

## SHORT REVIEWS

## Whipsnade

By Philip Street. Pp. 128+31 plates. (London: University of London Press, 1953.) 12s. 6d. net.

THIS is really a dual-purpose book: it describes the birth and development of Whipsnade Park and is an 'everyman's' natural history of the inmates. In addition, it takes everyman behind the zoological scene to make him understand the magnitude of the task of maintaining the Whipsnade estate and keeping the animals happy and healthy.

The history of Whipsnade makes most interesting reading and demonstrates the courage, energy and imagination of Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell and Dr. Geoffrey Vevers.

It is depressing to read of the number of species which are either extinct or nearly extinct through the depredations of sportsmen and the demands of agriculture. There is a dramatic story of the rescue of the Père David deer by the tenth Duke of Bedford, who built up a flourishing herd from the eighteen known survivors of the species of which the thriving Whipsnade herd is an offshoot.

The natural-history section, well written and clear, leaves the reader speculating and anxious for further information; but as it is written for the layman it is rather misleading to say that most of the mammals in Australia are marsupials; except for some bats and the odd mouse the indigenous mammals of Australia were marsupials; but since man arrived placental mammals are gradually ousting the native fauna. The statement, too, that deer do not exist in Australasia is only partly true in that they have been introduced by man in recent times and the red deer is flourishing in New Zealand.

The omission of a chapter on the anthropoids seems a pity; but these are small blemishes on a book which tells of an exciting experiment, in language which is plain, undramatic and elegant and which should do much to send its readers to Whipsnade to see for themselves.

#### Journal of Researches into the Geology and Natural History of the Various Countries visited by H.M.S. *Beagle*

By Charles Darwin (1839). Facsimile reprint of the first edition. (Pallas, a Collection of Offset Reprints of Out-of-print and Classic Scientific Works, Vol. 2.) Pp. xiv+615+16 plates. (New York and London: Hafner Publishing Co., 1952.) 55s.

IT is now 127 years since a young geologist, aged twenty-seven, returned to England from a five-year voyage. At an age when most men are starting upon their careers, young Darwin had seen memorable service as naturalist in H.M.S. *Beagle*: his mind was full of information that was to be sifted, interpreted and re-interpreted until it became the basis of the "Origin of Species" more than twenty years later.

Despite all that is said to-day about Darwin and Darwinism there must be many who have not read the classic "Journal" in which the day-to-day discoveries were noted, and on every page of which the imprint of new experience is clearly recorded. One can still read the story for its intrinsic interest, with admiration for the tenacity, the physical toughness and the insatiable curiosity of the traveller.

Certainly the pleasure of reading is enhanced in this fine facsimile of the 1839 edition, which is clearly printed and has the original notes, illustrations and index. Some illustrations have been added from the earlier narratives of Captains King and FitzRoy, and the diagrammatic drawing of the *Beagle*, made many years later by Captain King, has also been included.

The closing words of the volume recommend travel as teaching "good humoured patience, freedom from selfishness, the habit of acting for himself, and of making the best of everything, or in other words contentment". Darwin also says "To hoist the British flag, seems to draw with it as certain consequences, wealth, prosperity and civilization". To these extracts one can only add: *O tempora. O mores.*

W. E. SWINTON

#### A Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe

By Dr. Roger Peterson, Guy Mountfort and P. A. D. Hollom. Pp. xxxiv+318+64 plates. (London: William Collins, Sons and Co., Ltd., 1954.) 25s. net.

A GOOD handbook on European birds for use in the field has long been wanted. It is true that some thirty years ago Wardlaw Ramsay wrote a handbook on European and North African birds, but it had no coloured plates and the descriptions were more of birds in the hand than in the field.

In the present volume every bird is figured either in colour or black-and-white and, in addition, there are lines on the plates pointing to the principal different markings of any two birds which appear similar in life. Opposite the plates the chief characters of each species are clearly given, and as birds of prey are, as often as not, seen on the wing—they are shown in flight.

The introduction has valuable illustrated notes on how to identify birds, and where and when they are found, with a timely note of caution as regards rarities. The letterpress is short—a few lines on size and markings, a line or two on voice, and finally a short note on habitat and nests. At the foot of many of the pages are useful distribution maps.

The authors are to be congratulated on producing a veritable *multum in parvo* on European birds.

N. B. KINNEAR

#### Logic and Psychology

By Jean Piaget. Pp. xix+48. (Manchester: At the University Press, 1953.) 6s.

THIS small book is based on three lectures given in the University of Manchester in 1952. The brief historical survey in the opening chapter explains why there is little co-operation at the present time between logicians and psychologists. The second chapter deals with the four main stages, extending over the period from birth to maturity, in the psychological development of operations. Finally, the operational techniques of modern logic are used for discovering and constructing structures which can be put into correspondence with the operational structures of psychology, and the use of these logical structures in psychological interpretation is discussed.

The symbolic algebra used in the third chapter is more readily understood by the short survey, written by one of the translators, of the more important