

physiologists in the service. All of us have the degree of doctor of philosophy in one of the biological (broad sense) sciences. We teach and do research in connection with problems of respiration, anoxia, air sickness, body temperature, and the like. With only one or two exceptions we are all anxious to return to academic life. We are an available pool of young scientists who will need positions when the war is over. In the Army Sanitary Corps, in the Quartermaster Corps and in the Navy you will find similar men.

However, we feel rather ignored, since practically none of us has been offered a civilian position to become effective upon discharge from the service. If the shortage of scientists is so critical and if the various university and commercial representatives are

sincere, why have not the scientists, who are now temporarily in uniform, been approached in regard to post-war appointments?

Personally, the outlook is not too bright. Most university men with whom I have spoken recently maintain that they are making no postwar plans to take on additional faculty members. Where, then, does the shortage exist?

We have noticed that the National Research Council is planning to grant fellowships to aid young scientists in studying for the doctorate. We have not heard of any plan whereby trained scientists (now in the service) can get a six-month period of rehabilitation and "refreshing" between the time of discharge and the time they enter into new civilian duties.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

CHARLES DAVIES SHERBORN

Squire: Memoirs of Charles Davies Sherborn. By J.

R. NORMAN. 202 pages. 2 figs., 8 plates. London: George G. Harrap and Co. 1944. 15 shillings.

"SQUIRE" was a unique character among British scientists, and this biography by one of the most intimate friends of his later years is in many respects a unique book. By means of personal recollections, excerpts from Sherborn's letters and autobiographical notes and various anecdotes and reminiscences supplied by friends and colleagues, it re-creates the spirit of the man and reveals an aspect of the scientific life that is seldom seen in any country. It moreover gives an extraordinary insight into the working relationships of the group of famous scientists who brought honor to the British Museum and other official organizations and learned societies of England, as well as to themselves, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century. Many an American zoologist, geologist and student of the history of science will gain much pleasure as well as profit by reading it.

Dr. Sherborn was a "born collector" and even before he left school in 1875, at the age of fourteen, he "had amassed quite useful series of shells, fossils, minerals, stamps, coins, books, autograph letters, historical and other documents, and even a few prints." Despite his lack of any advanced formal schooling, his entire life was spent in close association with research scientists and he not only helped many of them achieve success, but he made many contributions to knowledge on his own account, notably in stratigraphic geology, paleontology and zoology. His *magnum opus* was of course the *Index Animalium*, with its 440,000 references, the last part of which was issued in 1933. This monumental work involved the indexing of nearly 28,000

publications and was completed only after forty-three years of unrelenting toil in the face of difficulties that required almost superhuman persistence to surmount. Would that all the thousands of scientists the world around who blithely consult it from time to time could be required to read Mr. Norman's account of the way this self-assigned task was accomplished! Surely they would all applaud the action of Oxford University in conferring upon "Squire" Sherborn the honorary degree of doctor of science, the only academic reward and almost the only official recognition he ever received throughout his long life of unselfish, quiet service in the cause of science.

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THE BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA

The Distribution of the Birds of California. By JOSEPH GRINNELL and ALDEN H. MILLER. Cooper Ornithological Club, Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 27. 608 pp., 1 color plate, 57 maps. Berkeley, Calif., 1944.

THE physiography of California and its effect upon meteorological phenomena have produced a notably large number of ecological niches. These are characterized not only by climates that can be quantitatively defined, but also by special associations of plants and animals. In extreme examples, such as that of the yellow-billed magpie, the correlation is one of thoroughgoing endemism. This bird (*Pica nuttallii*) occurs nowhere outside its limited range within the State of California.

Aside from climate of the proper kind, a further probably essential factor in habitable environment is presence of accessible water in dry seasons, needed not only to drink but in certain phases of nest-building; another is