

"The question as to whether these birds should be protected or partially protected or not during their stay on the Queensland coast is a difficult one to give an opinion upon. If the close season is fixed as from the 1st November to 1st April, and it is strictly observed, I do not think many birds would fall to the gun, as they do not settle down to breed until about the 1st November, and they leave the islands for New Guinea before the 1st April, consequently they would be wholly protected."

[The assumption in Mr. Pennefather's interesting remarks that these Pigeons may possibly breed a second time in New Guinea is scarcely feasible, seeing that migratory birds usually only breed in the highest latitudes of their range.

The Nutmeg-Pigeon is at present protected from 1st November to 30th April in each year. According to some authorities a few of the birds arrive as early as September, while eggs have been taken in October. (See also Mr. P. Cochrane's article in this issue, p. 47.) If the close season were extended, say, a month, at the beginning (making it from 1st October to 30th April, and properly observing it) it would probably be sufficient protection for the Pigeons for the time being.—EDS.]

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## The British Museum of Natural History.

HIS Excellency the Governor of Victoria, Sir George Clarke, F.R.S., has received a letter from the British Museum authorities which sets forth certain desiderata.

The Council of the Aust. O.U. has pleasure in giving publicity to the ornithological requirements, with the hope that some collecting members of the Union will deem it a privilege to assist one of the most noble institutions in the kingdom.

Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, who has charge of the Ornithological Department, writes:—"I should much like to have a carefully-prepared series of Victorian species. We have a gradually increasing set of Australian birds, but it is so difficult to get them with proper dates, sexes, and moults.

"Perhaps we could give an exchange. Again, I should like some birds in spirits. We want specimens of the leading genera of Passeres, and I much want a couple of skeletons of the Crested (Square-tailed) Kite (*Lophoictinia isura*)."

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## Review.

"PARRAKEETS." — Mr. D. Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U., the editor of the *Avicultural Magazine*, is issuing, under this title, in six parts (price 33s.), a concise and instructive description of the Parrakeets, Lorikeets, Love-Birds, and Parrotlets which are or are likely to be imported into Great Britain. Not only are instructions for the treatment of the various species in captivity

given, but also valuable notes on their habits in a wild state. The work is well illustrated, and is to average about three coloured plates per part. The three parts to hand contain admirable examples of the work of Mr. H. Goodchild and Mr. H. Grönvold, whose faithful reproductions of bird life are well known to ornithologists. Amongst the Australian items of interest in the first three parts are the sections dealing with the Swainson or Blue-bellied Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus novæ-hollandiæ*); the Red-collared Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus rubitorques*); the Scaly-breasted Lorikeet (*Psitteuteles chlorolepidotus*); the Musky Lorikeet (*Glossopsittacus concinnus*), so common in parts of Eastern Australia; the Cockateil or Cockatoo-Parrakeet (*Calopsittacus novæ-hollandiæ*), which is described as, with the exception of the Budgerigar, "the commonest Australian Parrakeet with English aviarists;" the Great-billed Parrakeet, from Western New Guinea, &c., and other Malayan species; Barraband Parrakeet (*Polytelis barrabandi*), so well known as the "Green-Leek" in Eastern Australia (this admirable coloured plate is by Mr. H. Grönvold); the Black-tailed Parrakeet (*Polytelis melanura*), commonly known in Australia as the "Rock-Pebbler"; and the Alexandra Parrakeet (*Spathopterus alexandræ*, Gould), from Central and Western Australia, brought more under notice since the Horn Expedition, 1894. When it is remembered that the present parts of the work embrace also American and Asian species, and that for each full notes and instructions are given, it will be realized how valuable it must prove to aviculturists and students of bird life. The publisher is Mr. R. H. Porter, 7 Prince's-street, Cavendish-square, W., from whom the numbers under review have been received.

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### Obituary.

A RECENT mail brought news of the death of one of the founders of the American O.U. Mr. Thomas M'Ilwraith, author of the first text-book on Canadian birds ("The Birds of Ontario"), and ornithological superintendent of the district of Ontario since the first meeting of that Union, was a man (in the full sense of that word) who devoted every available hour to the duties of his office and the pursuit of bird-lore. He passed away on 31st January. The late Mr. M'Ilwraith possessed one of the largest and best private collections in Canada, got together by many an hour of patient search in American woods. The M'Ilwraith family, and more particularly Mr. Wm. M'Ilwraith, of Rockhampton, to whom the deceased was closely related, and who was the suggester of the system of observing stations which the Aust. O.U. has endeavoured to establish throughout Australia, are so well known to local ornithologists that deep sympathy will be felt for a loss which is not only personal to them, but one to the scientific world.