

spelled in the book) have necks too long and curved, the male and female of the pair of Pintails differ too much in neck thickness, and the Golden Eagle and the female Red-wing seem twisted too far out of natural posture, perhaps to show more of the underside of the tail from a side view.

The publishers have placed the title and short descriptive paragraph pertaining to each plate on the back of the plate which arrangement is not only confusing at first glance but forever disturbing to one looking at a picture of an utterly different species on the page facing it. Up-to-date scientific names are used on most legends, but not on all. The color register of several of the plates in the review copy is bad, and that of several others slightly off. The excessively dense colors in certain plates, for example, the Sparrow Hawk and Bluebird, may also be due, at least in part, to imperfect reproduction. Good quality, dull finish paper is used throughout, and the text is in large clear type. The black and white sketches include, beside birds, such subjects as flowers and large insects. Several of the full-page black-and-whites lack suitable form-giving contrast in places (for example, Mockingbird and Black Skimmer).

The accompanying text, written by Mrs. Menaboni, seems excessively sentimental at first reading, the birds being treated quite anthropomorphically; but gradually the realization grows that an inside story of the life of the Menabonis with their many bird and animal pets, both captive and wild, is being unfolded. Their experiences with many of the subjects of the pictures in the book are recounted, as well as bits of their struggle to attain a home in the woods which would also be a sanctuary for wild creatures. Sara Menaboni thus writes now from their own "Valle Ombrosa" near Atlanta, Georgia, while Athos paints its inhabitants.

Although there can hardly be substantiation for the sweeping claims of the publishers that these paintings of Menaboni's are "the most beautiful, most faithful bird portraits painted in America in more than one hundred years," Menaboni has an excellent ability to show detail as well as texture, especially in wing feathers, and also accomplishes the seemingly difficult task of placing a realistic iridescent gloss on black feathers, as in his painting of the Crow and on the wings of the Golden Eagle. In general, his treatment of color and contrast seems more successful than that of contour and outline. The presence of some of these faults, especially of proportion or position of body parts, keeps some of his paint-

ings from being accurate representations of the birds pictured. Comment upon the fine points of artistic merit is beyond the scope of this review; but certain of the pictures are quite pleasing *in toto*, without considering details which may contain one or more of the faults mentioned above. The reviewer's personal favorites are the Screech Owl, Little Blue Heron, Wild Turkey, and Pileated Woodpecker; and the Wood Duck would probably be as good if the colors had registered properly.—HOWARD L. COGSWELL.

## COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

### NORTHERN DIVISION

JANUARY.—The monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held in Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley, on January 5, 1951. The minutes of the December meeting were read and approved. The following were proposed for membership: Ralph W. M. Keating, 3031 Balboa St., San Francisco, Calif.; William V. Mayer, Dept. Zoology, Univ. of Southern Calif., Los Angeles 7, Calif., both by A. H. Miller. Officers of the previous year were reelected. These are Mrs. Junea W. Kelly, president; Dr. Robert T. Orr, first vice-president; Dr. Charles G. Sibley, second vice-president; Henry E. Childs, Jr., secretary.

Two Starlings were seen at Gridley on December 10 by A. H. Miller. C. G. Sibley told of the collection of a Clark Nutcracker with two acorns on its lower mandible in Santa Cruz County.

The speaker of the evening, Mr. L. E. Richdale, gave a very interesting account of his studies of the Royal Albatross in New Zealand.—HENRY E. CHILDS, JR., *Secretary*.

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

NOVEMBER.—The monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at 8 p.m., in Allan Hancock Hall, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

The following names were proposed for membership: Frederick Ashton Allis, 122 W. Fir Ave., Oxnard, Calif., by E. R. Greene; Miss Eva C. Ewing, 1205 Muirlands Dr., La Jolla, Calif., by W. Lee Chambers; James Fisher, Old Rectory, Ashton, Northampton, England, by Edward L. Chalif, and Mrs. Charles H. Hude, 12745 Gravelly Lake Dr., Tacoma, Wash., by S. B. Peyton.

Dr. John Davis, Curator of the Robert T. Moore Ornithological Collections, gave an illustrated talk on the distribution and variation of the Brown Towhee.—DOROTHY E. GRONER, *Secretary*.