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An Oxford-educated clergyman and prolific writer on natural history topics ranging from seashore wildlife to microscopy, John George Wood (1827–89) wrote and lectured for a receptive Victorian audience. His books were not rigorously scientific, but they made their subjects accessible to laypeople and were said to have inspired many future naturalists in their youth. His *Nature's Teachings* (1877) has also been reissued in this series. Theodore Wood (1862–1923) published this biography of his father in 1890. The account covers Wood's childhood and education, his clerical work and his desire to share his enthusiasm for the natural world with the public. His lecturing engagements, including a tour of America, and his home life are also discussed. An affectionate portrait of a significant figure in the history of popular science, this work sheds light on the intellectual interests of its subject and his readership.

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FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY DONOVAN & CO

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J.G. Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

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THE
REV. J. G. WOOD

HIS LIFE AND WORK

BY THE

REV. THEODORE WOOD F.E.S.

Author of "Our Insect Allies," "Our Insect Enemies," "Our Bird Allies,"

"The Field Naturalist's Handbook,"

&c. &c. &c.

With a Portrait

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P R E F A C E.



As it may fairly be claimed for my father that he was the first to popularise natural history, and to render it interesting, and even intelligible, to non-scientific minds, it has been thought advisable that some account of his life and labours should be prepared and published while his memory is yet fresh in the minds of those who have read his books or listened to his lectures. In the following pages, therefore, I have endeavoured to describe his three-fold work as clergyman, author, and lecturer, and at the same time to give a short account of his public and private life from his early boyhood to the closing days of his life.

Unfortunately for the labours of a biographer, the diaries which he left behind him—and which are by no means continuous—are extremely scanty, and often for many weeks together there is nothing but the barest entry of work done and letters written, without amplification or details of any kind. By the aid

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of family information, however, I have, I think, been enabled to fill in the gaps; and I have only to ask that indulgence which all may crave who attempt the most difficult task of giving to the world the account of a father's life.

T. W.

BALDOCK, HERTS,
January, 1890.

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