

NEW ZEALAND BIRDS. By PÉRRINE MONCRIEFF. Whitcombe and Tombs, New Zealand, Australia and London. 10s. 6d.

This is the fifth edition, extensively revised, of a book which, in view of its circulation, needs little introduction to New Zealand ornithologists. Any visitor to the country who has an interest in birds would find it very useful. It is a handy, practical guide, compiled on the lines of Miss B. A. Carter's *Ready Guide to British Birds*. The construction is unusual. The main part of the book is in two sections, one listing birds in order of size (length in inches), with descriptive notes, and the other listing birds in systematic order with shorter descriptive notes, mainly comparative. There is also a section on nesting times, so that information on many species occurs in three places which are connected only by page references in the index. There are eighteen colour plates and twenty-seven pages of photographs, the latter mainly of museum specimens; all are of rather poor quality but good enough to convey some impression of what the birds look like.

J. D. M.

LARGER BIRDS OF WEST AFRICA. By D. A. BANNERMAN. Penguin Books. 2s. 6d.

The ornithologist in West Africa is now well provided with "light" and "heavy" literature on the birds of the region. Travellers are often concerned with baggage weight and Bannerman's famous "Eight Volumes" were, I believe, taken into the field with reluctance and with equal reluctance left behind. The situation was eased with his abridged but still quite weighty two-volume edition; and now there is this third reduction to a pocket-sized book whose weight at least will appeal to everyone.

In spite of the small size the volume contains information on about 350 of the larger (non-passerine) species. The text is laid out in the form of a general outline of the characteristics of each group or family with a line drawing of a typical species. This is followed by short accounts of the features, habits and distribution of each species. There are in all fifty-four illustrations, including one on the topography of a bird and details of a wing.

There are no keys and there is no index.

J. D. M.