

an area of about 1,360,000 square miles, rather more than half of which lay in Canada. The United States withdrew from the Project in 1944, but the Canadian study group increased its activities, and expanded the areas originally covered, so that ultimately about 1,000,000 square miles was considered.

Canada's New Northwest is the report of the Canadian part of the Project. It is largely the work of Mr. R. K. Odell of the Department of Mines and Resources and Mr. W. Maxwell an industrial engineer. The work is divided into

chapters which deal in turn with physiography and geology, agriculture, forests, fisheries, water power resources, transportation, wildlife conservation, population and meteorology. There are ten maps, most of them prepared specially for this work. Although the original plan for a joint undertaking by the two countries was not carried out, the Canadian report was well worth publishing. It sets a pattern which might be followed by other reports on the remainder of northern Canada.

T.L.L.

BIRDS OF ARCTIC ALASKA

By ALFRED M. BAILEY. Popular Series No. 8, Colorado Museum of Natural History, U.S.A. 317 pp. Map. \$3.00. The basis of this book is the 1921-22 expedition of the Colorado Museum of Natural History to the coast of Alaska between Cape Prince of Wales on Bering Strait and Demarcation Point on the international boundary.

The primary purpose of the expedition was to secure exhibit material for a new wing of the museum. This work was successfully accomplished. The interest of the author and his assistant, Russell W. Hendee, in ornithology led not only to the acquisition of a large collection of birds (2,000 specimens), but to the establishment of a contract with several residents of the region from whom the Colorado Museum and others have continued to receive specimens up to the present time.

The chief portion (pp. 133-302) of this book is a faunal list of birds which brings together under the species headings previously published records as well as new material from the collections made by A. J. Allen and Charles D. Brower and his sons. As the author points out in the introduction, the area covered is not arctic Alaska, but the arctic slope of Alaska, and the basin of the Yukon River is not included. Over 200 specimens, including some unconfirmed by specimens, are listed. Plumage description and life history notes have in general been omitted, and taxonomic discussions kept to a minimum. There is a bibliography of about 150 titles to

which reference is made by dates following the author's name in the text. For some reason these dates have been rather frequently omitted, and the reader is left to infer from which of the author's publications the information is derived.

There are three other main sections:

(1) *Vegetation of the Arctic Slope of Alaska* by Joseph Ewan. In this short space a bare outline of vegetation only has been possible, but additional sources of information are pointed out.

(2) *Historical Sketch* (pp. 33-42) of the previous ornithological work in the region starting with the voyage of HMS *Blossom* in 1825-28. This is a useful and interesting section. It is surprising to find that there apparently has been no ornithological work done upon the arctic slope of Alaska except by local collectors since the end of the Colorado Museum expedition in 1922.

(3) *Narrative*. pp. 44-132. This is largely a day to day account with frequent direct quotations from the author's diary. It forms a valuable record of life and conditions in the area. The diary extracts contain numerous references to birds, most of which are repeated in the faunal list under the species concerned, and might therefore have been omitted from the narrative with advantage, especially to the general reader. A considerable part of the narrative had been previously published in the "*The Birds of Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska*".*

The single large map on a scale of 120 miles to 1 inch is ineffectual. A good map on a larger scale showing all the

places referred to in the text would have greatly increased the value of the book. At least the limit of trees and perhaps some other indication of the type of country might have been given with the map.

The work entailed in assembling the information presented in this book must

have been very considerable, but there is no doubt that its usefulness to future students of the ornithology of north-western Alaska will fully justify it.

T. H. MANNING.

*Bailey, Alfred M. The Birds of Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska. Proc. Colorado Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. 18, pp. 1-113. 1943.

"THE GREAT MACKENZIE", in Words and Photo.

Text by Raymond Arthur Davies, photographs by George Zuckerman. (Toronto: The Ryerson Press. 139 pages, 100 photographs, \$3.50).

"*The Great Mackenzie*" will have popular appeal for those who would like a rapid evening's trip through the Mackenzie valley of the Northwest Territories. An excellent set of 100 full-page pictures, arranged in ten logical groups, gives an adequate pictorial representation of the resources, transportation and people of the long valley. The pictures have been selected primarily for their "human interest", rather than as a record of life in the area.

It is unfortunate that readers could not enjoy the pictures without submitting to the newspaper-headline style of Mr. Davies, who has written the captions. Mr. Davies' sole purpose is to browbeat "the government" into more rapid development of the North and greater care of her Indian wards. His staccato style pounds away at this theme throughout the book, and the description under every picture is twisted to serve this purpose.

Readers of *Arctic* will not have to be told about the twenty-six factual errors in the text, and will recognize most of the half-truths. It is unfortunate, however, that the general public will accept this irresponsible writing as accurate description. Some of his statements are true, and therein lies the difficulty, for readers who do not know the North will not be able to discriminate.

For example, Davies states on page 70 that "it is believed that 100,000 square miles of the Mackenzie Basin is suitable for farming". He does not say that

probably Mr. Davies is the only man who so "believes", but on page 112 he slips by admitting that "hundreds of thousands of square miles are ruled by mosses and swamps". (Out of a total area of 125,000 square miles!) He condemns the lack of education by saying that there are no public schools in the Northwest Territories, thereby ignoring the public schools at Fort Smith and Yellowknife, the largest settlements. Twice he states that "the Eskimos have been wiped out by venereal disease and whisky", a fact that actually refers only to a small group of Eskimos who lived near Herschel Island in the whaling days half a century ago, whereas Canada is proud of the way the trading companies have kept whisky away from the Eskimo, and venereal disease is virtually unknown among these happy people. Davies uses words loosely and extravagantly, such as "coal *abounds* at Fort Norman" when referring to a small seam of low quality, and "land is *lush* at Fort Simpson," referring to the grey-brown woodland and muskeg soils.

Davies condemns our lack of development by comparing Leningrad, U.S.S.R., on the same latitude, with tiny Fort Smith, when they have nothing in common in the way of climate, resources or accessibility. He suggests several major plans for development, not knowing of, or ignoring, the fact that most of the points are already being actively pursued by the Government.

"*The Great Mackenzie*" is a good book to look at, and will be an entertaining book for those who know the North and remember "the great Barnum". For those who sincerely want to see orderly development of our Northland, this book has not really helped the cause.

J. LEWIS ROBINSON.