

Mr. Pootman's book, translated into good, readable English, is in the nature of a well-balanced survey of major pieces of research into this absorbing field, covering a wide selection of animals, and amply supplemented with the author's own observations. The photographic illustrations are very good.

Only one error needs to be pointed out, a typographical one. "The British bird-watcher David Lang" mentioned on page 22 is, of course, David Lack of robin fame.

A. L.

NATURE IS MY HOBBY. By C. V. A. ADAMS. Wheaton: Exeter. 15s.

The amateur naturalist is usually either an observer or a collector; this book is written for the latter and is a very valuable addition to the current literature in this field. Mr. Adams has managed to gather together many valuable hints on collecting and preserving insects, shells, skulls, flowers and sea weeds. There is a section on the collection and mounting of birds' nests which is a subject rarely covered in natural history guides. Finally, there is a chapter on setting up and keeping aquaria and vivaria. Many of these topics are dealt with in other books, but the great value of Mr. Adams's work is that they are all together in one volume and it is quite obvious that all his advice is based on practical experience. The book is illustrated by photographs and a large number of excellent drawings—those describing the construction of nets and other apparatus being particularly good. One or two slight errors, particularly in the glossary, do little to detract from the value of this work.

The book deals only with the collection and preservation of specimens, not their identification, but there are good bibliographies after each section which list books suitable for further reading and these will help to solve any taxonomic problems.

In the introduction F. S. Russell particularly recommends this book to younger people and, although mainly written for them, it will be of use to teachers as well, particularly in secondary schools, and, in fact to all who have an interest in this branch of natural history.

D. G. L.

JAMES AND SUSAN IN THE COUNTRY. By J. CLEMENT-JONES. Illustrated by Gunvor Övden. Hutchinson. 9s. 6d.

Apart from their school books, most children under fourteen or fifteen read purely for pleasure; in books they seek not

instruction but entertainment. Nevertheless, adults, anxious to teach the young, buy instructive books to give them. So the *genre* of the instructive book disguised as a novel has come into being. By introducing fictional characters and a plot, and putting the instructive material into the mouths of the characters, the author hopes that his young reader will work his way through the book for its own sake, unaware that he is being instructed—and finish the book more knowledgeable than when he began. I have a feeling that most children see through this ruse and that many of these books are consigned to the back of a cupboard, unread.

The book under review is of this sort. It is a thinly disguised nature lesson. The pictures are charming and the characters quite well drawn (though a small boy who is constantly “instructing” his sister is bound to seem rather a prig) but a questing child who really wants to know about nature lore, the habits of hedgehogs and bats for example, will, I am sure, seek for it in a reference book—preferably one written for children no doubt, but not one disguised as a story. Children not yet interested in nature can be encouraged by an adult prepared to spend time with them and talk to them, but are unlikely to have their interest aroused by a book which they will find a disappointment because it belies the promise of its illustrations and opening pages.

To quote an eight-year-old to whom I lent the book, “the pictures are lovely but nothing happens”; and a ten-year-old, “it was all right I suppose but rather dull.” This is a pity because one realizes that the author has a real love of nature and a desire to pass this on to children. I should like to see a real reference book from his pen, for use “in the field” by nine-year-olds or, perhaps, a straightforward children’s story, set in the country.

M. D.

AND THE RUNNING OF THE DEER. By A. WINDSOR-RICHARDS.  
Illustrated by Edward Osmond. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

This is the story of Fawn, a little roe-deer, from her birth until her adulthood and meeting with a young roe-buck. Her adventures are drawn from the lives of real roe-deer observed by the author. Coincidental to Fawn’s story are descriptions of birds, animals and insects and their environments which are, as the author tells us in a short preface, true to nature. The animals in the story are given thoughts and feelings but are