

And for this reason, he says, he has called his book 'Bird Watching.' In a certain sense it is unique, and forms a most valuable record of patient and minute observations of wild British birds in a state of nature. The scope of the work may be indicated by the following transcript of the headings of the twelve chapters: I, Watching Great Plovers, etc.; II, Watching Ringed Plovers, Redshanks, Pewits, etc.; III, Watching Stock-Doves, Wood-Pigeons, Snipe, etc.; IV, Watching Wheatears, Dabchicks, Oyster-catchers, etc.; V, Watching Gulls and Skuas; VI, Watching Ravens, Curlews, Eider-Ducks, etc.; VII, Watching Shags and Guillemots; VIII, Watching Birds at a Straw-stack; IX, Watching Birds in the Greenwoods; X and XI, Watching Rooks; XII, Watching Blackbirds, Nightingales, Sand-Martins, etc.

The amount of original and interesting information here brought together renders the book noteworthy and important, but it is perhaps marred a little, and certainly greatly swelled in volume, by the author's propensity to theorize and philosophize on what he has seen, especially where the observations do not furnish proper basis for speculative digressions.

In the first place the author is a strong believer in the efficacy of 'sexual selection,' and it is consequently from this point of view that he interprets the behavior of the birds he has so carefully watched. His arguments, he seems himself willing to admit, are here and there a little far-fetched and inconclusive, and to this extent they had better have been wholly omitted from an otherwise excellent book. Lack of space forbids a detailed reference to particular instances, and also prevents the transcription here of many passages in illustration of the author's admirable descriptions of what he has seen amid the wild crags of the sea-coast, on the moorlands, or in the 'greenwoods.' His felicity of description often makes readable, and even gives special interest, to what might easily become a dull recital if rendered by a less gifted narrator. But in general, to the bird lover, the incidents possess in themselves an interest that gives a charm to the pages of 'Bird Watching.'

The photogravure and text illustrations are from drawings by the well-known bird artist J. Smit, and, having been doubtless made under the author's careful supervision, are probably as good substitutes for the truthful pictures of the camera as could be well devised.

A very full index renders the contents of the book readily available.

'Bird Watching,' it may be added, forms a volume of the 'Haddon Hall Library' series, edited by the Marquess of Granby and Mr. George A. B. Dewar.—J. A. A.

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species. (*Ibid.*, pp. 57-60, July, 1901.) (4) A New *Ortalis* from the Archipelago de las Perlas, Bay of Panama. (*Ibid.*, pp. 61, 62, July 31, 1901.) (5) A New *Phaethornis* from the Santa Marta Region of Colombia. (*Ibid.*, pp. 63-65, July 31, 1901.) (6) On an apparently Unnamed Race of *Buteo borealis*. (*Ibid.*, pp. 67-69.)

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Early Migration of Wild Geese.

EDITORS OF 'THE AUK':—

Dear Sirs:—Upon the 30th day of August, when in longitude 54° E. and latitude 45° N. (approximately), upon S. S. 'Minneapolis' bound from London to New York, I saw and pointed out to several of my fellow-passengers, three flocks of Geese flying due south, as near as could be