

If the information gained is important, the manner in which it is imparted is somewhat exasperating to one unacquainted with previous papers on the subject. The title of the memoir affords no clue to its import; there is no statement of the problem under consideration, and for the first ten pages there is nothing to hint that there is any question as to the specific validity of the bird under consideration; furthermore in no instance do the common and scientific names occur in conjunction. Nevertheless we are much indebted to Mr. Faxon for the memoir.—F. A. L.

'**Cassinia.**'¹—The present issue contains a biographical sketch of Dr. William Gambel, by Witmer Stone; an 'Unpublished poem by Alexander Wilson,' by Robt. P. Sharples; 'Breeding of the Raven in Pennsylvania,' by Richard C. Harlow; 'The Wood Thrush,' by Cornelius Weygant; 'Nesting of the Blackburnian Warbler in Pike Co., Pa.,' by David E. Harrower; 'Recollections of Wild Pigeons in Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1864-1881,' by John G. Dillin; 'Report on the Spring Migration of 1910,' by Witmer Stone; the usual 'Abstract of Proceedings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club for 1910'; 'Bibliography for 1910' of papers relating to the birds of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, and the usual 'Bird Club Notes' and list of officers and members. The frontispiece is a view of the building occupied by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia from 1826-1840, at the corner of Twentieth and Sansom Streets, Philadelphia.

Mr. Stone's biographical sketch of Dr. William Gambel, well known to ornithologists through the various species of North American birds associated with his name, as described by him or named in his honor, presents the little that is known of his personal history. He is supposed to have been born "somewhere in eastern Pennsylvania or southern New Jersey, and to have early attracted the attention of Thomas Nuttall"; but his actual place of birth appears to be unknown, nor is anything known to Mr. Stone of his family history or of his relatives, nor has he been able to find a portrait of this distinguished pioneer in ornithological research in the wilds of the far West. From Mr. Stone's sketch we learn that he was employed for a short time at the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, and in 1847 was a candidate for the curatorship, but was defeated by the late Dr. Joseph Leidy. He served, however, as Recording Secretary in 1848-49, and on the Publication Committee, 1845-49. When little more than twenty-one years of age he made an overland trip to California, returning by way of Valparaiso and Cape Horn to Philadelphia in 1845. On this trip he secured the various new species of North American birds described by him soon after his return. In the winter of 1845 he began the study of medicine, obtaining his medical degree in 1848. In April, 1849, he started on a second overland journey to the Pacific coast, leaving Inde-

¹ *Cassinia*, A Bird-Annual: Proceedings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club of Philadelphia. No. XIV, 1910. 8vo, pp. 61, and frontispiece, March, 1911.

pendence, Missouri, May 1, having joined "a Virginia Company of five men, one wagon and eight mules." On June 2 the party overtook a large ox-train on the Platte River, under the command of Captain Boone of Kentucky, which Gambel joined in the capacity of medical assistant. After many months of hardship, Boone's train reached the Sierra, where heavy falls of snow compelled the abandonment of the cattle and wagons, and the men endeavored to cross the mountains with such provisions as they could carry. Most of them perished, "but Boone, Gambel, and a few others succeeded in making their way to Rose's Bar on Feather River," in what is now Plumas County, California. Here, on December 13, 1850, Gambel died of typhoid fever, at the early age of about thirty years.— J. A. A.

Mathews's 'Birds of Australia.'—Part 2¹ of this great work completes the Turnicidæ and includes the Treronidæ and part of the Columbida. In this part fourteen species are figured and described, and both text and plates conform to the high standard set in Part 1, noticed in detail in the January issue of this journal.— J. A. A.

McGee's 'Notes on the Passenger Pigeon.'—In the issue of 'Science' for December 30, 1910, Dr. McGee, in an article of five and a half pages,² gives his recollections of the Passenger Pigeon as observed by him in eastern Iowa "in the sixties and early seventies," and of other pigeons he mistook for this species in 1905 in the "Sierra Gila, seventy-five miles southwest of Yuma and near the Mexican boundary." His recollections of Passenger Pigeons in Iowa form a welcome addition to the reminiscences of a species now probably extinct as a wild bird, but the Arizona notes are unfortunately based on an evident misidentification of a species known locally in the arid Southwest as the "Sonora Pigeon." Although his account of its habits and appearance is detailed, and in some ways conforms to the characters of the Passenger Pigeon, no specimens were saved for positive identification, and in the light of our present knowledge of the habits and range of this species doubtless few ornithologists will be willing to accept his record of the Passenger Pigeon in arid southwestern Arizona as a valid record for the species without the confirmation of actual specimens from the region in question. The pros and cons of the case were considered in a later issue of 'Science.'³— J. A. A.

¹ Birds of Australia. By Gregory M. Mathews. Part 2, January 31, 1911. Royal 4to. pp. 97-136. pll. xxii-xxxv, colored. Witherby & Co., London.

² For full title and conditions of publication see the notice of Part 1, *antea*, pp. 135, 136.

Notes on the Passenger Pigeon. By W J McGee. Science, N. S., Vol. XXXII, pp. 958-964, December 30, 1910.

³ The Arizona 'Passenger Pigeons'. By J. A. Allen. Science, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 217-219, February 10, 1911.