

## OUR BOOK SHELF.

*Animals of No Importance.* By D. Dewar. Pp. 113. (Calcutta and Simla: Thacker, Spink and Co.; London: W. Thacker, 1903.)

THE essays collected in this little volume have, with one exception (which made its appearance in the *Indian Daily Telegraph*), been previously before the public in the columns of the *Times of India*. Although his style is occasionally somewhat slangy, the author discourses in a pleasant and readable manner on the habits and mode of life of various living creatures commonly met with by the resident in India, inclusive of some of those to be seen on the voyage. Excluding all such animals as come under the denomination of game—whether great or small—he confines his attention to the less attractive, although in many cases by no means the less obtrusive, members of the animal world, and from this lowly aspect of his subject he has chosen the title of the volume.

As a rule, each of the various essays is devoted to the main to a particular species. One of the most amusing of the series treats of the Indian crow—the miscalled *Corvus splendens*—a bird which, despite its store of mischief, Mr. Dewar allows the possession of some redeeming traits. He can, however, scarcely find words to express his detestation of that noisome pest, the common fly—a detestation shared by all who have resided in the east. On the other hand, the spider is a creature for which the author expresses the greatest admiration, ranking its intellectual powers higher than those of ant, bee, or wasp.

Under the title of the "Malaria Middleman" will be found a good popular account of the manner in which the Anopheles mosquito conveys the malaria germ; although it would have been better had the use of "scientist" been avoided. To one sentence in another article, namely, that "dinosaurs and sea-serpents disported themselves in the ocean" (p. 62), we venture to take strong exception. Although, perhaps, one relating to the movements of the fins of flying-fishes is the only zoological observation of any importance, we may commend the work as an excellent practical example of "nature-teaching," and at the same time as showing how the enforced tedium and confinement of Indian hot-weather life may be mitigated by the intelligent observation of the ways of the uninvited denizens of the bungalow and its immediate surroundings.

R. L.

*Farming.* By W. M. Tod, M.A. With illustrations by Lucy Kemp-Welch. Haddon Hall Library. Pp. vi+268. (London: J. M. Dent and Co., 1903.) Price 7s. 6d.

THE Haddon Hall Library has hitherto dealt only with various branches of sport; its incursion into the serious domain of agriculture is therefore rather a novelty, but as Mr. Tod indicates in his opening chapter farming is something more than a business. There are probably few men who have not deep in them the desire to cultivate a plot of land or to breed some kind of animal; it is a form of atavism, civilised man gets his amusement from the pursuits out of which he dragged a hard living in the early world, and farming, like shooting and fishing, has long been the rich man's recreation. The professional can still make a living by it, but the amateur often finds his farm little less costly than his shoot. It would be hardly fair to Mr. Tod to say that his book is intended for the latter class of readers; clearly he has in mind the man to whom farming is bread and butter, but he is very sure that if the farmer sometimes finds the butter spread too thin he may look for abundant compensation in the pure joy of life on the land.

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Mr. Tod's book then differs from the ordinary text-book of agriculture in treating his subject from a somewhat more generalised and human point of view; he deals with the functions of the soil, the principles of tillage, manuring and cropping, live-stock, and the system on which a farm should be managed, without any elaboration of detail, but with an intelligent appreciation both of the scientific basis of agriculture and of the other considerations which must regulate its practice. Here and there his statements and recommendations are open to criticism; in a country so diversified as Great Britain, the routine of management must change with the shifting conditions of climate and soil, but in the main the book presents a very sound picture of the farming of the midlands and east of England. Mr. Tod's experience is sufficient guarantee that the book is practical; at the same time he is no blind follower of the old paths, but is insistent that agriculture, to be successful, must adapt itself to the altered state of our markets since the great tradition of British farming was established.

The book is clearly and enthusiastically written, and we can cordially recommend it either to the man who has a little place in the country and wants to do something more than blindly follow the lead of his bailiff, or to the general reader interested in the land and desirous of understanding its great industry. To the young landowner or to the boy who is anxious to take up farming as his walk in life the book will give an excellent picture of the work of a well managed farm, and will serve as an inspiring introduction to a more technical study of the subject. Like all the volumes of the Haddon Hall series, the book is charmingly produced, well printed on good paper, and with some illustrations by Miss Kemp-Welch which catch the true spirit of the English country-side.

A. D. H.

*Queries in Ethnography.* By Albert Galloway Keller, Ph.D. Pp. ix+77. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1903.) Price 2s. net.

DR. A. G. KELLER'S small book of questions in ethnography is intended for the use of the "intelligent and partially instructed layman." The specialist, he informs us, needs no such manual, and the utterly un-instructed are unfitted to use one with discrimination and result. We agree with him. The 912 questions comprise a very wide range of ethnographical inquiry under the following heads:—(1) maintenance; (2) perpetuation; (3) gratification; (4) religious and superstitious ideas and usages; (5) the societal system; (6) contact and modification.

The system followed has been that developed by Prof. Sumner, of Yale University, and the questions evidently are based also on the admirable "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" edited by Dr. J. G. Garson and Mr. C. H. Read, and on the set of questions issued by Dr. J. G. Frazer. Not one of these books has been written by a field ethnologist, and it is perhaps doubtful whether a field ethnologist would write such a book, as the answers given to such questions by the collector are apt to be snippety, and, with the view of answering the question succinctly, he would be inclined to leave out other descriptive matter which did not appear to be relative to the particular question, but which might be, nevertheless, of supreme importance. Dr. Keller asks "exactly what is meant by 'father,' 'brother,' 'son,' if they do not correspond to our own terms?" This sort of questioning is of little real value; the only satisfactory method is the genealogical one devised by Dr. Rivers (*Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, vol. xxx. p. 74, 1900). Nothing is said about the value of obtaining information concerning different schools of decorative art and the significance of the designs.

Doubtless Dr. Keller's little book will prove of con-