

Reviews

[Coloured Plates of the Birds of Ceylon. By G. M. Henry, with a short description of each bird by W. E. Wait. Part III. (Published by the Ceylon Government, 1930. Obtainable from the Director, Colombo Museum, or from Dulau & Co. Ltd., 32 Old Bond Street, London. Price, £1/10/-.)]

Gradually this interesting publication is assuming shape, 48 of Ceylon's birds now being ably figured. In the part under review three birds of outstanding interest to Australians are the Ceylon Flower-pecker (*Dicaeum erythrorhynchum ceylonensis*), the Indian Edible-nest Swiftlet (*Collocalia unicolor*), and the Green-billed Ceylonese Coucal (*Centropus chlororhynchus*), generically related to allied birds here. Indeed, the relation between the Australian and Ceylon Coucals is particularly close.

Little can be said concerning the general scheme of the publication, for that has already been indicated in reviews of previous parts. Perhaps a little more of letterpress would enhance the work—this could be included quite easily in the space available, but, on the other hand, Mr. Wait's "short descriptions" are directed to the essential details of the various birds, and one can see at a glance all the more important factors. A matter for comment is the apparent lack of discrimination of the natives, who have an identical vernacular name for the Edible-nest Swiftlet and the Crested Swift. This is reminiscent of the Australian aboriginal, to whom often all small fry are lumped under a common name.

Messrs. Taylor & Francis, of London, the printers, have also contributed in producing a work that should when completed become an exhaustive synopsis of Ceylon's avifauna.—C.E.B.

[A Handbook of the Birds of Eastern China. By J. D. D. La Touche, C.M.Z.S. (Taylor & Francis, Fleet Street, London.) Part V. Price, 7/6 net.]

This part concludes Volume I, and brings the account of Passerine birds to a close. Since the commencement of the work some years ago, several important contributions on the birds of Southern and Western China have been made, so that as a whole the knowledge of Chinese bird life is taking shape. The author states that he now thinks the province of Kwangsi should be included in the Eastern China region, as a large portion of its birds are also common to Kwangtung Province. Tribute is paid to early pioneer explorers like Pere David and Consul Swinhoe, who in the 'seventies of last century, with crude appliances and native assistance only, made valuable collections. A systematic index for the first volume, also an alphabetic index, with synonyms, conclude this part.—A.G.C.