

i. e., they are full enough to answer the actual requirements of publication under our code but are often not full enough to enable anyone to recognize the species without consulting the type specimen. Such diagnoses are frequently more of a hindrance than a help to the advancement of science, and it seems a pity that our American ornithologists, who have set such a high standard in most of their work, cannot take time to adequately describe all of the new forms which they are in such haste to name, or that the institutions which they represent cannot provide immediate means for the publication of adequate descriptions, for we realize that the author is not always to blame. A new genus *Microstilbon* is proposed for *Microstilbon inspiratus*, a Bolivian hummingbird allied to *Chalocercus*.—W. S.

Kirkham's 'North and South.'¹—Mr. Kirkham already well known as a writer on nature, author of 'East and West,' 'In the Open,' etc., compares, in the present volume, the aspect of nature in the Lake Country of New York and in the Coastal Plain of South Carolina, attempting, as he puts it, "to reflect the spirit of the North and of the South, as do the birch and the cypress . . . to make you hear in an inner ear the ringing call of the Carolina wren and to become suddenly conscious of the perfume of jasmine; or to hear the eerie song of the upland plover descending from the sky, and again to be dimly aware of water lilies and the lapping of little waves on a summer day." That he has succeeded admirably in his undertaking his readers will, we think, unanimously agree.

Mr. Kirkham evidently possesses an accurate knowledge of the birds, flowers, trees and insects and an ability to treat of them as he finds them; to bring before us not only the characteristics of the species of which he writes but also the more subtle spirit of their environment. This constitutes his interest in nature, and he has little sympathy for the man who never gets beyond the bare facts. He says "you have perhaps kept a record of birds and flowers, and have devoted much time and energy to the matter, but this is the most elementary work. You will graduate someday from bookkeeping unless you aim to remain a bookkeeper all your days. . . . Ornithology, like everything else, will be just as commonplace as the mind that pursues it." He apparently forgets that some people are unable to get beyond the 'bookkeeper' stage, and even in attaining that, they may derive as much pleasure and benefit from the study of nature as the more gifted writers who, like our author, are privileged to soar to greater heights. The two spots of which this volume treats are a summer camp on the shore of Canandaigua Lake, N. Y., and a winter home near Milford, S. C. Besides frequent casual mention of birds there are two chapters that deal entirely with them. 'Birds about the Camp' treating of the northern locality and 'Winter Bird Life' with the southern.

¹ North and South. Notes on the Natural History of a Summer Camp and a Winter Home. By Stanton Davis Kirkham. G. W. Putnam's Sons. New York and London. The Knickerbocker Press, 1913. 8vo. pp. 1-286. \$1.75 net.

These of course are of especial interest to the ornithologist although the whole volume will be interesting reading to all who love the great outdoors. The book is attractively printed and is illustrated by a number of half-tones of characteristic scenery from photographs by the author.— W. S.

Wood on Michigan Birds.¹—Continuing his investigations on the Charity Islands already noticed in these pages,² Mr. Wood was able during July, 1911, to add eight species to his former list and to secure breeding data on 37 species. Notes on 66 species are included in the present paper which are accompanied by 19 half-tones illustrating the physical features of the islands. In another short paper³ Mr. Wood presents notes on sixteen species of rare or unusual occurrence in Michigan.— W. S.

Howell on New Birds from Alabama.⁴—Even the eastern United States seems still able to produce novelties for those who care to make careful comparisons of material from different areas and are content to establish new forms on slight differences. Mr. Howell finds that the Crows of the southern states exclusive of Florida and possibly Georgia, are smaller than either the northern or the Florida race. This form which ranges north to the District of Columbia and southern Illinois he names *Corvus brachyrhynchos paulus*.

A number of Towhees from Alabama differ from the northern form in having the white markings less extensive, while they are distinctly larger than Florida birds. This form is separated as *Pipilo erythrophthalmus canaster* although Mr. Howell is unable as yet to fix the limits of its distribution.— W. S.

Mearns on New African Birds.⁵—In two papers Dr. Mearns adds eleven more forms to the already long list of novelties discovered by him on his two trips to Africa. In the first there are described *Cisticola robusta abaya*, Lake Abaya, Abyssinia; *C. r. tana*, Tana River, British East Africa; *C. subruficapilla bodessa*, Bodessa, Abyssinia; and *C. s. fricki*, White Lake Abaya, Abyssinia, all obtained on the Childs Frick Expedition, and *C.*

¹ The Breeding Birds of the Charity Islands with Additional Notes on the Migrants. By N. A. Wood, Fourteenth Report of the Michigan Academy of Science, 1912. pp. 178–188.

² Auk, 1912, p. 118.

³ Notes on Michigan Birds. By N. A. Wood, Fourteenth Report of the Michigan Academy of Science, 1912, pp. 159–162.

⁴ Descriptions of two New Birds from Alabama. By Arthur H. Howell, Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., Vol. XXVI, pp. 199–202, October 23, 1913.

⁵ Descriptions of Six New African Birds. By Edgar A. Mearns, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 61, No. 11, pp. 1–5, August 30, 1913.

Descriptions of Five New African Weaver-Birds of the Genera Othyphantes, Hypargos, Aidemosyne, and Lagonosticta. By Edgar A. Mearns. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 61, No. 14, pp. 1–5. September 20, 1913.