

few cases concerned. But in other groups, the matter is by no means simple, and every degree of similarity can be found. Thus the genus *Cantherines* is preceded by *Acanthorhinus*, a correct rendering of the same etymology; *Canthidermis* by *Acanthoderma*, also a correct form of the same word; *Thymallus* is preceded by *Thymalus*, *Lyopsetta* by *Liopsetta*. Rafinesque changes *Hiodon* because it sounds too much like *Diodon*; *Trachidermis* has been altered on account of its resemblance to *Trachyderma*, *Ateleopus* on account of its resemblance to *Atelopus*.

"Between forms like *Pachynathus*, antedated by the correctly spelled *Pachygnathus*, and *Aplodontia*, antedated by the more correct *Haplodon*, and *Aplodon*, every sort of case may be found. If all names are regarded as different unless spelled alike, these matters offer no difficulty. Any other view gives no assurance of stability."

Although there are several other points of difference of a very minor nature, I shall close this short abstract with the following well-considered canon, a portion of which, as will be seen, departs considerably from present usage in ornithology and mammalogy.

"Canon XXIX. The authority for a specific or subspecific name is the first describer of the species or subspecies. A name adopted from manuscripts should be ascribed to the person indicated as author in the original publication, whether this person be the author of the memoir in which the name occurs or not. * * * [NOTE] This canon deprecates the practice of ascribing to the author of a paper descriptions and names furnished him in courtesy or otherwise by some other author. If a writer ascribes one of his species to some one else, we must take his word for it. Thus the manuscript species of Kuhl and VanHasselt in the Museum of Leyden, although printed by Cuvier and Valenciennes, should be ascribed to Kuhl and Van Hasselt."

W. K. FISHER.

EDITORIAL NOTES

ALTHOUGH THE CONDOR can hardly be classed among "popular" journals (at least the business manager does not believe his accounts will justify such a view), nevertheless a word or two concerning the coming year may be of interest to club members. Our magazine corresponds to the "proceedings" of some scientific societies and consequently depends almost wholly upon the efforts of the club members. It is manifestly impossible, therefore, to provide an array of special features in advance, nor is it at all desirable to do so. The special features always depend upon the efforts of the editor and in so far as they occupy the body of the magazine they crowd out contributed material. There is an element of danger also, that if too much is provided in advance the members may tend to lose their sense of responsibility.

During the past two years we have published a number of portraits of American ornithologists. The series has been very incomplete, in some cases because we could not secure the necessary photographs and consent, but mostly on account of scarcity of room and funds. As noted on another page this series will be discontinued for the present. Beginning with the March-April issue we will commence a similar series of portraits of eminent European ornithologists, publishing from two to four photographs in each number. So far as we are aware this has never been attempted before. It should prove a feature of exceptional value to everyone interested in the personal and historical sides of ornithology. In an early issue, also, will appear a facsimile page of manuscript from the pen of Prince Charles Lucian Bonaparte. Mr. Emerson will relate something concerning its history and the rather dramatic manner in which it came to light.

Inasmuch as it is well-nigh impossible to prognosticate just what the coming year has in store for the readers of THE CONDOR, the contents of this volume upon which we are now entering must be gauged largely by the standard of that just completed. So far as the name of an author is an index to the standard—and it is a good index we believe—we take pleasure in announcing in advance the following contributors to volume seven: Florence Merriam Bailey, Vernon Bailey, Lyman Belding, Herman T. Bohlman, Herbert Brown, William Lovell Finley, A. K. Fisher, Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Joseph Grinnell, Rev. S. H. Goodwin, Henry B. Kaeding, Leverett Mills Loomis, Joseph Mailliard, Edgar A. Mearns, E. W. Nelson, Harry C. Oberholser, Wilfred H. Osgood, William W. Price, P. M. Silloway.

