

from which that of the family is derived, ends in -a, the termination -adæ is employed, so that we find the words, Ursidæ, Musteladæ, Talpadæ, &c. With all due deference to Mr. Bell, and in spite of the first line of Lucretius' poem, which commences with "Æneadum genetrix," we cannot help feeling that for the sake of uniformity and the feelings of the many propounders of scientific names who are not so well versed in the dead languages as they might be, it is better to continue the now nearly universally employed -idæ on all occasions.

The illustrations of the species described maintain the general character of the work, some being evidently new, as in the case of the deer. Many chapters have a picturesque and respectively appropriate sketch as a conclusion; and we notice that in the additional chapters, instead of fresh sketches, there are in their place (we say it with regret) views, both in profile and from above, of parts of the skeletons of the subjects of the text.

SCLATER AND SALVIN'S "NOMENCLATOR AVIUM NEOTROPICALIUM"

Nomenclator Avium Neotropicalium, sive avium quæ in Regione Neotropica hucusque reperia sunt nomina systematicè disposita adjecta sua cuique speciei patria. Accedunt generum et specierum novarum diagnoses. Auctoribus Philippo Lutley Sclater et Osberto Salvin, (Londini: sumptibus auctorum, 1873). I vol. fol., 164 pp.

THE naturalists whose names are attached to the present work have been for some years working together on American ornithology. Besides numerous papers and articles of greater or less importance published in the "Ibis," the "Proceedings of the Zoological Society," and elsewhere, they completed in 1869 a quarto volume of "Exotic Ornithology," containing one hundred coloured lithographic plates representing new or rare birds of South and Central America, with accompanying letter-press. These works are understood to be all written with a view to the ultimate incorporation of the results arrived at in an "Index Avium Americanarum," or complete treatise on the ornithology of Central and South America. In further progress towards this end the authors now give us a "Nomenclator" or list of the generic and specific names of the species of birds as yet ascertained by them to occur in these countries, which form the "neotropical region" of Mr. Sclater—one of the six principal regions into which he has proposed to divide the earth's surface zoologically. After the name of each species is added the "patria" or "habitat," indicating the exact locality in which the species has been observed.

The neotropical region is now well known to be the richest in the world, ornithologically speaking; the "Nomenclator" contains the names of no less than 3,565 species of birds which, as the authors have convinced themselves by personal examination, are found in it. About 2,000 of these belong to the great order Passeres, and rather more than 1,500 to the nineteen other orders of birds met with in the neotropical region. One order alone is unrepresented in South and Central America, namely, the Apteryges, which is confined to New Zealand; but on the other hand the neotropical region

possesses two peculiar forms of bird-life of ordinal rank (the *Opisthocomus* and the *Tinami*) which are unknown elsewhere. Besides these, many extensive families are entirely restricted to the limits of this region; for instance, the Tanagers with 302 species, the Humming-birds with 387 species, the Dendrocolaptidæ with 217 species, and the Formicariidæ with 211 species. A few Tanagers and Humming-birds have invaded the neighbouring nearctic region (*i.e.* America north of Mexico), but the great bulk of these large groups of birds and of several other less numerous though equally distinct families, is essentially neotropical.

Nor must it be supposed that we are yet by any means fully acquainted with the riches of the neotropical region. The active ornithologists of the day are making continual additions to the long list—chiefly through the exertions of collectors in various parts of the Andean Chain, where almost every valley appears to contain distinct species of birds. At a recent meeting of the Zoological Society, twenty-four new species of birds (several belonging to new genera) were described from a single district in Peru, and Mr. Gould is constantly recording additions to the long series of humming-birds which he has so admirably monographed. Besides this, the anatomy and osteology of the greater number of exotic birds is almost utterly unknown, so that there is ample work in the neotropical region alone for many future generations of ornithologists.

The two collections upon which the "Nomenclator" has been principally based are those of Mr. Sclater and of Messrs. Salvin and Godman. The former of these contains an unrivalled series of the American species of the great order Passeres, and a set of representatives of the other higher orders, down to the end of the parrots—altogether about 7,000 specimens. The latter collection is still larger and more general, embracing the whole series of American birds. It is especially rich in Central American forms, the owners having themselves visited several districts of the Central American Republics, and employed private collectors in other districts for the enrichment of their cabinets.

The "Nomenclator" gives us a summary of all the species represented in these two great collections, and of other species examined by the authors, but of which they have not yet succeeded in obtaining specimens.

In an appendix are added characters of nine new genera, and of thirty-one new species, founded on specimens contained in one or other of the above-mentioned collections.

OUR BOOK SHELF

The Mishmee Hills; an Account of a Journey made in an Attempt to penetrate Thibet from Assam to open new Routes for Commerce. By T. T. Cooper, F.R.G.S., Acting Political Agent at Bhamo. (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1873.)

MR. COOPER is already well known as an enterprising traveller and delightful story-teller through his "Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce in Pig-tail and Petticoats;" the present narrative is one of the most attractive published for a long time; it is one of the few books now published one feels inclined to read through at a sitting. Mr. Cooper tells his story without apparent effort, and in