

New Books.

American Birds is the title of a neat volume by William Lovell Finley, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons. The illustrations are excellent and a score or more of species are treated in an attractive manner.

Although the author has been pleased to give the volume a broad title, the second paragraph of the introduction explains his aims and purposes. After stating that it is his purpose to consider only a few representative birds he continues by saying that "each chapter represents a close and continued study with camera and notebook at the home of some bird or group of birds—a true life history of each species." Such studies are commendable, for their appearance in print teaches one that there is much to learn about a species aside from its mere identification.

"Many of these studies were made in the West but in the list of birds treated an effort has been made to get a selection that is national in scope. In the popular mind a song sparrow is a song sparrow from ocean to ocean, yet scientifically he represents over a dozen subspecies, according to the part of the country in which he lives. To the ordinary bird lover, however, a robin is the same east and west, and the same is true of the chickadee, flicker, wren, grosbeak, vireo, warbler, hawk and others dealt with in the following chapters."

The author easily may find those who differ with him on some of these assertions. How natural it is for the "popular mind" to be attracted by characters which distinguish species, and what a satisfaction is felt when one specifically identifies the bluejay for the first time by its blue color and distinct crest.

Nesting methods, feeding habits, development of young and many other phases of bird life are either discussed or figured. Mr. Finley has given us a vast amount of information about a number of species and has advanced a line of bird study which is sure to attract many future students.—J. S. H.
