

The Cinnamon Bird

By R. M. Lockley. Pp. 79+4 plates. (London: Staples Press, Ltd., 1948.) 8s. 6d. net.

R. M. LOCKLEY is one of the best-known of British naturalists. He is an accurate observer, and his prose is so good that any book of his is pleasant to read, even by those who have little knowledge of the subjects on which he writes. In "The Cinnamon Bird" he tells of an experiment made of taking a dozen marked canaries from captivity to his small, wind-swept island of Skokholm in the Irish Sea, a home of shearwaters and an alighting place of many migrants. Here the small birds were gradually given full liberty, and the record of their lives on the island during the spring, summer and autumn is set down. By September the population of canaries had increased, and the young birds flew over the island in little flocks or 'charms', happy and carefree. But in September came disaster, for the island is visited each year by numbers of sparrow hawks, and these gradually thinned the numbers of the canaries until those which were not caught and housed once more had all been killed. One of the canaries had a brief mating with a migrating goldfinch, which next morning left the island. She laid four eggs, but only one hatched. The hybrid was a cock, a beautiful and strong bird, with a rich song differing slightly from a canary's song. One of the most moving passages in the book describes the son's furious pursuit of the hawk which killed his mother. There are four excellent illustrations in colour by C. F. Tunnicliffe, which are admirably reproduced, and the printing and appearance of the book generally are unusually good. In this short notice I have been able only to touch on the book's contents, which will be read with appreciation by R. M. Lockley's wide circle of admirers.

SETON GORDON

Compendio y descripción de las Indias occidentales

Por Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa. Transcrito del manuscrito original por Charles Opson Clark. (Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 108: Publication 3898.) Pp. xiv+801. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1948.) n.p.

THIS thick volume is a transcription of an unidentified manuscript found in the Vatican by Mr. C. U. Clark in 1930 and afterwards ascribed without any doubt to the Carmelite Fray Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa. Mr. Clark edited it and translated it into English, and this version appeared in 1942 as vol. 102 of the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections. It proved impossible to carry out the editor's original intention of publishing the Spanish text opposite the translation, and its appearance six years later cannot but be somewhat of an anti-climax to English readers. The work itself is a description, mainly geographical in the widest sense, of Central and South America and the Philippines, and it includes matter for the anthropologist, the botanist and the historian; however, the author does not claim special historical knowledge—in fact his remarks about the Inca Atahualpa show less of knowledge than a desire to vindicate his countrymen. The editor considers that the greatest value of the work lies in the picture it gives of contemporary Spanish colonial and ecclesiastical administration at a period which is not adequately covered by other writers.

The book was written in 1628, and internal evidence shows that Vázquez's travels lasted over at least the years 1612–21. He gathered much of the information

himself, covering a surprising amount of country in lands where travel has always been difficult and full of hardship. He was at pains to learn from eye-witnesses about regions which he could not visit, and his information, though necessarily variable in the amount of detail given, rings true in the ears of a modern traveller who knows a few of the places he describes.

G. H. S. BUSHNELL

Some Notes on the Psychology of Pierre Janet

By Elton Mayo. Pp. ix+182. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1948.) 4s. net.

IN his researches into human problems in industry, Prof. Elton Mayo has been considerably influenced by the work of Pierre Janet, the French psychologist. Janet's findings have been less well known in the English-speaking countries than on the Continent, since few of his important works have been translated into English. To help those who wish to read Janet in the original French as an aid to their studies of society or of industry, Mayo has brought together some notes which were originally prepared for his colleagues at the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration whose work demanded close attention to the difficult individual, social and administrative problems of our time. For many years Janet's clinical contributions to psychopathology have been dismissed somewhat cavalierly as something which has been superseded by Freudian and other developments. Readers of these notes will find that there is little real conflict between the observations of Janet and Freud, and that Janet's investigations into the restricted field of obsessive thinking are in many ways mutually complementary to Freud's more widely ranging hypotheses. The book, written with Mayo's usual enthusiasm and sincerity, also includes his address to the Harvard Medical School on "Frightened People", in which he describes the causes of fear in individuals and the need for effective re-assurance in the consulting room.

T. H. H.

Proteins and Amino Acids in Nutrition

Edited by Dr. Melville Sahyun. Pp. xvi+566. (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1948.) 45s. net.

THIS collection of articles, by various experts, some of them having the standing of international authorities, covers a wider field than one could infer from its title. It is a long way from the feeding of pregnant women to the size of particles found in rabbit papillomas. The only connexion is that both have a *p* in them, the *p* standing for protein. This is essentially a book for libraries and is in some ways an essential book for libraries; many who cannot be expected to pay its rather high price for very occasional use will want to consult it from time to time, until the day when, like all such compilations, it has become too out-of-date to have anything but historical value. This will be small, for it bears no impress of individual personality or even of editorial policy; it is rather a friendly symposium, at a high technical level, unhampered by fear of the chairman's gavel. Names such as H. H. Mitchell, Lela Booher, H. J. Almquist, Clarence Berg and the editor himself guarantee, however, that the contributions to the symposium will—etymology notwithstanding—be full of meat. From the British reader's point of view, however, the 94 pages of appendix are almost complete waste of space.

A. L. B.