

- Philippine Journal of Science**, X, No. 4, July, 1915.
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Science, N. S., XLII, Nos. 1095-1096, XLIII, 1097-1107.
Scottish Naturalist, The, Nos. 48, 49 and 50, December, 1915 to February, 1916.
South Australian Ornithologist, The, II, Part 5, January, 1916.
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CORRESPONDENCE.

Membership in the A. O. U.

EDITOR OF 'THE AUK,'

Dear Sir:—

As I fail to find in the corrected copy of the A. O. U. by-laws, sent me by Mr. Sage, any changes whereby the working ornithologists in the Associate Class are benefited, I have this day sent in my resignation as an 'Associate' in the A. O. U. This step also was necessary, by the refusal by 'The Auk,' of further articles dealing with "proposed changes," previous to the last A. O. U. meeting in San Francisco. In my open letter on the subject, I asked for a free discussion in 'The Auk.' This was denied me, as well as others who cared to take part in it. It is evident, that the Fellows, who like I, desired a changed by-laws, to meet changed conditions, were absent, or were over ruled at the last meeting. By leaving the A. O. U. I am not giving up any work so dear to me, and my friends will still find my collection of birds, mammals and eggs, as well as my home, open at all time to them.

Very truly yours,

HAROLD H. BAILEY.

Newport News, Va.

Sunday, the 19th of December, 1915.

[As Mr. Bailey's statement regarding his discussion in 'The Auk' may be misleading, the editor desires to state that the *only* communication

which was refused publication was one from Mr. Bailey discussing the fitness of certain gentlemen for the various classes of membership. As Mr. Bailey declined to omit this personal matter his letter was returned.]

Graphic Representation of Bird Song.

[At Mr. Moore's special request 'The Auk' publishes his letter, below. With his permission a copy was sent to Mr. Saunders whose rejoinder follows. These contributions will close this discussion.—Ed.]

EDITOR OF 'THE AUK,'

Dear Sir:—

In the January issue of 'The Auk' Mr. Saunders complains that "many of the faults" I found with his system "are the result of misunderstanding." If I misunderstood him, I regret it. My purpose was to point out kindly to one who is just beginning to record bird-songs scientifically, the limitations of his methods, so plain to those who have devoted years to the same study. I assumed that when he elected to employ technical terms, he would wish to use them with the "scientific" precision musicians employ. Now that he admits attaching to them the various and often contradictory meanings found in large family dictionaries, the reason for our misunderstanding is apparent. I am no longer astounded by his careless use of such technical terms as, "duration," "time" and "rhythm," and his most serious confusion of the "trill" with the "repeated note." When he has "recorded enough songs" even of the few species he has worked on, he will have to revise his wild assumption that the "shake must be rare in bird music." The shake or trill is not rare! Indeed, it is employed by the *very* birds whose songs he records! It is not uncommon in songs of Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow and Purple Finch, and in a form of wide range is *characteristic* of the Vesper Sparrow.¹ If Mr. Saunders really cares to be as "scientific" as musicians, he will find this factor decidedly "worth bothering" his "head about!"

Mr. Saunders casts many aspersions at the methods of musicians. Among others, he charges them with artificially *changing* bird songs "in both pitch and time to fit the method." It is possible he did this when he used the musical method, but I know of none who have. Our field methods are just as scientifically accurate as his, for some of us discovered the stopwatch long ago and use both it and the more valuable metronome. Personally I do not "decide on some key the bird is supposed to sing!" I do *not* record the key in the field *at all* and if none exists, leave the song as it is. As to pitch, I record every note that is off the pitch with its approximate variation, which is all that Mr. Saunders does. As to time I use for a unit

¹See Schuyler Matthews' "Field Book of Wild Birds and Their Music, pp. 106-122-123-87.