

Interesting articles on the habits of the LeConte Thrasher, by Dr. Mearns and Mr. Stephens, may be found in early volumes of 'The Auk' (Vol. I, 1884, pp. 253-258; *ibid.*, Vol. II, 1885, pp. 229-231; *ibid.*, Vol. III, 1886, pp. 299-307); and important technical matter, including the first description of the young, in a paper by Mr. William Brewster (*ibid.*, Vol. II, 1885, p. 197). A summary of the records made by the Death Valley Expedition was given by Dr. Fisher in 'North American Fauna,' No. 7 (May, 1893, pp. 128-130). Thirty-two specimens were brought back by this expedition—a considerably larger number than the total previously known in collections.

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## TWELFTH CONGRESS OF THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION.

THE TWELFTH CONGRESS of the American Ornithologists' Union was held in New York City, Nov. 12-15, 1894. The business meeting took place on the evening of November 12 in the 'Board Room' of the American Museum of Natural History. The three days' open session, to which the public was invited, was held in the Library of the Museum.

BUSINESS SESSION.—The meeting was called to order by the President, Dr. Elliott Coues. Fifteen Active Members were present. The Secretary's report gave the membership of the Union at the opening of the present Congress as 616, constituted as follows: Active, 48; Honorary, 22; Corresponding, 71; Associate, 475;—the total increase for the year being 34.

During the year the Union lost forty-five members,—eight by death, thirteen by resignation and twenty-four were dropped for non-payment of dues. The members lost by death were Dr. Eduard Baldamus,<sup>1</sup> who died Oct. 30, 1893, in Wofenbüttel,

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<sup>1</sup> For an obituary notice, see the present number of 'The Auk,' under 'Notes and News.'

Germany, aged 81; Dr. Leopold von Schrenck,<sup>1</sup> who died in St. Petersburg, Jan. 20, 1894, aged 68; and Dr. Alexander Theodor von Middendorff,<sup>2</sup> who died at Hellenorm, Liveland, Russia, Jan. 28, 1894, aged 79, all Corresponding Members. Also the following Associates: Rev. Samuel Lockwood, Ph. D.,<sup>3</sup> who died at Freehold, N. J., Jan. 9, 1894, aged 75; Frank Bolles, LL. B.,<sup>4</sup> who died in Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 10, 1894, aged 37; William Cushman Avery, M. D.,<sup>5</sup> who died in Greenboro', Ala., March 11, 1894, aged 64; Pierre Louis Jouy,<sup>6</sup> who died at Tucson, Arizona, March 22, 1894, aged 38; Prof. J. W. P. Jenks,<sup>7</sup> who died in Providence, R. I., Sept. 27, 1894.

The Secretary also presented as a part of his report, the annexed table.

The report of the Treasurer showed the finances of the Union to be in good condition.

The officers elected were Dr. Elliott Coues, President; William Brewster and Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Vice-Presidents; John H. Sage, Secretary; William Dutcher, Treasurer. The vacancy in the Council occasioned by the election of Dr. Merriam as one of the Vice-Presidents was filled by the selection of Mr. Frank M. Chapman. One hundred and nine Associate Members were elected, but no additions were made to either the Active, Honorary, or Corresponding lists. The usual reports of Standing Committees were received.

The Amendments to the By-Laws proposed at the Eleventh Congress were considered; part were adopted and part rejected.<sup>8</sup> A change in Rule XI was proposed and after explanation adopted.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an obituary notice, see *Auk*, XI, 1894, p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> For an obituary notice, see *Ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>3</sup> For an obituary notice, see *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>4</sup> For an obituary notice, see *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>5</sup> For an obituary notice, see *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>6</sup> For an obituary notice, see *Ibid.*, pp. 262-263.

<sup>7</sup> For an obituary notice, see the present number of 'The Auk' under 'Notes and News.'

<sup>8</sup> See under the department of 'Notes and News' in the present number of 'The Auk.'

