

## Weekend

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of bird paintings. In short, artists must live by producing what they can sell.

There have been distinguished painters of birds since Audubon, and some of them are now at work. The best, like Audubon, are field naturalists as well as artists, studying their subject more thoroughly than Audubon could, and painting from life. Their life studies are aided by all of the devices of modern photography; files of color and black-and-white pictures, and more recently motion pictures, are the tools of their art; their floral and faunal specimens, when not living, are drawn from rich study collections of museums.

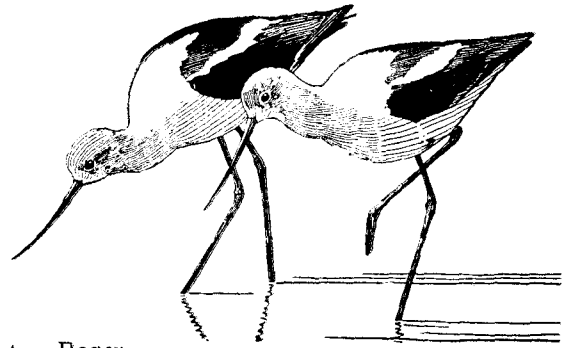
The artist puts his intelligence and knowledge into his pictures in ways that are not possible for the photographer, who can only give us what he chances to catch with his camera under rigidly limiting conditions. The

picture which the artist creates is no lifeless figure; it is an authentic and vibrant synthesis of the living creature in its typical habitat, in characteristic pose, going about its commonplace activities. The world of art as well as the natural sciences would be poorer indeed without the paintings of Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Roger Tory Peterson, Peter Scott, Walter Weber, and Frances Lee Jasques.

"Birds of Washington State," by Stanley G. Jewett, Walter P. Taylor, William T. Shaw, and John W. Aldrich (University of Wisconsin Press, \$8), remedies a real deficiency in ornithological literature, for there had been no systematic description of the birds of this state since 1909. Washington is significant to ornithologists as our most northwestern state, a meeting place for southern and northern fauna, including the Alaskan, which is enriched by an intrusion of eastern forms reaching Washington by way of Canada's bridge of trees lying north of the plains. It is also a region of unusual interest because its varied physiographic features offer substantial areas in five major life zones: the upper Sonoran of the interior river plains, the transition zone (both humid and arid, timbered and timberless), the Canadian, the Hudsonian, and the Arctic. The book gives the geographical distribution and the seasonal occurrence of each species or subspecies in the state, with convenient range maps, and with considerable information about the characteristics, mannerisms, food habits, nesting, and other aspects of the birds.

"Birds of Washington State" reflects the old rather than the modern style in state bird books. There is regrettable overemphasis on subspecies, making the subspecies, rather than the species, the unit of discussion and even introducing vernacular names for each subspecies. The subspecies is the conceptual tool of the taxonomist; it is unfortunate to encourage field observers to report on the basis of distinctions which cannot be recognized in the field. A more serious fault is the departure from sound ecological principles in labeling hawks as good or bad from man's viewpoint without any recognition of their essential role in all wildlife communities.

"Audubon Guides: All the Birds of Eastern and Central North America," by Richard Pough (Doubleday, \$5.95), and "Cruickshank's Pocket Guide to the Birds, Eastern and Central North American," by Allen D. Cruickshank (Dodd, Mead, \$2.95), are presented as supplements to, rather than competi-



Avocets.

tors with, Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds," and both are offered for the beginner. The Cruickshank book will be welcomed for the fine, if small, color photographs by Helen Cruickshank, as they appeared in *Woman's Day*, and for A. D. Cruickshank's helpful discussion of field identification and his emphasis on family traits. However, it is not adequately illustrated as a guide for beginners.

"Audubon Guides" offers in one volume Mr. Pough's "Audubon Bird Guide" and "Audubon Water Bird Guide." Virtually all the birds of eastern and central North America are portrayed in color by Don Eckelberry, whose growing competence can be seen in the more lifelike forms and crisp plumages of the water and game birds. Nevertheless, the "Audubon Guides," lacking truly analytical drawings and text, are second to Peterson's "Field Guide" in providing a sure basis for field identification. Mr. Pough has, however, created an extremely useful bird book, with helpful notes on habits and habitats which effectively supplement the identification guides.

"A Guide to Bird Finding West of the Mississippi," by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. (Oxford University Press, \$6), a companion volume to Pettingill's eastern guide, is first of all a Baedeker for those whose hobby makes every journey an adventure. Through the cooperation of some 300 bird watchers, it is an extremely practical guide to finding the better birding areas, with specific instructions for reaching each locality and an indication of the birds to be anticipated. Special attention is devoted to the national wildlife refuges and the national and state parks and forests. The finest feature of the book is the discussion of physiographic regions and biological communities which introduces each chapter. With such assistance, the visitor enters a new region not only prepared to identify the local birds but also equipped to understand their places in the wildlife communities he finds. Here in compact form is the essence of what one would seek in any state bird book.

### FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 583

*A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 583 will be found in the next issue.*

AJSOFUNGGB X YNQJ UF

JURYEOXNOV ZFS

FSINUXCJK HJJSXUI

OJLRXFUO, MER X YFGK

RYNR RYJ OAFURNUJFEO

SXIYR FZ SNOAMJSSB

OYFEGK MJ KJUXJK RF

UF FUJ XU NVJSXLN.

—YJBPFFK MSFEU.

#### Answer to No. 582

There is always one man to state the case for freedom. That's all we need, one.—Clarence Darrow.



