

## BOOK REVIEWS.

THE BIRDS OF MAINE. By Ora Willis Knight, M.S., Bangor, Maine. 1908.

The undertaking of which this book is the product was no light one. Maine is a state of no mean area, and its topography presents many difficulties to the biological explorer; its coast line is fjord-like, and ranges of mountains and mountain masses and peaks present a varied biota.

Mr. Knight has done well to make this book largely a record of his own work, supplemented by rigidly culled and carefully selected material from other sources. He is to be heartily congratulated upon the excellence of his work in both directions.

There is a map of the state which represents the faunal areas, mountains and water courses, as a frontispiece. Following the introduction and acknowledgements there is a comprehensive "Summary of Characters of the Orders and Families (compiled with regard to those found in Maine)," with two photographs of the Canadian Ruffed Grouse for the purpose of mapping out the "Topography" of a bird. While these photographs are not as clear as drawn figures would be they serve the purpose fairly well, and possess the advantage of representing an actual specimen.

The text of the book and the bibliography occupy 652 pages exclusive of 28 full page half-tone plates. The double column index is a model of its kind.

The treatment of the species follows the latest A. O. U. published arrangement and nomenclature, and numbering. There is added a list of local names, mostly applicable to the state of Maine. Following this list of local names there is a brief but careful description of the species in all known plumages, with measurements in inches. The general geographical distribution precedes a comprehensive Maine county record with the authority given for each county. In larger type there is a discussion of the species in its relations in general, something given about its habits, its nest and eggs described, and a discussion of its food and economic status when it is of regular occurrence in the state.

The contribution which this book makes to our knowledge of the birds lies in the record which it gives of the field work which Mr. Knight has done. There is new light shed upon the time and manner of nesting, the period of incubation, the length of the stay of the young birds in the nest, food habits, migration, song, and other topics. Not all of the topics are treated from a new standpoint under each species, indeed, sometimes the author has had nothing new to offer, but often some one or more of the topics find more or less extended treatment under a species.

We may congratulate ourselves upon the appearance of this book

as one well worthy of reference, and the author upon the consummation of a long cherished plan.

L. J.

CAMPS AND CRUISES OF AN ORNITHOLOGIST. By Frank M. Chapman.

A book of 439 pages and 250 photographs from nature by the author.

It is entirely fitting that Mr. Chapman should decide to share with a wider group of people than even the multitudes which visit the splendid collections which find a home in the American Museum of Natural History, his many field experiences in securing the material for museum groups; and the sincere thanks of this larger public are due him for the opportunity he thus affords them of seeing the many different places which have been the scenes of his work.

After a few short excursions "About Home" the author takes us to Gardiner's and Cobb's Islands on the Atlantic coast, and from there to Florida, where "Pelican Island, The Florida Great Blue Heron, The Water Turkey, The American Egret, and Cuthbert Rookery" are illustrated and described; then to Bahama, where "The Flamingo, The Egg Birds, The Booby and the Man-o-War Bird" furnish texts for delightful pictures and interesting descriptions. Then we are taken out onto the Plains for studies of "The Prairie Hen, A Golden Eagle's Nest, and Cactus Desert Bird-Life"; and from here to California for studies of "The Costal Mountains of Piru, The Coast of Monterey, The Farallones, The San Joaquin Valley of Los Baños, Lower Klamath Lake, and The Sierras"; and lastly for this country to western Canada for studies on "The Prairies, The Plains, The Mountains, and The White Pelican." The book ends with "Impressions of English Bird-Life."

The book is written in Mr. Chapman's most charming style, and it is needless to say that the photographs are unexcelled. We can think of nothing which would make a better Christmas present than this book.

The introductory pages deal with the methods of successful bird photography, including the camera equipment and the construction of blinds. The author points out that the blind is just as necessary for any intensive study of birds as it is in successful photography. We are also pleased to note that the author strongly emphasizes the importance of home studies of bird life and the great need of such studies, in the following words: "Continuous and definitely directed observation is the secret of success in the study of bird-life; and only that permanency of residence which permits us to keep a close watch on the species, through the year, and on the individual through the nesting season, will enable us to write an adequate history of its life."

L. J.