

vations and much from the oft-quoted publications of the U. S. Biological Survey. It would have been better had the author also quoted his descriptions of the birds from a standard authority since the color terms used often vary so widely from those usually employed as to be confusing. His Bobolink's eggs moreover if really "white spotted with brown" must have belonged to some other species of ground nesting bird.

This work contains so much interesting and original matter that it is a pity that the manuscript could not have been read critically by some ornithologist familiar with the broader aspects of the study, but apart from slips in the more technical side of the subject it will furnish interesting reading for the popular bird student and will do much to attract others to the field that the author has found so interesting.

The book is beautifully gotten up and the half tones and the colored plates from the Audubon Society leaflets are remarkably well printed.—
W. S.

Dr. Cordier's 'Birds: Their Photographs and Home Life.'—This¹ is another of the popular 'bird books' with which the market at present seems to be filled. Dr. Cordier makes no claim for his book as a complete treatise on the birds of any given locality and only those with which he has come into photographic contact in their natural feeding and breeding haunts are considered. Dr. Cordier, moreover, wisely confines himself to his personal experiences and does not, in an attempt to cover the whole field, rehash the work of others.

Although a big game hunter himself, he seems to be unable to realize the possibilities of a similar enthusiasm on the part of a collector of birds and scores the amateur collector roundly. However we nearly all agree that today the collecting of birds in the United States, except on the part of the technical investigator or representative of the large museum, is unnecessary, but many of his strictures apply just as well to the hunter of big game animals, and not a few big game hunters have abandoned the slaughter in favor of photography.

Several chapters in Dr. Cordier's book are devoted to methods in bird photography with many useful hints about cameras, lenses, etc., and then follow accounts of trips to bird rookeries in Florida and on the Texas coast and finally sketches of the habits and habitats of various birds which the author has studied, which contain not a few notes and observations of interest, while the 140 half-tones give evidence of his ability as a photographer. The few pictures taken from chloroformed birds or dead birds had better have been omitted as they are but sorry substitutes for photographs from life and at once invite criticism.

¹ *Birds: Their Photography and Home Life.* By A. H. Cordier, M. D. With 145 illustrations from Photographs of Wild Birds by the Author. Dorrance & Co., publishers. Philadelphia (308-310 Walnut St.) 1923. pp. 1-247. Price \$4.00, post paid \$4.15.

This book will doubtless be read with interest and profit by the increasing army of bird students who follow their hobby with the aid of the camera.—
W. S.

Payne's 'The Baltimore Oriole.'—This handsomely printed little book,¹ which has about it the appearance of authority, unfortunately contains so many misquotations and pieces of misinformation that one wonders how it could have been compiled in these days of accurate ornithological knowledge.

From the astonishing Canary-colored Oriole of the frontispiece and cover, to the sketch of Audubon based on the antiquated and discredited life by Buchanan, errors are numerous. The author has apparently never heard of Herrick's life of Audubon and the extracts from Audubon regarding the Oriole, although enclosed in quotation marks, are unfortunately not verbatim and are often pieced together. Moreover the great ornithologist is made to say that the birds "attain the full beauty of their plumage before the first winter" whereas as a matter of fact he says the "plumage is not mature until the third spring." The latter part of the remarkable statement "They lay 4-6 eggs and in the far south *near two brooks*" proves to be, when the original is consulted, "and in Louisiana *rear two broods.*"

These and other quotations are, we are informed, taken from the "Elephantine Edition" and we learn that the economic value of the Oriole was "demonstrated scientifically by the admirable Biological Survey made by the Government in the Department of Agriculture." [!]

Why do not publishers consult some competent ornithologist and have such works properly revised before launching them upon the public?—
W. S.

Johnston's 'Birds of West Virginia.'—The West Virginia Department of Agriculture has issued an attractive book² on the birds of the state by the state ornithologist, I. H. Johnston. The main text consists of accounts of forty of the best known species covering nesting, range, food and general habits. Each one is illustrated by a figure in colors from paintings by Louis Agassiz Fuertes printed as inserts in the text. While these are excellent portraits of the birds the printer has unfortunately in several cases gotten the colors out of register so that a blurred effect is produced like a lantern slide out of focus, which is most unfortunate.

The text that the author has furnished is fully up to the requirements and is followed by a nominal list of all the birds of the state to which is added a general account of the economic value of birds with methods of attracting them, suggestions for bird study in the schools and a chapter

¹ The Baltimore Oriole and a Biographical Sketch of Audubon. By Raphael Semmes Payne, Baltimore. The Norman, Remington Company. MCMXXIII. pp. 1-55. Price \$1.00.

² Birds of West Virginia. Their Economic Value and Aesthetic Beauty. 1923. I. H. Johnston, State Ornithologist. Compiled and Published by State Department of Agriculture, Charleston. J. H. Stewart, Commissioner. pp. 1-138 (140).