

and laying the land down to grass. This, of course, would be disastrous. To avoid it, a guaranteed minimum price of 40s. to 42s. per quarter for wheat should be offered for the next ten years; in addition, a bonus of 2l. should be given for each acre of grassland ploughed up. Possibly an import duty would be needed to pay the cost of the guarantee, but the authors prefer not to discuss the details too minutely. The Board of Agriculture should take over several grass farms in different parts of the country and run them as demonstration farms, showing how best they may be broken up and converted into arable land. As minor reforms the authors suggest that some of the munition works should be turned on to produce agricultural machinery after the war, and that special attention should be devoted to the sugar-beet and potato industries, both of which are capable of considerable development.

It is gratifying that agriculture is now receiving so much attention, and one can only hope that something will emerge to give it direction and impetus. There is a growing tendency in favour of definite State action, and everything is gained by having the matter well discussed beforehand.

#### OUR BOOKSHELF.

*Highways and Byways in Nottinghamshire.* By J. B. Firth. With illustrations by Frederick L. Griggs. Pp. xviii+426. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1916.) Price 6s. net.

ALTHOUGH the county of Nottingham cannot perhaps claim a place among the most picturesque of the English shires, it can nevertheless show many attractive landscapes, more especially in the valley of the Trent and in the splendid remnant of the ancient forest of Sherwood. While mainly concerned with the towns and villages, the castles, abbeys, churches, and mansions of the county and the historical associations attached to them, Mr. Firth has done full justice to its physical features, and has produced what is certainly one of the best books yet written on Nottinghamshire.

Perhaps the best chapters are those on the forest and parks of Sherwood, full of "the glamour of a romantic past and the charm of living memorial beauty. As a district of enchantment, of old oaks, of noble names, of great memories, of high romance, it has not its peer in England. The New Forest may vie with it in the beauty of its woodlands, but it has few associations to match those of Sherwood."

Sherwood Forest, moreover, is full of interest to the naturalist, as might be expected in a region of primeval woodland; many of the constituents of its fauna are, indeed, peculiar to it. Such matters, however, would be out of place in a work of this kind, and as a matter of fact there is not a word in the book on the geology or natural history of the county, unless we except the reference to the Nottingham crocuses and the forest

flies of Sherwood. In describing the Nottingham meadows in spring as "ablaze with fairy gold," Mr. Firth makes a curious slip, for the Nottingham crocus is, of course, the purple-flowered species!

The book is profusely and beautifully illustrated, and the large-scale maps will be invaluable to the explorer of the byways of Nottinghamshire.

*Index of Genera and Species referred to, and an Index to the Plates in "The Ibis" (seventh, eighth, and ninth series), 1895-1912.* Edited by William Lutley Slater. Pp. 513. (British Ornithologists' Union: sold by W. Wesley and Son, 1916.) Price 1l. 12s. 6d.

THOSE who study or refer to the more recent volumes of the *Ibis* will welcome the successful completion and issue of the third index of genera and species referred to, and an index to the plates. This covers the seventh, eighth, and ninth series, or eighteen volumes, and saves a tedious reference to a corresponding number of separate indexes. The two previous indexes, each covering fifteen years, published in 1879 and 1897 respectively, contained 431 and 471 pages. The present volume contains 513. This increase is chiefly caused by the adoption of the trinomial system of nomenclature, which necessitates three references to each bird mentioned under its generic, specific, and subspecific names respectively. The compilation of this great index was entrusted by the committee of the British Ornithologists' Union to Mr. Henry Peavot and Mr. Thomas Wells, and they are to be congratulated upon the able manner in which they have carried out their laborious task. The general supervision of the work, as well as the reading of the proof-sheets, a toilsome and tedious business, was undertaken by Mr. W. L. Slater, the editor of the *Ibis*. The list of plates occupies eleven pages, showing that the later series of the *Ibis* have been well illustrated, though the coloured portraits of species may be relatively fewer than in the earlier volumes.

*Macmillan's Geographical Exercise Books.* With Questions by B. C. Wallis. I. *The British Isles.* II. *Europe.* III. *The British Empire.* IV. *The Americas.* V. *Asia and Australasia.* Pp. 48 each. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1916.) 7d. each. Keys, 2s. 6d. net each.

THE plan of these books is to enable pupils to learn geography by doing something for themselves. Each left-hand page provides a clear outline map—quarto size—either suitably contoured or showing political divisions, which the pupil is to fill up by answering carefully graded questions of a sensible kind, which are printed on the right-hand page. In the keys, intended for the use of the busy teacher, the maps are correctly filled in, and the questions are annotated where necessary with hints to the teacher on points he should emphasise and amplify when discussing the questions with his pupils.