

The volume before us follows exactly the excellent plan of its predecessors, with abundant quotations from publications and original field notes of collectors and explorers, especially the many recent explorers of the arctic and subarctic regions. As most of the Shore-birds breed far to the north, but little detailed information on their nesting habits has been available until quite recently, and in Mr. Bent's work we have the life history of many of the American species adequately presented for the first time.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Bent for his painstaking compilation and it is gratifying to note the response that his request for information has received from those best able to furnish it.

The accounts of the breeding of certain species such as the Knot and the Sanderling which we know only as transients along our sea shores are especially interesting. In the case of the former, by the way, one of the earliest records of the discovery of the downy young was, we think, the specimen secured by the late Langdon Gibson at Tucktoo Valley, Greenland, July 11, 1891 (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci., 1895, p. 503 and 'Auk,' 1922, p. 360).

The illustrations are, as usual, excellent, consisting of photographs of nests and eggs, downy young and adults.—W. S.

Robinson's 'The Birds of the Malay Peninsula.'—This handsome volume¹ 7.5 x 10.5 inches in size is the first of a series of five and treats of the 'Commoner Birds' of the Peninsula. It is attractively printed and bound and is illustrated with twenty-five colored plates from paintings by Grönvold representing forty species many of which have not been figured before or, if so, inadequately.

By way of introduction there is an excellent map of the peninsula and a brief description of the several states and colonies, some pertinent remarks on zoogeography and nomenclature, and a bibliography.

The main text considers the birds in the order of Sharpe's 'Hand-List.' Each account is headed by the Latin name, binomial or trinomial, as the case may be, and an English name; then comes the original reference and the more important synonymy followed by the Malay name of the bird, Description, Soft Parts, Dimensions, Range in the Malay Peninsula, Extralimital Range, Nidification, and Habits. The diagnoses of the higher groups are popular in character and the keys to the genera and species simple.

The scope and method of treatment are admirable and the finely printed

¹ The Birds of the Malay Peninsula. A general account of the birds inhabiting the region from the isthmus of Kra to Singapore with the adjacent islands. By Herbert C. Robinson C. M. Z. S., M. B. O. U., C. M. Amer. O. U., Late Director of Museums, F. M. S. Volume I: The Commoner Birds, with twenty-five full-page plates in colour. Issued by Authority of the Federated Malay States Government. H. F. & G. Witherby, 326 High Holborn, London, W. C. I. 1927. pp. i-1, + 1-329. pll. I-XXV and Map. Price 35s.

plates most satisfactory. In all respects it is a very welcome addition to our faunal works especially as it covers a region whose avifauna has not been satisfactorily treated in this way before. Would that we might have such works on the birds of some of the South American countries!

American ornithologists will recall that this work covers Trang, the coasts of Trengganu and the Pulau Tioman Archipelago where Dr. William L. Abbott, of Philadelphia, made such extensive collections for the U. S. National Museum in 1899.

The species figured include the Malay Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis*), *cheela bassus*), the Great-eared Nightjar (*Lyncornis temmincki*), Swifts (*Tachornis* and *Micropus*), Barbets (*Mesobucco* and *Xantholaema*) the Pitta (*P. moluccensis*), Fantals, Bulbuls, etc.

The volumes to follow will treat of the 'Hill Birds,' 'Sporting Birds,' 'Birds of the Low Country,' and 'Other Birds.' Such an arrangement is, as the author admits, not exclusive, and one species may belong to several categories. The ornithologist doubtless would prefer a thoroughly systematic work where all species of the same genus or family would be found together, but the separate volumes, as planned, will each appeal to a somewhat different group and if they are to be sold separately this should be considered. At any rate we are informed that Mr. Robinson in conjunction with Mr. C. B. Kloss is actively engaged upon a more formal 'Fauna of the Malay Peninsula' which will doubtless fill every demand of the systematist.

Meanwhile we can commend the present volume as a credit to all concerned and not only a handy work of reference but a handsome volume for the ornithological library.—W. S.

Henry and Wait on the Birds of Ceylon.—The first part¹ of the set of colored plates of Ceylon Birds by Mr. G. M. Henry, recently announced in 'The Auk' is before us. There are sixteen quarto plates 10 x 12.5 ins. reproduced in color by Vitty and Seaborne of London and accompanying each plate is a page containing a brief account of the distribution of the species by Mr. W. E. Wait with its habits, measurements and vernacular names, together with a reference to Wait's 'Manual of the Birds of Ceylon.'

Four Babblers are figured, two Bulbuls (*Turdoides* and *Pomatorhinus*) the Spotted-wing Thrush (*Oreocincla*), two Flycatchers (*Cyornis* and *Stoparola*), a Drongo (*Dicrurus*), a Warbler (*Elaphornis*), two Barbets (*Cyanops* and *Xantholaema*), a Kingfisher, Cuckoo, and Owl.

Mr. Henry, an assistant in entomology in the Colombo Museum, is an artist of a high order and, being thoroughly familiar with the living

¹ Coloured Plates of the Birds of Ceylon. By G. M. Henry, with a short description of each bird by W. E. Wait, M. A., F. Z. S., M. B. O. U., C. F. A. O. U. Part I. with sixteen coloured plates. Published by the Ceylon Government. 1927. Title page, preface (two pages), contents (one page) and sixteen single pages of descriptions.