## NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. WILLIAM LAGRANGE RALPH, a Member of the American Ornithological Union, died in Washington, D. C., on July 8, 1907, of a complication of organic heart and kidney lesions in the fifty-seventh year of his age. He leaves a widow, an adopted daughter, Katharine Louise, and two brothers, G. Fred Ralph and Henry Ralph. He was born in Holland Patent, N. Y., June 19, 1851, and remained there until 1863 when he moved with his parents to Utica. In the dozen years of early life spent among the fields and woods of his native home and surrounded on all sides by a rich and ever varying assortment of bird life, the seed of his future love for ornithology was sown and gradually ripened as time went on. He often spent the greater part of his vacations and holidays at Holland Patent with his grandfather, who, as an ardent sportsman and in a general way an interested observer of all birds, encouraged the boy by precept and example to look for the many secrets which Nature held in store for him. Here he began to watch the birds construct their nests and to levy an occasional egg from them to add to his rudimentary collection.

He received his preliminary education from the schools of Utica and Whitestone Seminary, and in 1879 completed his studies and secured his medical degree at the college of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, New York City. Later in the same year he began to practice his profession in Utica, but owing to delicate health resulting from a weakened heart he gave up this exacting work and returned to a more quiet life. He evidently was glad of the opportunity to renew his research in ornithology which had been held somewhat in abeyance during his college life. Fortunately, being of independent means, he was able to devote unlimited time to study and to field work, which primarily was carried on among the rarer and more interesting birds of Oneida County and later was extended to much broader fields. Within a comparatively short time, through his own efforts and those of trained collectors, and by purchase, the foundation of a collection of eggs was formed which subsequently became one of the most valuable private collections in the country. During the summer much of his time was spent with the birds in the Northern woods, while in winter and spring the marshes and forests of Florida were explored in search of interesting nests and eggs.

When Major Bendire planned to write the 'Life Histories of North American Birds' he was well equipped, so far as western birds were concerned, but was sorely in need of reliable detailed information regarding the nesting habits of some of the rarer eastern species. This data in part, Doctor Ralph was able to furnish and in many places pages of almost literal quotation from his field notes may be found in this most valuable standard work. Major Bendire acknowledged in his introduction indebtedness for this material assistance.

Although Doctor Ralph gathered full notes and frequently was quoted

by others, so far as we know his only published papers were 'An Annotated List of the Birds of Oneida County, N. Y. and the Immediate Vicinity,' which was issued under joint authorship with Mr. Egbert Bagg of Utica, in 1886, and an addendum to this list published in 'The Auk' in 1890 (pp. 229–232).

After the death of Major Bendire in 1897 Doctor Ralph was made custodian of the egg collection of the National Museum, and in 1901 his title was changed to that of curator. From the very first when he began to associate with Major Bendire he took a deep interest in the Museum collection and from time to time made valuable donations of beautifully prepared and carefully identified eggs, aggregating upwards of 10,000 specimens. He also went to considerable trouble and expense in collecting mammals and other desiderata for the Museum, and on one occasion purchased a fine example of the extinct Philip Island parrot which was in danger of being sent abroad. He always was fond of studying the habits of wild creatures and of keeping them as pets. During the past few years he purchased and liberated in the Smithsonian grounds many gray squirrels for the purpose of giving pleasure to visitors and a show of wild life to this attractive spot. It was a familiar sight during cold wintry weather to see the Doctor hunting up his pets to furnish them with a liberal and needed supply of nuts or other food. A few days before his death, while in a very weakened condition, with great effort he went to his office, it is thought for the main purpose of seeing whether his pets there had had proper attention.

Although in delicate health Doctor Ralph seemed to look upon the bright side of life and was happiest when associating with or entertaining his chosen friends. He never tired talking over collecting or hunting experiences, and was most enthusiastic while listening to or giving details of some important capture or successful day in the field. He was unselfish, kind hearted and generous almost to a fault, and we feel that in his death the Union has lost a valuable member and his associates a devoted friend.—A. K. F.

THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ZOÖLOGY held a six days' session (August 19–24, 1907), in Boston, putting into effect without material change the program announced in the first preliminary circular of the Executive Committee issued in 1906 (see Auk, XXIII, Oct. 1907, p. 486). There was a large attendance of foreign delegates and members, and the zoölogists of America were well represented, the registered attendance being about five hundred. The general meetings were held in Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory of Music, and the sectional meetings in the new buildings of the Harvard Medical School. President, and Chairman of the General Committee of the American Society of Zoölogists, Alexander Agassiz; General Secretary of the Permanent Committee of the International Zoölogical Congress, R. Blanchard, Paris; Secretary of the Congress, Samuel Henshaw. The arrangements for the work of the Congress

and for its entertainment were elaborate, and the weather was exceptionally favorable. On Monday evening a reception was tendered by the Local Committee at the Art Museum, through the courtesy of the Trustees; on Wednesday evening a reception was given by the President at the Hotel Somerset. The mornings were occupied with the sectional meetings, the general sessions being held in the afternoons, at which the business of the Congress was transacted, followed by addresses, including the address of the President, and addresses by distinguished delegates on subjects of wide interest. The week closed with an excursion on Saturday to Harvard University.

