

existing conditions from time to time will permit.

Work in the Coal Measures of the State has been in progress for two summers, and Volume I. of the Report is now almost ready for publication. Other volumes will appear at irregular intervals. Those already under preparation are: One on Coal, Oil and Gas; one on the Vertebrate Paleontology of the State; and one on the Salt and Gypsum deposits of Kansas.

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LAWRENCE, KANSAS,

April 20, 1895.

SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

Our Native Birds of Song and Beauty. BY H.

NEHRLING. 4°, 36 colored plates from originals by RIDGWAY, GOERING and MÜTZEL.

Published by Geo. Brumder, Milwaukee.

To be completed in 16 parts, \$1.00 each.

Part eleven of this excellent work, carrying it nearly half through the second volume, has been delivered to subscribers. It is enough praise to say that the high standard of the first volume is maintained. Mr. Nehrling is a field naturalist of the kind who deem a bird in the bush worth two in the hand. He loves everything in the woods and fields, and in telling about the birds and their lives he tells also of the trees and flowers.

The aim of the book is to give trustworthy accounts, in popular style, of the haunts and habits of our birds. Occasionally it does more and introduces a new fact of scientific interest, as when the breeding of the Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola*) is recorded for northern Wisconsin. On the other hand, it is not always down to date. For instance, under the Black Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte atrata*), the statement is quoted from Ridgway that "nothing has yet been learned as to its range during the breeding season." As a matter of fact, the species is common

in summer in the higher parts of the Salmon River Mountains in Idaho, where it was obtained by the reviewer five years ago (see North American Fauna, No. 5, 1891, 102). Similarly, the Gray-crowned Rosy Finch (*L. tephrocotis*) is said to be 'a resident of the interior of British America, near or in the Rocky Mountains,' and further, that 'none seem to breed in our territory.' If Mr. Nehrling had consulted the 'Report on the Ornithology of the Death Valley Expedition,' by Dr. A. K. Fisher, he would have found the statement that this species "is a common summer resident in the higher portions of the White Mountains and the Sierra Nevada in eastern and southern California," where it breeds abundantly and where nearly 40 specimens were secured by the expedition (North Am. Fauna, No. 7, 1893, 82).

The plates are of two kinds, some showing a single species in appropriate surroundings; others showing a number of species grouped together on a background of landscape or dense vegetation. The reproductions, while amply sufficient for purposes of identification, are evidently inferior to the originals, the number of stones used in printing being too small, and the workmanship not of the best. By far the most effective picture in the second volume is one of a group of winter birds—Evening Grosbeak, Pine Grosbeak, Redpoll, White-winged Crossbill, Nuthatch and Chickadee—on top of a spruce tree laden with snow. The combination of colors is striking and is aided by the red berries of a giant mountain ash, which, by the way, forgot to drop its leaves! Among the earlier plates of high merit, both in conception and execution, are several by Robert Ridgway that give charming glimpses of birds in characteristic attitudes and surroundings. Of these, the Golden-crowned Kinglet, Prothonotary Warbler, and Canon Wren are among the best.

By some accident in binding, the two plates of part 10 (pls. 13 and 15) are repeated from the first volume.

The nomenclature is that of the American Ornithologists' Union, except that the authority given is for the combination, not for the species—an unfortunate departure, inasmuch as it does not tell who was the original describer of the species.

To those unfamiliar with the first volume it may be said that the work is not a scientific treatise at all, but a popular book devoted to the life histories of birds, and based mainly on the authors' extensive field experiences, supplemented by quotations—perhaps too lengthy and frequent—from the writings of well-known ornithologists. It does not profess to cover all North American birds, omitting the water birds, birds of prey and a few others, but treats primarily, as its title indicates, of 'Our Native Birds of Song and Beauty.' It is a large, well printed quarto, and of its kind is incomparably the best book yet published in America.

C. H. M.

Municipal Government in Great Britain: By ALBERT SHAW. New York, The Century Co. 1895, 8°, viii + 385.

The modern increase of cities, and of the proportion of urban population as compared with that of rural districts, is, according to Mr. Shaw, to be accepted as a permanent fact for this generation and its immediate successors, and, instead of lamenting over it, it is the duty of thinking men to devise ways and means to do away with or diminish the evils which are at present connected with city life. The author states his point of view as being that a city government should so order the general affairs and interests of the community as to conduce positively to the welfare of its people, or, at all events, to make it certain that for the average family the life of the town shall not be necessarily detrimental. The object of

the book is to show how some of the older and larger British cities have dealt with this problem, giving details as to their modern forms of government, method of elections and modes of securing pure water, cleanliness, rapid transit, prevention of contagious diseases, etc.

The cities selected for this purpose are Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham and London, and for each a vast amount of information is clearly and concisely given.

Taking Birmingham as an example, it is shown that in twenty years the death rate of the city was lowered twenty per cent., and, in some parts of the city, sixty per cent.; that the provisions for the comfort and recreation of the people have been greatly increased, and that, while over forty millions of dollars have been expended in securing these improvements, the taxes have not been increased, because the municipal gas and water works, street railways, markets, etc., have been from the financial, as well as from the utilitarian, point of view completely successful. Surely it is worth while for the citizens of American cities to inquire how this has been accomplished.

The description of the means used by the city of Glasgow for the isolation and treatment of infectious disease is worthy of careful study. The Contagious Diseases Hospital has been given the semblance of a lovely village, and Mr. Shaw truly says that "the difference between popularity and unpopularity in a public hospital for infectious diseases may well mean all the difference between a terrible epidemic and its easy prevention." The sanitary wash houses of Glasgow are a feature of the work of the Health Department which finds no parallel in American cities but which is of great importance. One of these cost \$50,000, another \$75,000, and they far more than repay their cost.

The author promises a second volume