## by

Kys. William Io Pinley
(Mis. Finley sh haz dauchtex, Phoebe Katherine, are motozing through the southvest and have sent in this artiele from Fueson, Arizone.)

Near the reeister of a prominent hotel in Tucson, Arizons, hangs, the eazd of the southwestern Txavelin Men's Associstion. The emblem on this postex is abbizd with a high top-knot, a long tail snd legs thet indicate that he is traveling at full speed saross the desert. Under the pieture is the motto: "You can't run over us." All of whioh is a parable. Both the xoadrurner and the traveling salesman cover the ground, and I am suze that the roadrunnex at least oan't be xun ovez.

- One can't get the full meaning of this until he starts hunting a roadrunnez, the most unique and intriguing bizd of the southern desert xagion. In fact, if a tourist treveling through catches a meze glimpse of this wayy bizd, he is lucky. His numerous names axe es mysticsl as his shedow. He is called cround Cuckoo, Mexican Paisano, Snake-killex, Chaparxal Coek, but most typiosl of all, Cook b' the Desert.

As we rolled along over one of Axizona's splehdid highways, the sand hissed under the wheels. Here and there thrashers, verdins, gnatcatchers and other birds were seen, but no rosdunner. Only the feeling of his presence was there as we scenned closely every clump of cactus that we passed. Then just at the side of the white road, scuttling from one gnarly eactus to snothez, slid a slim, daxk bird with head lowered as if dodging the scrutiny of strange eyes. It surely was a roadrunner. He faded away in the silence that reached out over the endless mesa. Then his shadow came out again, skulking
from one bush to another, funning easily as if he wished to keep pace With the car. At our slightest movement, he became scazed and slid along low to the ground like a bxown streak. His movements wexe oatlike. He was making toward the west end of the Catalinss, those rugged, colexpul mountaing that lifted dizectly out of the plain in front of us. Soon he disappeazed into the sameness of sand and wash, palo verdes, sahuaros, ocotillos and chollss.

Frequently after that we oaught Pleoting glimpses of these byown shadows as me zolled along the desext. ono day, something under a bunch of eactus caught my eye. A zoadzunnez was standing stiff and stralght watohing us and thinking he could not possibly be seen. I got out and making a big oircle walked slowly around the bush, getting eloser and ologex metil I conld see $h$ in plainly and meke out the markings of his stilking oost. I was looking at a bixd nearly two feet long with a tail half the length of his body. He was enin indereribable gray-ish-brown, stresked with blagk, with a sheen of byongy-ereen over all. The long, black tail, ixxidescent above, showed white thumb mazks on the outer feathexs. The wholo dxess nas haxsh, espocially the bxistletimped erest. When he caught my eye and kenew he was discovezed, his own yellow eye became excited, his cxest raised and the feathers on the side of his head partedshowing a bare spot just baok of the eyo that was a brilliant orange and biue.

We wondered if a desert diet produced this coloring. Majoy Charles I. Bendire in his "Life Histories of Nozth American Birds," says, "The food of this speoies consists ohiefly of inseots, particularly grasshoppors, but embraces occasionally a lizaxd of a field mouse." Yes, occasionally. If Major Bendize could have watched as many loadrunners as ve did, he would have doubled many times the "occastonal lunch" of lizards.

## ROADRUNNERS

Near the regieter of a prominent hotel in Tueson, Arizona, hange the card of the Southwestern Traveling Men's Association. The emblem in this poster picture is a bird with a high top-knot, a long tail, and loge that indieate that he is traveling at full speed acroes the desert. Under the picture is the motto: "You can't run over us." All of which is a parable. Both the roadrumer and the traveling salesman cover the ground,, and I am sure that the roadrunner at least can't be run over.

One can't get the full meaning of this until he starts hunting roadrunner, the most unique and intrigueing bird of the southern desert region. In fact, if a tourist traveling through catches a mere glimpse of this wary bird he is lucky. His numerous names are as mystical as his shadow. He is oalled Ground Ouckoo, Mexican Paisano, snake-killer, chaparral cock, but most typical of all, cock o'the desert.

As we rolled along over one of Arizona's splendid highways, the sand hissed under the wheels. Here and there thrashers, verdins, gnatcatchers, and other birds ware seen from time to time, but no roadrunner. Only the feeling of his presence was there as we scannod closely every clump of cactus that we passed. Then just at the side of the white road, scuttling from Jae gnarly caetus to another, slid a slim, darik bird with head lowered as if dodging the sorutiny of strange eyes. It surely was a roadrunner. He faded away in the silemce that reached out over the ondless mesa. Then his shadow came out again, slculking from one bush to another, running easily as if he wished to keep pace with the car. At our slighteat movement, he became scared and slid along low to the ground like a brown streak. His movements vare cat-like. He was making toward the west end of the Oatalinas, those rugged colorful mountains that lifted directly out of the plain in front of us. Soon he dieappoared into the sameness of sand and mash, palo verdes, sahuaroe, ocotillos and chollas.

Frequentiy after that we caught fleeting glimpses of these brown shadows as we rolled along the desert. One day something under a bunch of cactus caught my eye. A roadrumer was standing stiff and straight, watching us, thinking he could not possibly be seen. I got out, and making a big circle, walked slowly around the bueh, getting closer and closer till I could see him plainly and make out the markings of his striking coat. I was looking at a bird nearly two feet long, the tail half the longth of the body. He was an indescribable grayish-brown, streaked with black, with a sheen of bronzy-green over all. The long black tail, irridescent above, showed white thumb marks on the outer feathers. The whole dress was harsh, especially the bristlewtipped crest。 When he caught my eys and knew he was discovered, his own yollow eye became excited, his orest raised, and the feathers on the side of his head parted, showing a bare spot just back of the eye that was a brilliant orange and blue.

We wondered if a desert diet produced this coloring. Major Charles E. Bendire in his "Life Histories of North American Birds," says, "the food of this laks species consists chiefly of insects, particularly grasshoppers, but eme braces occasionally a lizard or a field mouse" Yes, occaeionally. If Major Bendire could have watched as many hoadx unners as we did, he would have doubled his occasional lunch of lizards many times.

