Professor Verrill has located, from these early narratives, some of the breeding places — on some of the smaller outlying islands of the group, — but lack of time prevented any very thorough search for their bones, which he thinks may be found on Castle Island, Southampton Island, and Cooper Island, the latter being in his opinion the most favorable site for such discovery. Here then is another 'ornithological mystery' worthy of further investigation. — J. A. A.

Palmer and Old's 'Digest of Game Laws for 1901.'[1] — This important 'bulletin' presents in convenient form the provisions of the Federal, State and Provincial laws now in force for the protection of game and birds, including the amendments enacted by the various legislatures in 1901. It consists, first (pp. 11–68) of a 'general discussion of game laws,' including restrictions as to time, methods, and purposes of killing game, and the manner of its shipment; and, second (pp. 69–148), abstracts of the laws, with special reference to the shipment and sale of game. "The opening year of the new century has witnessed an unprecedented interest in game protection. Nearly four-fifths of the States and Territories have enacted some amendments to their game laws.... Changes in dates for opening or closing the seasons have been very general, but restrictions on methods of capture, on sale, shipment and storage, have also been numerous. In many instances the laws have necessarily become more complex, but there has been a strong tendency toward extending protection to more kinds of game, shortening seasons, limiting bags, and throwing greater restrictions about the trade in game." It is therefore of the highest importance to have for handy reference a practically complete digest of all the laws relating to the capture, shipment, and sale of game, in the interest not only of sportsmen, but of the increasing number of persons who take an interest in game protection. The importance of the subject is rapidly becoming more and more recognized by the general public, which in itself gives great encouragement to the promoters of intelligent protection for both game and non-game birds. — J. A. A.

Judd's 'The Relation of Sparrows to Agriculture.'[2] — The results are here given of a very detailed and thoroughly scientific investigation of the food habits of the native sparrows of eastern North America, with

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[1] Digest of Game Laws for 1901. By T. S. Palmer and H. W. Olds, Assistants, Biological Survey. Prepared under the direction of Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of Biological Survey. Bull. No. 16, U. S. Depart. Agric., Division of Biological Survey, 1901. Pp. 152, and 8 maps and diagrams.

[2] The Relation of Sparrows to Agriculture. By Sylvester D. Judd, Ph. D., Assistant, Biological Survey. Prepared under the direction of Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of Biological Survey. Bull. No. 15, U. S. Dept. Agric., Division of Biological Survey, 1901. 8vo, pp. 98, pll. 4, and 19 text figures.

the verdict strongly in favor of the sparrows as an important natural check upon the growth of noxious weeds. Says Dr. Judd: "When the food of the native sparrows is divided into the three classes .... the neutral part proves to be small, not exceeding a third of all that is eaten; the injurious part very small; and the beneficial part much larger than that of most birds, and from five to ten times as great as the injurious part. We may therefore safely conclude that, as a class, these small birds are well worthy of our protection." The greater part of the first fifty pages of this important and very interesting paper are devoted to an account of the author's methods of investigation, and the general subject of the food of sparrows and its effect on agriculture, while some forty pages treat of the food of the species individually. Several pages are given to the European House Sparrow, with the conclusion that there is little to be said in its favor. "Its insectivorous habits are creditable, as far as they go, but they are insignificant, because the diet is almost exclusively vegetable; and while it is in the vegetable fare that the value of most sparrows consists, yet in the case of the English Sparrow the damage to grain far overbalances the benifit of weed-seed destruction. Adding to this the injury it causes to buildings and statues in cities, there is no escape from the conclusion that the bird is a serious pest the extermination of which would be an unmixed blessing."

It is to be hoped that Dr. Judd's convincing report on the economic value of our native sparrows will have a wide distribution. — J. A. A.

Bonhote's 'On the Evolution of Pattern in Feathers.'[1] — Mr. Bonhote's paper is highly speculative and not easy to comprehend, nor does he himself appear to be very clear as to just what points he believes he has even tentatively established. Toward the close of the paper he says: "My object has rather been to show that all the many and diverse markings on the feathers of birds are in the main variations of one type, namely: a longitudinal stripe with great tendency towards lateral expansions into transverse stripes, and that on modifications of this, by suppressing one portion or increasing another, all the various patterns have been built up..... The main question that now remains to be answered is that relating to the method in which the pigment groups itself to form these markings, but that is a matter which I hope to be able to investigate when dealing with the question of colour-change..... To sum up .... it should be noted that the most exposed portions of a bird, generally the upper parts, undergo a further evolution than those less conspicuously situated, and if there be any difference between the sexes, the male shows the higher form."

He takes, primarily, in illustrating his theme, the European Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter nisus*), his plate (pl. xix) giving "diagrammatic" but

[1] On the Evolution of Pattern in feathers. By J. L. Bonhote, M. A., F. Z. S. Proc. Zoöl. Soc. London, 1901, pp. 316–326, pll. xix, xx.