

inhabits distinct islands with separating sea channels broad enough to make the passage over difficult and infrequent.

The above facts make Philippine species and varieties geographical or local groups depending upon local causes for their existence. They show *isolation* to be the first and the necessary step in the formation of species.

The foregoing facts make the belief in the fusion of closely allied species, when thrown together, almost necessary. The volcanic character of the islands and the shallow seas separating them, with the observed marks of frequent changes of sea level, make it necessary to believe that the land areas of the Philippines have been continually varying and that, in multitudes of cases, closely allied species have been thrown together by the connection of islands formerly distinct. These closely allied species now no longer existing together, they must have disappeared either by the destruction of one or by their fusion. To one who has observed the likeness in size and coloring and notes and food of these allied forms, the latter is the only reasonable hypothesis for the greater number of cases.

A satisfactory explanation of many or most of the phenomena of distribution of genera and species in larger and continental areas may be found in giving the same prominence to isolation and fusion in the formation of the species occupying them.

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## RECENT LITERATURE.

**McIlwraith's Birds of Ontario.**<sup>1</sup>—The first edition of Mr. McIlwraith's excellent manual, 'The Birds of Ontario,' published in 1886 (see Auk, IV, 1887, p. 245), was speedily exhausted, so that for some years past the

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<sup>1</sup> The | Birds of Ontario | being a concise account of every Species of Bird | known to have been found in Ontario | with a | Description of their Nests and Eggs | and Instructions for collecting Birds and preparing | and preserving Skins, also Directions how | to form a Collection of Eggs | By Thomas McIlwraith | Member of the American Ornithologists' Union | — | Second Edition—Enlarged and Revised to Date | With Illustrations | — | Toronto | William Briggs, Wesley Buildings | Montreal : C. W. Coates    Halifax : S. F. Huestis | MDCCCXCIV—8vo., pp. i-x, 11-426.

work has been unobtainable to many who desire to consult its pages. It is therefore with great pleasure that we welcome this valuable handbook, revised to date, much enlarged, and in a dress more befitting its scientific importance and popular interest. In place of the introductory essay 'On Birds and Bird Matters' of the first edition, we have here a few pages on the general subject, with special reference to migration, followed by a dozen pages of directions as to how to collect and prepare specimens for the cabinet.

The species treated number 317 as against 302 in the first edition, to which nearly 400 pages of the work are formally devoted, giving about a page and a quarter to each species. The technical, descriptive portion of the text is printed in small type, the biographical in much larger type. The whole has evidently been carefully revised, and much new matter added to the biographies, which in many instances have been to a large extent rewritten, the recent literature of the subject having been placed under contribution. As the author himself says: "In the present edition, it has been my object to place on record, as far as possible, the name of every bird that has been observed in Ontario; to show how the different species are distributed throughout the Province; and especially, to tell where they spend the breeding season. To do this, I have had to refer to the notes of those who have visited the remote homes of the birds, at points often far apart and not easy of access, and to use their observations, published or otherwise, when they tend to throw light on the history of the birds observed in Ontario." Credit is of course duly given for the information thus obtained.

As ornithologists well know, the author of the 'Birds of Ontario' is well equipped for his task, and, as would be expected, has done his work well, the second edition being fully abreast of the subject, the few faults of the first edition having been corrected, and the more important recent discoveries in the field here covered being duly incorporated. The text is illustrated with numerous cuts, though none of them appear to be here for the first time published. An excellent portrait of the author forms a fitting frontispiece to the volume, which will doubtless prove a boon to the bird lovers of Ontario and adjoining Provinces and States.

We notice that the last bird given — inserted as an addendum — is the Black-capped Petrel (*Astrolata hasitata*), the record being based on a specimen found dead near Toronto, Oct. 30, 1893. This is of interest as making the third inland record for this species during the autumn of 1893, one having been taken at Blacksburg, Va., Aug. 30, 1893 (see Auk, X, p. 361), and another at Oneida Lake, N. Y., Aug. 28, 1893 (Auk, XI, p. 162). We have private information of the capture also of a specimen in Vermont at about the same time. Doubtless these occurrences of this little known sea-bird so far inland have some relation to the great cyclone of August 26-27, which proved so disastrous to property as well as bird life on the coast of South Carolina (cf. Wayne, Auk, XI, p. 85).—J. A. A.