

On the whole, the book is a thoroughly creditable production, particularly when the factors of the youth of the authors and the difficulties under which they worked, are considered. A performance of this kind tends to strengthen one's optimism and to increase one's faith that there still abide in our American youth the good old-fashioned, wholesome, sterling qualities that in the past have made America great.—J. S. WADE.

Canby's 'Thoreau.'—The steadily growing popularity of the writings of Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), American naturalist, educator, poet and philosopher, is a source of gratification to the steadily growing number of readers who appreciate and enjoy them. As has been frequently pointed out, during his life-time Thoreau was comparatively unknown and such of his works as had been published had an exceedingly limited circulation. In the seventy-seven years which have elapsed since his death, much hitherto unpublished material by him has been issued, and his writings and his unique philosophy of life, decade by decade have spread abroad until he has become known and his writings have been loved in every important country of the world. It will be remembered that it was in the fields and woods of his birthplace, Concord, Massachusetts, that he learned the love and worship of Nature which later became a great passion of his existence. Of these he has written in phraseology of such exquisite beauty that presently it becomes like a haunting melody in the memory of his readers. A graduate of Harvard University, he was a valued friend of the famous naturalist, Louis Agassiz, and made various biological collections for him. In 1845, Thoreau began his now famous experiment in simplification of living. He retired to a self-built hut in the woods by the shores of Walden Pond near his native village, and there for two years he made studies and wrote of birds and plants, insects and other animals, and of the various philosophical and other themes in which he was interested. At various times he also made explorations to other places, notably to Canada, Maine, Cape Cod, Minnesota and elsewhere, and wrote of most of these in detail, with intermingling of factual and mystical observations of Nature. He never married, but one of the great friendships of his life was with Ralph Waldo Emerson, and they were of life-long inspiration to each other. Thoreau died of tuberculosis at the early age of forty-five, and his remains rest today in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery at Concord, Massachusetts, near the grave of his associate, Emerson. All these and many other facts pertaining to Thoreau's career have been narrated with great fidelity to detail in the newly issued biography¹ by Dr. Canby. The principal biographies of Thoreau which appeared in the years after his death and with the increase of his fame, were those by Emerson, 1863; Channing, 1873, revised 1902; Page, 1877; Japp, 1878; Sanborn, 1882, revised 1910; Salt, 1890 and 1896; Marble, 1902; Van Doren, 1916; Edward W. Emerson, 1917; Sanborn (a second and larger biography), 1917; Bazalgette, 1924; Atkinson, 1927; and Crawford, 1934. Since there is always room on our Thoreau shelves for still another volume of this type when of genuine excellence, it is a pleasure to welcome this latest addition, the product of long years of research and toil on part of its distinguished author. It is a delightfully written, well-balanced, well-rounded, well-documented production. It is predicted that it will prove to be one of the outstanding biographies of the year. It is not unlikely that, through its well-deserved popularity, it may serve to introduce thousands of new, appreciative readers to the charms of Thoreau's own writings. If so, all such

¹ Thoreau. By Henry Seidel Canby. 8vo, 508 pp., 16 illus., Boston and New York; Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939. \$3.75.

would be under a lasting debt of gratitude to Dr. Canby. There is something very touching and very appealing in the author's delineation of this great and noble-hearted man and the pathos of his struggles to fill the emptiness and the loneliness of his own life with studies, assiduously pursued, of birds and insects and flowers and "the sweet mysteries of nature"—all as part of his greater quest: his explorations for God and for spiritual reality. There are many others in the world who likewise have lost and are seeking their own "hound, bay horse and turtle-dove." To all such, the reading of Dr. Canby's book is heartily commended.—J. S. WADE.

Dr. Strong's 'Bibliography of Birds.'—The enormous output of ornithological literature from year to year places an ever-mounting burden upon the ornithologist who would keep abreast of the progress of knowledge in his special field. Of the various aids currently available, the annual summaries now provided by the 'Aves' section of the 'Zoological Record' are by far the best, but the older literature is less thoroughly treated in these, while for that of recent decades the search through the yearly volumes is a slow and laborious undertaking. For this reason, and because a single all-inclusive index to ornithological literature is at present almost out of the question, special bibliographies covering part of the field are of immense practical value. Such a one is that here presented by Dr. Strong. As its subtitle indicates, it has been prepared "with special reference to anatomy, behavior, biochemistry, embryology, pathology, physiology, genetics, ecology, aviculture, economic ornithology, poultry culture, evolution, and related subjects." The two volumes¹ now issued comprise some 900 pages containing (at an average of twenty-five references to a page) at least 22,500 titles, and are the result of many years of painstaking search.

Because of this limited field, purely taxonomic works are for the most part omitted, though many, if of monographic scope, are included. Palaeontology is already well covered by Lambrecht's catalogue of 1921, so that such papers are omitted except from that date to 1926, the year set as the limit in general of literature listed. Parasitology is largely referred to various excellent bibliographies while "the vast field of poultry economics and management," though well represented, is not completely covered. Works on migration have been selected with a view only to their importance and in general the aim has been to include such titles as seemed likely to be of probable use. These explanations account for the omission of many important works that one might otherwise have expected to find listed. Furthermore, since the work was in progress for a number of years, the compiler's viewpoint has varied from time to time and he acknowledges that a strictly consistent policy has not been possible, but "all reasonable efforts have been made to secure and check references to old or obscure publications that might have any possible use to the investigator," a difficult undertaking at best.

In addition to the titles of papers, the full names of authors, their life dates, and references to their biographies and bibliographies where published, are given. The introductory pages explain the methods employed in citation. A key list of abbreviations to periodicals cited, with their full titles covering some fifty-five pages, gives a little idea of the extent of the search made through ornithological literature. In addition is a list covering ten pages of the titles of minor or ephemeral periodicals, poultry journals and others, that have not been included.

¹ Strong, Reuben Myron. 'A Bibliography of Birds with special reference to anatomy . . . and related subjects.' Zool. Ser. Field Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. 25, pt. 1, pp. 1-464; pt. 2, pp. 465-937, December 1939. \$11.00.