

of the intruder. Another Cowbird *M. badius* makes a nest of its own and rears its own young.

Members of the Audubon Society will be pleased to know that in Argentina there are game laws and closed seasons, and that a permit is necessary in order to collect specimens, while the collector will rejoice to learn that officials are most courteous and obliging, and that the necessary permit was secured in a few hours which included a railway journey to the nearest city.

Mr. Miller's book is one that we can heartily recommend to the general reader who wishes to know something of South America, from the everyday experience of the traveller, both in the long settled districts and in the wilderness, while it should be in the library of every ornithologist and mammalogist. The day is past when the student of this or that branch of natural science can limit his reading to technical monographs. He must know something of the animal in its natural surroundings in order to appreciate the relationship between color and background, adaptation and environment; and to enable him to extend his studies beyond the mere description of a new species based on a museum specimen. And as a contribution to this field of literature Mr. Miller's book holds an important place.

We regret that there is no index, as it is difficult to find again some paragraph that deals with a certain species in which we may be interested, and the utility of the volume is impaired to that extent. It is also regrettable that the author has seen fit to make use of the names of certain familiar North American birds — such as Red-headed Woodpecker and White-throated Sparrow — for South American species which are only remotely related to them, as in spite of the citation of the correct technical names many popular readers will imagine that these familiar birds occur in South America as migrants. In the 'Contents' there seems to be an error of some kind in dividing the book into parts. Part one, headed "Columbia," includes nine chapters all devoted to that country, but part two, headed "Venezuela," contains seventeen chapters only two of which have anything to do with this republic. This however is a trifling matter. The typography and general appearance of the volume from the standpoint of the bookmaker are excellent.— W. S.

Van Oort's Birds of the Netherlands.¹— We are in receipt of parts I and II of an important illustrated work on the birds of Holland by the well known ornithologist, Dr. E. D. Van Oort, Director of the Natural History Museum at Leiden. From a prospectus by the author and the publisher,

¹ Ornithologica Neerlandica [de | Vogels van Nederland | door | Dr. E. D. Van Oort | Directeur van 's Rijks Museum van Natuurlijke Historie | te Leiden | Met ongeveer vierhonderd gekleurde Platen | 's Gravenhage | Martinus Nijhoff. [Lange Voorhout, The Hague, Holland.] Royal quarto, Part I, pp. 1-24, plates 1-10; part II, pp. 25-56, plates 11-20. [1918]. Price, 12.50 Gld. per part.

Martinus Nijhoff, we learn that the complete work is to consist of five volumes, two of eight parts, two of seven and one of ten. Each part will contain ten plates and four or five parts will be issued annually so that there will be in all 400 plates while the undertaking will require from eight to ten years for completion.

The two parts already issued give promise of a work that will be the standard authority on the birds of the Netherlands and a fitting companion to Mr. Van Pelt Lechner's 'Oologica Neerlandica' published a few years ago by Mr. Nijhoff, and reviewed in these columns. The text of the present work consists of sections dealing with each order, family and genus, covering structural characters and matters of nomenclature and distribution, as well as keys to the genera and species. Under each species are given the original reference and a full synonymy of references to the bird in the Netherlands; then follows a list of the Dutch vernacular names and the most familiar English, French and German names. The various plumages are described with more than ordinary detail, with measurements of specimens, and there are full accounts of the distribution of the species, dates of occurrence in the Netherlands and manner of nesting, with descriptions and measurements of the eggs.

The colored plates, from paintings by Mr. M. A. Koekkoek, are excellent of their kind, and fully up to the standard of most works of this sort; the coloring is accurate and all matters of detail are worked out with the greatest care. Of course they are not to be compared with the work of Thorborn, Fuertes and some of the other leaders in bird portraiture, who present to the life the characteristic actions and postures of the birds as well as colors and proportions, but they are nevertheless admirable illustrations, well above the average. There is some range of variation in the execution too, and the plates of the Little Grebe, Fulmar and Storm Petrel are worthy of especial mention. A particularly praiseworthy feature of the illustrations is the large number of figures that are given of the same species in order to show the variations due to season, sex and age, which is a great help to a proper understanding of the plumages.

The text is, of course, wholly in Dutch but nevertheless Dr. Van Oort's work is one which should be in all reference libraries, in this country as well as in Europe.

In matters of nomenclature the author seems to be quite up to date so far as can be judged from the two parts of the work before us. The name *Colymbus* is, however, used for the Loons and *Podiceps* for the Grebes, apparently on the basis of Gray's designation of *arcticus* as the type of the former (in 1855); this, however, we fear cannot hold as Gray was not dealing with the tenth edition of Linnæus' 'Systema,' when the designation was made, but with that of 1735.

The typography, paper and general makeup of the book are excellent and fully up to the publisher's high standards. We congratulate both author and publisher upon the first parts of this notable work and wish them all success in completing their task.—W. S.