

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Travels Through the Western Country in the Summer of 1816.** *David Thomas.* With Introduction by *John W. Wells* and Forward by *George W. White.* Hafner Publishing Company, Darien, Connecticut. 1970 (facsimile of the 1819 edition). ix-xiv+338 p. \$14.95.

This is David Thomas' diary of his journey made from May 21 to August 14, 1816, through the western parts of New York and Pennsylvania, the northern projection of Virginia, the southern parts of Ohio, the northern parts of Kentucky, and the interior and western parts of Indiana. He discusses the natural history, topography, geology, climate, commerce, "antiquities," agriculture, and manufactures of the region. Thomas' report must be considered a factual account of both good and bad conditions as he saw them on the frontier.

In the Forward, Editor White points out that Thomas was "one of the earliest, not only to describe, but also to speculate on the origin of many of the geological features" in the territory covered. While most of the travelers who recorded their observations went west via the Ohio River, Thomas traveled entirely by land, observing and reporting on regions and features not previously discussed by others of scientific ability. In this one respect alone, Thomas' account of the early western country is unique.

In the *Introduction*, Professor Wells gives a brief account of Thomas' life, noting that he was primarily a successful agriculturalist, particularly a horticulturalist who grew both native and exotic fruit trees, who published his writings on the subject in the early agricultural journals. Later he was an engineer and surveyor for the building of the canals in New York state.

The original diary consists of 187 pages and covers the trip up to July 14, when Thomas was in the Wabash valley, Indiana. Additional *Notices*, totaling 131 pages, were apparently added later. While reading the diary, one can readily recognize these additional notes, because the editor has added, at the appropriate place in the diary, the page numbers for each additional note. Two hundred new notes, principally explanations of geology and place names and a bibliography of 60 titles, of which 33 were cited or referred to by Thomas, have been provided by Professors Wells and White. Three maps are included: Thomas' own map of southern and central Indiana prepared for the original publication; a present-day map of the region Thomas covered, with his travel route drawn and place names located; and a physiographic diagrammatic map of southern and central Indiana showing the rock units of that region.

Listed as volume 6 in a series of reprint editions collectively called *Contributions to the History of Geology*, and edited by Professor White and published by the Hafner Publishing Company this book is a valuable contribution to students and researchers interested in early geology and natural history, principally of the Ohio valley.

RONALD L. STUCKEY

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**An Introduction to the Study of Insects.** *Donald J. Borror and Dwight M. DeLong.* Holt, Rinehart and Winston (3rd edition), 1971. xiii+812 p. \$17.50.

The authors have again succeeded in improving upon a book which is already an entomological classic. This new edition is a little thinner, but has only seven less pages than its predecessor, despite the fact that the number of illustrations has been increased and the text has been expanded. This was accomplished by reducing the size of the type in which the text is set. There are also separate chapters for Anatomy and for Physiology (with more extensive coverage of the latter), whereas in previous editions these subjects had been combined into a single chapter. This change is a decided improvement.

The keys have undoubtedly been improved and, in keeping with previous editions, the nomenclature and taxonomic arrangements have utilized the most current information available. However, those of us who use the keys over long periods of time will find the present edition more difficult to use because of the smaller print. The constant shift of the eyes from couplets in the keys to the specimen being studied make the print size in previous editions more desirable.

The most important part of this book is the keys to families and subfamilies. It is the most complete and usable set of keys to North American insects ever produced, enabling one who has had some exposure to insect taxonomy to ascertain quickly the family of almost any adult insect likely to be encountered on this continent. The first two editions have gained wide acceptance and are to be found on the shelves of most serious insect taxonomists throughout the World. Most copies gather little dust. Editions have been published in Arabic and Portuguese.

Undoubtedly this new edition will be widely used. The publishers present it at virtually no change in cost over the second edition. The greatest fault I find is in the poor reproduction of the plates—especially the shaded drawings of entire insects. It is unfortunate that such an otherwise fine book as this must be marred by poor to barely adequate illustrations.

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