

We are indebted to Mr. Robert B. Rockwell, of Denver, for the following information in regard to the new scientific society lately formed in Colorado.

On December 18, 1906, a number of the scientific workers of Colorado met at Denver and organized the Colorado Biological Society, which has been incorporated under the laws of the State of Colorado.

The Charter Membership consists of men specializing in Botany, Mammalogy, Ornithology and Entomology and altho few in numbers at present, the society will endeavor to secure as members all of the scientific workers of Colorado and adjoining states.

The policy of the new organization will be to foster and encourage practical field work, with "results" as the watchword. Especial attention will be paid to the collection and preservation of existing biological information relative to Colorado, and investigation along all lines of scientific biological work which have heretofore been more or less neglected.

There has been a growing demand for an organization in the State which would tend to bring scientific students thruout the Rocky Mountain region into closer touch with each other and enable all to work more or less in unison; and it is hoped that the new Society will not only furnish the means to this end but that it will go further and perform the same function for Colorado that the Cooper Club has for California.

The Society has accepted an invitation to affiliate with the Colorado Museum of Natural History, located at Denver, which gives it the necessary backing and support so necessary to a young organization of this kind; thru this combination it is expected that a great deal of work of scientific and practical value will be accomplished.

The charter membership consists of Messrs. Ellsworth Bethel, Victor H. Borcherdt, Geo. L. Cannon, Fred M. Dille, J. Clarence Hersey, L. J. Hersey, and Robert B. Rockwell, all of Denver, W. L. Burnett of Ft. Collins, E. R. Warren of Colorado Springs, and W. D. Hollister of Albuquerque, N. M.

All communications to the Society should be addressed to Fred M. Dille, Corresponding Secretary, 307 Continental Bldg., Denver, Colorado.

COMMUNICATIONS

IN REGARD TO THE MOOTED POINTS

Editor THE CONDOR:

If I may be pardoned in exceeding the "postal card" limit, I should like to touch at length on two of the mooted points; for one cannot express either reason or emotion in a single written "Yes" or "No".

(1) Unquestionably those who prefer the metric system are justified by current usage in advanced scientific circles, and they have the future with them. But, as certainly, measurements expressed in the metric system are unintelligible to most of us. They may be laboriously puzzled out, but they are not quickly *sensed*, as are measurements in inches and hundredths. The case is quite hopeless for those of us who do not happen to have enjoyed the early advantages of drill in the metric system. For myself I think I could derive the equation for the Conchoid of Nicomedes with passable credit; but if you told me that an egg was 26.23 mm long, I should have to study to know whether you had a California Condor's or an Anna Hummingbird's. Please, Mr. Editor, be patient with those of us who, altho only half way across the stage, are far too busy to go back and begin over again.

(2) Reformed spelling? Yes; altho I do not follow the President thru thick and thin. The substitution of *t* for *ed*, as in *blusht* and *kist*, is pedantic and, quite evidently, unpopular.

(3) For the capitalization of vernacular names, a hearty *Yes!* And for weightier reasons than those of prominence and eye-ease, already recited.

The accepted vernacular names of American ornithology have acquired greater stability than the vaunted Latin. The Latin name of the Evening Grosbeak has been changed twice within the last decade; but no one has thought of changing the vernacular as whimsical as it is. The Western Winter Wren has been *Trogodytes* sp., *Anorthura* sp., and *Olbiorchilus* sp., within recent memory, but the note-book shorthand is still "W. W. W." and always will be, whatever mire of Latinity "*varium et mutabile*" they try to stick it in. Ergo the English name in fact deserves as much consideration at the hands of an editor who would be understood as the scientific name.

But more important still is the fact that the name of a species, whether English or Latin, is a proper name. The basis of distinction between named birds is not individual but specific. We do not call an Audubon Warbler "Mary" to distinguish it from other individuals, but our common aim and interest is to declare it *propre*, or peculiar, as compared with birds of other species, as Myrtle Warbler, Palm Warbler, etc.

This is neither falsification of grammar nor hair-splitting. Moreover, we require capitalization of species in the interest of accuracy. If I speak of an evening grosbeak, I may refer to a specimen of *Habia*—or is it *Zamelodia* now?—*Zamelodia melanocephala*, seen at evening; but there is no uncertainty whatever if I speak of an Evening Grosbeak.

