

and their nests, mounted so as to represent the actual surroundings; this was initiated by Dr. Sharpe, who procured the first of these natural groups, that of the Coots, at Avington Park, in Hampshire.

Dr. Sharpe was promoted to the rank of Assistant-Keeper in 1895; he was the author of numerous books and memoirs in addition to those already mentioned, a successful and popular lecturer, and an honorary member of many scientific societies both at home and abroad. He was elected *Officier de l'Instruction Publique* in 1901, and amongst the distinctions he gained were the degree of LL.D. from the University of Aberdeen in 1891, the gold medal for science awarded him in the same year by the Emperor of Austria, and the presidency of the Fourth International Ornithological Congress in 1905, honours the more prized as they were won entirely by merit and hard work.

He will be mourned by naturalists throughout the world, by thousands who have derived instruction and entertainment from his lectures and his popular books, and especially by the colleagues who will miss his friendly help and genial presence; but the national collection of Birds will remain as a magnificent record of a life of devoted and unceasing activity. C. T. R.

On the Dates of Publication of Costa's 'Fauna del Regno di Napoli,' 1829-1886.

THIS work, begun by O. G. Costa in 1829 and continued after his death by his son Achille Costa, was issued in fasciculi of varying amounts of text. A single leaf of brownish-yellow paper bearing a rough collation of the subjects that had appeared up to the end of 1875 was issued by Gustav Lange. This collation refers to 117 fascicules, but their contents are not given, and no reference is made to any dates.

The dates, however, are not so puzzling as appears at first sight, owing to a singular method of dating by the printer, which, as the only means of information now available, may be accepted as very close to the truth. These printed dates will be found on the back fold or near the back fold of the sheet or half-sheet or single leaf, for each appeared as necessitated by the amount of matter in the printer's hands. Sometimes, if the sheet is not folded truly, the date can be seen by widely opening the bound volume, but frequently the sheet is folded truly and the date has perished under the binder's glue!

As the full list of dates runs to twelve closely written foolscap pages of MS., I do not propose to ask you to do more than to note that this MS. of mine is available for reference at the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) to any one who is desirous of ascertaining any particular date. It may be well to mention that I have not been able to find that the printer so dated any part of the Lepidoptera except the "Geometri, Bombycoidi, and Coeliopodi."

C. DAVIES SHERBORN
(*'Index Animalium'*).

Nov. 25, 1909.