

**Bannerman's 'Birds of Tropical West Africa.'**—The second volume of this notable publication<sup>1</sup> has recently appeared and in every detail is fully up to the high standard set by its predecessor which was reviewed in detail in 'The Auk,' 1931, p. 285. In the volume before us are treated the orders Ralliformes, Gruiformes, Charadriiformes, Columbiformes and Psittaciformes, the classification being that of Dr. Percy R. Lowe as set forth in 'The Ibis,' for 1931, and here formally used for the first time. Notable associations in this scheme are the placing of the Bustards, Thick-knees, and Jacanas along with the Cranes, in the Gruiformes; and the inclusion of the Sandgrouse and Button-Quail as suborders with the Pigeons in the Columbiformes. A most instructive feature of the key to the families is the arrangement in a column of the heads and feet of the more important genera with braces indicating their association in family groups and with explanatory text on the opposite page.

The account of each species is headed by the popular name followed by the technical, as in Chapman's new 'Handbook,' then the important synonymy relating to the district under consideration, a description of plumage and measurements, and paragraphs on Field Identification, Range and Local Distribution, and Habits, the last often developed into quite a full biography.

The illustrations consist of 114 text figures, line or half-tone, all with a few exceptions by Grönvold, Frohawk, and Roland Green and fifteen color plates from paintings by George Lodge, H. Grönvold, F. W. Frohawk and Henry Jones; the Bustard paintings by the last-named being particularly beautiful. There is also a colored map of the Gold Coast.

In every detail the work should appeal to the bird student as it is not only thoroughly up to date in its scientific information but written in a style that every lover of nature can understand, and presented in a form that will prove an attraction to any library fortunate enough to possess it.—W. S.

**Martorelli's 'Birds of Italy.'**—This work<sup>2</sup> first appeared in 1906 some years before the death of the author, in 1917, and the second edition which

<sup>1</sup> The | Birds of Tropical West Africa | With Special Reference to those of the Gambia, | Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Nigeria | By | David Armitage Bannerman | M.B.E., M.A. (Cantab.), F.R.S.E. | Zoological Department, British Museum of Natural History | Member of the British Ornithologists' Union and of the Société | Ornithologique de France, Corresponding Fellow of the American | Ornithologists' Union, Fellow of the Zoological Society of London | and of the Royal Geographical Society, etc. | Maps and Coloured Plates | Volume Two | Published under the Authority of the | Secretary of State for the Colonies by | The Crown Agents for the Colonies | 4 Millbank, Westminster, London, S. W. 1 | 1931 | Pp. i-xxix + 1-428. Price 22s. 6d. Subscription to the entire work (5 vols.) £ 5.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Giacinto Martorelli | Direttore della Raccolta Ornitologica Turati del Museo Civico | di Storia Naturale di Milano | Gli | Uccelli d'Italia | con 308 fotoincisioni da Acquarelli e Fotografie | Originali e con 16 Tavole | a Colori | Secinda Edizione | Riveduta ed Aggiornata dal Dott. Edgardo Moltoni | Successore del Prof. Martorelli nella Direzione della Raccolta Turati | e dal Dott. Carlo Vandoni | Rizzoli & C. Milano | 1931. Pp. i-xx + 1-752. Price 125 Liro, Rizzoli & C., Piazza Carlo Erba N. 6, Milan, Italy.

is before us is in the nature of a memorial, edited and revised by his successor in the Museum of Natural History at Milan, Dr. Egardo Moltoni, associated with Dr. Carlo Vandoni. It is a quarto volume of over 700 pages with 308 text figures or full page half-tones and sixteen colored plates. The illustrations are mainly from water colors by the author with the addition of a few by Dr. Vandoni and illustrate a large number of the 476 species and subspecies so far found in Italy. They vary in excellence and artistic merit but are all satisfactory representations of the subjects that they depict while many are excellent and show the intimate knowledge of the author concerning the actions and poses of the familiar birds of his country.

The text consists of a description of each species with measurements and a brief account of distribution and habits. The nomenclature and classification follow that of Sharpe's 'Hand-List.'

The book is more popular in character than the 'Ornitologia Italiana' of Arrigoni degli Oddi, to which it makes a satisfactory companion, furnishing the illustrations which the latter lacks.

The authors are to be congratulated upon an excellent volume and one which should stimulate interest in birds throughout Italy.—W. S.

**Wetmore on 'Birds.'**—The Smithsonian Institution is sponsoring a series of volumes dealing with all branches of science. Volume 9 of the series treats of the warm-blooded vertebrates and the first part covering the birds<sup>1</sup> is by Dr. Alexander Wetmore. The intention is to give a résumé of general information regarding bird life such as will interest the reader, without attempting to cover technical matter or to present a systematic account of the species, or even of the higher groups. The chapter headings will give a good idea of the contents of the volume: viz.; Birds in Relation to Man; Adaptations for Progression by Flying; Color and its Arrangement; Ancestors and Ancestry; Migration and its Study; Homes and their Location; Eggs and their Care; Something about Young Birds; Voice and Other Sounds; Studies Afield and in the Laboratory; Food and Economic Relations; The Kinds of Birds in Brief Review.

Dr. Wetmore has exercised excellent judgment in choosing the information that he has presented, with the result that he has included in a small space a surprising amount of important matter. As an additional attraction there are a number of admirable photographs of birds in life and several beautiful color plates from paintings by Allan Brooks. If the other volumes of the series measure up to Dr. Wetmore's contribution it will prove a unique summary of scientific knowledge.

**Chapman on the Bird-life of Mts. Roraima and Duida.**—The fauna and flora of these two isolated mountains rising from the tropical

<sup>1</sup> Smithsonian Scientific Series Vol. 9, Part 1. Birds, by Alexander Wetmore, Assistant Secretary Smithsonian Institution. Pp. 1-166. 69 Plates and several text figures. 1931.