

A Manual of Zoology. C. JEFFEREY PARKER and WILLIAM A. HASWELL. New York and London, The Macmillan Company. 1900. Pp. xxv + 563. \$1.60.

Optical Activity and Chemical Composition. H. LANDOLT, translated by JOHN MCCRAE. London, Whittaker & Co.; New York, The Macmillan Company. 1899. Pp. ix + 158.

The Refraction of the Eye. A. EDWARD DAVIS. New York and London, The Macmillan Company. 1900. Pp. xii + 431. \$3.00

SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS AND ARTICLES.

The Osprey for January begins with a paper by Paul Bartsch on 'Birds of the Road,' which is followed by an illustrated article on 'Esthetic Birds; The Bower Birds of Australia and New Guinea,' by Theodore Gill. Under the title, 'The Birds of the Hawaiian Islands,' Leonhard Stejneger reviews Scott Wilson and Evans' monograph of the Hawaiian birds and discusses some of the many interesting points connected with the avifauna of the islands. Charles E. Beecher contributes a sketch of 'Othniel Charles Marsh as an Ornithologist,' and gives a list of the fossil species described by him. The editorials contain some interesting statements as do also the notes.

Bird Lore for February opens with a brief, but appreciative biographical sketch of the late Dr. Coues, accompanied by an excellent portrait. Frederic A. Lucas contributes an illustrated article, 'Concerning Birds' Tongues,' and Frank M. Chapman has a 'Note on the Economic Value of Gulls,' which includes a very beautiful picture of a group of kittiwakes. A list is given of 'Bird Lore's Advisory Council,' whose members have consented to assist students by responding to their requests for information. Lynds Jones discourses 'On Methods in Teaching Ornithology at Oberlin College' and W. H. C. Pynchon has a paper on 'Every-Day Study of Birds for Busy People.' Morgan St. John (aged 12) has an article on 'February Birds,' which shows that good observations may be made by a young observer. There are numerous notes and book reviews, and in the editorial department the question of bird protection is discussed at length.

The Plant World commences its third year

with the January number and announces that a series of articles by Mr. Pollard on the families of flowering plants will appear as supplements to each number. C. F. Saunders describes the 'New Jersey Pine Barrens in July,' Wm. T. Davis has some 'Observations on a Woodland Fire,' and C. A. Crandall under the caption 'The Fall Green Orchis (*Habenaria hyperborea*) visited by Mosquitoes' tells how these insects assist in the pollination of this plant. V. K. Chestnut discusses a 'Fatal Case of Amanita Poisoning' and Mrs. Caroline A. Creevy continues the series of articles on 'Plant Juices and their Commercial Values.'

McClure's Magazine for October contained a short story entitled 'The Killing of the Mammoth,' which was taken by many readers, not as fiction, but as a contribution to natural history. Numerous requests for information have been received by the Smithsonian Institution and the editors of the magazine. To explain matters, the editors have inserted in the issue for February an interesting and excellently illustrated article by Mr. F. A. Lucas of the U. S. National Museum, entitled 'The Truth about the Mammoth.'

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON.

THE 511th meeting of the Society was held at 8 p. m., on January 20th at the Cosmos Club, Surgeon General Sternberg, presiding.

Under the head of Informal Communications Professor T. J. J. See of the Naval Observatory, presented the results of his researches on the orbits of the Double-Stars τ Cygni and 95 Ceti. The substance of the paper was as follows: No good orbit of either star has been determined by previous investigators. The period of τ Cygni was found to be 57 years, and the eccentricity 0.37. The companion, which is always very difficult, has passed through periastron, and is slowly becoming easier to observe. 95 Ceti is the most difficult of known Double-Stars, and only a few measures have been made by previous observers. So many unsuccessful attempts had been made by Burnham and others during the last twenty years to separate the small star, that some astronomers