

All were well pleased with the progress made and the work done by the Club in the past year and look forward to even better success in the future.—LEON J. COLE, *Secretary*.

Errata.—As I was not able to read the proof of my article on the ‘Birds of the Coal Regions of Pennsylvania’ (Auk, Oct., 1896), on account of absence from the city, two errors have unfortunately occurred. *Turdus fuscescens*, not *Turdus aonalaschkæ pallasi*, was noted by me at Pottsville and Rock Glen.

I noted Cowbirds at Pottsville on July 14, not July 11.—R. T. YOUNG, *Philadelphia, Pa.*

RECENT LITERATURE.

Sharpe's Catalogue of the Limicolæ.¹—As Dr. Sharpe says, the collection of Limicolæ in the British Museum “is truly a wonderful one. Of the 255 species recorded, the British Museum contains 250, and the types are 68 in number.” “The specimens arranged and catalogued in it are 13,440, exclusive of many hundreds of duplicates.” It is hence easily seen that the labor of preparing the present volume was very great, with, however, commensurate facilities for arriving at satisfactory results.

The Limicolæ are divided into the following six families,—Ædicnemidæ, with 4 genera and 11 species; Cursoriidæ, with 8 genera and 37 species; Parridæ, with 7 genera and 11 species; Charadriidæ, with 76 genera (44 of them monotypic) and 192 species; Chionidæ, with 2 genera and 3 species; and Thinocorythidæ, with 2 genera and 5 species. The family Charadriidæ includes 10 subfamilies, most of which have been often if not generally accorded the rank of families; as, for example, Arenariinæ, Hæmatopodinæ, Charadriinæ, Himantopodinæ, Scolopacinæ, Phalaropodinæ, etc.; while the genus *Aphriza*, sometimes recognized as a family, is not only reduced to generic rank, but is placed between *Ochthodromus* and *Charadrius*. While Sharpe thus degrades the rank of many groups usually recognized as families, he goes to the opposite ex-

¹ Catalogue | of the | Limicolæ | in the | Collection | of the | British Museum. | By | R. Bowdler Sharpe. | London: | Printed by order of the Trustees. | Sold by | Longmans & Co., 39 Paternoster Row; | B. Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly; Dulau & Co., 37 Soho Square W.; | Kegan Paul & Co., Paternoster House, Charing Cross Road; and at the | British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, S. W. | 1896.—8vo, pp. xii + 794, pl. vii. = Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum, Vol. XXIV.

tre in his treatment of genera, of which he here not only creates some eight or nine new ones, but elevates to generic rank a very large number of groups heretofore commonly treated as merely subgenera or else wholly ignored.

As regards matters of nomenclature, we of course expect the continuation of the confusion which results from taking the XIIth instead of the Xth edition of Linnæus's 'Systema Naturæ' as the starting-point for the law of priority, in opposition to the views of nearly all zoölogists except Sharpe and a few of his British confrères. But we can hardly understand why, after accepting *Jacana* as rightfully superceding *Parra*, he should continue to call the family Parridæ, in contravention even of the British Association Code. The genus *Asarcia* is proposed for *Jacana spinosa* (Linn., 1758), and the specific name *variabilis* (Linn., 1766) is adopted for the species. The generic name *Hydrophasianus* is replaced by the new term *Hydrophasis*, without any word of explanation or apparent reason.

Among the Charadriidæ proper, full generic rank is given to *Oxyechus*, *Ochthodromus*, *Ægialeus*, and *Podasocys*, as well as to *Squatarola*. Among the Tringæ we have as full genera *Helodromas*, *Limonites*, *Heteropygia*, *Arquatella*, *Ancylochilus*, *Pelidna*, *Rhyacophilus*, etc., while *Tringoides* takes the place of *Actitis*. As regards the status of species and subspecies which enter the North American fauna, *Charadrius dominicus fulvus* is considered not entitled to recognition; *Macrorhamphus scolopaceus*, *Ereunetes occidentalis*, and *Symphemia semipalmata inornata*, are also relegated to synonymy, *Tolanus solitarius cinnamomeus* Brewster, omitted from the body of the work, is added in the Appendix, where it is given the rank of a full species, but in the Systematic Index it stands as a subspecies.