## BROADWAY POSTSCRIPT

## Onward and Wayward

**P**UBLISHERS will tell you they do not make money publishing plays in book form. They do it because the play is a personal favorite, because the author is in their stable, or for whatever publicity and promotion value there is in associating with the glamorous world of the theatre. "Our problem," confesses one editor, "is not how to make money on plays, but how to keep the losses down to a reasonable figure."

Perhaps this statement explains the timidity and general lack of imagination in the current approach to play-publishing. Means have been found through the Fireside Theatre and steady library sales to hold the red ink to a trickle. With such a system promotion activity often serves only to complicate matters. If the campaign is a failure it adds to the loss. If it is a success it pushes the book into a second edition, which more often than not loses more money. This is not always understood by playwrights, naturally eager that their plays be read. Sam and Bella Spewack, whose "My Three Angels" and "Kiss Me Kate" were published during the past year, were puzzled when the first edition of each had been nearly sold out, yet neither book advertised. Say the Spewacks, "If there is no money in play books why do publishers put them out? And if there is why don't they advertise?"

While there may be no easy solution to the problem, it was suggested in these columns (SR July 4, 1953) that the product might be improved. First, a preface or two by the author, director, or even a newspaper interview with the star should be included. Next, there should be footnotes explaining where the printed version differs from the play as seen in the theatre. And, finally, some of the designer's and costumer's drawings, which have more style and reproduce better than photographs, should be utilized. A week later a note came from Random House applauding the article, and it looked as though reform was on its way.

Since that time Random House has published nine Broadway shows ("Tea and Sympathy," "Sabrina Fair," "The Little Hut," "Ondine," "In the Summerhouse," "The Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker," "The Prescott Proposals," "Anniversary Waltz," and "The Golden Apple" (\$2.75 each), and not one contains any of the suggested fea-

tures. What Random House did do was to attempt a more lively and colorful dust jacket on some of these books, apparently on the theory that you can't tell a poor book by its cover.

Other publishers have done no better. Putnam with "The Teahouse of the August Moon" (\$3), Viking with "Ladies of the Corridor" (\$2.50), Harcourt, Brace with "The Confidential Clerk" (\$3), Doubleday with "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial" (\$2.75), and Coward-McCann with "Made-moiselle Colombe" (\$3), were content to follow the sure small-loss formula. Only New Directions with "Camino Real" (\$3) and "Under Milk Wood" (\$3), St. Martin's Press with "The Burning Glass" (\$2.50), and Knopf with "Kiss Me Kate" (\$2.75) took the trouble to give their readers prefaces.

In the matter of selection, as usual almost all the Broadway shows are available either in the above form, in clothbound editions published by the Dramatists Play Service and by Samuel French, or in paperbound acting versions (90c) likewise published by the latter two companies. Also as usual, only the two finest works have so far failed to find a publisher. Alfred Hayes's "The Girl on the Via Flaminia," which was, in my opinion, the best play of the 1953-1954 season, stands only a slight chance of being published by Harper's, who brought out the best-selling novel. (Ironically it was first written as a play.) However, chances seem a shade better that Samuel French will put it out in an acting edition, although it is hardly for squeamish amateurs. The other peak of the New York season, Marc Blitzstein's superb translation of "The Threepenny Opera," is still unavailable in printed form, although you can hear most of the lyrics in the excellent M-G-M recordings of the Brecht-Weill masterpiece.

According to Miss Marjorie Seligman, our reliable correspondent from the Drama Book Shop, another important factor in the sale of playbooks is immediacy. If a new play by a prominent author is announced for production, or gets a favorable report on its overseas debut, there is an immediate demand for it in her bookshop on West 52nd Street.

Of the coming season's new plays, the publishers have already issued "The Living Room" (Viking, \$2.50), "Home Is the Hero" (Macmillan, \$2),

"Moon for the Misbegotten" (Random House, \$2.75), "Under the Sycamore Tree" (Plays of the Year, Vol. 7, British Book Centre, \$4), and, in Volume 8, "Dear Charles." While it is doubtful that the "Dear Charles" fans include many of the followers of Jean Anouilh, Volume 8 also contains that great playwright's wonderfully ironic "Waltz of the Toreadors." Some importations that could easily be published here in advance, but aren't, include "Witness for the Prosecution," "The Boy Friend," and "Quadrille."

Of course, Christopher Fry will be represented by his latest, "The Dark Is Light Enough," starring Katharine Cornell; the Oxford University Press is rushing to get out the book, while Miss Seligman turns away a large number of customers daily.

**T**HE rest of the play books divide themselves into two general categories. There is the old play with a new excuse for being published. The best of these is the large well-bound edition of "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Heritage Press, \$5). It is a new translation by Louis Untermeyer, prettily illustrated by Pierre Brissaud. This kind of book is on the right track, offering all the features that entitle it to that ever-diminishing space on your bookshelf. Pirandello's "Right You Are" (Columbia University Press, \$4) appears in an Eric Bentley translation and, while there are no colored drawings, Professor Bentley has appended more than enough notes and diagrams to keep the most scholarly director occupied and happy. Dudley Fitts, who has retranslated Aristophanes's "Lysistrata" (Harcourt, Brace, \$3.50), offers you nothing but the play itself. The same is true of the paperbound Grillparzer series, "The Jewess of Toledo" and "Sappho" (\$3 each).

The second category is the new play which hasn't yet, and in most cases never will, get a Broadway showing. Of these the most respectable usually appear in collections. "Five Plays by

