

BOOK NOTICES.

A REVISION OF THE GENERA AND SPECIES OF CANADIAN PALÆOZOIC CORALS, by Lawrence M. Lambe, Assistant Palæontologist to the Geological Survey of Canada. Contributions to Canadian Palæontology, Vol. IV., Part 1.

Students of Palæontology owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Lawrence M. Lambe for undertaking such a task as the revision of the Canadian Palæozoic Corals. The literature on the subject is very difficult to obtain. The work of Billings, although published in Canada, is out of the reach of ordinary students; that of Nicholson was only partly published in Canada, his recent and most valuable work appearing only in expensive monographs and journals in Great Britain. Professors Hall and Rominger, the most prominent investigators in the United States, of Canadian fossil corals, have naturally published the results in that country, so that the plight of the Canadian who desires to study these organisms, but who has not a large palæontological library at his command, has been well nigh hopeless. But to those who have access to the extensive and scattered literature of palæozoic corals the condition of the nomenclature combined with the lack of precision in description and the inadequate illustration of the details of structure, has deterred from the study of corals many who have been steady workers in other branches of palæontology. In the nature of palæontological investigation this condition must be present more or less in each of the main divisions of the animal and vegetable kingdoms as represented by fossils, until, after the collection of ample material, someone undertakes a revision similar to that of Mr. Lambe. The recent work of Wachsmuth and Springer in the camerate Crinoids, and of Hall and Clarke in the Brachiopods affords ample evidence of the necessity for patience in the accumulation of information before revision is justifiable.

The material in the possession of our Survey, gathered during the last half century from widely separated areas, and the accumulation of observations on fossil corals by the scientific world during that time, make it clear that the time for revision has come. The labour involved in this revision must have been very great, and at first sight it might seem out of proportion to the result if