

song of which is of such a definite number of distinct notes. I have heard all three variations successively produced by the same bird, showing them to come within the normal scope of its vocal powers. What appears to be the typical song may be represented thus: *chit, chit, che-che-che-che*; and one of the variations thus: *chit, tit, ter-r-r-r-r-t*, the last part with a grating sound. In the former song the notes of the last part are of about half the time of the first; in the variation they are much more rapid. In the third variation they are not so hurried and less harsh.

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## ORNITHOPHILOLOGICALITIES.

BY PROFESSOR ELLIOTT COUES.

(Concluded from p. 58.)

No. 512. *Buteo*. This we gave as the Plinian name, but of doubtful etymology. Mr. Wharton, in the 'Ibis List,' makes it cognate with βύας, βύζα, *bubo*, *bübère*, to cry like a bittern, *bucca*, the cheek, etc.

No. 528. *Urubitinga*. We said that this was a barbarous word of some South American dialect, *urubu* meaning a vulture, but did not know what the rest of the word is. The 'Athenæum' reviewer supplies the desired information, stating that *tinga* is a word of the widely diffused Tupi language, spoken throughout a great part of Brazil, and meaning 'white,' in the sense of 'bright,' and that *urubitinga* is simply 'beautiful vulture.'

No. 532. *Aquila*. This, which we discussed very unsatisfactorily, Mr. Wharton in the 'Ibis List' disposes of without query as from the root of *aquilus*, dark, ἀχλὺς, mist, ἄχρως, fallow. A case like this, where we were groping, is just one in which Professor Merriam might have resolved our doubts, and done good service.

No. 533. *Albicilla*. (See *Motacilla*.) Mr. Wharton says: from \**albicula*, dim. of *albus*, white; probably confused with an impossible derivation from a non-existent word, κἄλλος, a tail. Existent or not as such a word may be, our contention is, that *Haliaëtus albicilla* = white-tailed sea-eagle, and was not intended to mean anything else.

No. 539. *Columba*. We gave this as simply Latin for a pigeon, of unknown etymology. Mr. Wharton says: "probably as if meaning 'dark,' from the root of *caligo* = darkness. But cf. Lith. *gulbe* = swan, O. Irish *gall*, with the meaning white. Probably not akin to *Colymbus*." We sus-

pect the former of these surmises may be the right one; for if Lat. *columba* is connected with *caligo*, and means 'dark,' the word is brought into correspondence with the Greek name of a pigeon, *πέλεια* or *πέλειάς*, from *πέλλος* or *πέλος*, 'livid,' whence *livia* as the name of the Rock Dove.

Nos. 544, 545. *Zenaida, Zenaidura*. We had not succeeded in identifying the proper name, until the New York 'Critic' reviewer pointed out that *Zénaïde* is the name of the daughter of Joseph Bonaparte, wife and cousin of Prince C. L. Bonaparte, who dedicated the genus to her under the Latinized form *Zenaida*. From this *Zenaidura* is, as we stated, obviously though somewhat curiously formed by adding *-ura*, from *οὐρά*, tail. Will the next critic of our 'Check List' give us the nationality and pedigree of the word *Zénaïde*, which must have been a word before it became a proper name?

No. 560. *Urophasianus*. We naïvely took this from *ὄφει* and *phasianus*; but we suspect that we made a great bull in not making a bull instead of a tail out of the first part of the word. So, to take this bull by the tail, we should say that *urophasianus* is probably constructed upon the model of *urogallus*, which word was formed by Gesner from the German *Auerhahn*, where *Auer* = *urus*, the bull described by Cæsar, the *Aurochs*; the implication being the bird's comparative size. The same idea appears in 'bull-frog,' etc. If this be so, *urophasianus* is brought into correspondence with *urogallus*, *Auerhahn*, and also *capercaillie*.

No. 571. *Ortyx*. We gave *ὄρτυξ*, a quail, as related to *ὄρταλις*, and both as akin to *ὄρνις*, a bird. Wharton, quoting Curtius, makes it from the root of *verto*, I turn, from its whirling flight, and compares Skt. *vartakas*, a quail, *vart*, to roll. Will Professor Merriam decide this point for us?

No. 589. *Hiaticula*. We gave no satisfactory account of this word, merely saying, correctly, that it is an old bird-name, in form a diminutive of *hiatus*. The 'Zoologist' reviewer helps us to the desired explanation, saying: "Charleton, at p. 109 of his 'Onomasticon Zoicon' (1668), says that the name is given to the Ring Plover *quia circa fluminum alveos et rivorum hiatus verseter*, because it haunts the mouths (*hiatus*) of rivers." If now we were asked to say, what is the one most important point made by Professor Merriam in his long excursion into bird-land, we should reply, his quotation from Gaza (1476) showing that *hiaticula* is simply a translation of Aristotle's *χαρδριός* — '*quasi hiaticula dixeris*'; a point, by the way, already made by Mr. Wharton in the 'Ibis List,' p. 159.

