

abreast of that of any other country; and, indeed, as I have written elsewhere in these pages, they have been called "the pioneers of modern ornithological science." Besides their more technical work, the American students have written some of the best chapters of bird biography to be found in the entire range of ornithological literature.

While this is but a frank statement of facts, we must concede that the older writers noted so carefully the habits of the birds they knew that comparatively little was left for their successors to discover.

It was suggested to me that the new might be combined with the old,—that an interesting and useful book might be prepared by taking Nuttall's biographies and inserting brief notes relating the results of recent determinations in distribution and habits. That is what I have attempted in the present work. The Introduction has been given exactly as it appeared in Nuttall's second edition, and the text of the biographical matter has been changed but little. My notes follow each chapter in a smaller type, that they may be readily distinguished. I have also rewritten the descriptions of plumage, and have endeavored to phrase these in such well-known and untechnical terms that they may be understood by unskilled readers. To these, I have added a description of the nest and eggs of each species. In short, an effort has been made to prepare a work that will be useful to young students, as well as entertaining to those who are merely interested in birds.

The new matter has been selected with special regard for the needs of these classes of readers, for I