

its egg, but seems to quite discredit its existence. He also refers to a kind of dimorphism in the plumage of the Cuckoo when young, "for it sometimes has a rufous plumage, and sometimes a very dark plumage." The red phase appears not infrequently to have a bright chestnut collar; "they are then called Hepatic Cuckoos, and are more often females than males."—J. A. A.

Eastman on 'Struthious Birds.'¹—Dr. Eastman's paper consists of two parts, both of unusual interest. The first portion relates to a fossil egg of a Struthious bird found in the loess of northern China. This egg, with another which was broken, was found by a Chinese farmer, some five years ago, who took it to Kalgan and disposed of it to the Rev. William P. Sprague, an American missionary resident there. Last spring the egg was brought to this country by the Rev. James H. Roberts, by whom it was offered for sale in the interest of Mr. Sprague, and was eventually purchased for the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, where it is now deposited. It has thus a thoroughly authentic history. The egg is about one third larger than the largest Ostrich egg, thus indicating that "the fossil egg must be the legacy of a larger bird than the Ostrich, and very likely one differing in other respects as well as size." As early as 1857 a similar egg was discovered in the Government of Cherson, in South Russia. This egg later fortunately fell into the hands of Professor A. Brandt of Charkow, who described it, under the designation *Struthiolithus chersonensis*, up to the present time a species known only from this fossil egg, and to which Dr. Eastman now refers the present specimen.

Ostrich remains (fragments of bones) have also been found in the Pliocene of the Siwalik Hills of India and in the Lower Pliocene of Samos, indicating a wide distribution of Struthious birds in early times. In commenting on these facts, Dr. Eastman says: "The occurrence of fossil Ostrich remains in the loess of such widely separated regions as Northern China and Russia has a direct bearing upon the distribution of Struthious birds. It enables us to speak positively with regard to the former extension of the Struthionidæ over Eur-Asia and Africa since the Pliocene, and gives rise to some inferences, within duly circumscribed bounds, regarding the past history of Raft-breasted birds in general. It is necessary to distinguish between what can be affirmed of the Ostrich group, properly speaking, and what we can assume with more or less plausibility concerning the rest of the so-called Ratitæ." He notes that "the best modern ornithological opinion holds that the division into Ratitæ and Carinatae is unnatural, since the differences between existing

¹On Remains of *Struthiolithus chersonensis* from Northern China, with Remarks on the Distribution of Struthious Birds. By C. R. Eastman. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl., Vol. XXXII, No. 7, pp. 127-144 (with plate). August, 1898.

species of Raft-breasted birds are nearly as great as between any of the Ratitæ and Carinatæ." He summarizes the views of leading modern authorities on the relationships of the various extinct types of formerly supposed Ratite forms, and adds: "Strong enough arguments, we think, have been put forward to show that the theory of a common origin of the Ratitæ is untenable, and hence no single hypothesis of distribution is able to account for the facts of their distribution. We cannot imagine a race of Ostriches sprung from *Hesperornis* or anything of like nature in the Cretaceous, spreading over the whole earth in the Tertiary, and then as decay set in, leaving its fragments scattered in remote corners of the globe. . . . To seek the nearest Carinate affinities for the different sections separately; to develop the palæontological history of each more fully; and to inquire into the physical and biological conditions which led to their insulation, perpetuation, and differentiation in various provinces, — these are only a few of the points that invite an extended investigation." His review of the matter in the pages which follow is a suggestive and important contribution to the literature of the subject. — J. A. A.

Bangs on Birds from Colombia. — Mr. Bangs has recently published two papers¹ on birds received from Colombia, from his collector, Mr. W. W. Brown, Jr. The first relates to a collection of nearly 700 specimens gathered during the two months from the middle of December, 1897, to the middle of February, 1898, within fifteen miles of Santa Marta, at elevations ranging from 500 to nearly 6000 feet. The number of species and subspecies reported upon in this paper is 126, of which 10 are described as new, as follows: *Galbula ruficauda pallens*, *Melanerpes wagleri sanctæ-martæ*, *Dendrocincla olivacea anguina*, *Sycalis browni*, *Cyanocompsa concreta sanctæ-martæ*, *Arremonops conirostris canens*, *Piranga faceta*, *Cyclarhis flavipectus canticus*, *Dacnis nappæa*, *Merula incompta*.

The second paper relates to a later sending, by the same collector, of birds taken "at the little village of Pueblo Viejo, in the high Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia," at about 8000 feet altitude. This collection numbers 28 species, of which 4 are described as new, namely: *Elænia browni*, *Automolus rufipectus*, *Buarremon basilicus*, *Thryothorus lætus*. — J. A. A.

Nelson on New Birds from Mexico. — Further results of Mr. E. W. Nelson's ornithological work in Mexico have recently appeared. His

¹ On Some Birds from Santa Marta, Colombia. By Outram Bangs. Proc. Biol. Soc. of Washington, Vol. XII, pp. 131-144. June 3, 1898.

On Some Birds from Pueblo Viejo, Colombia. By Outram Bangs. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-160. Aug. 10, 1898.