STATUS OF ACTIVE AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP BY  
LOCALITIES.

	ACTIVE.	ASSOCIATE.	TOTAL.
Arizona . . . . .		3	3
Arkansas . . . . .		1	1
California . . . . .	3	28	31
Colorado . . . . .	1	11	12
Connecticut . . . . .	2	22	24
District of Columbia . . . . .	13	23	36
Florida . . . . .		5	5
Georgia . . . . .		2	2
Idaho . . . . .	1		1
Illinois . . . . .	1	19	20
Indiana . . . . .		4	4
Iowa . . . . .	1	9	10
Kansas . . . . .		7	7
Kentucky . . . . .		1	1
Louisiana . . . . .		1	1
Massachusetts . . . . .	6	66	72
Maine . . . . .	1	10	11
Maryland . . . . .		6	6
Michigan . . . . .	1	12	13
Minnesota . . . . .	1	11	12
Missouri . . . . .	1	7	8
Montana . . . . .		1	1
New York . . . . .	11	100	111
Nebraska . . . . .		1	1
New Hampshire . . . . .		1	1
New Jersey . . . . .		14	14
North Carolina . . . . .		2	2
Ohio . . . . .	1	8	9
Oregon . . . . .		6	6
Pennsylvania . . . . .	1	46	47
Rhode Island . . . . .		6	6
South Carolina . . . . .		1	1
Tennessee . . . . .		2	2
Texas . . . . .		4	4
Utah . . . . .		1	1
Vermont . . . . .		1	1
Virginia . . . . .		3	3
Washington . . . . .		3	3
West Virginia . . . . .		3	3
Wisconsin . . . . .	1	4	5
Wyoming . . . . .		3	3
Canada . . . . .	2	15	17
Cuba . . . . .		1	1
England . . . . .		1	1
	48	475	523

PUBLIC SESSION. *First Day.* — The meeting was called to order by the President, Dr. Elliott Coues. An address of welcome was made by Mr. Morris K. Jesup, President of the Board of Trustees of the Museum. After appropriate response by the Chair, the meeting at once proceeded to the consideration of scientific papers.

Mr. Frank M. Chapman gave as the first paper of the morning 'Notes on the Habits of the Bell-bird, the Pigmy Hummingbird, and other Tropical Birds.'

The second paper was by Mrs. Abby F. C. Bates, entitled 'A Swallow Roost at Waterville, Me.' In the absence of the author it was read by Dr. J. A. Allen. Remarks followed by Messrs. William Dutcher, Frank M. Chapman, John N. Clark and Otto Widmann, much information being brought out regarding other Swallow roosts.

The third paper was by Mr. Otto Widmann on 'Baird's Sparrow.'

The fourth title was 'The Summer Range of Colorado Birds,' by Prof. W. W. Cooke. In the absence of the author it was read by Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr.

The fifth paper was 'Notes on the California Vulture (*Pseudogryphus californianus*),' by F. Stephens. This was read by the Secretary in the absence of the author.

The opening paper of the afternoon session was 'Remarks on the Avifauna of the Source of the Mississippi River,' by Dr. Elliott Coues. Next followed a paper on '*Helinaia swainsonii* in Missouri' by Otto Widmann. The third paper was by Mr. Wm. W. Price on 'The Nest and Eggs of the Olive Warbler (*Dendroica olivacea*).' In the absence of the author it was read by Mr. Frank M. Chapman.

'Robin's Winter Roost,' by Otto Widmann, was the fourth paper.

Mr. William Dutcher exhibited a Labrador Duck, believed to be the last specimen killed and possibly the best one extant.

*Second Day.* — The meeting was called to order by the President, Dr. Coues.

The first paper of the morning was by Mr. F. A. Lucas 'On the Tongues of Birds.' Remarks followed by Prof. W. B.

Barrows, Messrs. John N. Clark, George B. Sennett, Otto Widmann, the Chair, and the author.

