

Club Notes.

With the call of Mr. Witmer Stone to the editorial chair of the 'Auk,' 'Cassinia' suffered a great loss, which at the moment seemed irreparable. For two decades he has guided all the publications of the D. V. O. C., first as chairman of its Publication Committee, which brought to light the Proceedings from 1890 to 1900, then as editor of 'The Birds of Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey,' and finally in the same capacity for 'Cassinia' during the ten years of its existence. That each of these ventures has proved successful, has been due largely to his tireless energy, his steady enthusiasm, and wise control at moments of stress. Whether at the helm of 'Cassinia' or on the floor of the Club, it was he that suggested and encouraged, it was he that pressed for completion. Only just and fitting, therefore, it is that the D. V. O. C. should express at this hour its respect for his attainments and appreciation of his services. With deep regret and some foreboding for the future we heard that his official duties on the 'Auk' would compel him to resign the editorship of 'Cassinia.' Quite irreparable would our loss have been, had we not been assured of his constant advice and assistance in the guidance of this publication.

The new incumbent enters upon his duties with some misgiving, being fully aware that the best he can hope to accomplish is the maintenance of the standard set by the retiring editor. What that standard has been is obvious to anyone acquainted with our past issues. It demands from all papers accepted first of all, an authentic statement of facts, and second, their presentation in a style, possessing at least clearness and readability, if not some literary merit. This simple standard cannot be bettered for a magazine of this kind and to keep it at this level of excellence is the aim of the present editor. If he succeeds, he will feel that this in itself is an achievement. From time to

time it will be necessary to introduce slight changes—a department of General Notes in this issue—but these will not be indicative of vaulting ambition that leaps before necessity, but of conservative effort to solve immediate problems and provide space for cramped energies.

The D. V. O. C. has reached a stage, when it bulks large, not only in size, but also in quality of membership. With such a corps of trained observers there should be little difficulty in getting valuable material for future issues. I know, of late, there has been a tendency to belittle the chances of adding to the knowledge of the birds of this region, to believe, because so much has been accomplished in the timing of migratorial movements, the determining of distribution, the plotting of faunal areas, that little is left for the younger generation. I, for one, am confident that this belief is without foundation. It is true that the searcher for new species will shoot in vain, that the blower of shells will note his consuming fad depreciated more and more, that the maker of mere lists will find his wares unsalable; but this will simply mean that the age of the indefatigable observer has arrived. The work of the past has been hardly more than foundational. The superstructure of life-histories has just been begun. There is not one species whose vital statistics have been completed! The consecutive history of a single individual year after year has hardly been attempted! We have exhaustive studies of birds' feathers, we have learned little of how they fly; we know much of throat mechanism, we know practically nothing of bird-songs! The past, splendid as it has been, has not made effort useless, it has merely swamped out the main road into the wilderness, whose pleasant by-paths it shall be our duty to cut, and so reveal secrets unsuspected. With perfect faith, therefore, in the future, the editor looks forward to renewed activity on the part of every member of the D. V. O. C. in the study of these elusive creatures of wing. Indefatigable study, rather than general observation, should be our watchword for the coming year. The exhaustive study of details will reap an unexpected harvest and will provide a surplus of products, so that subsequent issues of 'Cassinia' will be thoroughly representative of such a splendid organization.

Fifteen meetings were held by the Club during the year, the average attendance being nineteen.

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At the A. O. U. meeting held at the Academy of Natural Sciences seven papers were presented by Club members, by Baily, Brown, Moore, Rhoads, and Trotter. A reception was given to the members of the A. O. U. by Mr. and Mrs. Wm. L. Baily at their home in Ardmore.

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Club members were unusually energetic this year in activities outside of the Delaware Valley. Brown commanded a Philabustering expedition to Venezuela, Rhoads fought fever-laden mosquitoes in Ecuador in order to present the revolutionists with a new type of arms, Trotter retired again to the solitudes of Nova Scotia, Rehn played tag with the grasshoppers of Florida, Baily and Moore learned how to cook in the Magdalen Islands.

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For the portrait of Rafinesque the Club is indebted to Mr. S. N. Rhoads and for the two views along the Pocomoke to Mr. George Spencer Morris.

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