

That Prof. Herrick's volumes contain references to all the existing matter relating to the ornithologist we doubt, and he would probably be the first to admit this possibility. The very amount of material, astonishing as it is, that he has gathered together only makes it more probable that there are yet other published notes and manuscripts undiscovered, but they are not likely to alter in any material way the history that he has written, even while his pages were going through the press several notes have appeared in print, among which we may mention the description of Audubon republished by John H. Sage in 'The Auk' (April, 1917, p. 239). Another article in the same journal 'Miss Lawson's Recollections of Ornithologists' by F. L. Burns (July, 1917, p. 275), corrects a statement regarding Wilson which we notice Prof. Herrick has perpetuated, *i. e.* referring to "his fingers stiffened by the hard labor of his hands." This we always thought to have been a fiction of some of his biographers, as he wrote a beautiful hand, played skilfully on the flute and worked at the loom, none of which accomplishments accord well with "hands knotted and hardened by labor," these points Miss Lawson emphasizes adding that her mother spoke of Wilson's hands as small and delicate.

In closing, we should like to emphasize in the strongest terms Prof. Herrick's plea for the restoration and preservation of the dwellings of Audubon and his sons in New York City which "though in dire neglect, are not beyond repair," and that the ground where they stand, between Riverside Drive and the Hudson River, should be converted into a real Audubon Park. As he truly says "such a memorial would contribute to the instruction and pleasure of all the people, for every generation of Americans that is to come" — and we may add that this closing sentence of Prof. Herrick admirably describes the volumes that he himself has given to the public, the contents of which we have here endeavored to describe.—
W. S.

The New 'Birds of America.'¹—The present work the publishers tell us in the preface is put forth to meet the demand for a single work which will present "a complete review of what is known today about American birds." While this is a pretty large task even for the imposing array of authors and artists whose names appear on the title page to say nothing of the advisory board of nineteen more, nevertheless we think that the work will fill a very general need. It is by all odds the most thoroughly illustrated work on North American birds that has yet appeared and the great demand for the admirable colored plates of Mr. Fuertes, which

¹Birds of America. Editor-in-Chief, T. Gilbert Pearson; Consulting Editor, John Burroughs; Managing Editor, George Glidden; Associate Editor, J. Ellis Burdick; Special Contributors, Edward H. Forbush, Herbert K. Job, William L. Finley and L. Nelson Nichols. Artists, L. A. Fuertes, R. B. Horsfall, R. I. Brasher and Henry Thurston. The University Society Inc. New York (1917). Vol. I, pp. i-xviii, + 1-272; Vol. II, pp. i-xiv, + 1-271; Vol. III, pp. i-xviii, + 1-289. 4to, numerous illustrations, and 110 colored plates. Comprising Volumes I-III of the 'Nature Lovers' Library'.

appeared in Eaton's 'Birds of New York,' indicated pretty clearly what the bird-studying public wants, for it is far easier to identify birds from good colored plates than from any amount of descriptions. The publishers of the present work have been fortunate in obtaining these same plates through the courtesy of the New York State Museum, and they naturally form one of the leading features of the volumes. Mr. Henry Thurston has contributed a series of five colored plates of birds' eggs which are very satisfactory. Then there are a large number of half-tone text figures of birds from colored drawings by Mr. R. I. Brasher which vary considerably in merit, but they are all minutely exact in patterns and markings and are therefore often of greater value for purposes of identification than certain much more artistic and lifelike bird portraits. Besides all of these there are a very large number of reproductions of photographs mainly from nature but some from mounted specimens, although the fact is not always mentioned, and some of paintings by Mr. Bruce Horsfall. Most of this last group of illustrations have already appeared in other publications and are from a variety of sources.

We regret that the publishers have seen fit to adopt the name of Audubon's classic work as their title. Every work must stand upon its own merits and it is a pity that each one cannot have a distinctive name. In one respect the present work is like its great predecessor — that is in the unequal treatment of the birds of the two sides of the continent. Audubon of course did not possess adequate information on western birds but in the present case that excuse does not exist and we fear that western ornithologists will resent the fact that while all of the eastern birds are figured in colors not one of the distinctively western species is so depicted, most of them being pictured only in half-tones and quite a number not at all. The superabundance of figures of some of the eastern species on the other hand seems unnecessary, if not actually confusing. With Fuertes' excellent full page plate of the Blue Jay, it is quite unnecessary to publish a figure by Brasher which shows nothing additional, to say nothing of a very poor photograph of what is apparently a mounted bird.

However these criticisms in no way detract from the fact that this work places within reach of the public a splendid series of bird pictures, more and better than can be gotten today in any other work, which will go far to satisfy the needs of a vast number of bird students and no doubt help to develop many a future ornithologist.

The text is admittedly, in the main, compiled, and most of the accounts are satisfactory, presenting concisely such information as one would desire on habits, range, food, etc. The best accounts are probably those by Herbert K. Job and Edward Howe Forbush. The nomenclature is that of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-List and subspecies are only mentioned at the end of each account, where the points by which they differ are briefly stated and their ranges given, often too briefly to be of much practical value. Curiously enough the name of the eastern race is always given in the heading. This may be logical where, as is usually the case,

it is the so called 'typical' form, as for instance *Planesticus migratorius migratorius*, for the Robin, but in the case of the Hermit Thrush it would seem more consistent to have headed the text with *Hylocichla guttata guttata* than with *H. g. pallasi*. This however simply shows the need that has recently been emphasized of a binomial nomenclature for popular ornithology and a vernacular name for each binomial group. Then we should have had for a heading in the case referred to *Hylocichla guttata* the Hermit Thrush, and if subspecies were to be mentioned at all, their trinomial names could have been given in the end of the text along with their characteristics and ranges. This is a fault of the A. O. U. Check-List, however, and not of 'The Birds of America.'

At the head of each account is given a list of vernacular names; a general description and detailed account of coloration; a description of the nest and eggs; and the range of the bird. This information is taken from Ridgway's 'Birds of North and Middle America' and the A. O. U. 'Check-List,' popularized where necessary by the alteration of technical terms. There are several color keys at the end of the work, a glossary and a bibliography. The last is rather an unfortunate effort, as remarkable for what it omits as for what it includes and with no indication of what the various books treat. There should at least have been a geographical list of works on the bird life of the several states, since the first thing the general reader will desire, after having his interest aroused by a work of this kind, is a special publication on the birds of his own region.

The paper upon which the work is printed is heavily sized in order to carry the large number of half-tone figures, which makes it exceedingly heavy, but the typography is good and the printing of both text and plates well done as is also the binding, making all in all an exceedingly attractive work.—W. S.

'Tropical Wild Life in British Guiana.'—This volume published by the New York Zoological Society, presents the results of the first season's work at the tropical research station, established in British Guiana under the direction of William Beebe and conducted by him from March to August, 1916. The enterprise marks an innovation in tropical zoological research, making possible the study of living or freshly killed tropical animals in their native haunts, whereas heretofore field work has of necessity been mainly limited to securing and preserving specimens to be studied by specialists in museums, far distant from the home of the animals them-

¹ Tropical Wild Life in British Guiana. Zoological Contributions from The Tropical Research Station of The New York Zoological Society. By William Beebe, Directing Curator, G. Inness Hartley, Research Associate and Paul G. Howes, Research Assistant, with an Introduction by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt. Volume I. Photographs and Other Illustrations by the Authors. Published by the New York Zoological Society, 111 Broadway, New York City. January, 1917 [distributed in November]. 8vo. pp. i-xx + 1-504, 4 colored plates and numerous half-tone illustrations.