As matter of fact this principle of capitalization in bird names has to be applied still further, in the interests of accuracy. When I read of "warblers in the woods" how shall I know that the author does not refer to Thrushes, Catbirds, Vireos, and all birds which warble? But if he says "Warblers" he can of course mean only *Mniotiltidae*.

By all means, Mr. Editor, if we would be intelligible, logical, and consistent, let us use capitals *always* in presenting specific names of birds, and elsewhere in referring to the higher groups, wherever uncertainty is likely to exist in the mind of the dullest reader.

Respectfully yours,

W. LEON DAWSON

Seattle, April 11, 1907.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

MARCH.—The regular meeting of the Northern Division was held in East Hall, University of California, Berkeley, on March 9, 1907. A very interesting and instructive paper was read by Prof. Wm. E. Ritter on "Ornithology for a Student of Evolutionary Problems," in which was set forth the importance in Biology of close observation and careful recording, and the part that Ornithology has played in the general scheme in the past, and the part that it will play in the future. He emphasized the need of more careful and searching studies in Ornithology, which should deal with the whole life cycle of the bird from the egg to the adult, and pointed out the possibilities in Ornithology as an advanced study, for still further advancement. An informal discussion followed the paper after which the business session was held, with Pres. D'Evelyn in the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

The following propositions for membership were made: Dr. and Mrs. Burnham, 2335 Warring street, Berkeley, both by Prof. W. E. Ritter; John F. Ferry, Chicago, Ill., by H. S. Swarth; A. O. Treganza, Salt Lake City, Utah, by C. S. Sharp; W. L. McAtee, Biol. Surv., Dept. Agr., Wash., by H. T. Clifton.

It was announced that the application of Henry K. Coale of Highland Park, Chicago, Ill., was read before the Southern Division several months ago and sent to this Division for action, but was unfortunately lost in the mails. Since the matter has been mentioned in the Club before, his name was considered to have been proposed in this Division and he was duly elected to membership. Mr. Louis P. Bolander was also elected to full membership.

A communication from J. Eugene Law ask-

ing that the Northern Division consider the proposition made by the Southern Division at their last meeting to increase the subscription of THE CONDOR to non-members from one dollar to one dollar and a half, was read. Considerable discussion was raised concerning the proposition but it was finally decided that, considering the standard of THE CONDOR and its efficiency, such a raise in subscription price was very reasonable, and was therefore adopted.

At the previous meeting the names of eleven members were recommended for suspension for non-payment of dues. Of these eight had failed to pay up before this meeting was called though fully notified and were therefore formally suspended. The following resignations were accepted: R. F. Rooney, Juliette C. Harding, Louis Wessel, Nathan M. Moran. Meeting adjourned.

H. O. JENKINS, *Secretary*.

SOUTHERN DIVISION

FEBRUARY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was called to order Feb. 28, 1907, by President Morcom in the office of H. J. Lelande in the City Hall, Los Angeles, Cal., with members Grinnell, Willett, Lelande, Clifton, Antonin and Alphonse Jay, Linton, Chamberlain, Watson, Cosper, and Law present.

The minutes of the last meeting, Jan. 31, 1907, were read and approved.

Applications for active membership were proposed as follows: Mr. W. L. McAtee, Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., by H. T. Clifton. On motion by Mr. Lelande, seconded by Mr. Cosper, and duly carried, Mr. A. O. Treganza, Salt Lake, Utah, Mr. Jesse C. A. Meeker, Danbury, Conn., and Mr. Howard Wright, Pasadena, Cal., were elected to active membership in the Club, the two former subject to the approval of the Northern Division. The resignation of Mr. J. B. Fuedge was accepted. Also the resignation of Mr. J. G. Brown was accepted as of date Jan. 1, 1905, the previous action of the Club in dropping Mr. Brown for non-payment of dues, at meeting Jan. 12, 1905, being rescinded, as Mr. Brown has now paid his dues in full to that date. The resignation of Mrs. J. M. Willard was also accepted.

Mr. Linton exhibited a few skins taken recently including a Pacific fulmar, taken in San Diego Bay, and Townsend fox sparrow and varied thrush taken on San Clemente Island.

The balance of the evening was spent in ornithological chat, very interesting to those participating, but hard to record. Adjourned.

J. EUGENE LAW, *Secretary*.