

anites oceanicus), which "resorts in thousands to Laurie Is. to nest on the cliffs of its remarkably extensive coast-line." This species is one of the last to reach the islands in spring (Nov. 11), and one of the earliest to leave (March 23).—J. A. A.

Menegaux and Hellmayr on the Passeres Tracheophones of the Paris

Museum.—As indicated by the title, this important series of papers¹ is a critical revision of the American Tracheophones contained in the Paris Museum of Natural History, with special reference to species of supposed doubtful standing, and to the actual types of species contained in the French National Museum. The specimens of this group are said to number several thousands, and apparently represent about a third of the known species, including five here described as new. About 120 species are represented by types, and a number of others by cotypes. Here are preserved the types and other material resulting from the French voyages of exploration made in the early part of the last century, as those of d'Orbigny, Castelnau, Deville, A. St.-Hilaire, etc. Much of this historic material, the basis of our knowledge of many of the species of this group, has neither been studied anew nor carefully examined, according to these authors, by any recent investigators, with the result that doubt has sometimes been expressed as to the validity of some of the species. Some of the types had been lost sight of in the mass of specimens, being without scientific names, but it has been possible to rescue and identify them "with certainty" through various clues furnished by their labels. A few types appear to have quite disappeared, but among those here catalogued and commented upon are the types of 20 species described by Lafresnaye and d'Orbigny, of 9 described by Lafresnaye, of 13 described by Des Murs, of 12 described by Vieillot, of 11 described by Lesson, of 8 described by Pucheran, and of a smaller number described by various other authors.

Of special interest to American ornithologists is a statement in reference to the collection of Baron Lafresnaye, sold after his death to the Boston Society of Natural History. This is to the effect that E. Verreaux, a natural history dealer, before placing the collection on sale, labeled and catalogued the specimens, and indicated many as types which have no right to be so considered. Upon the authority of these indications American ornithologists have assumed, with apparently good reason, that the types of various species described by Lafresnaye and d'Orbigny in their preliminary papers on d'Orbigny's collection, published in the 'Magazin de Zoologie,' were really those so indicated in the Lafresnaye Collection.

¹ Etudes des espèces critiques et des types du groupe des Passereaux trachéophones de l'Amérique tropicale appartenant aux Collections du Muséum. Par MM. A. Menegaux et C.-E. Hellmayr. I. Conopophagidés, II. Hylactidés, Bull. du Mus. d'histoire naturelle [de Paris], 1905, pp. 372-381. III. Dendrocolaptidés, Mém. de la Soc. d'hist. nat. d'Autun, XIX, 1906, pp. 43-126, (also separate, *repaged*). IV. Formicariidés, Bull. de la Soc. Philomat. de Paris, 1906, pp. 24-58.

But it is known, on the other hand, say these authors, that Lafresnaye received, for this collaboration, only duplicates, the true types remaining in the Paris Museum. "Consequently the specimens in the Paris Museum should be considered as the *true types* and those of Boston have no importance from the point of view of nomenclature, and above all not that which Americans seek to attribute to them."¹

It is quite reasonable to suppose that where species were represented by a single specimen in the material collected on d'Orbigny's South American expedition, the specimens all remained in the National Museum, and that the types of new species should also be there preserved. But Lafresnaye's collection consisted of something more than duplicates from the Paris Museum, and he described many species without any association with d'Orbigny or his specimens, and it therefore seems a rather too sweeping condemnation to assume that the alleged presence of types in the Lafresnaye collection, in the Boston Society of Natural History, is nothing more than a "legend" that our hasty friends consider it a duty to the Paris Museum to reduce to nothing.

