

'The spring near Orange, N.J.,' for instance, renders the peculiar mistiness and indefiniteness of a New Jersey landscape at that time of the year with considerable truth. The fascination of a new process of reproduction makes one eager to extend it to all subjects; and it is only after a long period of comparison that one can get far enough away from this fascination to obtain clear judgment of the possibilities of the method. He who discovers for himself the possibilities of a pot of red paint in decorative art is at first apt to apply the paint to every thing.

The wood-engraver and the etcher have nothing to fear at present from the various lithographic and photolithographic processes, save in the cheap market. The various gelatine processes must necessarily intensify the want of half-lights which is a characteristic of many photographs, and must obliterate even the faint differences in the degree of darkness of shadows which the original photograph may show.

Heliotypes and similar processes stand in the same relation to the pictures they reproduce that music-boxes stand to the performance by the musician of the piece of music they strive to reproduce. The delicacy and freedom of the original performance is lost. This cannot be said of wood-engraving and etching. The wood-engravings and etchings in this catalogue are superior to the other methods of reproduction, and show a capacity for interpreting the sentiment and the skill of the artist, even to the extent, sometimes, of improving on the originals of which they are the reproductions. The progress of one's art-culture is generally from photographs to engravings, and from engravings to etchings; and a half-hour's study of this illustrated catalogue would hasten one's culture in this generally accepted way.

#### YARROW'S CHECK-LIST OF AMERICAN REPTILES.

*Check-list of North-American Reptilia and Batrachia; with catalogue of specimens in U. S. national museum.* By H. C. YARROW, M.D. Washington, Government, 1883. (Bull. U.S. nat. mus., 24.) 8 + 249 p. 8°.

IN this catalogue are included the names of three hundred and thirty-seven species and sub-species of reptiles, and one hundred and thirty batrachians, found in North America north of Cape San Lucas and Key West. The

trinomial system of expressing the variations of widely distributed and variable species is adopted, as in the recent check-lists of birds; and the sub-species are numbered with the species. Each species and sub-species has been furnished with an 'English' name, although very few of them have any distinctive vernacular appellation in fact. The author observes, that to the task of ascertaining the English names in actual use has been added "the very laborious one of translating as literally as possible some of the polysyllable Greek and Latin names." This, it seems to us, has been a wholly profitless task. It is no gain to any one to call *Amblystoma jeffersonianum* platineum the 'slender salamander,' while the related *Batrachoseps attenuatus* is the 'slender lizard.' Nor is it evident why most, but not all, of the species of *Plethodon*, are called 'lizards,' while those of related genera are chiefly 'tritons' or 'salamanders.' *Hemidactylum scutatum*, although in no proper sense a lizard, and not scaly, is called the 'scaly lizard,' instead of the 'shielded little half-toe,' as its name would imply. Perhaps these English names of Dr. Yarrow are as good as any other set of made-up vernacular names; but, if so, it is time to protest against the whole business. Scientific names themselves are sufficiently trying without this additional incubus.

The classification and nomenclature of Dr. Yarrow's list is essentially that of the check-list of Professor Cope. Several additions have been made, and a few changes of name; most of the latter being in the group of turtles, and due to the studies of Mr. F. W. True. Some further changes in nomenclature must take place; as the substitution (already suggested by M. Boulenger) of '*Cryptobranchus*' for '*Menopoma*,' of '*Necturus maculatus*' for '*N. lateralis*,' and the suppression of the generic name '*Muraenopsis*,' pre-occupied among the eels.

After the check-list, follows a list of the specimens of each species in the National museum. This list is of very high importance as a contribution to our exact knowledge of the geographical distribution of species, and is, in fact, the *raison d'être* of the whole memoir. The bulletin is completed with a list of species desired by the museum, and with full index to scientific and vernacular names of species, and to the localities and names of persons mentioned.