

**Mathews' 'Birds of Australia.'**<sup>1</sup>—Parts 3 and 4 of the second volume of Mr. Mathews' great work are before us testifying to the energy with which the publication is being carried on. In style these parts are similar to those that have preceded them and they are fully up to the high standard that characterized the first volume. The only point wherein Mr. Mathews' work seems open to criticism is in his failure to designate type specimens for the extralimital races that he is constantly describing as new, and in the brevity of some of these descriptions. The latter practice the writer has just had occasion to criticise in another connection, while in the matter of types he has recently been put to so much trouble in attempting to ascertain the type specimens of Gould's species of Australian birds, that he naturally regrets that the modern authority on Australasian ornithology should follow, in the case of these forms, the bad example set by his predecessor. Such a practice will cause some one much trouble and research in the future.

The two parts under consideration comprise 240 pages and 26 plates practically completing Volume II. They cover the remainder of the Procellariiformes and most of the Lariformes.

The following forms are described as new, most of them from localities outside Australia. In part 3: *Pelecanoides urinatrix coppingeri*, Straits of Magellan; *Puffinaria garnotii lessoni*, Coast of Chili; *P. g. magellani*, Straits of Magellan; *Diomedea exulans rothschildi*, Australian Seas; *Thalassarche melanophris impavida*, Tasmania; *T. m. belcheri*, Kerguelen; *T. m. richmondii*, West coast of South America; *Thalassogeron chrysostruma harterti*, Kerguelen; *Phaebetria palpebrata huttoni*, New Zealand Seas; *P. fusca campbelli*, Australian Seas; *Hydrochelidon leucopareia leggei*, Ceylon; *H. l. delalandii*, South Africa; *H. l. swinhœi*, China; *Gelochelidon nilotica addenda*, China; *G. n. grönvoldi*, South America; *Thalasseus bergii bakeri* Mekran Coast; *T. b. edwardsi*, Ceylon; *T. bengalensis arabicus*, Red Sea. In part 4: *Sterna dougallii bangsi*, Foochow, China; *S. d. arideensis*, Seychelles; *Sturnula nereis exsul*, New Caledonia; *Melanosterna anæthetis recognita*, Bahamas; *Anous stolidus gilberti*, S. W. Australia; *Megalopterus minutus americanus* Caribbean Sea, British Honduras, *M. m. atlanticus*, Ascension Isl.; *Procelsterna cerulea nebouxi*, Ellice and Phoenix groups and Samoa; *P. c. imitatrix*, St. Ambrose group; *Gygis alba royana*, Kermadec Islands; *G. a. monte*, Seychelles; *Bruchigavia novae-hollandiae forsteri*, New Caledonia. *Leucanous* is proposed as a new genus with *Gygis micro-rhyncha* as type, and the following subgenera are noted, *Nealbatrus*, type *Thalassogeron chlororhynchos*; *Diomedella*, type *Th. cautus*; and *Gygisterna*, type *Sterna sumatrana kempi*.

Several of Mr. Mathews' proposed changes in nomenclature affect the A. O. U. Check-List. *Thalassogeron culminatus* appears as *Th. chrysostruma culminata*, *Phaebetria palpebrata* is apparently his *P. p. huttoni*, *Gelo-*

<sup>1</sup> The Birds of Australia. By Gregory M. Mathews. With hand-colored Plates, Roy, 4to. Witherby and Co., London.

*chelidon nilotica* is *G. n. aranea* (Wilson), *Sterna caspia* becomes *Hydroprogne tschegrava imperator* (Coues), and *S. anathetus* becomes *Melanosterna anathetus recognita* Mathews. *Phæbastris*, *Thalasseus*, *Hydroprogne*, *Onychoprion*, *Sternula* and *Melanosterna* are regarded as genera, while in *Hydrochelidon leucoptera*, *Sterna dougalli*, *S. fuscatus* and *Anous stolidus* the specific name must be repeated on account of the recognition of extralimital races.

In the substitution of *Hydroprogne* for *Thalasseus* and *Thalasseus* for *Actocheilidon*, Mr. Mathews has the writer's hearty support.—W. S.

**Bickerton's 'Home-Life of the Terns.'**<sup>1</sup>—This attractive volume constitutes the fourth of the 'Bird Lover's Home-Life Series.' In it Mr. Bickerton tells us of his visits to several Tern colonies on the English coast and his experiences in studying and photographing the five British breeding species — the Arctic, Common, Sandwich, Lesser and Roseate Terns. One chapter is devoted to Terns' habits in general, and one each to the species here especially considered while some additional notes on the Common Tern are given in chapter VII. The accounts are written in an attractive style and contain much information of value to the ornithologist as well as to the bird-lover.

We learn from Mr. Bickerton's pages that the Arctic Tern is by far the most abundant breeding species in Great Britain today, one colony numbering at least ten thousand pairs; the Common Tern comes next, the Lesser Tern is not so numerous, the Sandwich decidedly rare and the Roseate extremely so.

The protection afforded these birds during the breeding season is yielding encouraging results. In the case of the Sandwich Tern in the Ravensglass 'Gullery', which is carefully guarded by Lord Muncaster, the number of eggs recorded by the warden has increased from 120 in 1900 to 403 in 1912. As a protection against the unscrupulous raids of collectors the freshly laid eggs are each day marked by the warden with an indelible purple pencil so as to make them valueless as specimens. An idea of the rarity of the Roseate Tern may be gained from the fact that the only breeding colonies that could be found were located on rocky islets, inhabited by Arctic and Common Terns, and numbered all told not over 15 or 20 pairs while the other two species numbered respectively 10,000 and 1000 pairs. Mr. Bickerton found the Roseate Terns laying but a single egg in every nest examined, due possibly to this being on the northern limit of their breeding range.

American readers of this interesting volume will find in it a reminder of what might have been, on the New Jersey coast and elsewhere on our shores,

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<sup>1</sup>The Home-Life of the Terns or Sea Swallows Photographed and described By W. Bickerton, F. Z. S., M. B. O. U. Vice-President of The Hertfordshire Natural History Society and Field Club, with thirty-two mounted plates London Witherby & Co., 326 High Holborn W. C. MCMXII, pp. 1-88, plates 1-32.