It is well to guard with jealousy the interests of one's own institution, but one also should not disparage lightly the good name of other institutions. It would be much more convincing and satisfactory if our authors had stated more explicitly the proofs that certain specimens in the Paris Museum are "*les vrais types*" — that is, how they were determined to be such, for presumably not many were thus indicated by the authors of the species they are alleged to represent. This is suggested in part by the statement in respect to how certain types, "perdus au milieu d'une masse de spécimens," were identified, and also by such cases as, for instance, *Nasica guttatoides* Lafr. (Rev. et Mag. zool., 1850, p. 387). Lafresnaye says: "Cette espèce a été rapportée de Loretta, au Musée, par l'expédition Castelnau; mais nous la possédions déjà dans notre collection, l'ayant achetée d'un marchand avec quelques oiseaux de Colombie." The original Lafresnaye specimen is still in the Lafresnaye collection in Boston, an adult bird in good condition, as cited by Elliot (Auk, VII, 1890, p. 186). Why then should the young female ("♀ jeune"), obtained on the Castelnau Expedition, and only incidentally mentioned by Lafresnaye, be claimed as the type of *N. guttatoides* Lafr.? The figuring five years later of the young specimen in the 'Oiseaux' of Castelnau's 'Voyage' by Des Murs certainly could not make it the *true* type of this species.

¹ Donc les spécimens du Muséum de Paris doivent être considérés comme les *vrais types* et ceux de Boston ne peuvent avoir aucune importance au point de vue de la nomenclature, et surtout pas celle que les Américaines cherchent à leur attribuer.

Ce sont des animaux semblables, mais ce ne sont pas les types qui seuls font foi auprès des ornithologistes. C'est sur quoi nous serons plusieurs fois forcés d'insister dans notre travail, et nous espérons avoir ainsi réduit à néant une légende qui tendait à s'acclimater dans le monde scientifique au préjudice de la riche collection du Muséum de Paris.— *Menegaux et Hellmayr*, Bull. du Mus. d'hist. nat., 1905, No. 6, p. 374.

We would not for a moment question that where Lafresnaye's material is accredited in the original descriptions to the Paris Museum, or where he was joint author with d'Orbigny in publishing the species of d'Orbigny's Expedition, the true types are those now claimed as such in the Paris Museum. But sweepingly to denounce the alleged types in the Lafresnaye collection as spurious is quite another matter.

Besides, we believe it is not quite true that the Lafresnaye collection was catalogued and labeled by E. Verreaux before it was placed on sale, and that in this way many specimens were indicated as types that were not types. Our information is to the effect that Dr. Henry Bryant purchased the Lafresnaye collection after an examination of it while it was still at Falaise, and not from an inspection of a catalogue; and furthermore that the catalogue was made by Jules Verreaux and not by his brother Eduard, the former being an excellent ornithologist, capable of doing the work with proper discrimination through previous familiarity with its contents, while the latter was merely an intelligent dealer. We are further at liberty to state that for this information we are indebted to Dr. D. G. Elliot, who was in Paris at the time the collection was purchased, and in daily association with Dr. Bryant, and that they were in consultation respecting its value and character.— J. A. A.

Shelley's 'The Birds of Africa.'— Part I of Volume V¹ contains the families Oriolidæ, Sturnidæ, and Corvidæ (species 647–723). The European Golden Oriole (*Oriolus galbula*) is, singularly, the only migratory species of these families met with in Africa, the others being non-migratory. Fifty-seven species of Starlings are recorded, of which three are now extinct, and three are introduced species, two of which are from the Indo-Malay regions, and the other is the common Starling, imported from England into South Africa, and which has become firmly established in and about Cape Town.

The seven colored plates in this part illustrate eleven species, after drawings by Grönvold. It is a pleasure to note the rapid progress of this great work, the scope and character of which have been stated in notices of previous parts.— J. A. A.

Nash's 'Check-List of the Birds of Ontario.'²— The author states: "In the following Check List I have endeavoured to include all the birds which

¹ The | Birds of Africa, | comprising all the Species which occur | in the | Ethiopian Region. | By | G. E. Shelley, F. Z. S., F. R. G. S., &c. | (late Grenadier Guards), | author of "A Handbook to the Birds of Egypt," | "A Monograph of the Sun-birds," etc. |— | Vol. V. | Part I. |— | London: | Published for the Author by | R. H. Porter, 7 Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W. | 1906.— Roy. 8vo, pp. i-vi + 1-163, pll. col. xliii-xlix. Price 31s 6d net.

² Check List | of the | Vertebrates and Catalogue of | Specimens in the Biological Section | of the Provincial Museum | Birds | Department of Education | Toronto | [Seal] Toronto | Printed and Published by L. K. Cameron, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty | 1905.— 8vo, pp. 82. Sub-title: Check List of the Birds of Ontario.