

# OUTDOOR BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

ONE is inclined to rush—no, to saunter to any of a score of spots on Long Island, the while snapping his fingers at Utopia, when he finishes Charles Hanson Towne's book with the truly descriptive title "Loafing Down Long Island" (Century). If the lazy prose and indolent verse fail to inspire the reader to follow Mr. Towne's haphazard trail, Thomas Fogarty's thirty illustrations probably

will. The two combined make the 212 pages turn all too quickly, no matter how much one lingers over them. Maybe it is that the island is too small. They should—both of them—loaf up and down the whole United States.

T. M. Longstreth in "Reading the Weather" (Macmillan)—the science of the United States Weather Bureau

presented simply in a volume fitting both the camper's need and pocket—laughs at climatic prognostication founded upon the proverbs of the oldest settler and explains the rationalism of what have been considered the eccentricities of the weather. By studying this book, every man can become his own Noah.

"Vacation Tramps in New England Highlands" by Allen Chamberlain (Houghton Mifflin) is a very efficient stimulant of the appetite for the outdoors. Copiously illustrated with excellent photographs and maps, it combines quite delightful travelogue-chatting with very practical advice regarding the regions to be traversed. Not only are the physical features of the country discussed, but sometimes also the character of the inhabitants from whom the hiker will occasionally desire hospitality. Trips ranging from a day to two weeks in duration are temptingly placed before the reader's eye. On irksome working days the delights set forth here are of almost painful desirability.

Dr. Frank M. Johnson in his pleasant little book "Reminiscent Tales of a Humble Angler" (Stewart Kidd) tells of mighty catches and adventures with the rod. Incidentally the cup that cheers plays an important, if not an absolutely essential part, in his narrative. Once let a mere mortal land a six pound black bass on a light rod and he is lost, wife and children, honor and success, fading into mere background. Perhaps one explanation of the sport's fascination is the singular combination of the contemplative and active which it affords. There are long minutes of high thinking and then short moments of furious activity as exciting as big game hunting or

polo. These reminiscences will prove provocative reading while the angler rests in camp after a successful day.

Motorists will find much helpful information in "The Motor Camping Book" by Elon Jessup (Putnam). There are as many methods of camping as there are varieties in Mr. Heinz's list, and Mr. Jessup describes them all in detail, from the bough bed beside the car to the palatial motor trailer with its full camping equipment. The illustrations tempt one to pack up and set out at once.

William T. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Park, in "Wild Life Conservation in Theory and Practice" (Yale) has a solid sermon full of convincing statistics and argument that should steal from the wastrel hunter the joy of spoilation but which should interest anyone concerned with wild animals or birds in an economic, dietetic, sentimental, or sporting way.

Nature, mingled with human nature, is the consistency of "Along New England Roads" by W. C. Prime (Harper). It is an old book but, like the roads, loses none of its beauty despite all its wear. For flavor try chapter XIII, "Boys with Stand-Up Collars".

An entertaining companion for a tourist is "Highways and Byways of Florida" by Clifton Johnson (Macmillan). Many incidents and many photographs are crowded into this travelogue, which does credit to the sunny state. Mr. Johnson is not content to let his tourist merely tour and read but urges him to unconventional adventure.

The "Handbook of the Yosemite Na-

tional Park" (Putnam) is a book of seventeen articles collected by Ansel F. Hall explaining the attractions of this vacation ground for scientist, camper, motorist, and historian. Most of it is a bit heavy with scientific data, and in this respect differs from the usual California Chamber of Commerce publicity.

The collected essays of Francis E. Clark, churchman and editor, look askance at city life. "The Gospel of Out of Doors" (Association) is enthusiastic over that part of the physical world we call nature. The tone of this pocket-sized volume is correctly described by the publishers as "gentle, kindly".

Facts about the game lands of the Rocky Mountain region are presented in the narrative style of Dillon Wallace's "Saddle and Camp in the Rockies" (Outing). The author made his survey in 1910, since when conditions may have changed, slightly or greatly. However, the work is a good sourcebook of local color.

For those who can find relief from the smoke and steel of the city in an elaborate, oil-painted evocation of the rarified springtime-primrose atmosphere of New England we recommend Winthrop Packard's amusing, but rather incoherent rambles along "Old Plymouth Trails" (Small, Maynard). Here are generous sprinklings of honey-sweet verse, culled from innocuous and respectable sources, of piquant Latin botanical terms, of very "fine" writing about sighing pines and midsummer moonshine, and of rather good humorous local legends ("Jotham"-stories). In spite of a few rare touches of manly vigor—when, for in-

stance, the author sturdily foots it across Cape Cod or visits Nantucket in April—and in spite of all his efforts to get a real tang of the North-Atlantic salt breeze into his book, he usually achieves only the heady scent of sweet lavender. One soon wearies of the mayflowers, "peeping through the leaves like sweet little Pilgrim children, ready to draw back behind their mothers' aprons if they do not like the appearance of the coming stranger".

Harold Whiting Slauson's "First Aid to the Car" (Harper), a little book which can be slipped into the side door pocket or into the coat pocket, is really what the title indicates—first aid to the motorist when he has car troubles along the road. It is written in simple terms and the arrangement of the material is admirable.

A compact, practical, and well-written handbook on the art of walking is Bayard H. Christy's "Going Afoot" (Association). Written very simply, but in a great glow of enthusiasm, by a Pittsburg attorney who walked forty miles on his fortieth birthday, it wastes no time in preliminaries, but gets directly to the how, when, and where of the organized tramping party. There are chapters on the great walking clubs of America, a section on walking at night contributed by Dr. John H. Finley, and generous quotations from Thoreau. Despite its small size, the book contains everything for the serious pedestrian to know, from advice as to what kinds of socks and suspenders to wear to suggestions for reading, where we note with satisfaction that the Bible is given honorable mention, together with "The Three Musketeers" and "The Golden Treasury".