The second paper, 'The Ornithology of Sable Island, Nova Scotia,' was by Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr. Remarks followed by Dr. Allen, Messrs. Sennett, Smith, Dutcher, and the author.

The third title was 'A Contribution to the Life History of *Porzana cinereiceps* Lawr., with Critical Notes on some of its Allies,' by Charles W. Richmond. In the absence of the author it was read in part by Dr. Allen.

The only paper of the afternoon session was by Mr. Frank M. Chapman entitled 'A Sketch of the Bird-life of the Lesser Antilles.' The members and visitors repaired to the Lecture Room of the Museum where lantern slides illustrating this paper were shown. Afterwards Mr. Wm. Dutcher exhibited lantern slides of common birds found in the vicinity of New York. Lantern slides of a few British birds, shown by Prof. A. S. Bickmore, concluded the afternoon.

*Third Day.* — The meeting was called to order by the President, Dr. Coues. Before proceeding to the reading of papers, resolutions were adopted extending the thanks of the Union to the Trustees of the American Museum of Natural History for a place of meeting and for other courtesies tendered to the Union; to the Council of the Scientific Alliance of New York for its cordial invitation to attend the meetings of the Societies forming the Alliance; and to the Linnæan Society of New York for generous hospitalities extended to the Union during its Twelfth Congress.

The first paper of the morning was by Mr. Otto Widmann on 'Smith's Longspur.' The second paper was by Geo. H. Mackay on 'The Terns of Muskeget Island.' In the absence of the author it was read by Mr. Wm. Dutcher. Remarks followed by Drs. Dwight and Allen, and Messrs. Sennett, Dutcher and Lucas.

The third title was 'Something New,' by Judge John N. Clark. 'The Nesting of Krider's Hawk in Minnesota,' by P. B. Peabody, was given in substance by Dr. Allen in the absence of the author. 'Certhia in Missouri,' by Otto Widmann, was read by title.

The afternoon was devoted to a paper by Mr. D. G. Elliot on 'Domestic Pigeons and Fowls, their Origin and Races, with

reference to the Theory of Natural Selection.' It was illustrated with lantern slides. Remarks followed by the Chair and by Dr. Allen.

At the conclusion of this paper the Union adjourned to meet in Washington, D. C., November 11, 1895.

The attendance at this Congress, together with the large number of new members elected, not exceeded by any year, was particularly gratifying. It shows the continued interest in ornithology in this country.

JNO. H. SAGE,  
Secretary.

Portland, Conn., Nov. 30, 1894.

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## RECENT LITERATURE.

**Elliot's Monograph of the Pittidæ.** — Part IV of this superb monograph bears date September, 1894. The eleven plates illustrate the following species: *Eucichla boschi*, *Pitta granatina* (on the plate "*Pitta granatina-malaccensis*" by typographical error), *P. granatina borneensis*, *P. meffoorana*, *P. cæruleitorques*, *P. atricapilla*, *P. cyanea* (two plates, giving old and young), *P. brachyura*, *P. baudi* and *P. erythrogastra*. So little appears to be known of these birds in life that generally (*P. cyanea* and *P. brachyura* form exceptions) the text is limited to descriptions of the plumage and the discussion of points of nomenclature in cases where names have been misapplied. An interesting case of this sort is furnished by the *Pitta atricapilla* of Quoy and Gaimard, who described the bird in 1830 and figured it in 1833. Later Lesson claimed that the name was preoccupied, having been previously given by Cuvier to another species. The name, however, so far as Mr. Elliot can determine, was never published by Cuvier and was doubtless merely a MS. museum name. Quoy and Gaimard's bird was later renamed *novæ-guinæ*, under which name it has since been universally known. In restoring the name *atricapilla* to this species Mr. Elliot acts strictly in accordance with the rule of priority, and makes a defense of the stand he takes which is well worth quoting, since this is but one of a class of cases constantly arising to vex the systematist. He says: "The law of priority is very clear in regard to the treatment of such cases, but some naturalists object to have it enforced on the ground of expediency, and because it would be