

**Birds Caught by Burdocks.**—On the annual trip of the Brookline Bird Club to Plum Island on the Massachusetts coast, we were watching birds on a deserted farm midway between the dunes and the beach at the lower end of the island, when our attention was attracted toward a movement in a clump of burdocks about two feet in height. On approaching it I found a Golden-crowned Kinglet almost dead and a Red-breasted Nuthatch very much alive, both caught in the burrs. The Kinglet soon died but the Nuthatch was able to fly after being released. The rest of the burdocks were searched thoroughly and in another clump was found a dead bat.—LESLIE T. LITTLE, *Waltham, Mass.*

---

### RECENT LITERATURE

**Murphy's 'Bird Islands of Peru.'**—In this handsome volume<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy describes in detail his sojourn on the west coast of Peru during the latter part of 1919 and the early months of 1920. Through his lectures and shorter articles many of the readers of 'The Auk' have already gained some knowledge of this interesting region and their appetites have been whetted for more, so that the present volume will prove most welcome.

The object of Dr. Murphy's trip was to study oceanic conditions which are responsible for the abundant life that is found on this coast as well as its inter-relationship and distribution. On the islands lying off the Peruvian coast are located the famous guano beds which form an important source of revenue for the government and this industry, as well as the life histories of the birds which nest there and deposit the guano—the Cormorants, Boobies and Pelicans, naturally come in for much attention, the famous *guanay* or Peruvian Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax bougainvillei*, which Dr. Murphy terms "the most valuable bird in the world", being considered at length.

Dr. Murphy is very happy in the style of treatment of his subject and his book is at once a scientifically accurate account, to be relied upon as a work of reference, and an extremely interesting narrative which holds one's attention from beginning to end. There are vivid descriptions of the old Peruvian towns and their people, with bits of history and anecdote scattered through. Other sea birds beside the guano-producing species are mentioned through the text and the Condor and the Sea Lions come in for attention as well as the fisheries of the coast, and the more striking species of reptiles, crustaceans and insects.

The climatic conditions of this arid coastal district and the curious

---

<sup>1</sup> *Bird Islands of Peru. The Record of a Sojourn on the West Coast.* By Robert Cushman Murphy. Illustrated from Photographs by the Author. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York & London. The Knickerbocker Press. 1925, pp. 1-xx, + 1-362, numerous illustrations. Price \$5.00.