No. 593. *Vanellus*. We wonder that Professor Merriam did not correct us here, where we were all wrong. The 'Zoologist' reviewer takes a fair shot, as follows: "There is a carelessness about deriving *Vanellus* from *vanus* which surprises us in the midst of so much erudition. The old spelling, *Vannellus*, and the French *vanneau*, leave no doubt as to the origin of the word being from the Latin *vannus*, a fan. Charleton (p. 108) already says the name is given *quodualis, instar vanni seu ventilabri, commotis concussisque strepitum edat*" — that is to say, you know, Professor Merriam, because with (its) wings, like unto (or after the manner of) a

fan or winnowing-machine, with commotions and concussions (the bird, understood) makes a noise.

No. 595. *Ostrilegus*. Wharton writes this in the usual form, *ostralegus*. Some say *ostrælegus*. We ventured to emend to *ostrilegus*, citing Vergil's *ostriferus* in our support. Here is a case in which we showed our instinctive appreciation of the 'genius of the Latin tongue'; in his exegesis upon which theme Professor Merriam might have sent us up to the head of the class again, after so sternly reprimanding us for giving out that *atrocristatus* was a fair way of saying 'crested with black' in bird-Latin.\*

No. 604. *Phalaropus fulicarius*. See under *Fulica*, No. 686.

No. 606. *Scolopax*. Here is a nugget. We instanced, as the most likely etymon, σκόλοψ, a sharp thing, from the shape of the bill; also, as alternative, σκάλλω, I scratch, etc. We also adduced σκόληξ, a worm. Wharton assents to the bearing of the two former of these upon *Scolopax*, but adds: "But possibly foreign; for other forms, σκολώπαξ and ἀσκαλώπας, occur." If Professor Merriam will settle *Scolopax*, he will confer a lasting favor upon ornithologists.

No. 620. *Arquatella*. See No. 625.

No. 625. *Subarquatus*. We gave this as an adjective, meaning little or somewhat curved, and as noting the shape of the bill. Wharton says "subarquata = a little like a Curlew, *arquata*." It is thus made a noun, synonymous with *arquatella*, and meaning simply 'little curlew.' If *arquata* is a noun (and Wharton so considers it, in writing *Numenius arquata*, not *N. arquatus*), this would seem a proper way of making such a word, or one conformable at least with usage, as in the case of *subbuteo*, *hypotriorchis*, etc. Compare No. 643.

No. 627. *Calidris*. We speculated on this word at some length; Wharton says simply, "Derivation unknown." Will Professor Merriam crack this nut? We fancy that, like *Scolopax*, it is full of meat, if we can only get at it. One of its forms, *Scalidris*, suggests a possible relation or cognation with *Scolopax*; another of its forms, *chalidris*, a possible connection with *charadrius*.

No. 640. *Actiturus*. We must here criticize our friend Wharton, who says "Actiturus = with the tail (οὐρά) of an *Actitis*." We were certainly right in explaining it as = *Actitis* with a tail, *i. e.*, a long-tailed *Actitis*. Bonaparte modelled the word upon *Actitis*, just as he did *Zenaidura* upon *Zenaida* after establishing the genus *Zenaida* upon his wife's name, *Zénaïde*. But what he meant, was simply a long-tailed *Zenaida* — surely not what would be implied in this case by Mr. Wharton's explanation of *Actiturus*. It is a case like *motacilla*, *albicilla*, *perspicillata*, where the verbally correct etymology furnishes an actually incorrect meaning.

No. 643. *Numenius arquata*. We admit that νομήνιος is the correct word, and that our speculation respecting *numen* is a curiosity. But does Professor Merriam quite fairly reproduce our meaning in quoting us here? By 'ornithologists of the heroic age' we mean those of 1555 *et seq.* And

\* An esteemed English correspondent informs us that Prof. J. H. Blasius (if we remember rightly, the letter not being at hand) anticipated us in this emendation.

does our genial critic agree with us that *numenius* is synonymous with *arquata* or *arcuata*? We really believed it to be so; but Mr. Wharton, says: "it more likely refers to *arquatus morbus* = the jaundice ('when the skin turns to the yellow colour of the rainbow'), in allusion to the legend about *Charadrius*, *Galbula*, *Icterus*, etc."

No. 659. *Garzetta*. To our correct statement that this is the Italian name of the corresponding European species, may be added the information given by Wharton, that it is also spelled *Sgarzetta*, as dimin. of *garza* or *sgarza*, a heron.

Nos. 660, 661. *Hydranassa*, *Dichromanassa*. There is a very queer point involved here. We can speak positively, for the latter of these words was a coinage of our own. See 'Ibis,' 1883, p. 224, where the full explanation is given. In our 'Check List,' the *-nassa* is said to be *νάσσα* or *νήσσα*, a water-fowl; so it is, in the case of *Dichromanassa*, that being actually what we had in mind in coining the word. But we meant it to be upon the model of *Hydranassa*, which is compounded of *άνασσα*, a queen, Baird's coinage of *Hydranassa* being suggested by Audubon's epithet 'lady of the waters.'

