

The book is profusely illustrated with drawings by W. H. Riddell, Joseph Crawhall and the author. Twenty of Mr. Riddell's plates are in color and are beautifully and delicately drawn representing a nesting colony of Flamingoes, Grebes, Vultures and various groups of African game animals. Equally noteworthy are Mr. Chapman's sketches of various birds on the wing, notably Vultures and Ducks.

The volume is a worthy successor of the author's other works and will furnish most interesting reading both to the naturalist and the sportsman, very few of whom have had such a wide and varied experience.—W. S.

Gross on the Heath Hen.—Dr. A. O. Gross who has for some years past been carrying on investigations on the status of the Heath Hen under the fund established to prevent its extermination, has now prepared what we fear, in the light of the latest information, may prove to be the obituary notice of the bird.

The paper is published by the Boston Society of Natural History with the aid of the William Brewster Fund and has as a frontispiece a beautiful plate in colors from a painting of the Heath Hen by the late Louis Agassiz Fuertes.

Dr. Gross presents first an historical resume of the species, giving its early history, and an outline of its decrease and increase, and the efforts that have been made to preserve it. In 1890 it numbered less than 200 individuals on the island of Martha's Vineyard, having long since disappeared from the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania, the Pine Barrens of New Jersey and Long Island, which had been its last strongholds elsewhere. By 1907 there were estimated to be less than 50 and then every effort was made to increase the number with the result that by April, 1916, they were estimated at 2000 individuals. The next month fire swept over their range on the island and they were nearly wiped out but by 1920 had increased again to over 500, since which time the decrease has been steady.

The various possible causes of decrease are then discussed by Dr. Gross—disease, parasites, cats, hawks, fire, sterility, etc, and his detailed study of the birds from the fire tower on the island is presented.

The food of the bird is considered in detail; there is a list of specimens preserved in museums—208 in all; full descriptions of the various plumages and of the anatomy of the bird and a bibliography. Various illustrations from photographs show the bird's habitat, and old and young in different poses, as well as anatomical preparations. Dr. Gross has prepared an admirable monograph for which all ornithologists are indebted.

In discussing the nomenclature of the bird he concludes, we think rightly, that the Heath Hen and the Prairie Chicken are merely subspecies and that the former should bear the name *Tympanuchus cupido*

¹ The Heath Hen. By Alfred O. Gross, Ph.D. (Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine). With twelve plates. Memoirs of the Boston Society of Natural History, Vol. 6, No. 4. Boston May, 1928, pp. 491-588.

cupido and the latter *T. c. americanus*. While it is by no means certain that Reichenbach's name *americanus* applies to the Prairie Chicken and not to the Heath Hen, he thinks it best not to overturn customary usage. In Dr. Gross's bibliography we note the omission of an anonymous account of the bird in the New Jersey Pine Barrens and its wanton destruction there by unscrupulous gunners (Doughty's Cabinet of Natural History, Vol. II, 1832, p. 16, dated January 4, 1832 and signed I.) Also the author listed as "Herbert L. Goggins" in the bibliography should be Herbert L. Coggins, former secretary of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club and former president of the Cooper Club.—W. S.

Collett's 'The Heart of a Bird.'¹—This little volume consists of a series of twelve sketches of bird life in England, covering the twelve months of the year, and written by Anthony Collett, who has been termed "one of the most sensitive and discerning of out door observers of nature." Most of the sketches have appeared previously in the London 'Times' and are now gathered together in book form with an introduction covering the general structure and activities of birds, which for terseness of expression and clearness and originality has seldom been equalled. "Birds," says Mr. Collett, "are flying things full of eagerness and mobility. Their hearts beat more swiftly than those of mammals, their blood is hotter, they overflow with the self expression of song," and again speaking of flight he says: "Of nature's three attempts to make vertebrates fly, birds have been by far the most successful * * * pterodactyls were dreary-looking beasts, unless the naturalists who reconstruct them from their stray bones do them injustice; they flew feebly and it is very unlikely that they sang."

Each of the monthly chapters treats of observations on birds in some part of England with descriptions of characteristic climate and scenery; while there are discussions on migration, song, feeding habits, etc. and the pages teem with original observations giving us some of the most vivid pictures of British bird life that we have read, as well as food for thought on many problems of bird activity—W. S.

Gorges' Life of Ernest Harold Baynes.²—The many who have listened to the lectures of the late Ernest Harold Baynes and especially those who have enjoyed the privilege of his acquaintance will be deeply interested in Mr. Gorges' sympathetic biography. Here is told the story of his early life, his athletic prowess, and his overpowering love of birds and animals which led him to the field of literature and to the lecture platform. Those who knew him only as the champion of bird life and

¹ The Heart of a Bird. By Anthony Collett. London, Nesbit & Co. Ltd., pp. 1-287. Price 10sh. 6p.

² Ernest Harold Baynes. Naturalist and Crusader. By Raymond Gorges. Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., The Riverside Press. Cambridge, 1928, pp. 1-256. Price \$4.00.