

NOTES AND NEWS.

EDWIN SHEPPARD, for a number of years an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at Philadelphia, April 7, 1904, at an advanced age. Mr. Sheppard was an artist and worked for many years at the Academy of Natural Sciences making illustrations for various scientific works. Birds were his special delight and many familiar cuts are the results of his labors, as for instance the text figures in Baird, Brewer and Ridgway's 'History of North American Birds,' Mr. D. G. Elliot's volumes on 'Shore Birds,' "Ducks, Geese," etc. Dr. Coues once said of him that he had drawn "more and better figures of American birds than any living artist," which was doubtless true at the time, but his drawing, while accurate in detail, will not compare with the work of the modern school, who study the live bird rather than the stuffed specimen.

Mr. Sheppard was a native of Richmond, Va., and came north in early life to study art. At the outbreak of the Rebellion he enlisted in the Confederate army and at the close of the war returned to Philadelphia where he resided for the rest of his life.

He was a true type of the southern gentleman and a warm friend of both the bird and the ornithologist.—W. S.

FROM the Report of the Chief of the Division of the Biological Survey, Dr. C. Hart Merriam, for the year 1903 (Ann. Rep. Dept. of Agriculture, 1903, pp. 483-495) we learn that field work in connection with the study of the geographic distribution of mammals, birds, and plants was carried on in 1903 along the western slopes and foothills of the Sierra Nevada and in the Coast Ranges in California, under the immediate supervision of Dr. Merriam; in various parts of Texas and New Mexico, under Mr. Vernon Bailey; in southern Mexico, by Messrs. Nelson and Goldman; in Alaska, under Mr. W. H. Osgood, and in the Barren Grounds near the Arctic coast by Mr. E. A. Preble. In most of these regions field work will be continued during 1904. Investigations in Economic Ornithology were continued as usual by Prof. Beal and Dr. Judd; and the work of game protection, under Dr. Palmer, has been successfully carried on, with most important results. The completion of "a bibliography of works relating to the occurrence of North American birds south of the United States" has been completed, and "all of the migration material collected in the past nineteen years has been overhauled, rearranged, and catalogued to date, so that it is now readily accessible." It is also announced that bulletins will be published during 1904 on 'Migration of North American Warblers,' and on 'Migration and Protection of Shore Birds.' A report on a biological survey of Texas is well advanced toward publication.

THROUGH the generosity of Mr. John E. Thayer, of Lancaster, Mass.,

Mr. W. W. Brown, Jr., has been sent on an expedition to Central America, mainly in the interest of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy at Harvard College, the expedition to be known as 'The John E. Thayer Expedition of 1904-1905.' Mr. Brown, already so well known for his excellent work in tropical America for the Messrs. O. and E. A. Bangs, will make collections in all departments of natural history, as circumstances may favor, but will give special attention to vertebrates, and primarily to birds and mammals. With the exception of a portion of the birds, the material will all be presented to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, and will form the basis of a series of papers to be published in its 'Bulletin.' Mr. Brown started for his new field of labor in February, going first to the Pearl Islands in the Bay of Panama, which are great breeding resorts for various sea birds. He has thus far been very successful, having already sent to Cambridge ten large cases as the result of his work at the Pearl Islands.

Such munificence in the interest of science is worthy of the highest recognition, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Thayer's excellent example will be frequently emulated by other men amply provided with means for the promotion of scientific investigation, but who too often fail to appreciate the opportunities thus offered for not only advancing science but for raising an enviable and long-enduring monument to themselves.

FRIENDS of the American Museum of Natural History having generously provided means for the construction of additional groups of characteristic North American birds, a number of such groups are now under construction at the Museum or have recently been installed, the latter including three California groups, representing the Yellow-billed Magpie, the newly described Sierra Dusky Grouse, and the California Partridge. A large California group is under way, which will later call for detailed mention. In order to secure groups representing species now rapidly approaching extinction, Mr. Chapman was sent to Florida early in March last to secure, if possible, materials for Carolina Paroquet and Ivory-billed Woodpecker groups. Although a few birds were found no nests were discovered, and the attempt to secure satisfactory materials for these groups proved a failure. From Florida Mr. Chapman went to the Bahamas in search of Flamingoes, and after some discouraging experiences succeeded in locating the rookeries; and the latest reports from him indicate that he has been successful in securing the necessary material for a fine group of these beautiful birds.

In this connection it may be stated that during the past year the ornithological collection at the American Museum has been increased by the addition, by purchase and through Museum expeditions, of about 13,000 birds, including the well-known Sennett Collection, which for many years has, through deposit, formed a part of the Museum's resources. Recently Dr. Dwight has transferred his collection, numbering about 8000 specimens, to the Museum for storage and use, thus still further increasing the ornithological resources of the Museum.