The Congress organized in ten Sections, as follows: I, Animal Behavior; II, Comparative Anatomy; III, Comparative Physiology; IV, Cytology and Heredity; V, Embryology and Experimental Zoölogy; VI, Entomology and Applied Zoölogy; VII, General Zoölogy; VIII, Palæozoölogy; IX, Systematic Zoölogy; X, Zoögeography and Thalassogeography. The names of these sections indicate how greatly changed has become the lines of zoölogical research during a single generation; of the 300 or more papers and addresses entered on the program, less than one third were listed under sections VII–IX. The attempt to organize a section of Ornithology (see Auk, XXIV, April, 1907, p. 239) failed through lack of response on the part of ornithologists, who, both abroad and at home, seemed to take little interest in the Congress. The eleven titles on the program relating to ornithology are: in Section I, J. P. Porter, A Comparative Study of Birds with respect to Intelligence and Imitation; J. E. Duerden, The Influence of Domestication on the Behavior of the Ostrich; F. H. Herrick, Organization of the Gull Community, a Study of the Communal Life of Birds. In Section II, W. A. Locy, The Fifth and Sixth Aortic Arches in Birds and Mammals. In Section IV, C. B. Davenport, Reversion in Poultry. In Section V, M. Blount, On the Cleavage and Formation of the Periblast and the Germ Wall in Pigeons; J. T. Patterson, On Gastrulation in Birds. In Section VII, S. A. Forbes, A Statistical Study of the Local Distribution and Ecology of Birds; C. W. Beebe, Geographic Variation in Birds, with special reference to Humidity. In Section VIII, C. H. Sternberg, *Hesperornis regalis*, the Royal Bird of the West. In Section X, F. M. Chapman, Remarks on the Geographical Origin of North American Birds. About sixty entries of "demonstrations, exhibits, etc.," were on exhibition during the Congress, including instruments, and apparatus, models, drawings, books, and preparations, illustrating special lines of research.

The Report of the International Commission on Nomenclature was unanimously adopted at the general session held on Friday, and is of general interest to systematic zoölogists. In addition to several recommendations in amplification of Articles 8, 14, 20 and 29, and several general rulings, covering 'The nature of a systematic name,' 'The status of publications dated 1758,' 'The status of certain names published as manuscript names,' and 'The status of certain pre-Linnæan names reprinted subse-

quent to 1757,' Article 30 of the International Code of Zoölogical Nomenclature, as adopted at the Berne Congress in 1904, was cancelled and a new Article 30 adopted in its place. Article 30 provides for the determination of types of originally typeless genera. The new Article 30 includes practically all of the provisions of the old Article 30, amplified and made more explicit, especially in respect to 'types by subsequent designation,' or types by designation of a first reviser, and also by incorporating most of the rules and recommendations published by Dr. Charles Wardell Stiles, U. S. A., in September, 1905.[1] The new Article 30 (for a copy of which we are indebted to the kindness of the secretary of the International Commission on Nomenclature, Dr. Stiles), is herewith given in full:

"Art. 30.— The designation of type species of genera should be governed by the following rules (*a–g*), applied in the following order of precedence:

"I. Cases in which the generic type is accepted *solely* upon the basis of the original publication.

"(*a*) When in the original publication of a genus, one of the species is definitely designated as type, this species shall be accepted as type regardless of any other considerations. (Type by original designation.)

"(*b*) If, in the original publication of a genus, *typicus* or *typus* is used as a *new* specific name for one of the species, such use shall be construed as 'type by original designation.'

"(*c*) A genus proposed with a single original species takes that species as its type. (Monotypical genera.)

"(*d*) If a genus, without originally designated (see *a*) or indicated (see *b*) type, contains among its original species one possessing the generic name as its specific or subspecific name, either as valid name or synonym, that species or subspecies becomes *ipso facto* type of the genus. (Type by absolute tautonomy.)

"II. Cases in which the generic type is not accepted *solely* upon the basis of the original publication.

"(*e*) The following species are excluded from consideration in selecting the types of genera:

"(α) Species which are not included under the generic name at the time of its original publication.

"(β) Species which were *species inquirendæ* from the standpoint of the author of the generic name at the time of its publication.

"(γ) Species which the author of the genus doubtfully referred to it.

