

Stone on the Genus *Psilorhinus*.* — Of the four species described by authors—*P. morio* (Wagl.), *P. mexicanus*, Rüpp., *P. cyanogenys* Sharpe *P. vociferus* (Cabot)—*P. cyanogenys* Sharpe is referred to *P. mexicanus*, the characters of *P. cyanogenys* being individual and inconstant; *P. vociferus* also proves barely separable from *P. mexicanus*. The type of *P. vociferus* is in the collection of the Academy. — J. A. A.

Professor Thompson on the Systematic Position of *Hesperornis*. —

Among the more recent of the anatomical papers from time to time published by University College, Dundee, is one by Professor D'Arcy W. Thompson 'On the Systematic Position of *Hesperornis*,† in which the author, after a careful and concise comparison of *Hesperornis* with *Colymbus*, sums up as follows: "It appears to me that from purely osteological characters, the wide differences between *Hesperornis* and any Ratite, and its close resemblance to *Colymbus* or to *Podiceps* is clear and patent."

The Colymbine affinities of *Hesperornis* have been dwelt upon at some length by Dr. Fürbringer; and Dr. Shufeldt, although giving no reasons for his conclusions, has stated his opinion that the Loons and Grebes are derived from the same ancestral stock as that to which *Hesperornis* belonged. Professor Thompson seems to have to some extent misunderstood Dr. Fürbringer's conclusions, and the latter in a recent paper has felt the necessity of giving full quotations from his 'Morphology' to show that Professor Thompson's views were substantially those previously brought forward by himself.

We are not quite prepared to accept the statement that the resemblance existing between *Hesperornis* and *Colymbus* are "as great as between *Strigops* and the other Parrots," preferring to hold with Dr. Helm that *Hesperornis* is an early and highly specialized offshoot from the stem of which the Loons and Grebes are later branches.

In respect to the pelvis, it hardly seems that Professor Thompson or Dr. Helm lay quite enough stress upon the general character of the pelvis and the separation of ilium from ischium; although, on the other hand, this does not necessarily indicate Struthious affinities, a more exact statement of the case, perhaps, would be that the pelvis of *Hesperornis* is of a low, or generalized type, highly modified for swimming.

There are many interesting points that might be dwelt upon, but space will not permit.

The many structural resemblances — morphological and physiological — between *Hesperornis* and *Colymbus* are well brought out, and we think that most ornithologists will agree with Professor Thompson that the proper place for *Hesperornis* is a long distance from the Ostriches.

* On the Genus *Psilorhinus* Rüppell. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1891, pp. 94-96.

† Studies from the Museum of Zoölogy in University College, Dundee, Vol. I, No. 10.

To slightly modify his words we might say that *Hesperornis* is a Colymboid bird of great size and prodigious swimming power, which, while losing its wings and sternal keel and otherwise somewhat modifying its shoulder-girdle as the faculty of flight degenerated, has retained in its brain case, its palate (?), its mandibles, its vertebrae, its sternum, pelvis, and hind limbs resemblances to existing *Colymbi* that clearly indicate its affinities with these birds; and with these modifications we are quite in accord with Professor Thompson. — F. A. L.

Townsend on the Birds of the Coast and Islands of Upper and Lower California.* — The observations here recorded were made during a cruise of the U. S. Fish Commission steamer 'Albatross' from San Francisco to the Gulf of California, during the winter of 1888-89. The collection of birds gathered by Mr. Townsend numbered 226 specimens, representing 92 species and subspecies, 11 of which are here described as new. The islands at which collections were made are San Clemente, San Nicolas, Santa Barbara, Santa Rosa, and Santa Cruz, off California, and Guadeloupe, Cerros, Clarion, Socorro, San Benedicte, Carmen, George, and Angel Guardia, off Lower California. The paper consists of thirteen separate lists, representing as many distinct localities at which collections were made, with a record of the specimens taken, but generally no further remarks as to whether the species were common or otherwise. The following are described as new: (1) *Speotyto rostrata*, (2) *Zenaidura clarionensis*, (3) *Troglodytes tanneri*, (4) *Puffinus auricularis*, all from Clarion Island, off Lower California; (5) *Oceanodroma socorroensis*, from Socorro Island; (6) *Amphispiza belli cinerea*, from Ballaenas Bay, Lower California; (7) *Octocoris alpestris pallida*, from near the mouth of the Colorado River, Sonora; (8) *Melospiza fasciata graminea*, from Santa Barbara Island; (9) *Helminthophila celata sordida*; (10) *Melospiza fasciata clemente*, and (11) *Otocoris alpestris insularis*, from San Clemente Island.

A single specimen of *Halocyptena microsoma* Coues was taken in Panama Bay, March, 1888, forming the second known specimen of the species. — J. A. A.

Palmer on Birds observed during the Cruise of the 'Grampus.' † — The U. S. Fish Commission schooner 'Grampus,' on her summer cruise in 1887, visited the Magdalen Islands and Bird Rocks in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Funk and Penguin Islands, the Mingan Islands, and

* Birds from the Coasts of Western North America and adjacent Islands, collected in 1888-89, with Descriptions of New Species. By Chas. H. Townsend. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. XIII, 1890, pp. 131-142.

† Notes on the Birds observed during the Cruise of the United States Fish Commission Schooner Grampus in the Summer of 1887. By William Palmer. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XIII, 1890, pp. 249-265.