THE writing of so-called 'nature books' by a certain class of romancers has of late attracted the serious attention of naturalists who deplore the rapid development of this class of light literature, for the reason that many otherwise intelligent people who happen to know little of natural history are misled into taking such books as those recently put forth by William J. Long and Mason A. Walton at their face value and as veritable records of bona fide observations by competent naturalists, even school superintendents and school teachers of good standing innocently giving them their endorsement as proper 'nature books' for school use.

Several writers in 'Science' have recently taken up the matter, with especial reference to the writings of William J. Long. In 'Science' for Feb. 26, 1904, Prof. William Morton Wheeler, under the title 'Woodcock Surgery,' gave a critical and rather sarcastic analysis of Mr. Long's now famous article 'Animal Surgery' published in 'The Outlook' for September 12, 1903 (see Auk, Jan, 1904, pp. 88-90); and in 'Science' for March 4, 1904, Mr. Frank M. Chapman published a paper entitled 'The Case of William J. Long,' in which he quoted at length from a defense of Mr. Long published some time previously in the 'Evening Transcript' of Boston, and also some of Mr. Long's own 'confessions' as to his methods and aims as given in some of his books,—his "efforts to reveal 'a vast realm of nature outside of the realm of science' in 'ideas above and beyond the world of facts!'"

In 'Science' for April 22, 1904, Mr. William Harper Davis, a comparative psychologist of Columbia University, reviewed the discussion from the psychologist's standpoint, dwelling with some particularity upon "Mr. Long's gullibility," to whom he refers, after citing passages from his books, as "a confessed intellectual anarchist." The discussion is continued at still greater length by Mr. Long's rejoinder to his critics in 'Science' for May 13, 1904, in which, through the intervention of the editor, Mr. Long has the last word. Under the title 'Science, Nature and Criticism' Mr. Long makes the best of sundry indiscretions of his critics, and with an injured innocence air proceeds to produce various affidavits in proof of statements in his 'Animal Surgery' article, which show that there is "certainly warrant for believing that the woodcock sets his own broken leg," and also "that the habit is more common and widespread than [he] supposed possible when [he] published [his] own observations." Through good tact and skill he has made the best of his opportunities for defense and may be able to convince incompetent judges that he is an innocent victim of persecution, and that his statements have been met with "dogmatic denials mixed with considerable error and misrepresentation" rather than by candid objections and some knowledge on the part of his critics.

AN important work entitled 'The Geese of the Old World' is announced for early issue by subscription by Mr. Rowland Ward (166 Piccadilly, London). The work will be prepared by Sergius Alphéraky, Correspond-

ing Member of the Imperial Academy of Science of St. Petersburg, and illustrated with 24 colored plates by F. W. Frohawk, and a frontispiece by Dr. Suschkin depicting a Goose scene in Siberia. The subject will be treated both from a scientific and the sportsman's standpoint, and will treat fully of the habits, nesting, and geographical distribution of the species and subspecies. Subscription price, £2 12 6 net.

AT THE Annual Meeting of the Michigan Ornithological Club, held at Ann Arbor April 2, the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Prof. Walter B. Barrows, Agricultural College; First Vice-President, Prof. A. H. Griffith, Detroit Museum of Art; Vice-Presidents, Norman A. Wood, Ann Arbor, and Jas. B. Purdy, Plymouth; Secretary, Bradshaw H. Swales, Detroit; Treasurer, Chas. E. Wisner, Detroit; Editor-in-chief, Alex. W. Blain, Detroit; Associates, Prof. Walter B. Barrows and J. Claire Wood.

WITH a view to obtaining positive evidence of the return of birds to the place of their birth, or otherwise, as the case may be, Mr. P. A. Taverner, of 95 North Grand Boulevard, W., Detroit, Michigan, proposes to attach small aluminum bands to the tarsus of young birds, in the hope that some of the birds thus tagged may afterward fall into the hands of ornithologists and be reported. The tag, for the sake of brevity of address, will be inscribed "Notify The Auk, N. Y.," to which any such discoveries should be reported for publication.

A NATIONAL association of wild animal photographers is being formed for the purpose of promoting the new form popularly known as "camera hunting." It is hoped that this organization will be an effective means of discouraging the unnecessary slaughter of American birds and other wild animals. All interested should write to Mr. Leroy Melville Tufts, Field Station, Biological Survey, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Farmington, Maine.



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