

NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. OLIVER MARCY, Dean of Northwestern University Evanston, Ill., and an Associate Member of the A. O. U., died at Evanston, Ill., March 19, 1899, at the age of 79 years. He was born at Colerain, Mass., on February 13, 1820, and was graduated from Wesleyan University in 1844. He taught natural science at the Wesleyan Academy, Wilbraham, Mass., for many years, and in 1862 became professor of natural history in the Northwestern University, which position he held until his death. From 1876 until the election of Dr. Joseph Cummings as president, in 1881, he was acting president of the University, and after this date was the Dean. In 1876 the University of Chicago conferred on him the degree of LL. D. He was a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a member of many other scientific bodies. In 1866 he was geologist on the Government Survey for a military road from Lewistown, Idaho, to Virginia City, Montana. Dr. Marcy, though an authority in several branches of sciences, was more especially a geologist, and the author of various geological papers, though his college duties gave him little time for original research. His genial and sympathetic nature always won for him the respect and affection of his students.

PROFESSOR OTHNIEL CHARLES MARSH, of Yale University, died at New Haven, March 18, in the 68th year of his age. He was born at Lockport, New York, in 1831, and was graduated at Yale in 1860. He subsequently studied several years under leading specialists in Europe, returning to New Haven in 1866, where he has since occupied the chair of Palæontology. He has long been recognized throughout the world as one of the leading authorities in vertebrate palæontology. His explorations in various parts of the West for fossil vertebrates began in 1868, and in subsequent years he amassed the immense collections which have been so long famous. The results of his investigations have been published in a long series of papers and memoirs, numbering nearly three hundred titles, covering a period of more than twenty-five years. His unrivalled collections of fossils, as yet only partly worked up, he presented to Yale University, with a considerable endowment for carrying on and publishing the results of further investigation of this great mass of material. Professor Marsh is well known to ornithologists for his numerous publications on fossil North American birds, including his great quarto memoir 'Odontornithes: a Monograph of the Extinct Toothed Birds of North America,' published in 1880. Probably five-sixths of the known extinct North American birds have been described by Professor Marsh. His scientific work brought him many honors both at home and abroad. In 1878 he was chosen President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and from 1883 to 1896 he was President of the National Academy of Sciences.

THE COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB of California has begun the publication of a 16-page bi-monthly 'Bulletin,' of which Nos. 1 and 2 of Volume I have been received. It is edited by Chester Barlow, with Henry Reed Taylor and Howard Robertson as assistant editors. It is a large octavo, illustrated, and well printed. The first number (Jan.-Feb.) contains a portrait and a biographical sketch of Dr. James G. Cooper, by Mr. W. O. Emerson, and various short papers on California birds, by well-known California ornithologists, including an account of the nesting of the Fulvous Tree Duck, by Mr. A. M. Shields. A new subspecies of the Brown Towhee (*Pipilo fuscus carolæ*) is described by Mr. Richard C. McGregor. The second number (March-April) is filled with excellent papers and shorter articles, including the description of a new subspecies of the Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata hooveri*), and of the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza fasciata ingersolli*), by Mr. McGregor. The 'Bulletin of the Cooper Ornithological Club,' thus early, takes a prominent place in the ornithological literature of North America, and is a credit to the energy and enterprise of California ornithologists.

THE MAINE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY (formerly the United Ornithologists of Maine) has also begun the publication of an official organ to be issued quarterly, under the title 'The Journal of The Maine Ornithological Society, A Quarterly Journal of Maine Ornithology,' under the editorship of Mr. C. Morrell. The first number (Jan., 1899), contains an account of the annual meeting of the Society, held at Waterville, Dec. 31, 1898, and papers by Mr. Arthur H. Norton, Prof. A. L. Lane, and Mr. Arthur Merrill. The principal paper of the second number (April, 1899) is by Capt. Herbert L. Spinney on 'The Gulls and Terns of Sagadahoc County.' Editorial and other notes complete the number. The 'Journal' will doubtless be an important addition to the periodical literature of North American ornithology.

'BIRD-LORE', announced in the January number of 'The Auk' as soon to appear, has made its bow to the public and has been received everywhere with unstinted praise. It is therefore needless to say that it has amply fulfilled the promises held forth in the prospectus, and has, on its own merits, taken its place at the front in the list of popular natural history magazines. The abundant half-tone reproductions of photographs from birds in life are among the finest thus far produced, and the beautiful cover, general makeup, and elegant typography are quite up to the standard of the illustrations. It has a field peculiarly its own, and one in which it can do great good. It is nothing to its discredit that it purposely avoids the technical side of ornithology, aiming instead to interest the public in the æsthetic and humanitarian aspects of bird study. That there is need of and a demand for such a journal has of late become more and more manifest, and 'Bird-Lore', with its avowed purpose to promote the "study and protection of birds," has come none too soon, and that it

