

region involved. He outlines the periods of Hittite history, and the various movements of peoples connected with it from 2000 to 600 B.C., in a masterly summary, which is very necessary for ethnological study. He then details the varied forms of the seals, and the subjects of the 335 specimens in the fine collotype plates. The classification by periods is the fruit of the work. It is notable that the button-badges of the Syrian invaders of Egypt (Sixth to Tenth Dynasties) and the labyrinth and frets of foreign origin (Sixth to Seventeenth Dynasties) seem to have been over and past before the rise of Hittite styles. The doubt (p. 23) as to the early use of the wheel in gem engraving is settled by work in Egypt so far back as the Eleventh Dynasty. The volume has the noble traditions of the Clarendon Press; but can students afford to support bibliophily as well as archæology in these times?

*Zoomikrotechnik: Ein Wegweiser für Zoologen und Anatomen.* By Prof. Paul Mayer. (Samm-lung naturwissenschaftlicher Praktika. Band ix.) Pp. vii+516. (Berlin: Gebrüder Borntraeger, 1920.) 64 marks.

THE treatment of the subject of zoological technique in this book follows closely the lines of Lee and Mayer's well-known "Grundzüge der mikroskopischen Technik," the last (fourth) edition of which was issued in 1910; indeed, the present volume may be regarded as the new edition of that work.

In the first seventeen chapters directions are given for various methods of killing, fixing, hardening, staining, injecting, embedding, and sectioning organisms and tissues, for mounting whole specimens and sections, and for decalcification. The six remaining chapters deal with the technique of the cell, of eggs, embryos, and larvæ, and with histological methods for vertebrates and invertebrates. In a number of cases the account of a method is too short to be a real guide, and the reader is referred rather too often to "Lee and Mayer," or to some other book, for details which he might reasonably expect to find in this volume. For instance, in a book intended for anatomists, instructions should have been given for making up Kaiserling's solution, but instead there is a reference to "Lee and Mayer." A number of methods which would have been useful to zoologists have not received notice—e.g. methods for the culture of tissue and of Protozoa, the employment of iodine solution during the examination of intestinal amœbæ, and the examination and staining of spirochætes. But the omissions are relatively few, and the veteran professor is to be congratulated on the issue of this useful guide, to which he has added an excellent index.

*Meteorological Office—Air Ministry: British Rainfall, 1919.* Pp. xxviii+268. (London: H.M.S.O., 1920.) 12s. 6d. net.

As a consequence of the absorption of the British Rainfall Organization by the Meteorologi-

cal Office this volume is, for the first time, printed by the Stationery Office and issued as a Government publication. It contains a preface by Sir Napier Shaw and an introductory chapter by Mr. Carle Salter, both dealing with the change of responsibility. The work is divided into four parts. Part i. refers chiefly to organisation. Part ii. gives details as to evaporation and percolation in 1919, and as to the distribution of rainfall in time, embracing wet spells and droughts; also monthly and yearly rainfall tables at 348 stations in the British Isles, together with monthly rainfall maps and a second monthly map showing the percentage of average fall, and data of the seasonal rainfall of 1918-19.

Part iii. contains a general table of total rainfall in 1919 at 4893 stations in Great Britain and Ireland. Part iv. has an article on the effect of rainfall on the saturation-level in the chalk at Chilgrove, West Sussex, from 1836 to 1919, by Mr. D. Halton Thomson, also an article on the exposure of rain gauges by Mr. M. de Carle S. Salter, which should be read by all rainfall observers. There are many features not ordinarily recognised, especially the exposure during the winter months, when higher winds are experienced than during the summer months, the wind causing a factor detrimental to the correct measurement and calling for care in the position of the gauge so as to safeguard it against over-exposure and to avoid defects due to wind-eddies.

C. H.

*British Plants: Their Biology and Ecology.* By J. F. Bevis and H. J. Jeffrey. Second edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. xii+346. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1920.) 7s. 6d.

THE revised and enlarged edition of "British Plants" provides a most useful handbook on general ecology, not only for the trained botanist, but also for the general reader who is interested in plant life. The outlines of the subjects are sketched in a suggestive manner with a minimum of technicalities, and sufficient general morphology is included to make the matters clear to the non-botanist. The first part of the book deals with environment and its influence on vegetation, the effects of climate, water, and soil receiving special attention. The second part gives general biological information, the section on the defensive equipment of plants gathering together a good deal of scattered knowledge. The last part treats of the evolution and present distribution of the British flora, and though one may join issue with the authors on certain points of detail, the broad outlines are clearly presented.

The book is fully illustrated, though some of the plant drawings would bear improvement—e.g. the underground rhizomes of couch-grass and mint, which lack distinctiveness and clearness. The authors are to be congratulated on bringing up to date a work which puts forward ecological matters in such a simple and attractive style.

W. E. B.