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Figures at the end of the issue.

BOOK REVIEW

ABERCROMBIE, M., HICKMAN, C. J., JOHNSON, M. L.: THE PENGUIN DICTIONARY OF BIOLOGY. Seventh Edition. — Penguin Books, Middlesex—New York—Ringwood—Markham—Auckland 1980. 323 pp. £ 1.95, US \$ 3.95.

The first edition of the Penguin Dictionary of Biology was published in 1951. Also in the reviewed seventh edition — revised, updated and expanded — the authors' aim is to explain biological terms which a layman may meet when reading scientific literature. More than three thousand of the more stable and the more widespread biological terms were selected by the authors, providing not merely definitions but some information bearing on the likely content of the terms.

Two authors — professor M. Abercrombie (Mrs. Abercrombie) and M. L. Johnson taught zoology, the third author — professor C. J. Hickman has been interested mainly in the study of fungi and plant diseases. The zoological, botanical, mycological and phytopathological terms used in present time form therefore content of this dictionary. The main interest is given to the two great generalizations of our time, those of energy transfer and of protein reproduction. The reader is referred to the Penguin Dictionary of Science by E. B. Uvarov, D. R. Chapman and A. Isaacs for the relevant chemical and biochemical terms.

The descriptions of some items may seem somewhat dogmatic and some terms are somewhat archaic. The reader must, however, agree with the authors that there is room for no more than what seems to be the received opinions of time, and that many out-of-date terms have still been used in literature.

Seven editions — which were twenty-four times reprinted — is in my opinion a sufficient evidence that this small paperback book is a very useful source of general biological information necessary for all working or interested in life sciences.

J. ČATSKÝ (Praha)