so completely fills its rôle is a source of great satisfaction to all bird lovers. The first number has as a frontispiece a flashlight photograph of John Burroughs at 'Slab Sides,' and the first article is 'In Warbler Time,' by this favorite author; Dr. Thomas S. Roberts writes of 'The Camera as an Aid in the Study of Birds,' with four half-tones illustrating the life habits of the Chickadee; 'From a Cabin Window,' by H. W. Menke, is illustrated by three halftones of winter bird life in Wyoming; Miss Isabel Eaton has a paper on 'Bird Studies for Children.' In the department 'For Young Observers' Miss Merriam writes of 'Our Doorstep Sparrow'; 'Notes from Field and Study,' contain short illustrated articles; 'Book News and Reviews,' give notices of new bird books, and an 'Audubon Department,' under the editorial charge of Mrs. Mabel Osgood Wright, presents a list of the Audubon Societies, and reports of their work, from the Secretaries of many of them, while similar reports will follow from others. With the usual editorial notes, this forms a well arranged number of 32 large octavo pages, and gives good evidence of its *raison d'être*.

SINCE our notice of 'The Osprey' in the January Auk, four numbers have appeared, namely, the December, January, February, and March issues, thus bringing the magazine practically up to date as regards publication. Each number contains popular articles on birds by well known ornithologists, and there are various reproductions of bird pictures by Mr. Fuertes. Dr. Gill has a communication in the February number giving 'Suggestions for a New History of North American Birds,' to be published in parts as supplements to 'The Osprey.' After pointing out the deficiencies in preceding works, and the timeliness of a new work, he proceeds to give an outline of how the new 'History' should be prepared, his hints being quite to the point for what we might term an 'ideal' history. He then considers at considerable length the 'Classification to be adopted,' discussing 'avine orders' and 'oscine families.' He makes the point that there are no orders among birds comparable with those in other classes of Vertebrates. He says: "I would scarcely recognize any orders among living birds — certainly not more than two." He proposes that the orders of most ornithologists be designated as suborders, and to give to the present suborders the rank of superfamilies. The families of 'Oscine birds' he looks upon as being as unsatisfactory as the orders. He claims: "To entitle the sections of Oscines generally called families as such, is to obscure and falsify our knowledge of structure and to give a distorted idea of the group." In contrasting the homogeneity of structure in birds with what we may call the laxness of structure in reptiles and fishes, or even in some of the orders of mammals, he does not of course set forth any new facts, but merely emphasizes what is familiar to every specialist in vertebrates. Most taxonomers give weight to the fact that the compactness and homogeneity met with in birds is necessarily a result of that specialization as egg-laying, flying vertebrates, with which the wide range of structure and adapta-

tion seen, for instance, among reptiles, would be incompatible, if not impossible. Hence it is customary, and perhaps justifiable, that a different measure is used in dividing the class of birds into minor groups. As Dr. Gill remarks: "The differences between the extremes of the living species are less than those between the groups of the reptilian orders of turtles, or lizards, or serpents, or than those between the suborders of Primales . . . or those of Carnivores or Cetaceans." This being the fact, is it better to ignore one of the most important features of the class,—its homogeneity due to its peculiar specialization,—for the sake of measuring the differences among birds by the same unit we naturally employ for reptiles? There are two ways of looking at the matter; everything depends upon the point of view, here as elsewhere.

Dr. Gill also has a few judicious remarks on the subject of subspecies, apropos of the proposed new work, and outlines his plan as regards synonymy, and the general make up of the biographies.

The March number of 'The Osprey' comes out in a new spring suit of type and cover, and has to all appearances quite recovered from the protracted fall moult of which the editor complained in his earlier numbers. The number also contains several communications of more than usual interest.

A STATE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY was organized at Denver, Colorado, Jan. 6, 1899, under the name The Colorado Ornithological Association. At the first meeting, held Feb. 4, the following officers were elected for 1899: President, Dr. W. B. Bergtold; Vice-President, E. J. Oslar; Treasurer, F. H. Fowler; Recording Secretary, H. S. Reed; Corresponding Secretary, W. Mitchell; Executive Committee, Dr. Bergtold and Messrs. Dille, Cannon, Mitchell and Collett. Although the present members all reside in Denver, it is intended to make the Association a State society, to include all the ornithologists of the State of Colorado.

THE DELAWARE VALLEY ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB held its annual meeting at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Jan. 5, 1899. The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Charles J. Rhoads; Vice-President, Charles J. Pennock; Secretary, William A. Shryock; Treasurer, William L. Baily.

Among the more interesting communications presented to the Club during the past year, were 'Habits of the Brown-headed Nuthatch,' C. J. Pennock; 'Snap-shots at Birds and Nests,' Wm. L. Baily; 'Birds of Point Barrow,' E. A. McIlhenny; 'Birds killed on the Tower of City Hall,' Wm. L. Baily; 'The Hind Limb of Birds,' Wm. A. Shryock; 'Summer Birds of Wyoming Co., Pa.,' Messrs. Hughes and Stone; 'Some California Bird Notes,' Henry W. Warrington.

