

National Museum, treats of the Woodpeckers,* of which ten species are recognized, and also one subspecies, the latter and two of the species being described as new. Questions of synonymy are treated in detail, and the references to previous writers on the species appear to be given with fullness. The paper is accompanied by a colored plate.

As Dr. Stejneger points out in his introductory remarks, the ornithology of Japan offers an inviting field, in which very little discriminating work has yet been done. "Formerly," says Dr. Stejneger, "it was sufficient to know that a bird was from 'Japan.' If the description of a Japanese species was found to fit a Japanese specimen approximately, the latter was identified as that species without further comparison. If the original specimen was described from Nagasaki, and the second one, believed to be the same, came from North Yesso, the habitat of the species was given as embracing the whole of Japan." Our knowledge of Japanese ornithology is at present only fragmentary, large portions of this great country being as yet almost unexplored, while some of it "is a complete *terra incognita*, ornithologically speaking." "American ornithologists," Dr. Stejneger well observes, "will not wonder at hearing that species apt to break up into local forms have done so in a group of islands which in extent corresponds to the coast from the Gulf of California to Vancouver Island, or from the southern extremity of Florida to Nova Scotia, with a variation of climate fully as great as that of the two last mentioned localities; with high mountain ranges, and studded with volcanoes eight thousand to twelve thousand feet high; with a vegetation . . . characterized in the south by the bamboo, the rice, the mulberry tree, and the tea-plant, while in the north the firs form extensive forests, and with a temperature ranging from the almost Siberian winters of Yesso, to the tropical heats of Kiu-Shin,' it would indeed be an extraordinary phenomenon, and quite reverse to what takes place in other countries of similarly varying conditions, were the birds of Japan uniform all through that empire."

The present paper is announced as the first of a series of "preliminary reviews of some of the most perplexing groups in order to solicit specimens and advice from fellow ornithologists, and to induce those who have the opportunity to attempt the solution of some of the questions, if possible, in the field." As already stated (Auk, III, p. 495), the author has the "intention to write a comprehensive and reliable guide to Japanese ornithology, with ample descriptions of all the known forms, from original Japanese specimens," and he appeals for aid in the way of material for carrying out his purpose.—J. A. A.

Stejneger on the British Marsh-Tit.—Dr. Stejneger has separated† the British Marsh-Tit, under the name *Parus palustris dresseri*, from the European form, from which it differs in being darker in color, with a shorter

* Review of Japanese Birds. By Leonhard Stejneger. I. The Woodpeckers. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. VIII, pp. 99-124, pl. ii. Published Sept., 1886.

† The British Marsh-Tit. By Leonhard Stejneger. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 1866, pp. 200, 201.

tail, etc. Although British ornithologists have long been aware of these differences, Dr. Stejneger thinks it curious that they have not had "the courage to describe this [British] bird under a distinctive name, not even those who recognize *Parus britannicus* as a distinct species."—J. A. A.

Stejneger on a 'Lost Species' of Murrelet.—According to Dr. Stejneger,* Pallas's *Cephus perdix* must be removed from the list of synonyms and rank as a good species, which "takes the place of *B. marmoratus* in Asiatic waters," the latter being apparently confined to the American side. A Kamtschatkan specimen (*♂* ad., Aug. 27, 1884) of *B. perdix* is described in detail and figured, and the synonymy and distinguishing characters of this species, *B. brevirostris*, and *B. marmoratus* are presented at length.—J. A. A.

Ferrari-Perez on the Birds of Mexico.—In 1877 the Geographical and Exploring Commission of the Republic of Mexico was established by an act of Congress, and became finally organized in 1878. In 1879 Mr. Fernando Ferrari-Perez was appointed to the scientific corps of the general staff as Naturalist of the Commission. During the years that have since elapsed considerable collections have been brought together in different departments of natural history, 'Catalogues' of which are to appear in the 'Proceedings' of the U. S. National Museum. The first instalment of these has now appeared†; it includes Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, and Batrachians, the report on the birds occupying 52 pages, and embracing 265 species. The annotations generally include merely citations of the works where the species were first described, or in which the nomenclature adopted was established, the vernacular names, and list of the specimens, with date and locality of capture. The specimens have been determined by aid of the collections at the U. S. National Museum, and assistance by Mr. Ridgway and Dr. Stejneger in their identification is also acknowledged. Besides this, there are remarks by Mr. Ridgway on many of the more interesting species, duly bracketed and signed "R. R.," these annotations, of course, adding greatly to the value of the 'Catalogue.' The new species, which were briefly diagnosed by Mr. Ridgway in a recent number of the 'Auk' (III, p. 331), are here described at length.

The paper forms not only an important contribution to our knowledge of Mexican ornithology, but also throws much light upon the southward range of many North American species. Sprague's Lark (*Anthus spraguei*) is reported from Puebla, a point 1000 miles further south than any previous record.—J. A. A.

* On *Brachyramphus perdix* (Pall.) and its nearest Allies. By Leonhard Stejneger. Zeitschr. f. ges. Orn., 1866, pp. 210-219, pl. vii.

† Catalogue of Animals collected by the Geographical and Exploring Commission of the Republic of Mexico. By Fernando Ferrari-Perez, Chief of the Natural History Section. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 1886, pp. 125-199. Published Sept. 1886. (Birds, pp. 130-182.)