

THE PASSING OF ALFONSE FORRER.

ALFONSE FORRER died at his home in Santa Cruz, Cal., on March 15, 1899. His life was one of activity, constantly associated with nature. Few have left behind them so much to perpetuate their memory as has the subject of this sketch. It has in years gone by given me much pleasure to listen to the many interesting narratives which came into Mr. Forrer's life as a naturalist, I having lived a number of years in the same city which Mr. Forrer had chosen for his home, and where he died. Alfonse Forrer was born in London in 1836. His early education was secured in England, after which he went to Zurich, then a great center of learning. He spoke fluently, as well as read and wrote German, French and Spanish, and also English, in which he was possessed of more than ordinary learning.

At an early age he emigrated to the United States, and at the outbreak of hostilities in 1861 he enlisted with the 1st Louisiana Cavalry, serving as First Lieutenant in the cause of the North. At the close of the war Mr. Forrer accepted a commission to collect zoological material along the west coast of Mexico and the United States for the British Museum. He made extensive collections of mammals, birds, birds' nests and eggs, shells, reptiles and insects in the state of Sinaloa and Durango and the Tres Marias Islands, Mexico.

Later several months were spent at La Paz, Lower California, thence to San Diego and up the coast. Some time was spent in search of natural history subjects in the high Sierras from Lake Tahoe northward through Sierra, Plumas, Lassen and Modoc counties. Much valuable material was collected in the vicinity of Klamath Lake, Oregon, Fort Lapwai, Idaho and on Vancouver Island. After having supplied the British Museum with large series of everything taken, other museums were supplied, in which connection Mr. Forrer made four trips to Europe.



The discoveries which perpetuate the name of Forrer are a goldfinch, *Chrysomitris forreri*, collected near Mazatlan, Mexico, and named in his honor by Sclater and Godman. Other forms are a vireo, *Vireo flavoviridis forreri* and a parrot, *Chrysotis forreri*. Besides these we have a frog, a snail, a star fish and several plants that bear his name. In ten years of field work

it is naturally expected that Mr. Forrer met with many obstacles that impeded his work and many instances of pleasure, as well as some that were annoying and embarrassing. An instance of this kind happened while he was collecting in a "backwoods" region in eastern Oregon. Mr. Forrer was desirous of getting a few sets of eggs of the Sage Grouse. His own efforts proving repeated failures, he at last resorted to

an advertisement in a local paper, offering to pay a good cash price for several sets of eggs of the Sage Grouse. In a few days a small country lad stood in Mr. Forrer's presence offering a set of nine eggs of the desired species. Mr. Forrer accepted these, paid the stipulated price and the lad returned to his country home. The next day the lad brought two more sets which were also taken. Two days later more sets were brought! Mr. Forrer's suspicions were then aroused and after a critical examination it was decided that the eggs were frauds and they were thereupon destroyed. Mr. Forrer gained in experience, while the boy was richer by several dollars as the result of a clever imitation which could not have been done so neatly except by one who knew the bird and its eggs well. I had the pleasure of examining one of these eggs which Mr. Forrer saved for future reference. I concluded it was the egg of a small breed of chicken, carefully wrapped in cloth having small, irreg-

ular markings, and by applying vinegar the print was left on the shell of the egg.

Mr. Forrer was widely known in Europe as well as in the United States among the older naturalists, but less so with the younger generation, since in his later years active field work was abandoned, excepting, perhaps, in shells, star-fish and sea mosses. The seashore about Santa Cruz offered many advantages in these branches. I have seen Mr. Forrer, accompanied by his wife, collecting the beauties that lurked among the rocks as the tide went out, on many occasions. In the death of Alfonso Forrer we lose a noted naturalist, one who has been a friend to many a struggling youth in helping him along the difficult path to a better knowledge of avian life, the beauties of the sea and the freedom that can be enjoyed in nature study.

GEO. F. BRENINGER.

Phoenix, Arizona, May 21, 1899.

Some Summer Birds of Palamar Mountains, from the Notes of J. Maurice Hatch.

BY RICHARD C. MCGREGOR.

THIS list of birds, observed by Mr. Hatch on the Palamar Mountains, between June 16 and 21, 1897, has been arranged from notes which he sent me for use in the state list. The mountains have an altitude of 5000 to 6000 feet and are covered with firs, oaks and cedars. Ferns and underbrush of various kinds abound. Numerous small streams of water are present.

- 1 *Oreortyx pictus plumiferus*.—Fairly common. A nest found June 19, contained five well incubated eggs.
- 2 *Lophortyx californica vallicola*.—Common at western base of the mountains. A female taken June 16 had an egg in the oviduct.
- 3 *Columba fasciata*.—About 100 birds seen near western base of mountains on June 15.
- 4 *Zenaidura macroura*.—Common at western base of mountains. One young in the nest found June 15.
- 5 *Pseudogryphus californianus*.—Breeds. One seen on the 16th and four more two days later.
- 6 *Cathartes aura*.—Quite common both

at the base and on the summit.

- 7 *Buteo borealis calurus*.—One pair seen on the summit.
- 8 *Falco sparverius deserticolus*.—Fairly common on the summit of the mountains where it probably breeds.
- 9 *Melanerpes formicivorus bairdi*.—Very common at this time of the year. Some young birds and adult males were collected, the latter having the testes very large.
- 10 *Colaptes cafer*.—Fairly common summer resident.
- 11 *Calypte costae*.—A few pairs seen.
- 12 *Calypte anna*.—A few pairs seen.
- 13 *Myiarchus cinerascens*.—A few seen. One taken on the 19th.
- 14 *Contopus richardsonii*.—Common. Nests from 25 to 50 feet from the ground. Two nests collected contained two and three eggs respectively.
- 15 *Otocoris alpestris chrysolæma*.—A few pairs seen on the western slope of the mountains.
- 16 *Cyanocitta stelleri frontalis*.—Common. Both young of the year and new nest