

The interest of the reader is excited even at the outset by the statement that it is very probable, that the 14 forms peculiar to Ceylon may have been evolved since the separation of the island from South India. While not questioning the value of such a statement in making the book readable, one who is painfully aware that our only account of the amphibia of India (namely, Boulenger's), is over 70 years old, would expect that intensive investigation of the amphibian fauna of especially South India (including Pondicherry, and native states), may yet reveal several which are at present recorded from Ceylon. The author's admission that *Bufo stomaticus* may be a recent immigrant implies the possibility of transportation and raises a doubt whether all the 14 forms now recorded only from Ceylon are autochthonous or recently evolved as claimed by the author. Taxonomy appears to be a very unreliable basis for such a generation.

On the whole, the author must be congratulated on his achievement. The book has an excellent get-up and the numerous illustrations enhance its value. Every college, university and public library should have this book on its shelves, both for the wealth of information between its covers, as well as to serve as a

model of a popular treatment of a very technical subject.
C. P. GNANAMUTHU.

Books Received

High Speed Diesel Engines. By Arthur W. Judge. (Chapman & Hall), 1957. Pp. vii + 578. Price 65 sh.

Pharmacognacy of Ayurvedic Drugs. By K. Narayana Aiyar, A. N. Namboodiri and M. Kolammal. (The Central Research Institute, University of Travancore, Trivandrum), 1957. Pp. 109. Price not given.

Relaxation Methods in Theoretical Physics—The Oxford Engineering Series, Vol. II. By R. V. Southwell. (Copies available from: Oxford University Press, Mount Road, Madras-2), 1956. Pp. vi + 250-522. Price Rs. 44.

Microphotography—Photography and Extreme Resolution. By G. W. W. Stevens. (Chapman & Hall), 1957. Pp. xvi + 326. Price 50 sh.

Fusion Methods in Chemical Microscopy. By Walter C. McCrone Jr. (Interscience Pub.), 1957. Pp. vii + 307. Price \$ 6.75.

Text-Book of Polymer Chemistry. By Fred W. Billmeyer, Jr. (Interscience Pub.), 1957. Pp. viii + 518. Price \$ 10.50.

THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS*

RANKING among the oldest publishing houses in the United States, the House of Wiley had its beginnings in a bookstore established at No. 6, Reade Street, New York City. The City Directory for the year 1807 lists Charles Wiley as the establishment's proprietor, and, in the absence of conclusive evidence proving an earlier founding, the business is considered to date from that year.

Charles Wiley, although initially a bookseller and printer, branched out into the publishing field prior to 1814 and, with various partners, printed the work of some of the best American and English authors of the period. Among these were James Fenimore Cooper and Fitz-Greene Halleck. Cooper's "The Spy", now considered one of the first great American novels, was published by Wiley and Halsted in 1821, at No. 3, Wall Street. Some of Cooper's later novels bore the Wiley imprint alone.

Charles Wiley died in 1828 and was succeeded by his son, John, whose name the Company now bears. Under John Wiley's supervision the busi-

ness progressed through a number of changes, although his publishing interest continued to centre on books of a general literary nature. After the Civil War, Charles and William, two sons of John Wiley, joined the firm, which in 1875 became known as John Wiley & Sons. To the younger of these, Major William H. Wiley, a Civil War veteran and civil engineering graduate, belongs much of the credit for carrying the Wiley name to the front rank in technical publishing at such an early date.

It was during the 70's and 80's that the firm began publication of the condensed engineering pocket works, which, over the years, have evolved into the tremendously comprehensive and useful handbooks of today.

By the time John Wiley & Sons was incorporated in 1904, with Major Wiley as the Corporation's first President, the publication of general literature had been virtually abandoned. In the years intervening to the present, as the Wiley imprint became more and more associated with works of a scientific and educational nature, extensive coverage has been achieved in all major branches of engineering, the pure, applied, and social sciences, and in many collateral fields.

* John Wiley and Sons, Inc., have brought out a tasteful volume with the above title, tracing the history of the firm from 1807 to 1957.