who have heard his belief paraded before the community may become warped by his crooked thinking. By this means, "cranks" are made.

He really does believe that the earth is flat and probably will until he dies. This man, Warren Latham by name, has never backed down on his untenable claims.

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Book Reviews

Antibiotics: A Survey of Penicillin, Streptomycin, and Other Antimicrobial Substances from Fungi, Actinomycetes, Bacteria, and Plants, Vols. I and II. H. W. Florey, *et al.* New York-London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949. 1,774 pp. $29.75 the set.

A number of comprehensive reviews of the literature on antibiotics and books concerned with penicillin and streptomycin have appeared during the past five years. In most instances the clinical use of these substances has received major emphasis. The present authors, all members of the famous Oxford team that contributed so much to the successful commercial production of penicillin a decade ago, believe previous writers have neglected the historical foundation of the antibiotics and the interrelationship of the chemical, biological, and clinical approaches. Their survey, as given in Volumes I and II, deals for the most part with laboratory investigations; a third volume, now in preparation, will be entitled "Clinical Application of Antibiotics."

The contents are arranged in eleven parts, with the following captions: "Historical Introduction"; "General Experimental Methods"; "Antibiotics from Fungi"; "Antibiotics from Fungi-Substances other than Penicillin"; "Antibiotics from Actinomycetes"; "Antibiotics from Bacteria"; "Antimicrobial Substances from Lichens, Algae and Seed Plants"; "Penicillin"; "Streptomycin"; "The Action of Antibiotics on Bacteria"; and "Conclusions." The authors, well aware that the rapid accumulation of information in this field precludes publication of an up-to-the-minute reference book, have added an appendix Volume II, which includes a list of the known antibiotics and short summaries of papers not mentioned elsewhere in the text.

There are a number of inaccurate statements in the text and references to procedures now obsolete. These will unquestionably be rectified with the appearance of Volume III. These volumes can be highly recommended to chemists, bacteriologists, and clinicians.

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Reviewed in Brief

Research in Medical Science. David E. Green and W. Eugene Knox, Eds. New York: Macmillan, 1950. 492 pp. $6.50.

The current medical literature, in contrast to that of former years, is replete with contributions by nonmedically trained investigators. It was firmly believed in days gone by that one must have a medical degree before embarking on a career of research into the mysteries of the disease process. Today specialists in disciplines seemingly far removed from the bedside are making fundamental discoveries in this area. Often their reports are so highly technical that the results of their researches are put into practice without being understood by the clinicians.

The present volume gives in essay form some of the latest developments in medical research. They are nontechnical accounts by outstanding representatives in microbiology, immunochemistry, physiology, and allied disciplines. Some idea as to the variety of subjects covered may be gained from the listing of the first and last titles: "Bacteriophages and Their Action on Host Cells"; "Some Biochemical Problems in Sanitary Engineering"—the former article by a biophysicist, the latter by a sanitary engineer.

The book will be of real value to those working in the basic sciences at medical schools, as well as to scientists in general.

The Nature of Natural History. Marston Bates. New York: Scribners, 1950. 309 pp. $3.50.

This book is a readable survey of general biology, with special emphasis on ecology, which is virtually equivalent to the author's interpretation of the meaning of natural history: "the study of animals and plants . . . of organisms." The first six chapters supply the essential background of classification and a survey of the plant and animal groups, their historical evolution, reproduction, heredity, and development. The next five chapters deal with the relations of individuals to one another and to the environment. There are interesting discussions of biotic communities, partnership and cooperation, parasitism, and individual behavior. The next section deals with the natural history of populations, their behavior, and geographic distribution. Adaptations and the mechanism of evolution are considered in the next two chapters, which are followed by a final group of three chapters: "Natural History and Human Economy"; "The Natural History of Naturalists"; and "Tactics, Strategy, and the Goal," a consideration of the methods of science and natural history in particular. Throughout the book, Marston Bates' broad background and extensive experience in the tropics make his comments illuminating and render his criticisms of the limitations of laboratory science cogent.