

little book — ‘Observations of Nature and Human Nature’ — is eminently descriptive of the character of this new collection of charming essays, devoted about equally to the birds, the flowers, and the people of that portion of the Blue Ridge where the States of West Virginia and North Carolina meet. While the reader is given delightful reminiscences of the scenery and natural products of the region as seen by a lover of nature in the closing month of spring, perhaps not less entertaining are his ‘observations of human nature’ which so delightfully flavor the book and break the tendency to monotony that a purely natural history relation by any writer, however gifted, is apt to present. The six essays here brought together are entitled ‘A Day’s Drive in Three States,’ ‘In Quest of Ravens,’ ‘A Mountain Pond,’ ‘Birds, Flowers, and People,’ ‘A Nook in the Alleghanies,’ and ‘At Natural Bridge.’ The ‘Quest for Ravens’ was not a great success so far as finding Ravens was concerned; the anticipated “little store of ‘first-hand knowledge’” was “a brace of interrogation points.” The Ravens evaded acquaintanceship, but the reader of Mr. Torrey’s book will not regret the length of this chapter that tells of the Raven hunt. In this, as in the other chapters, ‘anthropology and ornithology,’ and botany, are entertainingly blended. His successes and his disappointments in the ornithological line are narrated with an enthusiasm and a humor that appeals to the general reader as well as to the bird lover. He records, in the course of the book, much that is of permanent value from the standpoint of the naturalist, which an excellent index renders readily available. — J. A. A.

Mrs. Maynard’s Birds of Washington.¹—This little manual, prepared at the suggestion of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, is a credit to everyone concerned with its preparation. It gives untechnical descriptions of about 100 species of the birds most likely to be seen in the vicinity of Washington, with something about the habits of those that nest there, about a page being devoted to each species, many of the species being illustrated. There are also brief descriptions of the “migrants and winter residents,” and a tabular ‘List of All Birds found in the District of Columbia,’ the latter by Dr. C. W. Richmond, and so arranged as to indicate the season of occurrence. Other supplementary lists follow of ‘birds that may be seen in winter,’ ‘birds that nest within the city limits,’ and lists of birds seen on certain days at particular points, based on the observations of several of the best known Washington ornithologists. The ‘Introduction’ (pp. 11–16), by Miss Florence A. Merriam, is filled with excellent advice as to how, where and when to

¹ Birds of Washington | and Vicinity | including parts of Maryland and Virginia | By | Mrs. L. W. Maynard | with | Introduction by Florence A. Merriam | . . . [= motto, 3 lines] | Washington, D. C. | 1898. — 8vo, pp. 204, with numerous illustrations.

find birds in the vicinity of Washington, written with a directness, simplicity and fervor that must lend inspiration and comfort to the inexperienced bird lover. This is followed by a chapter 'About Birds in General' by Mrs. Maynard, which gives in the short space of three pages a surprisingly large amount of information about the generalities of the subject. This is followed by 'A Field Key to our Common Land Birds,' taken, by permission, from Chapman's 'Bird-life.' Then follows the descriptive matter forming the body of the work, as already detailed. The numerous illustrations are from Bulletins Nos. 3 and 54, published by the Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. As a local manual Mrs. Maynard's little book is in every way admirable, and must prove most welcome to the many amateur bird students of the District of Columbia. — J. A. A.

Blanchan's 'Birds that Hunt and are Hunted.'¹—The present is a companion volume to 'Bird Neighbors', by the same author (see Auk, XV, 1898, p. 66), and is written from the same point of view, namely, "that of a bird-lover who believes that personal, friendly acquaintance with the live birds, as distinguished from the technical study of the anatomy of dead ones, must be general before the people will care enough about them to reinforce the law with unrestrained mercy. To really know the birds in their home life, how marvellously clever they are, and how positively dependent agriculture is upon their ministrations, cannot but increase our respect for them to such a point that wilful injury becomes impossible." The present volume treats of the Waterfowl, the Marsh and Shore Birds, the Gallinaceous Game Birds, and the Birds of Prey, or the leading North American forms of each in systematic sequence, with brief mention of their distinctive characters, etc., and very satisfactory biographies. The matter is very well chosen and skillfully put together, being well adapted to instruct and entertain any bird lover. The author does not forget neatly to make her points in behalf of the Herons and Terns and the Birds of Prey, and the whole animus and tendency of the book is in accord with the sentiments already quoted from the author's preface. The colored plates, originally published in the magazine 'Birds,' are an invaluable aid in the determination of the species. It is only to be regretted that better examples of taxidermy could not have been chosen in some cases. We notice very few slips on the part of the author, but we must confess that it is a new fact to us that the blade-like bill of the Skimmer is ever used as "a sort of oyster knife to open mollusks." Also

¹ Birds that Hunt | and are Hunted | Life Histories of One Hun- | dred and Seventy Birds of | Prey, Game Birds and Water- | Fowls | By | Neltjie Blanchan | Author of "Bird Neighbors" | With introduction by G. O. Shields (Coquina) | And Forty-eight colored Plates | New York | Doubleday and McClure Co. | 1898.—8vo, pp. xii + 359. Price \$2.00.