

REVIEWS.

Alpine Flora of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, by Stewardson Brown. Illustrated with 31 water-color drawings and 91 other illustrations by Mrs. Charles Schaeffer, pp. 352. Putnam's Sons, New York. \$3.00.

Contributions to a Catalogue of the Flora of the Canadian Rocky Mountains and the Selkirk Range, by Edith M. Farr. Contr. from the Bot. Lab. of the Univ. of Penn. Vol. III. pp. 1-88. Bot. Dept., Univ. of Penn. \$1.00.

Among those who visit the Canadian mountains the greater number perhaps go chiefly to revel in the unrivalled scenery of the Rockies and Selkirks or to climb the peaks that tempt them on every hand. But there are few who can spend even one day in the mountains without feeling the desire to know at least the common names of some of the beautiful wild flowers that fill the woods and meadows and cover the mountain slopes with masses of brilliant color. Mrs. Henshaw's "Mountain Wild Flowers of Canada"* will long remain the "popular guide to the names and descriptions of the flowers that bloom above the clouds." Written by a good botanist and one who is an ardent lover of flowers it appeals to the Nature lover in a way that no "Flora" or "Catalogue" can do, and Mrs. Henshaw seems always to have found the exact word to describe the characteristic beauty of the plant she may be writing about, a matter of greater difficulty than is realized by one who has not attempted it.

While Prof. Brown's book is very far from being a complete "Flora" of the Rocky Mountains it is strictly "scientific" as far as it goes, and the amateur botanist who so dearly loves to "analyse" and "classify" the plants he collects will find that he can with this book identify all the commoner species at least, that he will find in the Rockies or Selkirks, for though the title covers only the Rocky Mountains the matter includes the Selkirks as well. The average tourist, however, will prefer Mrs. Henshaw's simpler, if not very scientific, arrangement of the alpine flowers in groups according to their color, as by this means he can in a very short time learn the names of the plants he has collected. Beginning with a general key to the families, Prof. Brown gives briefly and clearly the characters of each family and of the genera into which they are divided. The number of species in each genus is as a rule so small that the characters separating these are not given in the form of a key but will be found in the descriptions of the species themselves. These descriptions are with very few exceptions accurate and not unnecessarily long. The habitat of each species is also given

* Reviewed in the Ottawa Naturalist, Vol. XX, p. 114.

and its distribution in a general way. Had one or two localities been mentioned at which collectors could find each species, the value of the "Flora" to the traveller making only a short stay in the mountains would have been greatly enhanced, but as this defect is covered by Miss Farr's "Catalogue" which is a natural, and indeed a necessary complement of the "Flora" it will not be felt to the degree it would have been had the "Catalogue" not been published. The names used by Dr. Brown are those approved by the school of American botanists who have not accepted the "Vienna Rules." No objection could be taken to the use of this system of nomenclature were any synonymy given but one not familiar with some of these new names will be unable to decide whether they are applied to new segregates or are only new names substituted for the old familiar ones, which will generally prove to be the case. This defect is also remedied, however, by Miss Farr's "Catalogue." In her preface she says candidly: "The nomenclature is in accordance with the best judgment of the author," but "one synonym is given under each species where from familiar usage in the past such a course seems desirable." A strict application of the "Vienna Rules" will result in the changing of very few of Mrs. Henshaw's names and fewer still of Miss Farr's.

Of Mrs. Schaeffer's illustrations nothing but praise can be said or written. If a very few of the colored illustrations are a little "off color" the fault lies in the difficulty of reproducing in color the delicate shades so characteristic of many alpine flowers, and Mrs. Schaeffer's illustrations are much the best the writer knows of in any American work of this kind, and there is not one of them that would not serve to identify immediately the species it is intended to represent. The half-tones are also excellent and the reproduction on the same plate of an inch measure makes it easy to determine the relative height of the plants reproduced. A comparison is naturally suggested between Mrs. Henshaw's book and that of Dr. Brown and Mrs. Schaeffer, but such a comparison cannot be made. Each is excellent in its own way. Some will prefer one and some the other, but the qualities that make both good, and each in some respects better than the other, are so diverse that no one with the smallest interest in or love for flowers can visit the Canadian mountains and afford to be without either. The publication of two such books is of vastly greater significance than may appear to the unthinking. They will serve to advertise our mountains and attract visitors not only from the United States but from Europe, and what the average Canadian may not know is that though transportation companies, hotel-keepers and even the

Government have for many years exploited the mountains of the Western States no such books as either of these have been published on the flora of these mountains, a fact sufficient in itself to show that they do not offer the attraction to the tourist and Nature lover that our Canadian mountains do. These books and the work of the Canadian Alpine Club will do more to attract strangers to our mountains during the next five years than anything else will. It is to the credit of the Canadian Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company that this is not only appreciated by them but that their appreciation has been shown in a practical way by affording every possible assistance to the authors of these books and to the officers of the Alpine Club in the prosecution of their work.

Miss Farr's "Catalogue," as has already been said, is the natural complement of both of the books referred to above. But it is something more than a Catalogue. Like Macoun's "Catalogue of Canadian Plants" which gives the general distribution of all the species of flowering plants which were known to occur in Canada at the time of its publication and also the particular localities at which rare species had been collected, Miss Farr mentions a locality in either the Rockies or Selkirks, or both, at which each species may be found, which makes it possible for one who has only a part of one season to spend in the mountains to collect most of the species known to occur there. The "Catalogue" is also a practically complete list of the plants of those parts of the Rockies and Selkirks that it covers. Based on her own collections in 1904 and 1905 Miss Farr has added to her own list all species reported by other collectors. That a *complete* list of the plants of any region should be published is of course out of the question. All that anyone can do is to publish a list of the plants *known* to occur and this Miss Farr has done. Botanists like Prof. Macoun and Dr. Fletcher who have collected in the Rockies and Selkirks for more than twenty years could add a good many names to even Miss Farr's list, but these names have not been published, and indeed some of the plants collected by them are listed for the first time in Miss Farr's "Catalogue." To the professional botanist the "Catalogue" will prove more valuable than either the "Flora" or Mrs. Henshaw's book. The amateur botanist and the casual visitor to the mountains will find it an absolute necessity, for they will certainly find many species that neither Mrs. Henshaw nor Dr. Brown has described, but which are catalogued by Miss Farr.

J. M. M.



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