

In regard to the other specimens mentioned in Mr. Grieve's Monograph, I shall only note, that the specimen which formerly was in Mr. Nicolai Aall's collection in Naes, near Arendal, Norway, is now in the Museum of the University in Christiania, and that it has been remounted recently.

Both in Blasius's list and in that of Mr. Grieve, the "Harvard University Museum" (= Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Mass.) is credited with the possession of two skeletons "prepared from mummy Great Auks obtained at Funk Island. during 1864." Mr. J. A. Allen, then curator at the Museum, wrote me under March 18, 1885, as follows:—"We have but *one* specimen of the Great Auk, and that is to be rated as a skeleton. It is, in reality, a so-called 'mummy,' and is from the Funk Islands. Only a portion of the bones have yet been laid bare—one wing and one leg—the rest is still covered with the dried flesh. In some unaccountable way it is commonly and erroneously supposed that we have two of these Great Auk mummies."

Mr. Grieve's Monograph is accompanied by a 'Chart showing the supposed distribution of the Great Auk or Garefowl.' We shall not pass an opinion on the manner in which "the supposed limit of region in which the Great Auk lived" has been drawn generally; but when the author includes the entire Norwegian coast, from the Swedish frontier to North Cape, with all its islands and fjords, he certainly has not been aware of Prof. Robert Collett's investigations, who, as early as 1872, in an article written in the English language (Remarks on the Ornithology of Northern Norway), showed that there was no conclusive evidence of a single example of this species having occurred within the confines of the country. Since then Prof. Collet has made it probable, that the Garefowl has really *once* been seen in Norway, but in a locality considerably to the east of the limits of Mr. Grieve's map (Mitth. Ornith. Ver. Wien, 1884, Nos. 5 and 6).

Altogether Mr. Grieve's book forms an attractive volume, full of interest and useful information. But on looking over the long series of monographs and monographic essays devoted to the Great Auk, we are justified in raising the question: Might not the time, ingenuity, and money invested on them have been applied to other branches of ornithology with greater results? Or, are there not questions of more importance to solve than whether there are 78 or 79 skins of the Great Auk in existence? If the same amount of painstaking scrutiny and exactness had been directed towards elucidating geographical distribution, individual variation, etc. etc., the benefit to our science might have been considerably greater.—L. S.

**Meves on the Size and Color of the Eyes of European Birds.**—We have just received what appears to be a book filling a gap in ornithological literature, viz., Wilhelm Meves's List of European Birds\* with indications

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\* Die Grösse und Farbe der Augen aller Europäischen Vögel, sowie der in der palæarctischen Region vorkommenden Arten in systematischer Ordnung nach Carl J. Sundevall's Versuch einer natürlichen Aufstellung der Vogelklasse von Wilhelm Meves. Halle a. S., Verlag von Wilhelm Schlüter. (No date on title page, but preface dated "Januar 1886.") 8vo., pp. iv + 74.

of the size and the color of their eyes. The author enumerates 649 'species' (or rather 648, as No. 475 goes out as synonymous with No 482), the names of which are given in Latin and German (often with one or two synonyms appended). In every instance the size of the eye is given in millimeters, separate for ♂ and ♀, if different, followed by a careful statement of the color of the iris and how it varies according to sex and age. About sixty per cent of the statements are based upon the author's own examinations, while for the rest the colors given are taken from the best available sources, and the size estimated, in which case the figures are included in brackets. Anybody who has noticed how our taxidermists generally select eyes at hap-hazard when mounting birds, and how many an otherwise nicely stuffed bird has become an atrocious caricature by the disproportionate size of the eyes, cannot fail to see that this book must be of great service to taxidermists, especially to those of Europe; but until a similar work on American birds be published, it will also be valuable to the taxidermists of this country, for out of a total number of 650 species, Mr. Meves has measured about 150 forms which are absolutely identical or nearly so with birds holding a place in North American ornithological lists. We are happy to say, however, that a similar work is already in preparation for North American birds, giving not only the colors of the irides, but also including measurements of the eyes. Meves's book will at the same time, serve as a handy 'check list' of European (western palæarctic) birds, although the nomenclature is sadly 'eclectic,' arbitrary rejections of old names, because "regelwidrig," as the German ornithologists are pleased to say, being very frequent, and so also the retention of a number of preoccupied names; in some cases the latest innovations have been adopted, while in others the author is "conservative where, according to Mr. Seebohm, he ought to be conservative." His splitting of genera seems equally inconsistent (the genus *Picus* is entirely lost, after the fashion of Sundevall, while *Hirundo* is retained). In some instances already corrected mistakes are perpetuated (as *Pacila kamtschatkensis* Bonap.=Sibirische Sumpfmiese, p. 10), while on the other hand more recent additions to the European Fauna have been overlooked, as, for instance, *Sitta whiteheadi* Sharpe. We note, that like Sundevall, he follows Linnaei 10th edition (1758), but rejects trinomials.—L. S.

'Water Birds of North America'—'A Few Corrections' Rectified.—Dr. J. G. Cooper's long list of so-called 'corrections' to the 'Water-Birds of North America,' in the January number of the 'The Auk,' calls for comment from me in only a few cases, I having exercised no right of revision or supervision whatever over Dr. Brewer's portion of the work. The particular cases with which I am concerned are the following:—

*Mareca americana*.—Dr. Cooper says that this species "has not been found breeding in the United States." If he will turn to page 622 of my 'Zoology of the 40th Parallel,' he will see that on June 11, 1869, I collected a nest with 10 eggs of this species on Rabbit Island, in the Great Salt Lake.