

labors, if not alone the results, but also the methods by which they were reached, were given to the the public. To the ornithologist of today, this is perhaps of minor importance. Still he may desire to know why certain proposed races or species were rejected, while the ornithologist of the future, unaware of the facts which have influenced each decision, may desire to judge for himself, and the non-appearance of any data which have governed this committee in its examinations, causing them to ignore certain proposed changes and alter or adopt others, will, to say the least, be to him somewhat confusing. Would it not be well, therefore, if in addition to its report, this committee also publish an abstract of its proceedings, either as an appendix, as a special paper in this magazine, or in such other manner as it may deem best?

Very respectfully,

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. JEROME HENRY KIDDER, one of the original members of the A. O. U., died in Washington, D. C., on April 8, in his forty-ninth year, after a short illness from pneumonia. Dr. Kidder was honored with a membership in the A. O. U. for his very creditable ornithological work in connection with the Transit of Venus Expedition to Kerguelen Island in 1874, to which he acted as surgeon and naturalist. His report, prepared in conjunction with Dr. Coues, was published in 1876, as Bulletin No. 3 of the U. S. National Museum, and entitled 'Contributions to the Natural History of Kerguelen Island,' and 'A Study of *Chionis minor* with reference to its Structure and Systematic Position'. Dr. Kidder was graduated at Harvard College in 1862, and from this date till 1883 was in the military and naval service of the United States, first as a military cadet in the hospitals near Baltimore during the War of the Rebellion, and later as assistant surgeon and surgeon in the U. S. Navy. In 1883 he resigned his commission for special service with the U. S. Fish Commission under Professor Baird. Later he was made Assistant Commissioner under Professor Goode, but soon after resigned to accept an important position in the Smithsonian Institution. In later years his special line of professional work was in the direction of sanitation and hygiene, in which he made many important researches. About a year before his death he sent in his resignation as a member of the A. O. U., on the very conscientious ground that as he was no longer doing work in ornithology he felt it was not right for him to hold a position of honor to which others were so much better entitled. Personally Dr. Kidder was a great favorite with his social and scientific associates, to whom his sudden death was a great shock.

THE first edition of 'The Birds of Pennsylvania,' by Dr. B. H. Warren, State Ornithologist of Pennsylvania, having been quickly exhausted, the Legislature of that State has directed Dr. Warren to prepare a second and revised edition of this excellent Manual (see *Auk*, VI, p. 170), 19,000 copies of which are for gratuitous distribution to the schools and agricultural societies of the State. In order to make it as complete and trustworthy as possible, Dr. Warren has already issued a circular to the ornithologists of the State, soliciting their coöperation in perfecting the work. The circular is accompanied by a 'Provisional List' of the birds of Pennsylvania, with suggestions as to the character of the information most desired. With the increased appropriation for the work, and the systematic way Dr. Warren has entered upon his congenial task, a much more elaborate manual must be the result—one as creditable to the author, we have no doubt, as is the liberal policy of the Legislature, toward science and the education of the people in ornithological matters, to the great State of Pennsylvania.

The intelligent interest in natural history shown by the State of Pennsylvania is further manifested in an appropriation of \$50,000 to the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences for an addition to its museum building; and also in placing in the hands of its ornithologist, Dr. B. H. Warren, the sum of \$3600 for a complete collection of the birds and mammals of the State. It has also enacted an excellent statute for the protection of song and wild birds, similar in general character to the measure proposed and advocated by the A. O. U. Committee on Bird Protection two years ago. In fact, the passage of so creditable an act is doubtless due largely to the efforts and influence of Dr. Warren and the Chairman of the A. O. U. Committee, Mr. Sennett, both of whom have given public addresses on the subject of Bird Protection in different parts of the State. Further intelligent action in the same general line is the amendment of the notorious 'Scalp Act' so as to exempt Hawks and Owls from its provisions.

SOME time since (*Auk*, July, 1886, p. 415) we called attention to an announcement of a prospectus of a work in the German language on North American birds, by Mr. H. Nehrling, an Active Member of the A. O. U., and the author of many papers on North American birds, including a paper on the birds of southern Texas, published in the 'Bulletin' of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and various local lists and popular articles in the German ornithological journals. It now gives us pleasure to say that the publication of the work has begun, and that it will appear in English, under the title 'North American Birds,' as well as in German. The work will be issued in twelve parts, of 40 to 48 quarto pages each, "with 36 colored plates after water color paintings by Prof. Robert Ridgway, of Washington, D. C., Prof. A. Göring, Leipzig, and Gustav Murtzel, Berlin." It is published at one dollar per part, by Geo. Brumder, of Milwaukee, Wis., the completion of the work being promised during the fall of 1890. We have already received Part I of both editions, and find it a work we can heartily commend, as a popular treatise on our birds.

The English version seems not to be a strict translation of the German, but rather a paraphrase, with some omissions. It is to be hoped that, through haste of preparation, the English text will not be suffered to fall below the standard of the German edition.

The biographies are based primarily on the author's own field experiences, and are written in a graphic yet simple and pleasing style. The best authorities, however, are freely quoted. The technical matter is brief, and printed in smaller type at the end of the biographies. The colored illustrations are effective and highly creditable, considering the low price of the work, while the paper and typography are excellent. We trust the work will meet with the success it so well deserves.

THE REPORT of the Ornithologist and Mammalogist of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Dr. C. Hart Merriam, for the year 1888, contains an interesting account of the scope and character of the work of the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy, as conducted during the last year. The investigations of a strictly economic character relate especially to the food of Hawks and Owls, Crows, Blackbirds, the Bobolink, the Mink, and the Pocket Gophers and Ground Squirrels of the West, respecting each of which subjects much material has been gathered and partially elaborated, a special 'Bulletin' on the food of Hawks and Owls by Dr. A. K. Fisher, being nearly ready for the press, while the present report contains papers on the Mink, by Dr. Merriam, on the food of Crows, by Prof. Walter B. Barrows, and on the food of the Sparrow Hawk and Short-eared Owl, by Dr. Fisher. Professor Barrows also has a paper on the Rose-breasted Grosbeak as an enemy of the potato-bug. Dr. Merriam has an interesting report on the introduction of several species of Asiatic Pheasants into Vancouver Island and at various points in Oregon and Washington. The Mongolian or Ring Pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus*) seems to have multiplied rapidly, and fears are already entertained that it may eventually prove a pest, at least to farmers.

The work of the Division has already outgrown the appropriations made for carrying it on, and is much retarded through lack of a larger force of assistants for tabulating and elaborating the returns received in answer to the thousands of schedules of inquiry sent out semi-annually to observers in all parts of the country. The Chief of the Division sets forth very forcibly the importance of a knowledge of the geographical distribution of species, and it is to be hoped that our Congressmen will show their appreciation of this important subject in larger appropriations for carrying on the work.

The report indicates excellent progress in the several lines of special work, which are thoroughly systematized and energetically prosecuted.

AN AUDUBON ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB has been organized in Chicago, with Mr. J. M. Howard as President. At present there are seven active members.