

cola, the pale color and small size of the birds, both of which were closely observed for fully twenty minutes, making identification practically certain. Snow is nearly always on the ground at this time of the year, and the birds search for hillocks of bare earth. The nests are beautifully cupped and carefully built of roots of grass.—C. K. CLARKE, M. D., *Kingston, Ontario*.

An Addition and a Correction to the List of North Carolina Birds.—BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Dendroica castanea*).—A female *D. castanea* was taken by myself at Chapel Hill, Oct. 2, 1897, and a male was secured on the 8th of the same month. Both specimens were in the immature plumage. They were identified by Prof. Robert Ridgway. I believe this to be the first record of this bird in North Carolina.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW (*Spizella pallida*).—In part second of the 'Journal of the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society,' for 1887, published at Chapel Hill, Prof. Geo. F. Atkinson gives a 'Preliminary Catalogue of the Birds of North Carolina.' Under the name of *S. pallida* he says: "Accidental. One taken at Chapel Hill, March 8th, 1886 (Univ. Coll.)" The specimen to which he refers is No. 1050 in the University collection.

In two or more publications since, references have been made to this as the one record of this Sparrow's occurrence in the State. Upon examining the specimen I became convinced that an error had been committed in the identification, and at once sent it to the Smithsonian Institution. Prof. Richmond identified it as being simply *Melospiza georgiana*.—T. GILBERT PEARSON, *Chapel Hill, N. C.*

RECENT LITERATURE.

Two New Popular Bird Books.—Two more popular bird books have just been added to the long series of hand-books for beginners. Though both are prepared with the same object in view, they differ radically from each other in style of treatment of the subject, and also are quite unlike any of their predecessors. One is the work of an enthusiastic ornithologist of wide experience with birds in life, the other by a schoolmaster and an amateur, who has his subject well in hand, and who knows from practical experience the needs of beginners in attempting nature studies. With points of view and previous experience so unlike, it is not surprising that the method of treating the subject here in hand—the birds of eastern North America—should also widely differ.

Mr. Scott's 'Bird Studies'¹ is a quarto of 375 pages, illustrated with about 170 half-tone reproductions of photographs, about one half of them being full-page plates. As these are paged as part of the text, at least one third of the book is thus made up of pictures. "The object of the treatise," says the author, "is to place before students and others who wish to acquire knowledge on the subject, a means to that end. It is an invitation to a more intimate acquaintance with the Land Birds of Eastern North America. That is all." The area included is "that portion of the continent east of the Mississippi River, Lake Winnipeg, and the western borders of Hudson's Bay, together with Greenland and the islands which naturally group themselves with the mainland of the region." Later a second volume, on the Water Birds, is promised, should the present one meet with a favorable reception.

Few ornithologists have had so favorable opportunities for studying the birds of eastern North America in life as Mr. Scott, who for the last thirty years has devoted a large part of his time to field work and during his long periods of sojourn in various parts of the eastern States, in southern Florida and in Arizona has been able to make the acquaintance in life of most of the species here treated. The accuracy of his text, and his evident familiarity with many birds of rare or local distribution, as well as with those of common occurrence, indicate how well he has improved his advantages and how little he is dependent on outside sources for information. He tells what he has to say of the habits of his birds very pleasantly, but adds, nevertheless, very little in this respect to the general stock of knowledge, and rarely introduces personal incident. This we may readily believe is due to lack of space, since not less than 650 forms must be treated in an actual text space of about 250 pages.

The make up of the book presents several rather strange features for a book intended as a guide to the birds of eastern North America, inasmuch as there are no 'keys' for the determination of the species, no generalities whatever, nor any classification beyond the division of the subject under some half dozen headings of such an indeterminate character as to be of very slight aid as a guide to where any given bird may be found described. These headings, — 'About the House,' 'Along the Highway,' 'In the Woods,' 'Across the Fields,' 'In the Marsh and Swamps,' 'By Stream and Field,' — while prettily suggestive, can prove of very little assistance to the beginner in finding his bird. If he knows it already, he can find it by the index, and then read what Mr. Scott has to say of it and enjoy his pictures. If he does not know it, the task of

¹ Bird Studies | An Account of the Land Birds | of Eastern North America
| By | William E. D. Scott | — | With illustrations from original photographs
| — | New York and London | G. P. Putman's Sons | The Knickerbocker
Press | 1898. — 4to, pp. xii + 363. Profusely illustrated with half-tone repro-
ductions from photographs. \$5.00 net.

