

sembling the scraping of a tin pan with a spoon.

The Great Blue Heron is often found in the trees with this colony, being present chiefly at night, but I do not expect to see it nest. There is a smaller heronry of Black-crowns in the central part of Alameda near "Buck" Ward's house, over two miles distant, which was only started up this year, and the approximate number of thirty eggs taken was all the traffic would bear, if reports are correct!



Capture of a Condor in El Dorado Co. Cal. In 1854.

In the autumn of 1854, two men, Alonzo Winship, a former pony express rider on the plains, and Jesse Millikan, were acting as trackwalkers for the South Fork flume in El Dorado Co., Cal. Their cabin was situated between North and South Canyon, and one morning they noticed a large condor in a dead spruce tree, on the mountain side, below their cabin. Loading a rifle, one of the party started for the bird but it had disappeared. After breakfast Mr. Millikan started toward the head of the flume, whilst Mr. Winship went down the flume toward White Rock, eight miles away.

As he was crossing the aqueduct over North Canyon, he saw an enormous condor asleep at the base of a cliff that jutted about twenty feet above the flume. Surprised that the bird had not been awakened by his footsteps along the flume, he hesitated a moment, then decided to attempt to kill the bird. Having nothing but his shovel he threw it with all his force, striking the condor and breaking its wing. The condor, thus rudely disturbed, jumped from its perch, and running under the flume, started down the mountain toward the American River with Mr. Winship following closely after. The condor's broken wing impeded its progress, and finding its pursuer was gaining upon it, it turned savagely upon him and he was compelled to take refuge upon a granite boulder just out of its reach, realizing he had a dangerous enemy.

As the condor walked around and

around the rock of refuge, eyeing him revengefully, Mr. Winship called to Mr. Millikan who was not yet out of hearing. The latter thinking his friend had flushed a covey of grouse, stopped at the cabin on his way and procured his rifle. When in sight of his friend on his granite perch he called:

"What have you got 'Lonzo?"

"Oh! I've got the great grand daddy of all birds," was the reply.

The condor was in such a fury that it paid no attention to the new comer, but continued its circuit around the boulder, eyeing its prisoner who called to Mr. Millikan, "Look out or he will go for you."

Getting a good glimpse of the bird and amazed at its size, Mr. Millikan exclaimed, "We must not kill him; we must take him alive." After considerable planning, Mr. Millikan secured a long, clean, strong, cedar pole and succeeded in dropping it across the back of their quarry, and both men threw themselves upon it. The trapped condor fought so savagely with its beak that Mr. Millikan stripped his coat off over his head and muffling the bird's head, they were finally able to secure it. Carrying the bird to the house, they took some flour sacks, cutting holes in them and passing the feet through; they then prepared splints and properly set and adjusted its broken wing, and over all, they placed bandages securely. They fastened a trace chain to one leg, securing the other end to a post. The condor had plenty of room for exercise, but woe to any object that came within reach of its bill. It knew to a fraction of an inch just how far it could reach, and, within that limit nothing escaped minus the loss of a bill full of flesh, hair or clothes.

The packers who supplied the cabin with meat, brought quantities from the slaughter house, and it would devour five pounds of meat at one meal. The owners of the slaughter house desired it, and with much difficulty the bird was again secured, taken down the mountain and turned loose in the stockade of the corral, where it was boss of all, animate or inanimate. No dog ever tried conclusions with it twice. Finally

it disappeared one day and the vaqueros thought it had gone for good, but a week later, a miner prospecting on the river bank found it more dead than alive from starvation, as its wing was not yet thoroughly healed. All the bird's fight was gone, and the miner, without the slightest difficulty, conveyed it back to the stockade, where it was well fed and soon regained its old time ferocity. Finally, during the second autumn, it disappeared for good and they supposed it had gone south. Its wing measurement from tip to tip lacked one inch of eleven feet, being exactly ten feet, eleven inches.

CATHARINE MILLIKAN.

Santa Clara, Cal.

[This paper records the occurrence of the California Condor in the Sierra Nevadas in 1854, at which time the birds were doubtless not uncommon in suitable localities. None have been recorded from this region in late years.—ED.]



A Neglected Point Concerning the Picidae.

There is a matter of some importance concerning the immature plumage of the *Picidae* that does not seem to be brought forward in the leading ornithological works of reference. As ignorance on this point is apt to be misleading to the amateur and to the collector not well acquainted with the woodpecker family, it seems strange that such a matter should be overlooked. What I refer to is the fact that in at least some members of the genus *Dryobates* and the genus *Melanerpes*, the female in its first autumn resembles the male in respect to the crimson markings upon the crown of the head.

This is especially prominent in the *Melanerpes f. bairdi* where the immature females have the crimson of the crown extending down to the white of the forehead. As the female approaches the true adult plumage the crimson on that portion of the crown which will eventually be permanently black, becomes thinner and less bright and the line of final demarcation between the black and crimson patches of the adult can be distinctly traced.

I have not had the opportunity to examine many specimens of immature

Dryobates, but have collected enough of one or two varieties to show that this peculiarity is present, though in a much less marked degree than in the *Melanerpes* group. At what age the change to the true adult plumage occurs I do not know. Our records show that a specimen of *Dryobates nuttalli* ♀ was collected in January with a trace of the crimson still remaining, but nothing later. As the proportion of immature birds to the adults is small after they have once left the parental care, it is difficult for one collector to gather enough material to study out this matter unless he is constantly in the field. For this reason it would be of great benefit if our ornithological friends would give their experience on this subject, and I hope that some of the readers of this journal will kindly assist in bringing out the facts.

JOSEPH MAILLIARD.

San Geronimo, Cal.

(Read before the Northern Division of the C. O. Club, Jan. 6, 1900.)



MR. NATHAN M. MORAN of San Luis Obispo, a member of the Cooper Club and now attending the University of California at Berkeley, was recently honored by being elected editor-in-chief of the college paper, the *Daily Californian*. The election was warmly contested but Mr. Moran carried off the highest honors of college journalism at the State University, a distinction easily worth prizing.

CHAS. C. TRYON of Avoca, Ia. announces the publication on Jan. 15 of the initial number of the *Western Ornithologist*, a bi-monthly magazine of ornithology. Mr. Tryon states that the new magazine is but a continuation of the *Iowa Ornithologist* in an enlarged form, and that Mr. David L. Savage will act as associate editor of the new publication.

MR. JOHN W. MARTIN of Palestine, Ore., well known as the publisher of the *Oregon Naturalist*, will join the ranks of Californian ornithologists during the present year. Mr. Martin recently met with a sad affliction in the death of his mother, and has since arranged to remove to California.