

RECENT LITERATURE.

Eaton's 'Birds of New York.'¹—The first volume of Mr. Eaton's 'Birds of New York' was reviewed in these columns in July, 1910, at which time it was expected that the publication of the present, concluding, part would immediately follow. An introductory note however explains that the delay has been due to the regrettable illness of the author. The work as finally completed follows exactly the lines originally laid down and we think that the author, the authorities of the State Museum and the people of New York are to be congratulated upon the production of what is the most comprehensive state ornithology that has yet appeared.

So closely does the main text of the volume before us follow the plan of Part I that the remarks of the former reviewer are equally applicable to it. The accounts and descriptions of species are excellent and the handling of the quoted data admirable. In fact little or no improvement can be suggested in the work of the author, but the peculiar system of capitalization followed in the State Museum publications, and the exceedingly heavy coating of the paper upon which the book is printed are unfortunate. The text covers the 'land birds' from the Birds of Prey to the Passeres inclusive, following the order and nomenclature of the A. O. U. Check-List.

In addition there is an introductory chapter on bird ecology and economic ornithology, which contains much valuable information, though the variety of type used in the headings of the several sections leaves one in doubt as to just how it was intended to divide it. There is also an addendum of two pages covering 'New York Bird History since 1910.'

As this work is the only recent state ornithology which attempts to give original colored figures of all the species, a great deal of interest centers on the plates. As in the preceding part these are from the brush of Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertes and taken all in all constitute a wonderful series of bird portraits. It is always to be regretted that questions of space and expense make it impossible for the artist in a work like this to enjoy the freedom that is allotted to the author. Figures must be crowded on plates, and where an occasional life size portrait is permitted, the birds are so out of proportion to those on other plates, or to the size of the page, that we cannot properly appreciate them. These points however are not the fault of the artist, nor are the color tones used in the printing, which while generally good, are noticeably bad in the case of the Song Sparrow which appears red enough to entitle it to classification under the desert race of the Southwest.

¹ Birds of New York. By Elon Howard Eaton. = Memoir 12, New York State Museum. John M. Clarke, Director. Part II. General Chapters; Land Birds. 4to, pp. 1-719 (facing leaves to plates counted as pages 545-672), 64 colored plates and numerous half-tone text illustrations. Albany. University of the State of New York, 1914.

The question of background may be a matter of taste, but we think that when reduced to a minimum, as in the plate of the small flycatchers, the result is infinitely better than that attained with the abundance of green leaves seen in the warbler plates, or even the landscapes that are introduced with some species.

In both illustration and taxidermy there may be said to be two possible objects in view, a bird portrait or a picture, and the addition of accessories necessary to improve the picturesque effect is bound to detract from the portrait of the individual bird. A group showing a phase of the life history may well be a picture but for a work of this kind we prefer the portrait. As already said, however, perfection in the arrangement of plates and size of figures is too much to hope for in any work of even quarto size and the handling of the matter in the 'Birds of New York' has been all that could be asked, while the work will stand as a monument to both author and artist.—W. S.

Swarth's List of Arizona Birds.¹—While Arizona has been for many years past a favorite resort for the ornithologist, no one it seems has ventured to compile a complete list of its birds until Mr. Swarth began the work some eleven years ago. The varied topography of the state, our inadequate knowledge of the ranges of many forms and the constantly shifting nomenclature have tended to make the task anything but an easy one, and it is fortunate for ornithology that it was left for one who possessed the perseverance and painstaking accuracy that Mr. Swarth has displayed.

In general style the list follows Grinnell's 'Check-List of California Birds' but is more detailed in the statement of ranges and fuller in the citation of authorities for records quoted. The main list contains 362 species, with a hypothetical list of 24. There are 152 residents, 72 summer visitants, 57 winter visitants, 30 transients and 51 of casual occurrence.

A brief discussion of the several life zones and their characteristic birds with an original faunal map follows the list, and a bibliography of 313 titles and an index complete the work. The first entry in the bibliography is Gambel's paper of 1843, and Woodhouse's account of Sitgreaves' expedition, 1853, is the only other contribution prior to the Pacific railroad reports, while up to 1880 there had appeared only 43 papers bearing upon Arizona birds, so that the literature is for the most part comparatively recent.

Mr. Swarth follows the order and, in the main, the nomenclature of the A. O. U. Check-List departing only in the recognition of certain forms not accepted by the latter; in the rejection of the Western Sparrow Hawk as a distinct race from the eastern bird; and in differences in the rank of several

¹ A Distributional List of the Birds of Arizona. Cooper Ornithological Club. Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 10. Contribution from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California. Hollywood, California. Published by the Club. May 25, 1914, 8vo, pp. 1-133, with colored zonal map.