Helen W. Henderson's "A Loiterer in New England" (Doran) is rich in historical background and geographical detail. It recalls the charm spots of Massachusetts to readers who have visited them and whets the desire of those who have not. The book abounds in delectable illustrations.

"In all my life I've never met a golfer on his game." So sings Grantland Rice in "Lyrics of the Links", compiled by Henry Litchfield West (Macmillan). This amusing golf anthology contains verses by Andrew Lang, Ring Lardner, Clinton Scollard, and many other clever enthusiasts.

"In Vacation America" by Harrison Rhodes (Harper) is a pleasant and glorified guidebook. It is designed to arouse an interest in America's vacation resorts now that European travel is beset with difficulties. The author in a chatty, humorous way reviews the springs and mountains, dwelling lightly on their historical significance and suggesting their special charm. The book, covering such a large area, is too slim to be wholly adequate. Those of us who have our favorite resorts are apt to feel they have been neglected. We resent space given to Atlantic City at the expense of Maine with its sea challenging the sky in color and its air like old wine. Why, indeed, go to the Mediterranean,—or to Atlantic City?

In this hectic age, even the inveterate trumper will sometimes be surprised to find himself clutching with something like a passionate gesture at the speed and excitement of motoring, even when it is mingled with the dirt, grease, and garage-mechanic-profanity that are its inevitable accompaniments. "Automobile Operation" by

A. L. Brennan, Jr. (Outing) should, as its introduction modestly points out, "prove of immense value, not only to amateurs, but to professional motorists as well". Remembering the manifold distresses and despairs that embittered our first experiences as a driver, we are inclined to be just a bit sceptical about the efficacy of any printed advice on this complicated matter. Here, however, the layman will find as clear an exposition of the mysteries of the carburetor and the cam-shaft as he is likely to find anywhere outside his own experience.

The "distinguished foreign visitor" to our country almost invariably laments our artistic barrenness as compared to Europe. This may be largely due to the fact that the local Chambers of Commerce dominate his welcome. Factories, banks, all signs of material wealth, are shoved under his nose, and he returns home firmly convinced that America is unbelievably rich and unbelievably lacking in the finer graces of civilization. One of the best refutations of the latter belief is the charm and beauty of our colonial houses, many of them preserved with great care and most of them, at the present time, copied by architects. "In Old Pennsylvania Towns" by Anne Hollingsworth Wharton (Lippincott) is a very readable account of towns where old houses are to be found in abundance. Their dignity of line and simple beauty fit perfectly into the gracious landscape of rolling hills and gorgeously spreading trees. There are excellent illustrations and an index to aid the more than casual reader.

To a subject of supreme impressiveness and variety Robert Sterling Yard, in "The Book of the National Parks"

(Scribner), brings the equipment of Chief of the Educational Division, National Park Service, Department of the Interior: bold, sweeping powers of scientific and artistic imagination; the sportsman's keen mettle and relish; and the ardent doctrine that the "intellectual pleasure of comprehension" must supplement "love of beauty spiced by wonder" in the appreciation of scenery. His plan is simple and logical: a general note on scenery and its science, with a rapid survey of the national park system as a whole, followed by a division of the field into three sections corresponding to the three divisions of rock, with an interchapter on each division, and a fourth section covering the scenery of the southwest. For those who desire an untechnical introduction to the lessons of nature in her greatest classrooms and museums, or a hearty invitation to her pleasures on her greatest playgrounds, Mr. Yard's volume, smoothly blending the historic, geographic, descriptive, interpretative, and guide functions, carries the conviction of authority and inspiration.

For roughing it with smoothness, on both light and heavy travel, Horace Kephart's "Camping and Woodcraft" (Macmillan) is a comprehensive, convenient pocket manual, which has already stood the test of seven editions in ten years. In general, with occasional overlapping, the first volume deals with the science, and the second with the art, of living outdoors. Clear, expert instructions in the standard materials and methods of outfitting, camp-making, fire-building, cookery; the fine points in the use of compass, rifle, axe, and knife; and the "shifts and expedients" of getting along without these when reduced to

extremities of self-guidance and self-preservation in the wilderness—this is what the amateur may expect to learn from the veteran author of "Our Southern Highlanders". At the same time he manages to entertain with a humorous personal touch, imparting quaint bits of wisdom and lore.

Another handsome addition to the Page "See America First" Series (proud cousins of the famous "Spells") is "A Wonderland of the East, Comprising the Mountain and Lake Region of New England and Eastern New York". In his quiet, ruminative account of more or less sentimental journeys by motor amid the most beautiful scenery east of the Rockies, Professor William Copeman Kitchin displays no strikingly original or vivid qualities but honest appreciation and reverence. His chief aim is to emphasize the scenic unity of six states, which it must be admitted he accomplishes to the point of monotony (notwithstanding the inconvenience caused the reader by the absence of a complete map of the region.) As a guide book his volume is fairly picturesque and lively in atmosphere, and its serviceableness to the motor tourist is enhanced by a supplement of running logs and side trips. But with less idealization and conventionality and closer visualization of his subject, more people and incident to fill his places, more of the living present to supplement the dead past, he might have made a series of full-bodied, absorbing pictures out of his sketches, and satisfied a larger class of readers. As it is, he can hardly be said to have obeyed fully his own prime injunction to motorists: "Take time to see things!"