

RECENT LITERATURE.

Gätke's 'Die Vogelwarte Helgoland'.*—The long expected report of Herr Gätke's forty years' observations on the birds of Helgoland forms a beautiful volume of over 600 pages, replete with matter of the highest interest to ornithologists and bird-lovers the world over. Helgoland, a rocky islet at the mouth of the River Elbe, about a mile in length by a third of a mile in width, rising almost vertically on all sides to a height of about 200 feet above the sea, has long been celebrated in ornithological annals for its many waifs and strays of bird life, which through Herr Gätke have found an ever alert and faithful chronicler. Helgoland is situated in one of the great highways of bird migration, and from its isolated position and height above the sea is a natural resting place for the hordes of tired wanderers on their long semi-annual journeys. At this little watch-tower Herr Gätke has taken nearly four hundred species (396 is the exact number recorded), including waifs "from the far North, East, West, and South,"—from Siberia, North America, the Arctic Regions, Africa, and Asia Minor.

The work is edited by Dr. Rudolf Blasius, who dedicates it to the memory of his father who brought early to notice the remarkable observations of Herr Gätke. The work is divided into three parts: I, Migration of Birds; II, Change of Color in Birds without moulting; III, Birds observed at Helgoland. The first part contains chapters on (1) The ordinary migration at Helgoland (pp. 3-23); (2) Direction of the migratory flights, (pp. 24-45); (3) Height at which migratory birds fly (pp. 46-64); (4) Rapidity of their flight (pp. 65-75); (5) Meteorological conditions affecting migration (pp. 76-101); (6) Migration in relation to age and sex (pp. 103-115); (7) Exceptional appearances (pp. 116-133); (8) What guides birds during migration? (pp. 134-146); (9) What causes birds to migrate? (pp. 148-152).

Herr Gätke's observations throw much light on many problems connected with migration, and it is to be hoped that his 'Vogelwarte Helgoland' will be promptly translated and made generally available to English readers. In his chapter on 'Migration in relation to age and sex' (*Zug nach Alter und Geschlecht*), he combats vigorously what he considers the erroneous ideas of the early times respecting the fall migration, namely, that the old birds are the leaders, teachers, and guides of the young. He gives it as incontrovertably proven by his observations on the birds of Helgoland, that, in the fall, the young birds begin to appear within from six to eight weeks after they leave the nest, and that the old birds of the same species follow some two months later, and that the migration as a rule is closed by the finest old males. In spring he finds it to be the in-

* Die | Vogelwarte Helgoland. I — | Von Heinrich Gätke, | [= 5 lines, titles]
| — | Herausgegeben | von | Professor, Dr. Rudolf Blasius. | — | Braunschweig | Joh.
Heinr. Meyer. | 1891. | Roy. 8vo, 6ll., pp. 1-609, and frontispiece (portrait of author).

variable rule in all species that the finest old males reach the breeding grounds first, followed soon by the old females, while the young birds close the migration.

He notes the occurrence at Helgoland of fifteen species of North American birds, each, with the exception of two, represented by a single example, as follows:—

<i>Merula migratoria.</i>	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus.</i>
<i>Turdus u. swainsoni.</i>	<i>Charadrius dominicus.</i>
<i>Turdus a. pallasi.</i>	<i>Actitis macularia.</i>
<i>Turdus fuscescens.</i>	<i>Tryngites subruficollis.</i>
<i>Galeoscoptes carolinensis.</i>	<i>Larus philadelphia.</i>
<i>Harporhynchus rufus.</i>	<i>Rhodostethia rosea.</i>
<i>Dendroica virens.</i>	<i>Xema sabinii.</i>
<i>Anthus pensilvanicus.</i>	

The migration of each of the nearly four hundred species is treated in detail, sometimes several pages being given to a single species. A work on birds possessing more general interest has doubtless not for a long time appeared, it fully warranting the pleasant anticipations its announcement long since awakened.—J. A. A.

Cory's 'Birds of the Bahama Islands'.*—The revised edition of Mr. Cory's 'Birds of the Bahama Islands', issued a few months since, is a 'remainder' from the first edition, issued with uncolored plates, and the addition of nine interpolated unpagged leaves, giving (1) a 'Preface to Revised Edition' (one page); (2) 'Ornithological Bibliography of the Bahama Islands' (2 pages, 16 titles); (3) 'Species and Subspecies described since 1880' (9 pages, 14 species and subspecies); (4) 'Species and subspecies which have been added to the Fauna since 1880' (1 page, 2 species and 1 subspecies); (5) 'Corrections and changes which have been made since 1880, with remarks on several species which should be eliminated' (2 pages, containing remarks on 8 species); and (6) 'Changes in Nomenclature and Classification' (2 pages). *Mimocichla rubripes*, *Loxigilla noctis*, and *Sporadinus bracei* are expunged from the list of Bahama birds, as given in the first edition, and the last named species is considered as identical with *S. ricordii*. The 'changes in nomenclature' consist mainly of a concordance, showing the present equivalents of various names used in the first edition. During the interval of ten years between the publication of the original and the revised edition much has been added to our knowledge of the subject, and the author has "thought it advisable to issue the few remaining copies of the first edition in the form of a revised edi-

* The Birds of the Bahama Islands containing many birds new to the Islands and a number of undescribed winter plumages of North American birds. By Charles B. Cory, . . . [= 12 lines, honorary titles, etc.] Revised Edition. Estes & Lauriat, Boston, U. S. A. 1890.—4to, pp. 1-250, plus 9 unpagged interpolated leaves, pll. 8, uncolored.