"(*f*) In case a generic name without originally designated type is proposed as a substitute for another generic name, with or without type, the type of either, when established, becomes *ipso facto*, type of the other.

"(*g*) If an author, in publishing a genus with more than one valid

[1] The International Code of Zoölogical Nomenclature as applied to Medicine. Hygienic Laboratory, Bulletin No. 24. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905. 8vo, pp. 50.

species, fails to designate (see *a*) or to indicate (see *b*, *d*) its type, any subsequent author may select the type, and such designation is not subject to change. (Type by subsequent designation.)

"The meaning of the expression 'select a type' is to be rigidly construed. Mention of a species as an illustration or example of a genus does not constitute a selection of a type.

"III. RECOMMENDATIONS.—In selecting types by subsequent designation, authors will do well to govern themselves by the following recommendations:

"(*h*) In case of Linnæan genera, select as type the most common or the medicinal species. (Linnæan rule,[1] 1751.)

"(*i*) If a genus, without designated type, contains among its original species one possessing as a specific or subspecific name, either as valid name or synonym, a name which is virtually the same as the generic name, or of the same origin or same meaning, preference should be shown to that species in designating the type, unless such preference is strongly contraindicated by other factors. (Type by virtual tautonomy). Examples: *Bos taurus*, *Equus caballus*, *Ovis aries*, *Scomber scombrus*, *Sphærostoma globiporum*; contraindicated in *Dipetalonema* (compare species *Filaria dipetala*, of which only one sex was described, based upon one specimen and not studied in detail).

"(*j*) If the genus contains both exotic and nonexotic species from the standpoint of the original author, the type should be selected from the nonexotic species.

"(*k*) If some of the original species have later been classified in other genera, preference should be shown to the species still remaining in the original genus. (Type by elimination.)

"(*l*) Species based upon sexually mature specimens should take precedence over species based upon larval or immature forms.

"(*m*) Show preference to species bearing the name *communis*, *vulgaris*, *medicinalis*, or *officinalis*.

"(*n*) Show preference to best described, best figured, best known, most easily obtainable species, or one of which a type specimen can be obtained.

"(*o*) Show preference to a species which belongs to a group containing as large a number of the species as possible. (De Candolle's rule.)

"(*p*) In parasitic genera, select if possible a species which occurs in man or some food animal, or in some very common and widespread host species.

"(*q*) All other things being equal, show preference to a species which the author of the genus actually studied at or before the time he proposed the genus.

"(*r*) All other things being equal, page precedence should obtain in selecting a type.

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[1] "Si genus receptum, secundum jus naturæ et artis, in plura dirimi debet, tum nomen antea commune manebit vulgatissimæ et officinali plantæ."

"(*s*) In case of writers who habitually place a certain leading or typical species first as 'chef de file,' the others being described by comparative reference to this, this fact should be considered in the choice of the type species.

"(*t*) In case of those authors who have adopted the 'first species rule' in fixing types, the first species named by them should be taken as types of their genera."

The secretary in presenting the report of the Commission, stated that the Code, as now constituted, would probably cover 90 % of the cases that may arise, and would in all probability prove satisfactory to 90 % of zoölogists.

The Congress adjourned on Friday, to meet in Gratz in 1910, under the presidency of Professor Ludwig von Graff. On Sunday Woods Hole was visited *en route* to New York, the members of the Congress arriving in New York Monday morning and remaining through the week. The Congress was received on Monday by the trustees and officers of the Department of Zoölogy of Columbia University; on Tuesday as guests of the trustees and officers of the American Museum of Natural History; on Wednesday the Congress visited Cold Spring Harbor, as guests of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences and the Carnegie Station for Experimental Evolution; Thursday was devoted to visits to the New York Zoölogical Park and Aquarium; on Thursday an excursion was made to West Point and Castle Rock, the residence of Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, as guests of Professor Osborn. On Saturday many of the members accepted invitations from the trustees of Yale University and Princeton University to visit New Haven and Princeton. During the following week the foreign members and delegates visited Philadelphia, Washington, Niagara Falls, and Toronto.

The chief advantage of such gatherings is, of course, the opportunity thus afforded of bringing together for social intercourse a large number of investigators who otherwise may never know each other except through correspondence or published writings. In the present case many of the foreign delegates made their first acquaintance with American scientific institutions, in which they found much of interest and not a little to admire.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONGRESS of the American Ornithologists' Union will be held in Philadelphia, beginning on the evening of Monday, December 9, 1907. The evening session will be for the election of officers and members and for the transaction of routine business. Tuesday and the following days of the session will be for the presentation and discussion of scientific papers, and will be open to the public. Members intending to present communications are requested to forward the titles of their papers to the Secretary, Mr. John H. Sage, Portland, Conn., so as to reach him not later than December 5.