

RECENT ORNITHOLOGICAL WORKS

The Ornithological Works of Arthur, Ninth Marquis of Tweeddale, F.R.S., etc. Reprinted from the Originals by the desire of his Widow. Edited and Revised by his Nephew, Robert G. Wardlaw Ramsay, F.L.S., etc., Captain 74th Highlanders. Together with a Biographical Sketch of the Author, by William Howard Russell, LL.D. 4to. Pp. i-lxiv, 1-760. (London: For Private Circulation, 1881.)

Ornitologia della Papuasia e delle Molucche, di Tommaso Salvadori. Parte seconda. 1 vol. 4to. 706 pp. (Torino, 1881.)

THE very handsome volume, in which the works of the late Marquis of Tweeddale have now been collected and published, forms a fitting monument of the labours of one of the best ornithologists that this country has ever produced, and its utility to working naturalists cannot be doubted. No one who knew the author of these memoirs will be surprised at the new aspect which is thrown upon his life by the publication of the biographical sketch which Dr. Russell has contributed, though to scientific men Lord Tweeddale was chiefly known as a laborious ornithologist and a thoroughly sound writer and critic; but from the volume now before us we read the highest testimony to his qualities as a soldier, and receive evidence that the same thoroughness which characterised his scientific work was also prominent throughout the whole of his military career. His first ornithological paper appears to have been published in 1844, and was a carefully-written essay; and then for the space of twenty-two years nothing bearing on his favourite study appeared from his pen. His biography, however, shows that during this lapse of time he was completely occupied with his military duties, serving throughout the Sutlej campaign, and later on taking part with the Guards in the memorable Crimean War; and even at this distance of time it is refreshing to read the clear and vigorous criticisms which his keen perception enabled him to make at that period on the conduct of military affairs in the East. Retiring from active service in 1863, he appears to have from that time devoted himself to the pursuit of his favourite science, and until his death, in 1878, he worked with unflagging zeal at the ornithology of the Indian region, amassing one of the grandest collections of birds which has as yet been seen in any country, and forming a library unsurpassed for its completeness in ornithological literature.

To his nephew, Captain Wardlaw Ramsay, who has inherited his scientific tastes, the late Marquis bequeathed his magnificent library and collection, and the pious duty has devolved upon him of editing a complete edition of his uncle's memoirs, at the request of Lady Tweeddale, who has hereby raised a monument to her husband's memory which will keep the latter green in the minds of ornithologists for many a long year to come. Many of Lord Tweeddale's most important observations were contained in letters or short papers to various journals, and there was always a possibility of their being overlooked; but by the publication of the present volume, with its complete indices and cross-references supplied by the editor, there will be no such risk in future. Lord Tweeddale's

life forms a pleasing picture of what an English nobleman can do for science, if only his intelligence leads him in that direction; and many who are living can remember with pleasure the days spent beneath the hospitable roof at Chislehurst, where Lord Tweeddale was always glad to welcome any scientific visitors, for his love for science took a deeper turn than the mere following of his own particular branch of ornithology, and he always displayed an interest in every branch of intellectual study.

The perusal of his many excellent essays only deepens the regret that was felt by every one at the time of his decease, that a life only in its prime, and capable of doing so much good in every way, should have been prematurely closed.

In our notice of the first volume of Prof. Salvadori's work (*NATURE*, vol. xxiii. p. 240) we gave some account of the scope and origin of this great undertaking, and of the extensive materials upon which the author had based it. It is with great pleasure that we now chronicle the issue of the second volume, and record the announcement that the third, which will complete the work, is far advanced in preparation.

It will be recollected that the rich collections made by the Italian travellers D'Albertis and Beccari during their several expeditions into New Guinea and the adjoining islands, all of which came under the examination of Prof. Salvadori, were the "moving cause" of the present undertaking. Besides amassing numerous minor novelties and whole series of little-known species, these industrious explorers were the original discoverers of four new birds-of-paradise, several new pigeons and parrots of splendid plumage, and the large and fine bird-of-prey named *Harpyopsis Nova-Guineæ*. It was an obvious, though by no means light and easy task, to weave together the numerous papers and memoirs in which the different collections had been described into a uniform series, and to supplement it by summarising what was previously known of Papuan ornithology. This is what Prof. Salvadori has undertaken, and the result will be an excellent work upon a subject with which our previous acquaintance was of a very fragmentary description.

In his first volume, published in 1880, Prof. Salvadori treated of the *Accipitres*, *Psittaci*, and *Picariæ* of the Papuan sub-region. In the second volume now before us the numerous army of *Passeres* comes under consideration, and swells its size to 706 pages. The plan of treatment pursued is exactly the same as that which we have described in the case of the first volume. Every species is fully and fairly described, its complete synonymy is given, and a detailed list of the specimens examined from the various localities over which the species is spread is added.

It appears that the Royal Academy of Sciences of Turin, which published Prof. Salvadori's first volume as one of their "Memorie," have unfortunately not found it convenient to adopt the same course as regards the second. The author is therefore compelled to appeal to his brother ornithologists to subscribe for copies of the second and third volumes of his most meritorious work, in which we are sure he will receive every sort of support. Few special works of the present day have been so well planned, or so thoroughly carried into execution.