

on reaction-rate is of considerable interest, but their applicability would seem to be rather restricted. The most important field is probably that of enzyme and microbiological reactions, in which recent development has been rapid, but in this direction the account is disappointing.

A chapter entitled "Phase Solubility Analysis" deals with tests for purity and the determination of impurities by precise solubility measurements. These methods are sound in principle, but are often very time-consuming. They have proved particularly valuable in the examination of some biological products where the criterion of melting-point is not available. The concluding section on "Counter-current Distribution" is concerned with a method of highly organized multiple-solvent extraction. Convenient devices for carrying out many successive partitions systematically are described, and the theory of the fate of solutes present is worked out in detail. This technique has been developed largely by Dr. L. C. Craig and has been applied to the separation of acids, fats, bile constituents and protein degradation products.

The articles in this volume have been written by experts and they are in general well documented. It is not a serious disadvantage that some of the methods discussed have a restricted field of application. The production of the book is excellent, and the two volumes taken together will be of real value to the practical organic chemist.

G. M. BENNETT

## BIRDS OF THE KATHIAWAR PENINSULA, INDIA

Birds of Saurashtra—India, With Additional Notes on the Birds of Kutch and Gujerat

By R. S. Dharmakumarsinhji. Pp. liii+561+51 plates (33 colour). (Bombay: N. M. Tripathi, Ltd., 1955.) Rs. 50; 112s. 6d.; 18 dollars.

UNTIL twenty years ago, nearly all the works on Indian birds came from British pens. Then Salim Ali's books began to appear, which rank with the best of any previously published. Now, other Indian authors are following him, and the present volume, written by the brother of the Maharajah of Bhavnagar, and sumptuously produced, is an impressive addition to Indian ornithological publications. Saurashtra is the part of India which lies between the Gulf of Cambay and the Arabian Sea. It appears as Kathiawar on most maps, but Saurashtra is the older name. It is, therefore, a conveniently compact area for field-work. It contains no mountains more than four thousand feet high, and is mostly hilly and undulating. But there is a good deal of salt land and semi-desert (though the rainfall is locally heavy), so that rare or very local species, such as the great Indian bustard, its congener the florican and some of the sand-grouse, breed in fair numbers.

The author writes that he began his observations on birds when he was a schoolboy in England; but the whole of his adult life has been spent in Saurashtra, and this book is a remarkable testimony to the assiduity and care with which he has studied birds, with no neighbour to assist, throughout the years. The book is so full of first-hand and first-rate bird lore that it is not easy to comment on any special passages in a short review. The author is an expert on the eagles, which are among the most difficult

birds to distinguish, and his field-notes on their sight-identity are of special value after the recent appearance of some misleading information on some of the same species from Russian ornithologists.

In some cases, rather fuller information would have been desirable. Thus, both the roller (*Coracias garrulus*) and the spotted flycatcher, which occur in this part of India in some numbers on the autumn migration, are claimed as winter visitors. The impression hitherto has been that neither species remains in India during the winter, and it has been assumed that they migrate some fifteen hundred miles across the sea to Africa. It is a pity that the author does not give his evidence in these and some other cases in more detail than a general statement.

The book is fully illustrated, with photographs, many of them taken by the author, and with coloured plates by an Indian artist, Somalal Shah. These plates are variable in quality. The larger birds are often felicitously shown; but the smaller birds look as if they had been based on mouldy skins, and fail to give the distinctive features. However, the book is an important addition to the knowledge of Indian bird-life.

H. G. ALEXANDER

## ANTIQUITIES IN BRITAIN

### Buried London

Mithras to the Middle Ages. By William Thomson Hill. Pp. 192+40 plates+14 maps. (London: Phoenix House, Ltd., 1955.) 25s. net.

### Furniture in Roman Britain

By Joan Liversidge. Pp. viii+76+69 plates. (London: Alec Tiranti, Ltd., 1955.) 10s. 6d. net.

MR. THOMSON HILL's book came in on the crest of the wave of public interest which broke—for reasons that are still not altogether clear—on the discoveries which were made in the Walbrook area of London in 1954. "Buried London" is essentially an expansion of newspaper articles dealing with current work in the bombed areas and with the very serious losses to the visible antiquities and historic monuments of the city which resulted from the bombing during the Second World War.

The book is not a scholar's book and the phrase "complete record" in the publisher's note should be read with the reserve appropriate to such declarations. The "complete record" cannot be made until the present phase of recovery of evidence (against time-limits) has ended, to release the energies of the small group of archaeologists engaged for the next stage. In its primary form at least, the "complete record" must follow a very different pattern from that presented here.

The present popular enthusiasm for archaeology has, inevitably, its good and its bad points. There is a strong element of irony in a situation which creates an earth-shaking sensation out of a discovery like that of the Walbrook Mithraeum, in which (important as it was) there was a strong element of luck, while persistently ignoring results of equal historical significance the winning of which called for much greater application and technical resource. But that is how the world wags, and archaeologists are not the only sufferers. Unlike most of his professional colleagues, Mr. Thomson Hill has tried to see his subject whole; but too often it has defeated him, and there are some surprising and sometimes serious mistakes.