The average attendance for the past year was twenty-one.

THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES OF PHILADELPHIA has recently secured the collection of bird skins formed by Mr. Josiah Hoopes of

West Chester, Pa. Although for many years retired from active ornithological work, Mr. Hoopes was formerly a well known member of the Academy's Ornithological Committee—at the time when John Cassin was the leading ornithologist of the country. The present collection has been formed during recent years, and for excellence of specimens and beauty of arrangement is probably excelled by few, if any. It consists almost entirely of North American Land Birds and comprises upward of 7000 specimens.

THE RECENT organization of The American Society of Bird-Restorers is a most hopeful sign of the times for bird lovers. While the scope of the Society is national its methods are also intensely local and practical. Fletcher Osgood, the general manager and organizer, has extended its membership over much of the United States from Maine to California, and as far south as Arkansas. Accessions are coming in constantly.

The Society seeks to bring back our native song and insect-eating birds to communities all over the country, from which they have been expelled by causes known and removable. It is broadly inclusive in its aim and methods, welcoming members of kindred organizations, and helping men and women and the young to work for our birds in practical and fascinating ways. Some of its distinctive features are: The organization of adults and youth into patrols to observe and protect our birds, especially during the nesting season; concerted action, without cruelty, against the English Sparrow, and the appointment of Bird-Wardens. General educative work, tree-planting, and food-providing for the birds are specially encouraged.

The Advisory Board includes many of our leaders in science, religion, education and affairs. It is proposed to form a Branch Society in every town and city of the Union. While the society has been in existence but a few months, already fully organized branches are forming or have formed in different parts of the Nation, and the Observation and Protective Patrol is represented in many States.

An especially important movement, likely to be initiated throughout the Union, and immediately resulting from the activity of the Bird Restorers Society, is the appointment of a body of bird wardens by the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture. These wardens are chosen from among members of the gypsy moth extermination force, dispersed over more than thirty towns and cities. Later, it is hoped, bird wardens may be appointed by the society in every town and city of the State.

Another movement, due solely, to the American Society of Bird-Restorers, is now attracting wide attention: A Committee of Bostonians, organized by Manager Osgood and those associated with him, presented recently to the Mayor of Boston, a petition not far from thirty feet long, signed by a great number of the heaviest taxpayers in Boston, together with clergymen, educators, and people of all classes praying that the English Sparrow be reduced and if possible practically suppressed in

Boston. The petition was endorsed by Dr. L. O. Howard, Wm. Brewster, Dr. Vernon, E. H. Forbush, John Burroughs, Prof. C. H. Fernald, Messrs. Palmer and Beal, and others widely known to ornithology and kindred sciences.

The mayor (the Hon. Josiah Quincy) promptly ordered the reductions to be begun under the supervisors and general directions of the Committee organized by the American Society of Bird-Restorers.

The methods to be first tried are: Egg-destruction by the destruction of nests in the breeding season, and trapping by methods carefully studied and thus far proved effective. Many other methods are thought of and may be ultimately used. If successful in Boston, Sparrow reduction is likely to spread all over the country.

Information about this work and all other work of the American Society of Bird-Restorers will be gladly furnished on applications to Fletcher Osgood, General Manager, Boston, Mass.

THE second annual meeting of the Audubon Society of the State of New York was held in the lecture hall of the American Museum of Natural History on March 23, 1899. The program included a report on the work of the year by Frank M. Chapman, chairman of the executive committee; an address by Madame Lilli Lehmann, the famous interpreter of Wagnerian roles; the presentation of letters from Dr. Henry van Dyke and Governor Roosevelt endorsing the aims of the society; and an exhibition by Prof. A. S. Bickmore of slides of birds and their nests recently furnished by him to the normal schools of the State of New York.

Mr. Chapman stated that over 40,000 leaflets treating of various phases of the necessity for bird protection had been distributed by the society, and that the interest of the public in the subject was constantly increasing, and that its field for usefulness was limited only by its available funds.

Dr. van Dyke's letter expressed continued sympathy with the cause of the society, and Governor Roosevelt wrote in the same vein and with the evident sincerity of a genuine lover of birds.

Madame Lehmann, who is prominently connected with bird protection and humane societies of Germany and Austria, spoke earnestly of the need of concerted action in awaking an interest in the work of preserving birds, and urged the importance of nature studies in the schools.

Professor Bickmore, curator of the American Museum's Department of Public Instruction, exhibited a series of 100 slides representing the leading types of American birds and their nests from the Pygopodes to Macrochires. The larger part of these pictures had been made directly from nature, and they constitute by far the most interesting and valuable set of the kind ever introduced into the schools of this country.

ERRATUM.—In the January number, page 21, line 14 from top, for true frog read tree frog.