

its eyrie; the wigeon has quite lately been proved to breed in Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire, having certainly arrived of recent years; and the eider-duck's breeding range has its southerly limit at the Farne Islands, which are included near the southern boundary of "Tweed." In short, there is a peculiar interest in the area treated of in this volume, since it occupies a distinctly intermediate faunal position between the north and the south of Great Britain.

The scope of the book needs no description. After an introduction, including a reference to previous workers, and a bibliography, the author gives a short but picturesque account of the physical features of the area, treating of the following subdivisions in order: St. Abb's Head and the Northern Hills, the Western Hills, the Southern Hills, the coast lands and islands, the Berwickshire valleys and the How of the Merse, the shires of Peebles and Selkirk, Teviotdale and Lower Tweedside, the Cheviot valleys and the English tributaries of "Tweed." Then follows the systematic part of the book—the account of the mammals and birds, reptiles, and amphibians. As the ichthyology of the district is so closely connected with that of "Forth," the fishes have been left to the volume on that area. The body of the book is rich in interesting notes, and the author has evidently spared no pains to make his faunistic records complete and accurate. This has demanded much personal verification, and a careful search among old records, many of which require that critical handling which only an experienced naturalist can give.

To give a sample of attractions which the area affords, we will quote a short paragraph in reference to north-western Northumberland:—

"In few localities in the kingdom does the naturalist find so many changing scenes within so short a distance of one another, or so easy of access. The highest hills rise to a considerable elevation, and though he can no longer visit an eagle's eyrie on Cheviot, or even hope to see the king of birds upon the summit, yet he has at least a chance of observing the peregrine falcon and the raven; the resident kites, buzzards, and hen-harriers have departed, as from most parts of England, but he may see the merlin on the moors, while sparrow-hawks, kestrels, and carrion-crows are still more common; the brown and long-eared owls are abundant, and the short-eared owl appears in the time of vole plagues; herons nest at Chillingham and other places; tufted ducks, pochards, shovellers, and teal breed within easy range; wheat-ears, ring-ousels, pied flycatchers, wood-wrens, and grasshopper-warblers occur here and there, with other of our less common passerine birds; black-headed gulls share the lakes with coots and dabchicks; and, finally, it is but a short and easy journey to the Farne Islands or the Fenham Flats."

OUR BOOK SHELF.

In and Out of Parliament: Reminiscences of a Varied Life. By the Right Hon. Robert Farquharson, P.C. Pp. xi+338. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1911.) Price 12s. 6d. net.

AFTER twenty-five years of Parliamentary life there are sure to be many interesting reminiscences in any man's experience, and when to those years are added many others spent in study and travel, the whole,

NO. 2208, VOL. 88]

summed up in easy, flowing language, forms a volume of delightful and pleasant reading. The most interesting part of the book to most people will be that devoted to "In Parliament."

Dr. Farquharson's description of his first entry into Parliament, and of the difficulties and embarrassments which surround anyone in a like position, will be recognised as very true to life by those who have gone through a like experience. Nothing probably strikes the new member, after a few first days of Parliamentary experience, as his apparent uselessness, and his utter inability to do anything "on his own." Later on perhaps things improve. The chase of that elusive object, the Speaker's eye, is interesting, if often disappointing; committee work, and the demands of his constituents, will help to occupy his time, but his first impression of Parliamentary life will not be flattering to his sense of self-importance.

To those who from time to time have raised complaints as to the ventilation of the House, Dr. Farquharson's experience as a medical man, and as a member of two committees under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Roscoe which investigated the questions of the drainage and ventilation, will be reassuring. The source from which the air is pumped and the process by which it is purified and rarefied are described, and should carry conviction to the grumblers.

Dr. Farquharson also assisted in the experiments devised by Sir Michael Foster to determine the number of micro-organisms in the air of the House during its sitting. He sat for two years on the committee which settled the constitution and building of the Science and Art Department, and supported Sir Michael Foster's opposition to the motion against vaccination. He spoke, in fact, on most questions connected with public health and the Army Medical Department.

The perusal of Dr. Farquharson's book will well repay anyone who takes an interest in the inner life of our legislators and the part which a man of science may play in the House of Commons.

Who's Who in Science (International), 1912. Edited by H. H. Stephenson. Pp. xvi+323. (London: J. A. Churchill.) Price 6s. net.

THE man of science will find this new publication a very useful addition to the books of reference kept on his desk. The volume begins with lists of the heads and senior professors of the world's universities, and these are followed by short biographies of the more important workers in science in all countries. A classified index brings together conveniently under their various countries the names of the men of science prominently associated with each subject. The biographies provide information as to the academic career and the important contributions to science of each person whose name is included.

Prehistoric Parables. By Wilson Bell. Illustrated by Horace Taylor. Pp. viii+63. (Halifax: Milner and Co.) Price 1s. net.

THE seven short stories relating to prehistoric man included in this little book are dramatic and interesting. Civilisation is only superficial in comparison with the history of man, and a scratch will often reveal the elemental human nature beneath. Mr. Bell's parables may therefore represent humanity as faithfully as any efforts to project ourselves into the mind of the past can do. He realises that to place man, as he has done, in the Carboniferous period for artistic effect has no geological sanction—and we think he has gained nothing by such a departure from fact—but overlooking this point the stories are certainly of human interest.