

Audubon (1780-1851).

Ten years or so before the eighteenth century made its bow of farewell, a bright-eyed lad with decidedly foreign features might have been seen lying down amid the profuse and fragrant flowers of a plantation in Louisiana, where, shielded by the orange trees, he was intently watching the movements of the Southern mocking-bird. That studious lad was John James Audubon, who afterwards became one of the most honored naturalists of his time, and who gave the world that monumental work on "The Birds of America," that remains to this day without a peer.

Audubon was born near New Orleans, May 4, 1780. His father—a Frenchman—crossed the Atlantic in a fishing-smack from Nantes, and found his way to Louisiana, where in a few years he became an extensive ship-owner. His mother was a Spanish senorita of New Orleans, which at that time was Spanish territory.

His father was an ardent worshipper of Napoleon, and took the boy to France to be educated, and to win fame among the armies of the "Little Corsican." But the boy had no mind to be a soldier, and so, after a few years, was sent out to take charge of the estate in Louisiana, and another in Pennsylvania. At Mill Grove, near Valley Forge, he met and married Lucy Bakewell, the daughter of an English neighbor.

But at this time (1808) the new and wonderful West was enticing numbers of adventurous souls away from the Atlantic seaboard, and Audubon and his young wife went to Louisville, Kentucky, where—by the way—one of their two remaining daughters—Miss Harriet B. Audubon—is living at present.

In this new country he began the nature study which was to make him famous in earnest. The woods were amply stocked with game, the swales with reed-birds, while the streams and ponds were alive with water-fowl. It was an ideal place for a bird-lover to do his work. And to do it well, he was greatly assisted by the drawing lessons he had taken in the drawing-school of David during his stay in France.

Then there came to him the dream of a complete record of American birds. And these should be given in their natural surroundings, and in their natural size. The pictured eagle should be on the same proportions as the real bird of flight. So with the wild pigeon, the thrush, and the humming-bird.

But to do the work he set himself, he must thoroughly acquaint himself with the haunts of the birds he would portray. And this of necessity made of him a rover in the cause of science such as few men have been. At one time he would be away for months in the Appalachian mountains; and at another far away among the Indians of the

prairies, studying grouse and the wild swan. One year would find him along the great lakes; another year in the lowlands of Louisiana. Among his longest journeys was that from the coast of Labrador down through New Brunswick and Maine, and thence through all the Atlantic states of Florida. Later he went along the Missouri from St. Louis to the headwaters of that mighty stream. The colossal nature of such an undertaking can only be understood when it is remembered that it was before the days of convenient travel, such as our time affords. The perseverance of the man is beyond praise, as it is beyond comprehension.—*Selected.*

On Teaching.

Addressing Prince Edward Island school teachers on 'The Teacher's Opportunities' a few days ago Dr. G. U. Hay dwelt upon several points which must impress one as eminently worthy of emphasis. He spoke of the necessity of the teacher studying the children committed to his or her care, of being bright and optimistic in the school room. Many teachers in these provinces could doubtless tell Dr. Hay that their success in the profession has been largely due to observance of the necessity for these very things. Emphasis of their necessity everywhere, however, is undoubtedly fitting.

Dr. Hay went on to dwell upon the importance of inculcating a love for 'outdoor science' and other subjects which particularly lead to a development of the spirit of inquiry. 'When children are taught,' he said, 'to love their native fields by teaching them about the birds and beasts which live thereon, the foundation is laid for a course in patriotism.' Dr. Hay might have said that far too frequently there is an effort to drive into the pupils an array of dry-as-dust historical facts to the exclusion of any attempt to make plain the real glories of our country's history and the ignoring of any endeavor to indicate the spirit which has made those glories possible. Such an effort must have a very small part in developing patriotism that will count for anything worth while. He might have said, too, that greater attention to the life out of doors must tend to the creation of a love for nature and its beauties, which would be worth a good deal more to young people than much of the mathematics and study of dead languages which is forced upon school courses.

The whole tendency of school courses in these provinces seems too much toward making the pupils accumulate a certain store of information and toward enabling them to pass examinations along certain prescribed lines. More good would surely be done were greater effort made to shape the school policy so that it would tend to offer more likelihood of developing the scholars' originality.—*Sackville Tribune.*