

From Magazines, &c.

MR. D. Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., continues his admirable and practical articles on "Bird-keeping" in *The Avicultural Magazine*. The issue for December (vol. iii., No. 2), contains remarks on "Quails" of special interest and instruction to Australians.

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The Progress of Oology.—In the course of his address on the opening of the twentieth session of the British Ornithologists' Union (8/11/11), Dr. P. L. Sclater, F.R.S., stated :—"Last, but not least, we are delighted to hear that the fifth volume of the 'Catalogue of Birds' Eggs' in the British Museum will be issued next year. The work, which was commenced by Mr. E. W. Oates some years ago, has been almost completed by Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant. We wish to become acquainted with every part of the bird's structure in all its stages, and rejoice in the progress of oology as shown by these publications." — *Bulletin B.O.C.*, No. CLXXIII.

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MR. Thomas Parkin, M.A., F.Z.S. &c., has issued a neat little *brochure* entitled "The Great Auk: a Record of Sales of Birds and Eggs by Public Auction in Great Britain, 1806-1910," with historical and descriptive notes and five plates, issued as an extra paper, vol. i, part 6, of *The Hastings and East Sussex Naturalist*. While it is regretted that civilization has destroyed this fine fowl from off the face of the earth, Mr. Parkin is to be thanked for his painstaking task in preserving an authenticated record of a number of skins and eggs that are still extant. The highest prices realized at the sales were, for a handsome skin, £350, which was purchased for the Royal Scottish Museum, while Mr. James Gardner of Oxford-street, London, gave £330 for the finest known egg for its special type of markings—an unrecorded specimen from a French collection. The price of the *brochure* is 2s., and it may be had from Rowland Ward Limited, 167 Piccadilly, London.

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A New Journal.—A small but significant ornithological publication closely concerning Australians has been issued by Mr. Gregory M. Mathews, who is also its editor. It is styled "The Austral Avian Record: a Scientific Journal devoted primarily to the Study of the Australian Avifauna," and is issued in connection with Mr. Mathews' Austral Avian Museum, Watford, Herts., England. The editorial note reads :—"While preparing my 'Reference List to the Birds of Australia' (now in the press), I accumulated many notes of great interest regarding matters that need investigation. In that Reference List I have shortly indicated some of these matters, but detailed accounts could not

there be introduced. I have therefore decided to publish, at irregular intervals, such notes as I deem necessary to require immediate attention and referring to birds which either have been already treated of in my 'Birds of Australia' or will not be dealt with in the immediate future. In this place it is proposed to indicate new forms, notes on nomenclature, and any other interesting matter relating to the Australian avifauna."

Twenty-one pages out of the 24 pages of the initial part (vol. i., No. 1) contain a very interesting and critical paper, showing much research on the part of the editor—"Notes on Australian Cuckoos." From all the reasons and references set forth, Mr. Mathews has allotted to our hitherto 6 genera or 13 species, 5 genera (1 new), but has multiplied the species and sub-species to 23 (including 1 species and 8 sub-species new).

It is to be sincerely hoped that the advent of this new publication does not signal the withdrawal of all Mr. Mathews' serious Australian work from the pages of *The Emu*—a course to be regretted, especially as Mr. Mathews has received much support from Australian workers (to wit, from Capt. and Mrs. White, who are collecting, regardless of time, inconvenience, and expense, throughout the State of South Australia, and with special Government permission), and still expects and undoubtedly will receive continued support until the consummation of his self-imposed work.

Reviews.

["Home Life of the Osprey." By Clinton G. Abbott, B.A. Witherby and Co., London. Price 6s.]

THIS is the third volume of the Bird-Lover's Home Life Series, and is in every way worthy of its predecessors. The Osprey makes a fine subject for special study, and the photographs reproduced in this pleasant volume form a pictorial record of the domestic life of the great sea-bird. Some of the illustrations show Ospreys in flight, others depict the female alighting on the nest, the young birds, and nests in different situations, including the top of a telegraph pole and the posts of a sapling fence. All the photographs are excellently reproduced, and the plates are artistically mounted on stiff brown paper. The text accompanying this portfolio, although of minor importance, is full of interest, as the author relates his adventures on the coast of New Jersey, at the Great Lake, North Carolina, and at other places where he studied Ospreys. He describes how the wonderful photographs were obtained, and his observations on the habits of the birds are valuable. It was on Gardiner's Island that he found the best opportunities for studying the Osprey, which is protected by natural isolation as well as by the owners of the island.