As a special message to members of the club let us again remind them that the interest and value of a publication such as THE CONDOR must always depend upon the representative charact-

er of the list of contributors, in other words upon the members' full and active cooperation. They must be the principal supporters of the enterprise. An editor is, unfortunately, a necessary evil, but he cannot be expected to undertake responsibilities which rightfully belong with the club at large. In other words it is desirable that the members furnish the editor with a large assortment of articles, that he may be less limited in his choice of material. The editor is a clearing-house for all sorts of complaints. One coterie of readers loudly calls for "popular articles" (whatever that may mean) while another and smaller circle prefers the more serious material. The only criticism we are lead to make is that, in the past, the table of contents might have been more varied in several instances had our opportunity for choice been less limited. We consequently request all to unite and do their little toward improving the magazine. Parenthetically, we desire to ask those who are not accustomed to write for publication to be brief, to the point, and to preserve a reasonable unity. It is frequently necessary to condense articles, owing to the exigencies of space, and it is not always possible to give anæsthetics before applying the blue-pencil.

There is just one feature of THE CONDOR for the coming year which merits special mention, that is, the illustrations. We consider that we have been very fortunate in securing the cooperation of Mr. William Lovell Finley and Mr. Herman T. Bohlman of Portland, Oregon, who will contribute to each issue. Mr. Bohlman's photographs of western birds are of exceptional merit, and rank with the best that have ever been secured. Indeed, considering the difficulties which were overcome in many instances, his best work has been seldom equalled, judging solely from published results.

AT PRESENT there is a lively interest in "nature photography" and especially in photographs of wild animals. Of late years hunting with the camera has come to be considered one of the most satisfying of sports. It is certainly the most difficult to prosecute successfully. Almost any one is able to shoot birds, or even large game, but there are relatively few who possess patience and alertness sufficient to capture the same creatures with a camera. Photographs of birds are of greatly varying values from the rigidly scientific standpoint. But nearly all are beautiful, and excite our admiration for one reason or another. Probably the most valuable photographs are those which show *clearly* some fact of the bird's life history or especially elucidate the creature's relationship with its environment. Occasionally a portrait of a bird may be very beautiful to look upon, and yet when analyzed may show nothing more than the life habit. This of course is desirable knowledge, but scarcely so important as the life history. Figures of nests are likely to be disappointing unless carefully taken.

Usually the most valuable pictures are the most difficult to procure. Those who have never attempted to photograph a live bird, especially a shy one, know little of the nerve-racking work which was necessary to secure the better photographs published during the past few years. The general reader is likely to glance casually at such an illustration without taking in what it really represents beyond face value. It has been no uncommon thing for Mr. Bohlman and Mr. Finley to risk life and limb in tall trees, or on cliffy rocks off the Oregon coast. The same experience has been shared by nearly all of the more daring photographers. Every ornithologist knows of the cliff performances of the Kearton brothers. Let the reader, for example, pause a moment to consider the risk and work necessary to secure the admirable series of photographs illustrating the growth of the red-tailed hawk, published in this issue. Was there ever a form of hunting that could compare with this? Or, considering the trouble, has a filcher of hawk or eagle eggs in recent years such a contribution to offer as this series of photographs. It may be difficult to climb one hundred and twenty feet to secure two egg shells for a plethoric cabinet. It is vastly more difficult and worth while to secure such photographs. As a "gold-cure" for acute cases of the "egg habit" we cordially recommend the camera.

IS THERE growing in the minds of some ornithologists an intolerance for the efforts of the obscure beginner, or for the work of the amateur "without proper connections"? During the past two years we have seen in several places hints at such a sentiment which has recently found utterance in a very unqualified form. On page 181 of December *Bird-Lore*, Ernest Thompson Seton says: "The experts of our museums are the only ones who should be allowed to collect bird skins today. It is safe to say they will not abuse the privilege. Knowing the value of birds as they do, better than any other class of men, they are not likely to take the life of a sparrow, even, without a very sufficient justification." Shades of Audubon and Coues! Whither, pray? This approaches pretty near the "limit"! We would like the serious ornithologist to consider, for a moment, the first sentence. The second would be important if not partially vitiated by evidence to the contrary. The third, unfortunately, has its exceptions. Possibly they prove the rule. We must remember that, as in the past so in the present, a very large proportion of original ornithological knowledge is being contributed by persons who

