

Without a detailed perusal one cannot realize the vast amount of data contained in this notable volume which will long stand as a leading work of reference on arctic bird life. When we consider the amount of labor that the author must have expended in the preparation of the manuscript we must not forget the equally notable service of the editor, Dr. Glover M. Allen, who, we understand, translated the entire manuscript from French into English in preparing it for the press, and to him as well as to the author we owe a debt of gratitude.—W. S.

**Whistler's 'Popular Handbook of Indian Birds.'**<sup>1</sup>—As the author of this excellent work truly says, the books on Indian birds are either too scientific, too expensive or too elementary, and his object has been to provide a dignified treatise, giving all the information desired by the student or traveller, but not in too scientific a manner and at a price within reach of all. That he has succeeded admirably we think everyone will agree.

Matters of distribution, migration, and nomenclature are explained in a lucid manner in the introduction and following this the birds are considered in systematic sequence beginning with the Passeres. There is a brief description, a paragraph on field identification, another on distribution—in which the various subspecies occurring in India are distinguished, and finally an account of habits, etc.

Seventeen halftone plates from paintings by Grönvold (four in color) depict the most striking species while text cuts of heads or entire birds illustrate additional forms. The author's sketches of the habits of the various species are particularly interesting and show his familiarity with his subject as well as with the literature of ornithology. Many Indian birds belong to groups entirely unknown in America or else have habits utterly unlike those of our species which makes the book interesting reading for those desiring to broaden their knowledge of bird life.

Of the Palm Swift, a bird distantly related to our Chimney Swift, Mr. Whistler says: "It may be said to be parasitic on the fan-palm, and is only found in the areas where that tree grows. The nest is built on the leaves and the birds spend their lives hawking for insects in the vicinity. They sometimes cluster together on the leaves and move up and down the fronds with a shuffling mode of progression. Colonies of bats are found in similar situations and a single tree may contain a colony of both bird and mammal." As in many of the other sketches a vast amount of information is presented for which one would have to search widely through ornithological literature.

Mr. Whistler has placed us under obligations by furnishing a most valuable work of reference and a book that will be of the greatest service to ornithologists visiting India as well as to local students.—W. S.

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<sup>1</sup> Popular Handbook of Indian Birds. By Hugh Whistler, F. L. S., F. Z. S., late Indian (Imperial) Police. Gurney and Jackson, London: 33 Paternoster Row, E. C. Edinburgh: Tweeddale Court, 1928, pp. i-xv, 1-438, pl. 1-17, figg. 1-85. Price 15 shillings net.