

"Nature's Diary," compiled by Francis H. Allen. This is a neat 16mo. of about 190 pages of letterpress, as many dated blank sheets, and eight illustrations. The extracts are nature pictures from the works of Thoreau, Burroughs, Torrey, Bolles, Sylvester, Hawthorne, Holmes, Lowell, Whittier, Emerson and others, and the blanks are for the purpose of recording the first appearances of birds, flowers, and similar natural objects. The outlook of a book of this kind, from the middle of December till that of March, is not very lively. Snow can be chronicled, and blizzards, and silver thaws. The English sparrow is always in evidence in cities and towns, and, in the country, stray partridges, hares, muskrats and squirrels may call for record. But it is a long wait for the first crow, and, thereafter, for the robin and the blackbird, the song sparrow and the starling, that come in with the newts and bullfrogs, with the willows for Palm Sunday, the blood-roots, and hepaticas. After them, animal and vegetable life pours in fast and furious, and the diarist of nature who is observant has a busy time of it. Mr. Allen's book is an excellent one for a country parson, who has profited by his botanical and zoological studies at McGill or elsewhere, to record his observations in, and by which to cultivate a love of nature. Drs. James Hamilton and Hugh Macmillan are two of many successful ministers who have made the works of the Creator subservient to their life work, teaching lessons, like their great Master, from the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air. The Canadian poet also will find in "Nature's Diary" ample material, suggestive and descriptive, for his Muse. Mr. Allen draws largely on Thoreau, whose books I read many years ago. Yet I do not now remember, whether or not it was he who told an ancient lady of Maine that he lived in Boston, and who received for answer the enquiry, "How can you bear to live so far away?" Neither of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Co.'s books is theological, but each of them may be helpful to the theologian. I pity the congregation which has to listen to a man who reads nothing but theology.