The names mentioned above are well known in the realm of the natural sciences. William Swainson (1789-1855) was an outstanding English naturalist and a gifted delineator of natural history objects, being chiefly interested in ornithology, entomology and conchology. Many of his finely-drawn text figures were later used by Alfred Newton in *A Dictionary of Birds* (1893-6). Swainson emigrated to New Zealand, leaving London in 1840. He is not to be confused with his namesake, William Swainson, who seems to have reached New Zealand from England, by way of Tasmania, about the same time and who later became Attorney-General in New Zealand. William Swainson, the naturalist-author-artist, is buried in the cemetery at Lower Hutt, near Wellington.

Dr. Charles Davies Sherborn (1861-1942) was the great bibliographer and compiler of the *Index Animalium* (1890-1933). Smith was Dr. (later Sir) James Edward Smith (1759-1828), an eminent botanist, a close friend of Sir Joseph Banks, and one of the founders of the Linnaean Society of London of which institution he was President for forty years. In 1784 he purchased Linnaeus' famous collection. Dr. George Shaw (1751-1813) was also one of the founders of the Linnaean Society. He was Keeper of the British Museum and author of a number of books on natural history. John Hunter (1728-1793) was the famous surgeon and anatomist. Waite was Edgar Ravenswood Waite (1866-1928), an Englishman from Leeds who became Curator of the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1906 and, later, Director of the South Australian Museum.

John White (1756?-1832), in whose *Voyage* the name *cristatus* appears, was Surgeon-General of the colony founded at Sydney in 1788. He was an enthusiastic amateur naturalist and sent many specimens and drawings of plants and animals to scientific friends in England.

Sydney, Australia. — K. A. HINDWOOD

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REVIEWS

Field Guide to the Alpine Plants of New Zealand, by Professor J. T. Salmon; A. H. & A. W. Reed, $5.60.

If you spend most of your days, as most of us do, in the lowlands but are able once in a while to make an excursion into the mountains, this is one of the books you must have in your car pocket or knapsack. We are assuming, of course, that you are an intelligent lover of the New Zealand scene with a discerning eye for its bewildering array of choice alpine plants and the curiosity to want to know what they are. For the naturalist there is a new world in the high country. It may have some sharp surprises for the uninitiated. If you have experienced the agony of sitting unexpectedly on one of the less tractable species of speargrass — incidentally, is it good for international relations to call them Wild Spaniards? — it may be some balm to your soul, if not to your seat, to be able to identify the spiny offender on the spot. Dr. Salmon's strongly bound field guide with its hundreds of admirable photographs is the magic key.

One word of warning to the birdwatcher. With this new botanical field guide to hand, he may easily be side-tracked; for above the bushline, while the ornithologist has only a bare handful of species

to lure him on, the botanist commonly finds himself in the midst of an almost fulsome *embarras de richesse.* While your birdwatcher seeks the elusive Rock Wren he may be diverted by the charm of shining clumps of Snow Marguerite — it is some consolation to learn that all the outlandish scientific names are not confined to ornithology; or as he watches the soaring Keas he may find some gratification in knowing that at his right hand there is growing a species of Maori Onion and at his left a native Edelweiss.

Let it be noted that this practical guide to our alpine flora has been assembled by an entomologist. To the ornithologist it offers an exciting opportunity to broaden his horizons. Birds as well as insects are very much related to their botanical environment.

— R.B.S.

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"The World of Birds," by James Fisher and Roger Tory Peterson. Publ. Macdonald, London. 5 Guineas.

Among the many exasperating follies of the mid-twentieth century, some signs of grace may yet be found; and one of these is the determination of its dedicated naturalists, aided by gifted artists and the skilled craftsmen of the publishing trade, to press on with the production of sumptuous volumes on natural history.

In "The World of Birds," two ornithologists of international standing have collaborated to compile 'a comprehensive guide to general ornithology.' The format is a happy blending of text and pictures. Here we have something for every birdwatcher whatever his special interest, and many a knotty term — e.g. convergence — is elucidated and graphically illustrated. James Fisher casts his net wide. His text is good red meat and it is admirably garnished by Roger Tory Peterson's vivid paintings. New Zealand is not neglected. It is pleasing to see on p. 128 a facsimile of one of Ross McKenzie's nest-record cards; and gratifying on p. 143 to find Notornis among the emblems of famous ornithological societies.

It may be invidious to single out for praise any special chapter; but those on fossil birds and evolution seem to be of outstanding merit especially for all amateurs who are minded to ponder these thorny topics. Also particularly enlightening is Chapter VIII on 'The Regiment of Birds.' Nearly 100 pages are given to distribution maps on the different orders, sub-orders and families. New Zealanders would be repaid by studying these maps. The authors make no bones about placing Piopio among the Whistlers, a view likely to be supported by taxonomists who have been able to watch the endemic 'Tamies' of Norfolk Island.

A few slips and omissions have been noted; and minor blemishes though they are, in the interests of truth they should be mentioned.

p. 115. It is stated that since 1916 only two new seabirds have been discovered, Murphy's Petrel (1949) and Jouanin's Petrel (1955). Might not a New Zealander interject, "What about Pycroft's Petrel (1932) and Westland Petrel (1946)?" Moreover the identity of the once elusive Hutton's Shearwater has been substantiated and thanks to Geoff. Harrow its montane breeding grounds have been revealed. If Dr. Bourne's conjecture that *Pterodroma magentae* was the Taiko of the Chatham Islands is correct, its nesting was certainly known to Polynesian man and possibly to some early European settlers and seafarers.