

Leitch I (1959). The place of analytical and critical reviews in any growing biological science and the service they may render to research. Proceedings of the International Conference on Scientific Information, 2 Vols. Washington DC: National Academies Press, p 571-588.

Key passages

The Place of Analytical and Critical Reviews in Any Growing Biological Science and the Service They May Render to Research

ISABELLA LEITCH

On my return home, it occurred to me, in 1837, that something might perhaps be made out of this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on all sorts of facts which could possibly have any bearing on it. After five years' work I allowed myself to speculate on the subject,—CHARLES DARWIN in the Introduction to *The Origin of Species*, 1859.

A review of literature has long been a conventional part of original scientific papers. Such a review is usually of immediately antecedent work. It is most often narrowly selective and descriptive only of results, conclusions, or opinions, chosen as closely related to the original work to be presented. It need not concern us further.

Reviews of literature, published as such, are now an established part of the information services offered to help scientific research and the application of its results in practice. The stated policy of the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, planned as a comprehensive information service for agriculture, requires the production of reviews. Learned societies and associations of scientific workers produce periodical reviews in their own subjects. The type and quality of such reviews vary widely.

ISABELLA LEITCH Commonwealth Bureau of Animal Nutrition, The Rowett Research Institute, Bucksburn, Aberdeenshire, Scotland.