

proceedings," so wrote the learned Dr. Coates, in the *Auk*, in 1887, adding words of encouragement to the writer, whom he styles the "veteran observer" who had maintained his interest in ornithology for a quarter of a century. Mr. McIlwraith had been privileged to attend, at Washington, the meetings of the leading United States naturalists, who subsequently founded the *Auk* as their organ, in 1884, and had been named "Superintendent of the Ontario District for the Migration Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union."

The rare advantages within his reach, his close and untiring study of birds, and his life-long explorations in the field, in the woods, on the shores of rivers and lakes: his familiarity with eminent writers of the new school of classification, nomenclature, and bird migration, furnished the "veteran observer" with the materials for the first edition of his treatise. The second edition, much enlarged, to which his publisher, Mr. William Briggs, has added such a graceful appearance in printing and binding, has just been issued, and forms a handsome volume of 426 pages.

I do not know what may be the most familiar objects which meet the eye of the visitor at Cairnbrae, the home of the Hamilton naturalist; somehow or other a passage in the life of Mr. McIlwraith's distinguished compatriot, Alexander Wilson, as contained in one of his letters to William Bartram, crops up unbidden before me. "Whilst," writes the Scotch naturalist, "others are hoarding up bags of money, without the power of enjoying it, I am collecting, without injuring my conscience or wounding my peace of mind, those beautiful specimens of nature's work that are forever pleasing. I have had live crows, hawks and owls, opossums, squirrels, snakes, lizards, etc., so that my room has sometimes reminded me of Noah's ark. . . . I receive every subject of natural history that is brought to me. . . . A boy not long ago brought me a large basketful of crows. I expect his next load will be bull-frogs, if I don't soon issue orders to the contrary."

Reserving for a subsequent article a notice of the different groups described by Mr. McIlwraith, I shall avail myself of the occasion to enumerate his co-workers

in Canada, by quoting from a paper,* read by me in Montreal.

"The earliest ornithological record in Canada—I might say, possibly in America—occurs in Jacques Cartier's Voyages up the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In chapters ii., iii., vi., vii., and xii. of the narrative of his first voyage, in 1534, and chapter i. of his second voyage, in 1535, as well as an entry in the log of Roberval's first pilot, Jean Alphonse, in 1542, mention is made of the myriads of gannets, gulls, guillemots, puffins, eider ducks, cormorants, and other sea-fowl nestling on the Bird Rocks and on the desolate isles off the Labrador coast. Jacques Cartier goes so far as to say that 'the whole French navy might be freighted with these noisy denizens of that wild region without any apparent diminution in their number.' (Chap. i. ii., Voyages.) Reliable modern naturalists—Dr. Henry Bryant, of Boston, visiting the Bird Rocks, in 1860, and Charles A. Cory, in 1878—confirm these statements of early discoverers as to the number and species of birds to be found in the lower St. Lawrence. The Jesuit, Le Jeune, in the 'Relations des Jésuites for 1632,' dwells on the multitudes of aquatic birds infesting *He-aux-Oies* (county of Montmagny), and frequenting the shores of our noble river. Friar Gabriel Sagard Theodat that same year furnished in his 'Grand Voyage au Pays des Hurons,' a list of Canadian birds. In 1636, he noticed, among other things, some of the leading species, such as the jay, eagle, crane, etc., and has left us a lovely piece of word-painting in his glowing description of the Humming-bird. In 1663, Pierre Boucher, Governor of Three-Rivers, in an agreeably written memoir, addressed the 8th October 1663 to Minister Colbert, depicted the birds, mammals, fishes, etc., of New France. This memoir has been recently reprinted by a lineal descendant of the learned and venerable governor, the late Edward F. (Boucher) Montizambert, in his lifetime law clerk to the Senate of Canada, and father of Col. Charles and Dr. Frederick Montizambert of Quebec. In Volume I. of Baron la Hontan's Voyages to North America, published in France in 1703, there occurs an annotated

* *The Birds of Quebec*.—A Popular Lecture delivered before the Natural History Society of Montreal, on the 12th of March, 1891, by J. M. LE MOINE, Esq., F.R.S.C.