

retained for *V. monachus*, *Strix* for the Barn Owls, *Merganser* and *Mergus* for two different genera, *Mycteria* for the Jabiru, *Tantalus* for the Wood Ibis, etc., etc. It is unfortunate that in such an excellent work as 'Die Vögel', which could do so much towards uniformity in nomenclature, the modern system should not be adopted. The classification is also conservative and many generally accepted relationships are not admitted. The Owls still remain among the Birds of Prey, the Pigeons and Sand Grouse are separated by the Phasianidæ, while the Gulls and Shore-birds are widely separated, etc.

An introduction covering pp. 1-67 treats briefly of structure, classification, zoögeography, nomenclature etc. with a useful concordance of the names of the various parts of a bird in Latin, German, English, French and Italian.

Altogether 'Die Vögel' promises to be one of the standard works of reference on the birds of the world from the systematic standpoint, and contains more information of this kind than any other book of the same size — more probably than any other work except the 'British Museum Catalogue' or the still uncompleted 'Tierreich.'— W. S.

'**Oologia Neerlandica.**'¹— The four parts of Mr. Van Pelt Lechner's work which have appeared since our last notice bring this admirable publication to completion. The unusually high standard of both plates and letter press is fully maintained and the work will take its place as one of the noteworthy publications dealing with birds' eggs — an example of what can be done in scientific oölogical investigation.

These parts deal largely with the Terns, Shore-birds, Rails, Herons, etc., and the plates are particularly handsome. Some of them are identical with, or very closely related to, American species and hence the discussion of the coloration of their eggs and the characters by which they may be distinguished are of great interest to American oölogists. Still more interesting however are the discussions of shell layers of the Falconidæ and other groups and the generic characters which their coloration furnishes, *Buteo* and *Accipiter* for instance have the first layer green and the second white, while in *Falco* both are white, the latter colored superficially. In all the *Falconidæ* there is a third thin layer of mucus which bears spots in all the genera mentioned. The author points out the errors that have resulted in making gross comparisons between the eggs of certain species, when the colorations compared arise from different shell layers and are therefore not comparable. In comparing eggs of *Coturnix* and *Perdix* the author finds that the spots on the eggs of the former are contained in a superficial layer of glutin, under which is an unspotted layer, yellowish or grayish brown in color, which corresponds with the surface layer of the *Perdix* eggs. The fun-

¹ "Oologia Neerlandica" Eggs of Birds Breeding in the Netherlands. By A. A. Van Pelt Lechner. Parts IV-VII. Jan., Aug., and Nov. 1913, and Feb., 1914.

damental layer in both cases is colored with oöcyanin. This gives some idea of the thorough study of the shell structure and coloration that Mr. Lechner has conducted, a line of investigation which has been utterly neglected by American 'oölogists' but one well worthy of pursuit if they would substantiate the claim that their large series of egg shells are collected for the benefit of 'science.' One can readily appreciate how such investigations may yield data of much phylogenetic value. We congratulate Mr. Lechner upon the character of his work and upon its progress towards completion, while the publisher deserves the highest credit for a beautiful piece of book-making.— W. S.

Phillips on African birds.— Drs. J. C. Phillips and G. M. Allen spent two months beginning December 25, 1912, on the Blue-Nile and Dinder River, in Sennar, Sudan, and obtained a collection of 340 birds, representing 150 species. A briefly annotated list of these is published by Dr. Phillips in the Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy,¹ with a short account of the trip. Descriptions of two new forms, *Caprimulgus eleanoræ* and *Passer domesticus chephreni* were described previously,² while in the present number of 'The Auk' appears an article on the author's impressions of the bird life of the Sudan and a color plate of the new Nightjar.

Dr. Phillips found the mid-winter bird-life, especially at the mountain at Fazogli, far less rich and varied than has been reported by summer visitors and evidently, as he points out, there must be considerable local seasonal movements among the resident species.— W. S.

Bunker on the Birds of Kansas.— During the years 1911 and 1912, Messrs. C. D. Bunker and T. A. Rockland made extensive explorations along the south, west and north borders of Kansas, collecting about 1700 skins in forty-one different counties. Meanwhile, Miss Arta Briggs has carefully reidentified the collection of birds in the University of Kansas Museum and brought the nomenclature up to date. Eight forms new to the state list were obtained on the field trips, while Miss Briggs has detected twenty-seven species and subspecies not contained in Prof. Snow's last edition of this 'List of the Birds of Kansas,' published in 1903. These have been incorporated in the new list of Kansas birds³ which Mr. Bunker, assisted by Miss Briggs and Mr. Dix Teachenor, here presents and which has been brought up to date in matters of nomenclature though primarily

¹ Notes on a Collection of Birds from the Sudan. By John C. Phillips. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. Vol. LVIII, No. 1, pp.1-27. December, 1913.

² Two New African Birds. By John C. Phillips. Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash. Vol. XXVI, pp. 167-168. June 30, 1913.

³ The Birds of Kansas. By C. D. Bunker, of the University of Kansas Museum. Kansas Univ. Sciences, Bull. VII, No. 5, June, 1913, pp. 137-158. An inserted slip states that "equal credit should be given to Miss Arta Briggs and Dix Teachenor for this publication."