

specimens in some Jam (Acacia) wood, near the Minilya River. Honey-eaters, as one would naturally expect, are well represented, there being no less than 42 kinds, including *Meliphaga carteri*, probably a distinctive species, not a sub-species of *penicillata*. A pair of fine Bower-Birds (*Chlamydera guttata*) grace the collection. As far back as 1892, Mr. Carter procured the first recorded specimen of this species for W.A., and forwarded it to the National Museum, Melbourne, where it arrived a bundle of dust and feathers. Fortunately in the same locality (North-West region) several more specimens of the same species were collected which the finder and Mr. Mathews have called *C. g. nova*. (See *Ibis*, 1920, p. 499, pl. 14.)

The meeting, which included two English visitors, Mr. and Miss Wilson, was enthusiastic over Mr. H. L. White's last ornithological donation to the Nation, and closed with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

Reviews

RECENT WORK BY MATHEWS AND IREDALE.

The indefatigable Mathews continues his remarkable output of work of the first importance to Australian ornithologists. The parts of his great "Birds of Australia" have continued to arrive with commendable regularity. The high quality of this important work has been fully maintained. The first and second parts of volume ix., completing Mathews' treatment of the large and difficult group of Australian Flycatchers, are to hand. The quality of the hand-coloured plates continues excellent.

In conjunction with Tom Iredale, a re-grouping of the world's birds is proposed in a valuable article on "Avian Taxonomy" (*Austral Avian Record*, vol. iv., pts. 2 and 3). Some original and daring changes are proposed. Plovers and Gulls are combined into a large order. Frigate Birds (now a small, separate order) and Tropic-Birds (now a sub-order of the Gull-Plover group) have been removed from the Pelican-Cormorant group of Sharpe.

Sharpe, in his *Hand-list of the Birds of the World*, used six families for the Parrots. Mathews uses 16 families, but uses six "super-families."

As this new classification of Birds is stated by the authors to be their "first attempt at providing a workable classification of avine forms," the Check-list Committee did not depart from Sharpe's Classification as used in "The Hand-list of the Birds of the World," the Official Check-list, the last B.O.U. List, in Mathews' various lists and his "Birds of Australia."

Following this reclassification in the *Austral Avian Record*, vol. iv., pts. 2-5, is a Name-List of the Birds of New Zealand.

This is succeeded on similar lines by a Name-List of the Birds of Australia. It proved of great value to the Check-list Committee by enabling them to complete their draft with Mathews' latest position before them. Apart from genera splitting, there is no vital difference in any place between the work of the Check-list Committee and that of Iredale and Mathews. Some of their changes have been made in advance of recognised rules and principles—e.g., "one letterism." These the Check-list Committee are not accepting, but are retaining *Synoicus*, *Origma*, *Callocephalon*, *Plectorhynchus*, *Meliphaga*, *Myiagra*, and others altered by Mathews and Iredale.

Articles on Forgotten Bird-Artists and An Old-time Ornithologist (General Davies, who gave the name *superba* to the Lyre-Bird); Snipe and Sandpipers and Sherborn and the Systematist complete four important parts of vol. iv. of the *Austral Avian Record*.

["A Manual of the Birds of Australia." By Mathews and Iredale, with coloured and monochrome plates, volume i. (from the Emu to Pigeons, on Mathews' new arrangement).]

It is true that Latham brought out a supplement; that Gould, after the completion of his great work, gave the result of his completed studies in "The Handbook of the Birds of Australia," and that any author when finishing is in possession of fuller and better information than when he started a great work. Though the Manual is excellently produced, and, indeed, is a necessity to any person interested in Australian birds, still one cannot repress a feeling of regret that Mathews did not delay the publication of this supplementary work until his great work was completed. Of course, the section treated here was completed in the big work years ago, and it is hardly likely there will be much further accession of fresh knowledge of the birds treated. Still Mathews' standards are not yet fixed. It is to be regretted that the Manual appeared while Mathews is still in the phase of excessive splitting of genera, though even now the swing of the pendulum back from his extreme position is plainly indicated in this sentence from the Introduction of the Manual: "When we have studied all the groups with their plumage changes and growth stages, we may suggest genera lumping." Apart from this phase, the work will receive a warm welcome. It is convenient and compact, a good synonymy is given, a full description of adult, immature, chick, nest and egg, and the breeding season, incubation period, distribution and the recognised geographical races (sub-species) are briefly stated. The paper is good, the printing clear, and the binding strong. The plates are well drawn by Miss Lilian Medland. The colour printing is very good, and there is a complete index. The Manual is indispensable to working ornithologists, and those desirous of up-to-date knowledge of Australian birds.

["Some Useful Australian Birds." By Walter W. Froggatt, F.L.S., F.E.S., Government Entomologist N.S.W., etc. Published by the Department of Agriculture, N.S.W., through the Government Printer. Price 10/6].

This modest title introduces a book originated, the Preface says, to serve as the re-publication of a series of notes on birds useful to the man on the land. These were begun in the *Agricultural Gazette* (N.S.W.) by the late A. J. North, C.M.B.O.U.

The birds are treated in three sections:—

1. Birds of the Garden, Orchard and Field.
2. Birds of the Forest and Brushes.
3. Birds of Inland Plains, Swamps, Open Forests and Scrubs.

The author has utilised the opportunity to include many original and valuable field observations made by himself during a life-time of study in natural history.

The fine plates, over 60 in number, are excellent full-page reproductions in colour of the magnificent plates of Gould's great folio work, "The Birds of Australia."

An interesting section deals with the "Effect of Changing Environment on the Habits of Birds." Another deals with introduced mammals and birds—foxes, rabbits, domestic cats gone wild, sparrows and starlings—serious pests, one and all.

This handy volume contains much of interest for the bird-man as well as for the man on the land. It is written in a popular, interesting style. References are given to Gould's "Handbook" and to Leach's "Bird Book."

About Members

Mr. A. F. Basset Hull, Sydney, on retiring recently from the Government service, was presented by the fellow-officers of his Department with a valuable pair of field-glasses, and a solid leather suit case. Mr. Hull still retains his position as honorary ornithologist to the Australian Museum. We wish him many years at his labour of love.

From birds to trees is but one remove. Mr. A. J. Campbell is shortly bringing out an artistic production entitled "Our Golden Wattles, or Australia's National Flower," which will be illustrated by a unique series of full-plate photo-pictures.

Captain S. A. White at present is leading a small exploring party into Central Australia. Hitherto on such trips he had often, at the risk of his life, to scratch for water. This time floods impede his progress.