If we may judge from Mr. Sharpe's remarks on these and other similar cases, he seems to be as far as ever from grasping the idea underlying subspecies, now so well understood by many of his British and continental fellow workers.

Respecting *Ægialitis meloda circumcincta*, Mr. Sharpe sees no reason for considering it otherwise than as merely very old birds of *Æ. meloda*. *Tringa couesi* and *T. ptilocnemis* are both made subspecies of *A. maritima*, in the text, but in the Systematic Index *T. ptilocnemis* is enumerated as a full species. *Tringa (Pelidna) americana* (Cass.) (= *pacifica* Coues) stands as a full species, under Cassin's name, although the name *americana* Cassin (1858) is preoccupied by a *Tringa americana* Brehm (1855) applied to another species.

In the matter of specific names of North American birds, we have *Limosa hudsonica* instead of *L. hæmastica*, and *Phalaropus hyperboreus* in place of *P. lobatus*, on the basis of the XIIth vs. the Xth edition of Linnæus. In respect to the latter, he says the name *lobatus* "is taken from the tenth (1758) edition of the 'Systema Naturæ,' and it is also the *Tringa lobata* of the twelfth edition. Here, however, is given the name

of *Tringa hyperborea*, which, in my opinion, it is wise to adopt, as the name of *lobatus* has been applied to the Grey Phalaropes so often, that even at the present day its adoption seems certain to create confusion." To show how little there is in this plea, it may be stated that, according to Mr. Sharpe's citations, the name *lobatus* was applied just 8 times in the century 1771-1871, deducting for one reference (to Blyth, pp. 694 and 695) given twice, and for one reference (to Treat) which belongs to '*hyperboreus*'!

The bibliographical citations are very extended, under some species occupying from three to five pages. In fact, we are told in the Introduction that "The references quoted in the synonymy are 18,892. With the exception of a few books, which proved to be inaccessible, the whole mass of this literature has been actually consulted." The labor here involved no one can appreciate who has not engaged extensively in bibliographical work. It is doubtless well done, and as free from errors and transpositions as such work usually is. We miss, however, references to some publications that must have been accessible; for example, the earlier volumes of the 'Bulletin' of the American Museum of Natural History are cited but the later ones are not; and so with other works that might be mentioned, which are either quite overlooked or cited irregularly. The earlier volumes of the 'Bulletin' of the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy at Cambridge are cited as "Bull. Harv. Coll.," while later volumes are given correctly. As there is no such scientific publication as 'Bull. Harv. Coll.' there might be some trouble if one not conversant with the case should attempt to verify such references.

With all this apparently ungrateful fault-finding, we share the sense of profound indebtedness all ornithologists must feel toward Dr. Sharpe for the great boon conferred by his work on the Limicolæ, and appreciate most heartily the vast amount of drudgery it must have cost, as well as the skill and efficiency displayed in its preparation. — J. A. A.

Bendire's 'Life Histories of North American Birds.'—This forms, in order of appearance, Part II of the author's great work on 'The Life Histories of North American Birds', but through lack of foresight on the part of the proper authorities in such matters, we are left without any convenient method of notation to distinguish the present part of this

¹ Smithsonian Institution. | United States National Museum. | Special Bulletin. | — | Life Histories | of | North American Birds, | from the Parrots to the Grackles, | with special reference to | their Breeding Habits and Eggs, | by | Charles Bendire, Captain and Brevet Major, U. S. A. (retired). | Honorary Curator of the Department of Oölogy, U. S. National Museum, | Member of the American Ornithologists' Union. | With | Seven Lithographic Plates. | — | Washington: | Government Printing Office. | 1895 [= Oct. 1, 1896].—4to, pp. i-ix, 1-518, col. pl. i-vii, each with explanatory leaf.