

ian, although Mr. Snyder is of the opinion that under primeval conditions the latter largely predominated and that more southern elements have come in after the area came under cultivation and much of the forests were removed.

The main part of the publication consists of a well annotated list of 230 species of birds with a bibliography.—W. S.

Robert's 'Les Oiseaux de Chez Nous.'—We published an announcement of M. Robert's work¹ in 'The Auk' some time ago, and now we have before us the first portfolio consisting of 23 large sheets 15 x 21 ins., upon which are mounted from one to three reproductions of the artist's paintings of familiar French birds—woodpeckers, the Bee-eater, and various passerine species. His work is very different from that of Fuytes or Thorburn and in his treatment, there is more of the artist and less of the ornithologist, with the result, that there is less detailed accuracy and yet, often a reproduction of the character of plumage that is not always attained by our bird artists.

M. Robert's work is, however, by no means uniform; some of his birds show intimate knowledge of the living bird and many a characteristic attitude has been caught while on the other hand there are figures, which in their stiffness and unnatural poses look as if they had been painted from badly mounted specimens. The backgrounds, too, vary very much in effectiveness, some being excellent while others are unfortunate in being far more conspicuous than the bird. There are several cases too, where the background color has been put on immediately around the figure of the bird following its very curve!

However, they are probably the best paintings of French birds that have been produced and most of them are pleasing pictures from an artistic point of view and accurate in detail and coloring, indeed the reproduction seems to be excellent. The work is issued both as a portfolio and as an atlas.—W. S.

Collinge on the Corn-crake.—The Land-rail or Corn-crake has diminished in numbers in southern Great Britain for reasons not well understood. As one means of stimulating interest in the bird and its preservation, Dr. Walter E. Collinge has reported² on its food habits. He finds it to be one of three British birds that feed most extensively on leather-jackets or crane-fly larvae which are great pests of grass lands. The Corn-crake eats many larvae of the type known in the United States as wire-worms and in all is credited with subsisting to the extent of 66 per cent of its diet upon food, the consumption of which is a benefit to the farmer, while 33 per cent is neutral, and only 1 per cent injurious in character.

Dr. Collinge discusses possible causes of decrease in numbers of the bird,

¹ Leo-Paul Robert | Peintre | Les | Oiseaux | de Chez Nous | Premier Portfeuille | Neuchâtel | Delachaux & Niestlé S. A. | Éditeurs.

² Journ. Ministry of Agr. Sept. 1931, pp. 618-621, 1 fig.