

Purple Finches found food and protection there. Twined about many of the hoary old cedars were rank growths of poison ivy, furnishing food for a host of birds. In the spring of 1912 I found in one day on this hill 75 nests of the Bronzed Grackle. Some trees had as many as ten of these large, bulky nests and literally "you could not hear your ears" when all the birds were talking or gossiping. On one of the snowiest days of the winter of 1916-1917 I found 24 species of birds on this hill in a little over an hour and in the height of the migrating season that spring I saw 52 species there in a single afternoon.

But all this has radically changed, making a bird lover sigh for "the good old days." The bagworms, which had been steadily growing more numerous for several years, took on plague proportions in the summer of 1917. The poorly-nourished trees fought along the best they could through the rest of that summer and until midsummer in 1918, when they began to die rapidly. The whole hill soon looked as if it had been burned over. No other visible enemy except the bagworms could be found and I feel sure that this was the real cause.

Naturally, the hordes of birds came back half-heartedly but it was not particularly attractive to them to place their nests in spots unprotected from the sun or from enemies below. However, a few Bronzed Grackles tried the experiment but scolded more even than usual and seemed thoroughly disgusted with one year's experience. The ground birds also found their secluded places suddenly opened up and sought other nesting-sites. I feel quite fortunate now if I can see anywhere on the knob half as many species as I could see before the death of the cedars. So far as I have been able to observe in the past two years there are not so many Bronzed Grackles or Chewinks in my territory, as a whole, as there were before this plague. Probably the breaking up of their old breeding grounds has made them seek other sections.—GORDON WILSON, *Bowling Green, Ky.*

An Anonymous Work of John Cassin.—Some years ago it was my privilege to read over the correspondence of Professor Spender F. Baird, at the home of his daughter, the late Lucy H. Baird in Philadelphia and copy such portions as I might desire. I was especially interested in the many letters from John Cassin describing his work at the Philadelphia Academy, and the general progress of ornithology in America.

Under date of March 12, 1851, he wrote "Stephens and I are very busy getting up a lot of the greatest nonsense you ever saw, a 'Comic Natural History of the Human Race.' I will send you the second number which will soon be out." He also adds that his contributions to this work are all signed "C."

Knowing that Cassin possessed a keen sense of humor and did not take his science so seriously as to preclude a glimpse at the more frivolous side of life, I have always been curious to see a copy of this work but none ever came to my attention until quite recently.

My friend, Dr. Spencer Trotter, in the course of conversation a few days ago, mentioned a curious book that had been entrusted to him for sale, and upon his showing it to me I at once realized that it was the long sought work of Cassin. It is entitled 'The Comic Natural History of the Human Race; designed and illustrated by Henry L. Stephens, Philadelphia, S. Robinson, No. 9 Sansom Street.' It is Royal, octavo, exactly the same size as Cassin's 'Birds of California and Texas,' and contains 216 pages. There are forty colored plates, drawn by Stephens and lithographed by L. Rosenthal, representing human heads on the bodies of various birds, mammals, fish, etc. Some of these are portraits of individuals, others simply of types. The humorous letter press is by nine named contributors and several anonymous ones. Cassin was the editor as well as the author of six of the sketches, although, without the clue given in the Baird letters, it would be impossible to connect him with the volume, as his name does not appear. To one familiar with his letters, however, his peculiarities of style and wording are at once apparent. Stephens was the artist of certain plates of the U. S. Exploring Expedition reports and probably of some of the Government surveys.

This curious volume has no ornithological interest except in connection with Cassin, but that seems to be sufficient excuse for placing on record the facts that I possess in relation to it.—WITMER STONE, *Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia*.

Correction.—In recording the occurrence of the American Egret at Scarborough, Maine, ('Auk,' XXXVIII, p. 109, January, 1921) the date of capture was, through error, omitted. The specimen was shot July 18, 1920.—RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*