

if one considers interviews where the candidate's approach to standardized tasks, such as performance tests of intelligence, is systematically observed for the light it throws on temperamental qualities.

A useful theoretical contribution is the insistence that conversation, the texture of the interview, consists in a mutual modification or manipulation of attitudes, and that the exchange of information and specific opinions is only subsidiary, a means to the evocation of attitudes. This is in line with the growing recognition that the relative importance of cognitive experience and verbal behaviour has for long been exaggerated. Mr. Oldfield's view, however, is in danger of becoming too abstract to be useful when he reduces the interviewer's entire activity to the evocation and perception of attitudes in the candidate. This

view of the matter cannot be said to be untrue, since all human activity expresses itself in a sequence of attitudes. But it ignores the important question of what feature of the candidate's personality a given attitude chiefly reflects; whether, for example, a broad temperamental quality or a particular sentiment. The importance of interests is also rather slighted. Interests, temperamental qualities and sentiments are obviously closely connected and, of course, reveal themselves in attitudes, but they must be distinguished if the interviewer is to understand the significance of the attitudes he perceives in a candidate.

Although Mr. Oldfield's conclusions are not to be accepted without qualification, his effort towards a radical understanding of the interview as a psychological tool is nevertheless of very real value.

A BIRD OBSERVER IN CORNWALL

Winged Company

Studies in Bird-Watching. By R. G. Walmsley. Pp. xiii+227. (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, Ltd., 1940.) 7s. 6d. net.

IT is a coincidence that I should be able to review this attractive bird book, because, not long before his death, the author wrote to me. In his letter he mentioned that he had been reading a book, "Wild Birds in Britain", which I had written about that time, and he had been, he said, greatly impressed by the resemblance between that book and the manuscript he had written. He said he felt that he might well have been the author of my book, and he felt he must write and tell me this lest, if ever his manuscript should appear in print (he was very doubtful of this at the time) I should know that he had not been copying my own style and treatment of the subject.

"Winged Company" is written by a true lover of birds, for as with Edward Grey of Falloden, birds were his great joy during the last years of his life. The birds he watched so lovingly, and with such accuracy, were mainly observed in Cornwall. Raven and chough, peregrine and buzzard, gannet and kittiwake, shearwaters and terns, and the tribe of the divers, among the larger species; redwing and fieldfare, wheatear and skylark, the tribe of the warblers and the clan of the buntings among the smaller species. I was interested to read the author's statement that willow warblers "take a particular pleasure in tormenting Long Tailed Tits: they are like mischievous little boys chasing a party of fussy old ladies". I wonder if other observers have noted this.

He loved the wood warbler, which arrives "at

a time when the beech leaves are most silky and diaphanous and the woods are filled with cool green lucencies". But surely the colour "beneath the wings of the Redwing" is not "scarlet" but rather cinnamon (p. 65). It is interesting to know (p. 70) that the first wheatear arrives on the Cornish coast during the first days of March. In the Isle of Skye it is the last week in that month before he is seen (the males always arrive first). I write this notice on April 12, yet I have seen no wheatear, and were he here he would be shivering under the lashings of an Arctic wind. I like the author's description of the male wheatear (p. 70):

"The male Wheatears at this period are brilliantly arrayed; pearl-grey, black, white, and a tint somewhere between salmon and apricot blend to produce a plumage of exotic beauty. . . . There is surely something Egyptian in the Wheatear's expression, a suggestion reinforced by its colouring, by the black and white fan of its tail, and by the bird's strange instinct toward the sand."

This book is one which will appeal to all those who love birds. The author's style is direct, simple, and bears distinction. For war-time days of paper shortage it is admirably reproduced. It is indeed a book to be read slowly, at leisure, to be fully appreciated, and the more one studies the wood-cuts by Denys Watkins-Pitchford, which form the illustrations, the more one is impressed by their accuracy. I like especially that showing buzzards circling over Zennor Cliffs (p. 195), but that of the peregrine's stoop at Rock Doves (p. 201) is fully its equal, and shows minuteness of observation and delicacy of delineation.

SETON GORDON.