No. 666. *Botaurus*. We queried the reference of this word to *bos-aurus*. Wharton (l. c.) considers it akin to *bittern*, etc., and "certainly not derived from *bos* + *taurus*, though perhaps confused therewith in popular etymology."

No. 678. *Porzana marueta*. Italian *porzana*, as we gave; said by Wharton to be also written *Sforzana*, and *Forzane* (latter probably a plural form), and of etym. ignot. Will Professor Merriam enlighten us? *Marueta* we gave as also Italian, and as said to be equivalent to anything by the sea. Wharton says it is probably not Italian, as it does not occur in Count Salvadori, and that it is Latinized from French *la Marouette*. Will Professor Merriam enlighten us here?

No. 686. *Fulica*. We gave this as good Lat. *fulica*, a coot, same as *fulix*, gen. *fulicis* (said to occur in Cicero), and as related to *fuligo*, soot, from the bird's dark color. Wharton says "akin to *φαλ-ακρός* = bald-headed, and Eng. bald. On this understanding *fulica* would not have anything to do with *fuligo*, but would refer to the frontal shield of Coots. The common bird-name *Phalaropus fulicarius* is in evidence that Wharton is right, the Greek name of the Coot being *ραλαρίς*, from *ραλαρος*. Compare also *Phalacrocorax*, meaning literally 'bald-headed raven.' Will Professor Merriam give an opinion here?

No. 692. *Anser*. Our supposition that *anser* is related more or less radically to *anas* and so to *νάσσα*, a duck, probably escaped Professor Merriam's attention. Wharton says (l. c.): "cognate with *χην*, Skt. *hansas*, Grm. *gans* (our 'gander'), Norse *gaas*, A. S. *gōs* = goose, *gandra* = gander, *ganot* = gannet, Eng. *goose*; originally *hausser*. Probably from the root of *χαίνω*, *χάσκω* = I gape."

No. 699. *Bernicla*. Will not Professor Merriam kindly give us his views on this word? If he will turn to the place, he will see there is possibly an opportunity for him to dispel much gloom.

No. 714. *Querquedula*. Wharton says perhaps from κέρκρουπος, a light vessel used by the Cyprians, or from καρκάρω = I ring (Vaniček); the latter as we supposed and said. Professor Skeat says the name is from an onomatopœic base, *querq* or *kark*, significative of any loud noise.

No. 719. *Aix* or *Æx*. Though we wrote *Aix*, as the usual form, we distinctly stated our preference for *Æx*; simply not changing the form while in any uncertainty. Wharton (*l. c.*) says *Æx* without hesitation.

No. 728. *Harelda*. We said this was a nonsense-word, invented by Leach. Why does not our critic inform our readers that we were mistaken? For, as the 'Zoologist' reviewer points out, *Harelda* is the Icelandic name of the duck. "*Anas caudacuta Islandica Harelda ipsis dicta*," says Willughby (*Ornithologia*, 1676, p. 290).

No. 739. *Perspicillata*. Of our explanation of this word the 'Zoologist' reviewer, not Professor Merriam, says: "How far astray an etymologist may be led by guessing is comically illustrated by Dr. Coues' derivation of *perspicillata*. The true meaning of the word must be 'covered with looking-glasses,' from *speculum* a mirror, in reference to the white patches on the head." But we still think that we 'guessed' aright, as a matter of fact, though we may have been etymologically astray, in supposing the sense of the word to be 'spectacular' 'conspicuous,' or, as one might say, 'a sight to behold.' Witness *Phalacrocorax perspicillatus*, applied to a cormorant of conspicuous characters, but not in the least spotted as if 'covered with looking glasses.' Witness also *Pelecanus conspicillatus*, where the same root-word appears in the obvious sense of 'conspicuous.'

No. 746. *Sula*. We gave French *Le Sule*; Wharton, citing Brünnich, says Norse *sule*, said to mean a dolt, an awkward fellow. The English name 'booby' for one of the Gannets may tend to confirm this signification, or implication.

No. 750. *Phalacrocorax*. See under *Fulica*, No. 686.

No. 782. *Rissa*. As we said, this is Icelandic *Ritsa*, name of the bird. Wharton adds, "derivation unknown." Will Professor Merriam give the derivation?

No. 792. *Sterna*. To the several related words we cited, and of which *sterna* is a late Latinization, Wharton adds Frisian *stirn*, Grm. *Tänner*, Swedish *tärna*, Norwegian *terne*, English *tarnay*; and adds, "derivation unknown." If Professor Merriam's excursions in the etymological field reach so far as this from Athens and Rome, will he not give us the root of this group of words?

No. 808. *Anoüs*. A question of orthoëpy here. We marked the word as a trisyllable, and Wharton follows suit. Are we both right or both wrong, Professor? We fancy that Plato said *νωύς*, or something like that,—in one syllable at any rate,—when he talked to his pupils of *σώμα*, *ψυχή* and *νοüs*.