

The Ethical and Practical Value of Birds; Crops and Forests Saved by Birds; Sense versus Sentiment; Balance of Nature; Correlation of Structure with Food Habits; The Function of Birds in Nature; Complete Protection not Desirable; Quantity of Food Required by Birds; Methods of Investigation; Birds as Enemies of Injurious Insects, Man and Plants; Birds as Scavengers and as Disease Carriers; Destruction of Birds; Remedies. Under Part II the various families of birds are covered in the order of the A. O. U. 'Check-List' with the principal food of each. For the *Passeres* alone there are 478 foot note references. A bibliography and good index complete the work. Longfellow's 'Birds of Killingworth, a poem apparently not often read, is quoted to good effect and those who vow vengeance on the Crow may well take notice of the poet's early appreciation of the value of this maligned bird:

"Even the blackest of them all, the Crow,
Renders good service as your man at arms,
Crushing the beetle in his coat of mail
And crying havoc on the slug and snail."

—W. S.

Nicholson's 'How Birds Live.'—The object of this little book¹, the author explains, is to digest all recent theories and to give briefly and simply an outline of the views of bird life reached by modern observation. He moreover makes no attempt to "follow tradition and embellish his text with the strange behaviour of the Hoatzin, Birds of Paradise or the Frigate Bird of Christmas Island" nor does he "propose to invoke ice ages, land bridges or other infernal machinery."

On the contrary he presents a series of interesting sketches on territory, migration, song, etc., bringing in his own criticisms of the theories of others and taking his examples mainly from the common British birds. Our only criticism would be that the book is too English in that no mention is made of the work and theories of American and other writers who have contributed equally to our present knowledge of the subjects under discussion. For example we find no mention of the work of Watson, Cooke and Wetmore on migration, nor of Mousley's article on territory which appeared simultaneously with Howard's. In treating broad phenomena of Nature one cannot be so exclusive.

The chapter headings of the book are Ecology; Struggle for Existence; Territory Theory; Bird Song; Courtship; and Migration, while there are appendices covering General Character of Bird Activity; Number of Eggs Reared; Height at which Birds Fly; Speed; and Bibliography. The last as already indicated consists of English works only.

¹ *How Birds Live. A Brief Account of Bird Life in the Light of Modern Observation.* By E. M. Nicholson. London, Williams and Norgate, Ltd. 14 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, W. C. 2., 1927, pp. i-x + 1-139. Price 3 shillings 6 pence, net.

There is an attractive colored plate of a Jaeger attacking a Roseate Tern, the latter unfortunately with a red bill instead of a black one.

In spite of such omissions as we have indicated Mr. Nicholson's little book will bring many general readers into touch with the present day views on bird life which they would have trouble in finding for themselves and is refreshingly free from much that has become stale and hackneyed in such publications.—W. S.

Seton Gordon's 'Days with the Golden Eagle.'—The author explains that he has lived most of his life in the Eagle Country and has endeavored in the present volume to give information on the Golden Eagle which has not appeared in print before. He has produced a delightful monograph¹ of this splendid bird which still persists in the Scottish Hills as it does in California, although unfortunately the main object of students of the bird in America seems to have been to secure large series of its eggs and no adequate history of the American Golden Eagle has yet appeared.

Mr. Gordon discusses Scottish Eyries; Home Life of a Pair of Eagles; The Country of the Eagle; Eagles, Grouse Raising and Sheep Farming; Highland Stories of the Eagle; Traditions; Status of the Golden and Sea Eagles, Past and Present. There are a number of photographs of the nest from a hillside blind which overlooked it, three colored plates from paintings by J. C. Harrison and a number of beautifully delicate pencil drawings by the same artist, wonderfully reproduced in half-tone as chapter headings. In every way the volume is an attractive piece of book-making.

The observations on the life history of the bird are given in great detail and were obtained by constant watching of the nest from the blind by the author and his wife. They form an interesting comparison with Herrick's life of the Bald Eagle published in 'The Auk.' From the economic side we learn that Golden Eagles rarely take living lambs as so often claimed, that many lambs are born dead and that these and other carrion form the principal food of the bird; but to find the carcass of a lamb in the eyrie is enough for the shepherd and he declares war on the Eagle. Mr. Gordon admits that Golden Eagles do kill some Grouse but he adds "some good sportsmen think a heavy bag is not everything in life and are willing to allow the Eagle to remain as he adds a great charm to the hills," Let us hope that this view may be more widely held by sportsmen in America before all of our splendid birds of prey are exterminated because they claim an inherent right to share the game with the sportsmen.—W. S.

¹ Days with the Golden Eagle. By Seton Gordon, author of "The Immortal Isles" etc. In Collaboration with his Wife. Introduction by His Grace the Duke of Portland, K. G., Photographs by the Author and his Wife. Headpieces and colored plates by J. C. Harrison. London, Williams and Norgate Ltd., 14 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, W. C. 2, 1927, pp. i-xv + 1-176. Price 12 shillings 6 pence.