

## RECENT LITERATURE.

**Bent's 'Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl.'**—Mr. Bent keeps steadily at his great task of compiling his life histories of the birds of North America and if the Government Printing Office could only keep pace with him the work would be farther along than it is. The present volume<sup>1</sup> completes the Ducks, Geese and Swans and we learn from the introduction that the volume covering the Herons and Rails is nearly completed, leaving only the shore birds to bring the water bird volumes to completion.

The present part includes the remainder of the Ducks, i. e., the Eiders, Scoters, Golden-eyes, Old-squaw, Buffle-head, Harlequin and Ruddy Duck and the Geese and Swans. In glancing through its pages we are more than ever impressed with the thoroughness of the author's work and with the vast amount of new information that has been accumulated through exploration in the arctic and subarctic regions in recent years. One also realizes that the time will not be far distant when a work of such scope will be an impossibility for one man and our monographs of the future will have to treat only of special groups or of special sections of the country.

The accounts of the breeding of various familiar winter water fowl in their far off arctic summer homes is extremely interesting reading, while the hundred odd illustrations bring vividly to our minds the habitats of the various species. These are more varied in character than the plates of some of the earlier volumes, illustrating the birds and their haunts as well as the nests and eggs.

As most of our readers are familiar with the plan of Mr. Bent's earlier volumes and his admirable style of treatment, it is necessary only to say that he has in the present part fully maintained the high standard that he there established.

He requests those who have information of value on the breeding of the shorebirds to submit it at once, in order that it may be included in volume VI, and we heartily urge all readers of 'The Auk' to give heed to this request, as Mr. Bent deserves all the assistance and cooperation that we can give him.—W. S.

**La Touche's 'Handbook of the Birds of Eastern China.'**—One of the most welcome publications to the general ornithologist, that has appeared recently, is Mr. La Touche's 'Handbook of the Birds of Eastern

<sup>1</sup> Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl. Order Anseres (Part). By Arthur Cleveland Bent of Taunton, Massachusetts (vignette) Bulletin 130 U. S. National Museum. Washington, Government Printing Office. 1925. pp. 1-376, fifty-nine of which are plates with one additional plate as a frontispiece.—Price 90 cents per copy to be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.