

7. A North Pacific land belt between western North America and eastern Asia.
8. A Pacific land belt between North and South America westward of Central America.
9. An Antarctic bridge between Patagonia, Chile, Australia and New Zealand.
10. An Atlantic bridge between Bermuda and the West Indies, Bermuda being part of a continent that extended northward from the West Indies and joined the mainland of North America somewhere near Massachusetts.

The author takes up his subject geographically in fifteen chapters, beginning with Greenland and passing southward to Argentina and Chile, discussing these in succession from the viewpoint of their biology and geological history, with special consideration of their faunistic affinities. It would therefore have been a great convenience to the reader if he had given a topical résumé of the evidence for the ten land bridges he advocates disconnectedly in the course of the book, summarizing the pros and cons for each in a connected way, defining also their presumed extent and continental connections, and their probable geological age and duration. Former supposed land areas and their connections offer a fascinating topic for speculation, but the evidence at present is so meager and conflicting that the conclusions reached are apt to depend upon the temperamental characteristics of the author.

Dr. Scharff has certainly presented us with a work of unusual interest, and one which will stimulate to further investigation of the problems he has so elaborately discussed.—J. A. A.

**Brabourne and Chubb: 'The Birds of South America.'**<sup>1</sup>—The appearance of the first volume of this monumental work will be welcomed by ornithologists the world over. Even though it be merely a list similar in style to Sharpe's 'Hand-List,'—a framework as it were upon which the main structure is to be built up—it is nevertheless of the greatest assistance to students of the neotropical avifauna, as the writer has already had occasion to prove. It is forty years since Selater and Salvin published their 'Nomenclator Avium Neotropicalium' and we have had no general work on South American birds since. It is moreover a great advance over Sharpe's 'Hand-List' since the references are given in full with type localities and the nomenclature has been made to conform largely with the International Code. Binomials are used, as the authors explain, merely as a matter of convenience, the intention being to work out the relationship of species and subspecies and adopt trinomials in the body of the work.

<sup>1</sup> The Birds of South America by Lord Brabourne, F. Z. S., M. B. O. U., and Charles Chubb, F. Z. S., M. B. O. U. (Zoological Department, British Museum). Vol. I (London: R. H. Porter, 7 Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W) John Wheldon & Co., 38 Great Queen Street, W. C. | Taylor & Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E. C. | [1912] royal 8vo, pp. i-xix + 1-504 with colored map.

No less than 4561 forms are given in the list, one thousand more than are contained in the Selater and Salvin list and that included Mexico, Central America and the Galapagos all of which are omitted in the work before us. Each species is accompanied by an English name which will be of great assistance to the museum curator in preparing exhibition labels. Some of these names however are unduly cumbersome while others conflict with the names of common North American birds as the use of 'Pewee' for the species of *Empidonax*, of 'Marsh Wren' for *Thryophilus*, etc., we fully appreciate, however, the difficulty of finding English names for over four thousand birds.

One matter of detail, which will of course be corrected in the synonymy, is the failure to quote the name as originally published, so that one cannot ascertain under what generic name a species was described until the reference is consulted. There are also occasional lapses in stating the distributions, for having recently been working over a Venezuelan collection, we note a number of instances where this country is omitted in the ranges of species which are well known to occur there. These are however trifling matters, which should not be seriously charged against a list admittedly only preliminary and which is so excellent and helpful in other respects.

We note a number of changes in names. Some of those which affect North American species are *Columbina* for *Chamepelia*, *Podiceps* for *Colymbus*, *Catharacta* for *Megalestris*, *Pluvialis* for *Charadrius*, *Charadrius* for *Aegialitis* + *Oxyechus* + *Ochthodromus*, *Tringa* for *Helodromas*, *Canutus* for *Tringa*, *Nyroca* for *Marila*, *Oxyura* for *Erismatura*, *Merganser* for *Mergus*, and *Caprimulgus* for *Antrostomus*. *Falco* is divided, *Cerchneis* being used for the Sparrow Hawks; while *Pisobia* is split into *Pisobia* and *Heteropygia*. We note also the use of *Sula dactylatra* Lesson 1837 in place of *S. cyanops*, and *Egretta thula* Molina 1782 for the Snowy Heron, while the Black Vulture, at least so far as South America is concerned, stands as *Catharista fætans*. Some of these changes are undoubtedly necessary but in other cases we think the A. O. U. Check-List is correct.

Ornithologists everywhere will look forward with interest to the succeeding parts of this long needed work.— W. S.

#### Oberholser's 'A Revision of the Forms of the Great Blue Heron.'<sup>1</sup>

— In this carefully prepared monograph, Mr. Oberholser treats the Great Blue Heron as he has previously discussed the Green Heron. Plumages are described in detail and there are numerous tables of measurements and lists of localities from which specimens have been examined.

The races recognized are as follows with approximate breeding ranges: *A. herodias herodias*, eastern North America exclusive of Lower Austral zone; *A. h. wardi*, southeastern U. S., mainly Lower Austral zone; *A. h. adoxa* subsp. nov., Bahamas and West Indies; *A. h. treganzai*, western U. S.

<sup>1</sup> A Revision of the Forms of the Great Blue Heron. *Ardea herodias* Linnæus. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. 43, pp. 531-559. December 12, 1912.