

followed is reversed and altered, the first species mentioned being *Turdus mustelinus*, the last, *Zenaidura macroura*. The author's vast experience in descriptive work permits him to handle his subject in a masterly manner; there are analyses to the higher groups, families, and genera, and keys to the last which define all the then recognized species and subspecies of Eastern North American birds belonging to them. This is new matter; the generic, subgeneric, and specific diagnoses and descriptions, as before stated, are frequently quoted, but they are taken from a worthy source, and the birds have not to our knowledge changed perceptibly since they were written, though, it is true, we do now see many things in the light of a new understanding, which were then obscure. We would not then, for instance, have considered *Sturnella magna neglecta* a species, in fact its recognition as a race was open to question, but we find on page 314, it is accorded full specific rank. Nor would we then have admitted the author's earlier view, to which he now returns, concerning the specific distinctness of *Quiscalus quiscula æneus*. It is true these views are not yet accepted; but there is evidently a tendency in this direction. It will be quite useless here to go further into this portion of the work; the author's name is a sufficient guarantee of its value and accuracy, and we hope the edition will permit its being placed in the hands of every student of North American ornithology, if not in the hands of every student of ornithology whatever be the country to which he devotes himself, for the model here presented is in every respect worthy his attention. It is a reviewer's duty to speak with equal candor of both the good and bad sides of the book before him, but we must confess this volume is possessed of a one-sidedness which renders it barren ground for the most fault-finding critic; the typographical errors are for the greater part unimportant and evidently beyond the author's control, and when we consider the limited time allowed him for the completion of his task, which was further curtailed by the official duties of a busy life, we can only admire the energy and ability which has enabled him to accomplish it so quickly and so well. — F. M. C.

**Menzbier's Ornithology of Turkestan.\***—The first part of Menzbier's great work on the ornithology of Turkestan, recently received, contains four colored plates and over one hundred pages of text, besides the long preface explanatory of the origin and scope of the work. The author has set before himself the serious task of treating monographically all the species of Turkestan, and the lands adjacent, — a region extending from the Lower Volga to Mongolia, and from southwest Siberia to Pamir. The work is based primarily on the immense collections and notes gathered by the late Dr. N. A. Sewertzow during his twenty-one years' exploration of this region under the auspices of the Russian Government. Dr. Sewertzow unfortunately died at the beginning of his work on his ornithological collections, leaving it to be carried forward by his devoted friend,

\*Ornithologie du Turkestan et des Pays adjacents. Par M. le Docteur M. A. Menzbier. Premier livraison, Avec un Atlas de 4 Planches, Moscow, 1888, 4to, pp. viii+



Dr. Menzbier. As already stated (*Auk*, Vol. V, p. 447), the work will comprise six large quarto volumes, with about eighty colored plates. Volume I will consist of a biography of Sewertzow, a list of the birds of his collection, and a general summary of the fauna of Turkestan, the remaining five volumes treating in detail of the birds in systematic order, beginning with the Birds of Prey.

The first livraison of Volume II contains the Vultures and Eagles, sixteen species of which are treated, the text ranging from four to twelve pages to each.

A very full citation of bibliographical references is followed by detailed descriptions of the various phases of plumage each species presents, while much space is given to the geographical distribution of each and to biographical observations.—J. A. A.

**Nehrling's Bird Biographies.\***—Final judgment upon this notable undertaking must be deferred until the completion of the work. At present, we can form a tolerably clear opinion of what it will be, if the promise of the prospectus is fulfilled. The early parts, which came to hand some months ago, fully sustain the publisher's announcement, and we shall watch with interested attention the progress of an enterprise which commends itself to all true lovers of bird-life. We see no reason why Mr. Nehrling should not re-gather the lines which dropped from this hand twelve years ago, and weave them into a useful, attractive and enduring fabric.

Mr. Nehrling's name is not a new one in ornithological literature, though perhaps better known to the German than to the American public as a writer on American birds. Many sketches and some more formal bird biographies of his have already appeared in German periodicals, showing him to be a careful and faithful observer, a competent author, and above all a feeling writer, in full touch with the spirit of the beautiful airy beings whose lives he portrays. The present writer has spent too many years in the technicalities and formalities of ornithology to be misunderstood as depreciating the value of such tough fibre in the development of our science. Yet there is a 'height beyond,' which the ornithologist must reach before he can understand any bird, no matter how intricate and consummate may be his knowledge of the partialities, peculiarities and particularities of many birds. Wilson and Nuttall and Audubon each reached that height; so did Michelet and Thoreau; so have John Burroughs, W. L. Shoemaker and Wilson Flagg; all told the story from a keen ether, above the clouds of synonymy and diagnoses; while Nehrling follows, at no appreciable interval.

Only those who are in the secret will realize how high is the praise we

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\***North American Birds.** By H. Nehrling. 4to. Pub. in parts, paper, 40 to 48 pp. text in each, with 3 pll. col'd. (Prospectus calling for 12 parts, 36 plates, to be completed in 1890.) Parts I, II, pp. 1-96, and six plates. Milwaukee: Geo. Brumder, 1888. Also published simultaneously in German, *Die Nord-Amerikanische Vogelwelt*, u. s. w., Verlag von Geo. Brumder.



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