he will make his own corrections. All in all, the author may be congratulated on producing a very clearly written volume useful for the purpose for which it is obviously intended.

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### BIOLOGICAL NAMES AND TERMS

*A Source Book of Biological Names and Terms.* By EDMUND C. JAEGER. xxvi + 256 pp. 96 figs. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C Thomas. 1944. \$3.50.

THAT which we call a rose might still retain its sweetness by another name, but it would lose much of its charm for us nevertheless. Names may be fraught with meaning or they may be nonsense, as the author suggests in his dedication.

We are told that this rather slim volume contains some 12,000 elements from which biological names and terms are made. These, in alphabetical order, are explained, and examples are cited. According to the preface, this book surpasses in scope "many times the most complete collections in unabridged dictionaries and scientific glossaries and gives a key which unlocks the treasury of meaning of more than a million technical names and terms."

This volume is not a dictionary of technical terms, but, as the title says, a source book. All the more commonly known genera, many specific names and technical terms are included, from the standpoint of the elements of which they are composed. Geographical names and those based on modern personal names are not listed; nor are "ill-coined terms" of some "careless insect-anatomists and ecologists who have proved themselves to be word-butchers of the meanest sort." There is a discussion of a little over a page on "How Words Are Built." Some nine pages on word-formation of generic names are quoted from T. S. Palmer's "Index Generum Mammalium."

In the 256 pages which constitute the bulk of the

book word elements are carefully considered, from "a-" which, as you probably know, has various meanings, including "a negative or absence of something," "from," "without," "away"; to "zyzz," which, as you probably don't know, means "zigzag." The origin of such elements, usually from the Greek or Latin, is indicated, often with notes of interest.

Ninety-six of the plants and animals are illustrated. Some of the drawings are original; many of those of plants are adapted from the author's book on "Desert Wild Flowers"; and some at least of the animals glint with expression—from wistful to smug.

Obviously this book contains a wealth of information on the derivation, meanings and uses of biological words and word elements. From it the student, to whom it seems to be more especially addressed, may learn the underlying significance of the names and terms of his science. The specialist may also profit by the opportunity for reflection on the original meanings of the vocabulary with which he graces or encumbers his field. Both may search in vain for more particular meanings of certain technical terms—but then, this is a source book rather than a dictionary.

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### MAMMALS OF THE OLD WORLD

*Extinct and Vanishing Mammals of the Old World.*

By FRANCIS HARPER. Special Publication No. 12, American Committee for International Wild Life Protection. xv + 850 pp., 1 pl., 67 figs. Baltimore, Md.: The Lord Baltimore Press. 1945.

IN 1942 appeared a companion volume devoted to mammals of the Western Hemisphere, prepared mainly by the late Glover M. Allen but with aid by Harper; in the present work, the proportions of contributions of the two authors are reversed. This volume is the larger by 230 pages and is more thoroughly illustrated. Together they constitute a record that mankind, being chiefly responsible for the extirpations, should view only with contrition, but which it is well both for laymen and scientists to have in permanent form. May it prove more than a pious hope that these books will stimulate action before it is too late for the preservation of some of the earth's most interesting creatures.

Already the hour has passed for more than a hundred kinds of mammals, 31 per cent. of which were exterminated during the preceding, and 67 per cent. in the present, century. The deadly work has thus attained a doubly accelerated pace. The volume here reviewed, though relating to only one hemisphere (the eastern), contains more summarizing statements than its predecessor. One of these itemizes the extirpations by countries and leading, to our sorrow,