

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, performed in the years 1852, 1853 and 1854, under the command of Commodore M. C. Perry, United States Navy. By order of the Government of the United States. Vols. I. and II., with Illustrations. Washington, 1856. London, Trübner & Co.

THE second volume of Commodore Perry's Narrative of the celebrated "Japanese Expedition" contains, amongst a number of communications in relation to other topics from different members of the Expedition, several articles on natural history, which those who are interested in the zoology, botany, or geology of the Western Pacific should not neglect to consult. The smallest contributions towards a knowledge of the natural productions of ground so seldom trodden by Europeans as Japan, Formosa, or the Loo Choo Islands, is acceptable. It would be well if our own Government would take the hint, and insist upon the members of our numerous expeditions making their discoveries immediately available to the student.

The first part of the second volume of the present book is occupied by several articles upon the botany, agriculture, and geology of the Loo Choo archipelago. This is followed by Reports upon the agriculture of Japan and China and the coal-formation of Formosa, and an interesting account of the small settlement upon Peel Island, one of the Bonin group, with a copy of the short "Articles of Agreement" which constitute the laws of this primitive republic. Next come the papers on natural history, with which we are more immediately concerned. Two articles by Mr. Cassin upon the birds collected (principally by Mr. William Heine, the artist of the Expedition) are worthy of much attention, though they contain few novelties in the way of undescribed species. The first of these relates to the birds collected in Japan, most of which have been already noticed in Temminck and Schlegel's volume of the magnificent 'Fauna Japonica' devoted to the "Aves." But as Nangasaki in the southern island of Kiusiu is the only place to which the Dutch naturalists have had access, and the present collections were formed in Nippon and Jesso (the two northern and principal islands), the collection is still one of high interest. We may call particular attention to the details given of Mr. Heine's pheasant-shooting expeditions. He is certainly the first "of any cultivated nation" who has had the good fortune to beat up the native haunts of *Phasianus versicolor* and *Phasianus Soemmeringii*. We are not at all surprised at his missing the latter bird, or "at least only shooting off his two long tail-feathers;" for even an ordinary cock pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus* ♂) rising near (with a tail only one-third as long) is sufficient to agitate one not a little. But let us give Mr. Heine due credit for having preserved examples of these fine birds, and thus fixed their real locality. Our countryman Mr. Atkinson, in the steppes of Tartary—a region still more inaccessible—seems to have shot and eaten

many brace of the still rarer *Phasianus mongolicus* without the slightest compunction.

Mr. Cassin's second article upon the "birds collected in China, the Loo Choo Islands, Singapore, Ceylon, and California," is acceptable, as giving exact localities to many species of the correct *habitat* of which we were not hitherto very certain. There are also nice figures of *Garrulax perspicillatus*, *Heterornis sericea*, and the true *Ixos hæmorrhous* of China. Only four birds are noticed from the Loo Choo Islands, which, curiously enough, are, with one exception, identified with European species: *Ardea cinerea*, *Alcedo bengalensis*, *Fulica chloropus*, and *Sterna minuta*. Mr. Brevoort's notice of Japanese fish, or rather, of the drawings of them made by members of the Expedition (for it appears that no specimens were brought home), accompanies a series of plates made from these drawings. We decidedly object to the practice of describing new species of fishes (or, in fact, of any animals) from drawings, particularly when made, as these are confessed to have been, without a "close attention to the specific characters." But the discovery that *Ditrema Temmincki* probably belongs to the singular viviparous family *Embiotocidæ*, recently discovered in California, is certainly of great interest.

Mr. Jay has contributed a report upon the "Shells" collected by the Expedition, and Professor Asa Gray and others an essay on the dried plants.

There is also a very interesting account of the "Gulf-stream" and cyclones of the Western Pacific; and the volume closes with a facsimile of the Japanese version of the celebrated treaty of Kan-a-ga-wa, the "first formal instrument of the kind ever negotiated by the empire of Japan with any Christian nation."

The Angler in the Lake District; or Piscatory Colloquies and Fishing Excursions in Westmoreland and Cumberland. By JOHN DAVY, M.D., F.R.S. &c. Longmans.

Sir Humphry Davy was the author of two delightfully desultory works, one, the 'Salmonia,' and the other, 'Consolations in Travel, or the Last Days of a Philosopher.' Dr. Davy, the brother of the great chemist, is also an accomplished man, who has been engaged in the army medical service from his early manhood. Dr. Davy resided long in Ceylon and the West Indies, traversed many parts of the world, and in mature age has retired to the Lake country. He lives not far from another distinguished medical officer, well known to our readers as the friend and companion of Sir John Franklin, who did what he could, brave man! to find that arctic hero on the dreary North American coast. He is the author of the 'Fauna Boreali-Americana,' and many a goodly memoir and work on Exotic Fishes; while his new edition of Yarrell's 'British Fishes,' expected this year, will have a scientific exactness which the worthy Waltonian disciple, who wrote 'British Birds' and 'British Fishes,' never affected to possess, to say nothing of its many additions. Dr. John Davy and Sir John Richardson are resting (*not* on their oars) amid the calm



1858. "Narrative of the expedition of an American squadron to the China Seas and Japan, performed in the years 1852, 1853 and 1854, under the command of Commodore M. C. Perry, United States Navy. By order of the Government of the United States. Vols. I. and II.," *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 2, 210–211.

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