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EDITORIAL NOTES

(Continued)

have no connection whatever with museums or institutions of any sort. Examine the list of field ornithologists who contributed to Bendire's "Life Histories." Few are of the class Mr. Seton would endow with special privileges. Scan the last volume of *The Auk*. What proportion of articles are contributed by men connected with museums as compared with those who are not! Practically all the ornithologists west of the Mississippi would go out of commission if this sentiment prevailed. With legitimate bird protection we have perfect and unqualified sympathy, but we have little patience with the wild flights of ultra-enthusiasts.

As we hinted above this idea is not new by any means. It has come from high places and is having a little effect on the younger generation. If the discouragement of the gun leads to a closer study of the life histories, well and good, but practical experience teaches that the gun should not be abandoned, as is so often advocated. The substitution of "total abstinence" for the old time method is likely to have one serious result, which is already being slightly felt. It favors a growth of the rankest sort of dilletantism; and if the "new and proper" tendency is to prevail will we not in time have the serious ornithologist giving way to what Dr. Coues might have termed a "superficial ornithophile"? Of course we do not favor that every Thomas, Richard, and Henry shall be allowed unlimited freedom with firearms but we do think the unconsidered condemnation of the gun about a century premature.

Owing to demands on available space it has been necessary to omit several pages of reviews which were intended for this number, as well as the usual "From Field and Study," and the directory of club members. The last two, at any rate, will appear in March. We regret having been obliged to publish Mr. Keyes's ar-

ticle in two portions, but the concluding instalment will be in the next issue. The same is true for Mr. Swarth's paper. Indeed we have been so crowded this month that the title page for volume VII must be deferred till November. Last year we printed it as a part of the first issue. Prof. Cooke's article was read at the twenty-second Congress of the A. O. U., November 29th.

It is not a pleasant task to be continually harping on the money question but the printer, unfortunately, has to pay his help. Considering the excellent work that he is now turning out, club members should make it a matter of pride to be prompt with dues. The same remark applies to subscribers, who are receiving THE CONDOR at bare cost price. We would have no occasion for these observations had not the business manager sent us recently a pitiful wail concerning editorial extravagance, ending with the assertion that he could not collect funds as fast as we are determined to spend them. He further assures us that money is coming in slowly. If the members and subscribers wish us to maintain the present standard they will have to do their part. Besides, pity the business manager; his is a hard lot, managing an extravagant editor.

There is no reason why we should not have 400 members as well as 225, our present number. If every member would send us one name the trick could be done in a jiffy. The growth of the club is due to the alertness of about 15 people. That all the bird people in the west are not enrolled in very evident. *Will not every member who reads this make a resolution to send us one new name before the March meeting?* It is very easily done, and will mean a better magazine and a larger one.

Friends of the California Academy of Sciences will be glad to know that the amendment to the Constitution of California exempting the institution from taxation received about 11,000 majority of favorable notes. The exact figures are: for the amendment, 73,207; against, 62,275.

The annual dinner, announced in the last issue, was held at Jules's Restaurant, 315 Pine St., San Francisco, January 14, at 7 P. M. An account of the meeting will appear in the next issue.

Messrs. Joseph Mailliard and Joseph Grinnell spent a portion of the Christmas holidays ornithologizing near Victorville, California.

Mr. William L. Finley gave two lectures illustrated with lantern slides at the meeting of the A. O. U. in Cambridge. Mr. Finley is now at Santa Monica.

Members who notice errors in their address will do well to send a card of correction before the publication of the directory in the next number.

A remarkable series of flamingo photographs and a very interesting article are contributed to the December *Century* by Mr. Frank M. Chapman, a member of the Cooper Club and Editor of *Bird-Lore*.