hunting for it without some sort of introductory key is increased by these divisions rather than lessened, for if all of the Sparrows and Warblers were in one place instead of in three or four the case would be more hopeful. Yet such great tenderness has the author shown for his readers that he has managed to do without not only keys and diagrams but all technical terms, even banishing such easy every-day expressions as primaries, secondaries, wing-coverts and tail-coverts, substituting therefor such circumlocutions as may seem to best fit the case. The descriptions of the birds are variously interwoven with the general text, all the matter being uniformly in large type. A novel feature has also been introduced into the illustrations, there being many reproductions of photographs of bird skins made up as cabinet specimens and of dead birds laid out in a similar attitude. However such illustrations may strike the reader from the sentimental side, especially the 'how-to-know-birds-without-a-gun' class, it must be confessed that they can be made of very efficient service as an aid in identification. There are many illustrations of young birds and birds' nests from life, but many of the full page plates are from mounted birds placed in natural surroundings. The effect in many cases is excellent, but there is a tale-tale expression about the eyes and head, if not elsewhere, that shows the bird is dead and not alive, however clever the artist's conception.

One of the most valuable parts of the book is the ten pages devoted to the Blue Jay. The full page illustrations give, (1) the nest and eggs, (2 and 3), the nest with young, (4) the 'Blue Jay hammering,' and (5) in repose. There are four other figures of young birds of various ages, from six to fourteen days old. The purpose of this digression is to give some account, "by word and picture, of how young birds grow," and the details of the matter thus presented are especially interesting and instructive. Mr. Scott refers to the exercise of the muscles of the feet by the young birds by constantly grasping, first with one foot and then the other, the twigs and rootlets composing the lining of the nest. As shown by some experiments he relates, this constant exercise of the feet is necessary for the proper development of these members, it being, he believes, the natural function of the nest-lining to afford a grasping surface to the feet.

As a contribution to popular bird literature Mr. Scott's book is excellent so far as it goes, but we believe its efficiency as a help to the student in finding out the name of an unknown bird would have been greatly strengthened by adding 'keys,' and consequently some sort of system in the arrangement of the species. The 'systematic arrangement,' is given, it is true, in the form of a list at the end of the book, including the names and classification, from order to subspecies, from the Gallinæ to the end of the song birds. The book is beautifully printed, and with its wealth of illustrations, presents a very attractive appearance.

Mr. Apgar's 'Birds, of the United States east of the Rocky Moun-

tains'¹ is compact and business-like, having quite the air and appearance of a scientific school manual, with its analytical keys, strictly systematic arrangement, and 'glossary.' The thorny road of technicalities is smoothed, not by omitting the technicalities, but by using them, with proper definitions and explanations, aided by cuts and diagrams when necessary. Its purpose appears to be primarily that of a school manual, and for such use seems well adapted. The subject is reduced to simple terms, and is methodically presented. Even the scientific names are marked for accent. Part I (pp. 9-38) treats of the external parts of birds and the terms needed for their description. The treatment is for the most part brief, but is abundantly illustrated by appropriate outline figures. Under the head of 'Nests and Eggs' some very good advice is given to would-be collectors, both as to the taking of eggs and the manner of the taking. Part II (pp. 39-348) treats systematically of the species, giving first a key to the families, with instructions for its use, and later, in their proper places, keys to the genera and species. About fifty to a hundred words, in large type, give the leading traits of the species, both as to color, markings and habits, the measurements and area of distribution being added in a paragraph of smaller type, to which also the various subspecies are altogether relegated. Each species is usually illustrated with a full-length wash-drawing—generally effective and helpful but rarely artistic and often quite otherwise, some of them being the worst we have seen in a modern bird book. It is on the whole very carefully compiled, and therefore trustworthy, though the paraphrasing sometimes fails to fully conceal the author's sources of information.

Part III (pp. 349-372) treats of 'The Study of Birds in the Field,' giving brief directions as to how, when and where to find birds, with keys for their identification 'in the bush,' the keys in Part II being for the identification of birds 'in the hand.' Part IV (pp. 373-389) teaches the 'Preparation of bird specimens for display or study.' This includes instructions for skinning and mounting, with illustrations, and the preparation of eggs and nests. A glossary and index conclude this very serviceable little volume, which will doubtless assist much in the introduction of bird study in schools.—J. A. A.

Cory's Ducks, Geese and Swans.²—Mr. Cory's 'How to know the

¹ Birds | of the United States | east of the Rocky Mountains | A Manual for the identification of species | in hand or in bush | By Austin C. Appgar | Author of "Trees of the Northern United States," etc. | —New York, Cincinnati, Chicago | American Book Company | —No date; copyright, 1898. Sm. 8vo, pp. 415, numerous text illustrations.

² How to know | the | Ducks, Geese and Swans | of | North America | all the Species being grouped according to Size and Color | — | By Charles B. Cory | . . . [= 4 lines of titles] . . . [= 5 lines of titles of the Author's previous books] | — | For sale by | Little, Brown & Co. | Boston | 1897 — Sm. quarto, pp. 95, with 5 plates and numerous text figures.