

REVIEWS.

Aviculture. A Treatise on the Management of Foreign and British Birds in Captivity. Published by the Avicultural Society. Vol. I., 1925. Hertford, printed by Stephen Austin & Sons, Ltd.

THIS book consists of three parts: an introduction of 18 pages; a series of articles, occupying 306 pages, on special groups of Passerine birds, by the late Mr. H. D. Astley, the late Dr. A. G. Butler, Messieurs A. Decoux, J. Delacour and M. Legendre, Mr. E. G. B. Meade-Waldo, Capt. G. E. Rattigan, Mr. D. Seth-Smith and Mr. W. Shore-Baily; and useful indices extending to 16 pages.

Prince Charles Lucien Bonaparte, as we all know, was a famous ornithologist; his uncle, the great Napoleon, if his attention had not been so much taken up by other affairs, would have been a first-class aviculturist. His maxim, "The moral is to the physical as three to one," contains the main secret of all success in keeping wild birds alive in captivity. The introduction to this book is all useful and good, but, unfortunately, omits the most important item—that of giving mental occupation to the birds. Extracts from the *Avicultural Magazine*, 3rd Series, Vol. 2, Dec., 1910, pp. 67-69, might have been appropriate.

Many of the chapters by Monsieur Delacour will make the reader long to visit, or revisit, the thick forests and open spaces of the Far East and of the Western Hemisphere.

Lovers of British birds will find most interest on pages 41 to 46, where Mr. Meade-Waldo writes delightfully on the Crow Tribe; on page 135, where Dr. Butler tells of a habit of the Chaffinch nestling, and on pages 221 to 226, in which are Mr. Astley's experiences of Thrushes.

In 27 plates, figures, useful for their purpose, are given of about 128 different species of birds.

S. S. FLOWER.

Records of Birds Bred in Captivity. By Emilius Hopkinson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.A., M.B., B.Ch. (Oxon), F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. London (H. F. & G. Witherby), 1926, pp. i-ix., 1-330.

This is a more important and valuable work than might be inferred from the author's modest preface. To construct a proper conception of any "form" of bird, and to be able to classify it—as a monotypic genus, as a species or as a subspecies, it is necessary to know far more about it than its external appearance and its internal anatomy; we want to know all we can of its ways of life and of its psychology.

It is these biological studies that are so difficult to condense into writing, and it is especially difficult to eliminate the personal element of the observer and recorder. Therefore, we welcome any contribution that helps to throw impersonal and concentrated light on these matters.

Dr. Hopkinson has selected two items that are capable of being definitely recorded:—

1. Species that have been bred in confinement.
2. Hybrids which have been bred.

The first gives clues to several facts, the second to "kindred and affinity."

The author's long residence in Africa has given him but little time for consulting all the records on these subjects, but it is wonderful how many facts he has got together and methodically arranged in this book. The two institutions of which the present reviewer has most knowledge have come off rather shorn of their successes. The Egyptian Zoological Gardens at Giza are occasionally referred to, but only to about twenty years ago; in Annual Reports, published since then, more items of interest can be found. The Gardens of the

Zoological Society of London have done far more in breeding birds than might be inferred from reading this book; it is a pity that references are not given to the "Proceedings," for instance, to the late Dr. P. L. Sclater's papers "On the Breeding of Birds in the Gardens during the last Twenty Years," P.Z.S., 1869, pp. 626-629, and "On the Breeding of the Argus Pheasant and other Pheasants in the Society's Gardens," P.Z.S., 1879, pp. 114-118. And, although the chick lived twenty days only, it might have been mentioned that a Condor Vulture was hatched in Regent's Park on July 1st, 1846.

Of birds in the British List, Dr. Hopkinson does not mention that both Black Game and Capercaillie have been bred in the London Zoological Gardens, and in some cases reared; thus a Capercaillie hatched there June 30th, 1848, lived till May 7th, 1849.

That Spoonbills and Ibises (or *vice versa*?) will pair and hatch out living young is a fact (see footnote, page 253). I have seen more than one of such hybrids on the continent of Europe. S. S. FLOWER.

Birds mentioned in The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, 1124-1707.

By Hugh S. Gladstone. (*Dumfriesshire and Galloway Nat. Hist. and Antiq. Soc.*, 1926.)

IN the above pamphlet of 37 pages, Mr. Gladstone has compiled an exhaustive treatise on the birds mentioned in the Scottish Acts of Parliament between 1124 and 1707. Besides such collective names as "Hawks," "Wild-Fowl," etc., he has succeeded in making a list of thirty-six identifiable species, besides a few others, whose mediæval names at present defy interpretation, though these thirty-six include the Peacock and other domesticated forms. All the earlier Acts quoted (up to 1400) relate to the preservation of Hawks, eyries of Gos-Hawks and Sparrow-Hawks, specified in the Act of 1235, being the earliest mention of identifiable species. The later Acts are of three kinds, those for the preservation of certain birds that we should now describe as wild-fowl and game-birds; those for the suppression of species harmful to them, "foulys of reif," as they are termed in the Act of 1457, and those concerned with the cognate subject of heather-burning. It is interesting to note that the latter custom has apparently been an important economic usage from very early times. It was regulated by undated Acts before 1400 and by no less than sixteen different enactments between then and 1685. Mr. Gladstone is of opinion that it was regulated primarily as a safeguard to personal property. Next to the Hawks, the Rook and Dove-cote Pigeons are the earliest mentioned species, the former being restricted and the latter protected by the Act of 1424, while the Black and Red Grouse, Partridge and Plover were first mentioned, being awarded a close season from the beginning of Lent until August, in 1427. The Quail occurs four times between 1551 and 1698, but curiously enough the Capercaillie is mentioned only once and that so late as 1621. The word "Crane" is only mentioned in an Act of 1551, and Mr. Gladstone evidently considers that it is more than probable that it is intended to apply to the Heron.

A full list of the species mentioned is to be found in a useful index at the end of the paper. Space does not permit here of mentioning the curious old names under which many of them are recorded, but Mr. Gladstone may be congratulated on the great pains he has taken in identifying them and for the full explanations that he has given. Altogether, he has accomplished a notable task in early British Bird history, and the Dumfriesshire Natural History Society, now in its sixty-fifth year of useful life, must be thanked for its enterprise in publishing it.

N.F.T.