difficult matter, especially as they will abandon an uncompleted nest under very slight provocation. Those containing young are, of course, comparatively easy to locate by watching the parents carrying food. Most of my "finds" of this species have been entirely accidental.

The nest shown in the accompanying photograph was rather remarkably situated, and found as usual by accident. Altho these birds are naturally extremely retiring in their disposition, this nest was inside the right of way of the railroad running thru the Rancho San Geronimo and only about twenty-five feet from the track over which four or five passenger and freight trains passed each way every day. We use a wire of the railroad fence for telephonic purposes, and in the spring, when the growth of vines is especially rampant, we have more or less trouble from the grounding of the current by the vines coming in contact with the wire.

In the present instance, while driving along the county road parallel to the track, some three miles from headquarters, I noticed that some wild cucumber vines had clutched our wire in their disturbing embrace, and I jumped out of my buggy to remove them. This nest was on the farther side of the right of way, and it was in crossing from the track to the fence beyond that I flushed the parent by almost stepping on it. Quite a stream runs parallel with the railroad here, and some willows growing on its bank overhang the fence. The nest was placed near the ground in a low patch of wild blackberry vines under the edge of these willows. The instant the parent flushed I drew back and hid, waiting for her to return to the nest. She flew into the willows where she was soon joined by her mate, and their note—so much like the warning "twit" of the California Partridge—was repeated anxiously many times as they hopped about the neighboring trees before they were sufficiently reassured to return to the nest. Finally, however, the female edged toward her particular blackberry bush and all became quiet.

Except for the danger of having one's paraphernalia disturbed by the passing public this would have been an ideal place for a series of photographs as soon as the young were hatched, especially as the birds must have become used to more or less disturbance in such a noisy spot; but unfortunately my time was too much occupied to make the trial. The day after this discovery I brought my camera along with the result herewith submitted. It was necessary to cut away some of the vines on the camera side before the nest could be focussed, as it was practically hidden from sight.

It is more than possible that the noise of the passing trains had made this pair of birds bolder than the majority of their kind, as otherwise it is extremely improbable that they would have returned to their nest at all after the rude disturbance of a full grown man crashing thru their blackberry patch. The necessity of further disturbance from cutting away and disarranging the vines about the nest was too much for them, however, and the set was added to our collection. It was taken May 7, 1908; No. 4000-5-08, collection J. & J. W. Mailliard; incubation one-third. Nest composed of dry weeds and weed bark, lined with a few fine rootlets and a little horsehair; diameters 4 and 1¾ inches, depths 2¾ and 2.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Geronimo, California.*

The Status of the Hutton Vireo in Southern California.—I have come to the conclusion that *Vireo huttoni oberholseri* does not exist as a race separate from *Vireo huttoni huttoni.* And this, too, after my attempted demonstration to the affirmative conclusion (as presented in THE CONDOR VIII, November, 1906, pp. 148, 149)!

My reversal of opinion is due to the acquisition of more material from southern California, the most valuable of which in this connection are birds in fresh fall plumage from Orange County, and a number of additional specimens from San Diego County. My former statement that the only then available San Diego County example (taken in March) was exceptionally "leaden-hued" was perfectly true. Furthermore I have at hand thru the courtesy of Mr. F. Stephens, three May examples from Witch Creek, the type locality of *oberholseri*; and three more June birds (adult) from the Santa Rosa Mountains. These are all quite appreciably paler than June and July adults from the vicinity of Monterey, the type locality of *Vireo huttoni huttoni.* But (and here is the crucial test) the September birds from Orange County (just as with those from Los Angeles County, as I previously pointed out), and which are in full, fresh plumage, are of exactly the same tints thruout as equally unworn birds from Monterey, Palo Alto and the Santa Cruz Mountains. (It must, of course, be borne in mind here that there is but the single annual molt in this species, in August.) Furthermore (and this clinches the evidence) an adult specimen (No. 2401, U. C. M. V. Z.) from the Santa Rosa Mountains is even paler than any of the Witch Creek birds; yet among the prevailing worn, light-colored feathers of the back are to be seen, just appearing, two or three bright green new feathers of the precise tint of the corresponding feathers in the new-plumaged Monterey birds.

The deduction from this is that the character of *oberholseri*, paleness, is adventitious and due to the greater rate of fading and abrasion to which the southern California birds are subjected.

The atmospheric dryness makes the feathers more brittle and hence hastens the disintegration process resulting from attrition. The more intense and long-continued sunlight bleaches the colors at a greater rate.

The moral again, repeated here for the sake of emphasis, is that the true color characters of birds must be sought in freshly acquired plumages, and not in the "breeding dress" (often in a dilapidated condition) as has been so universally insisted upon.

The above contention that *oberholseri* is not after all a phylogenetic race, is not at all an argument against the recognition of minute differences in nomenclature, as would apparently be urged by Linton (cf. CONDOR X, July 1908, p. 181; and Kaeding, *idem*, XI, January 1909, p. 32), but rather points toward the need for greater care in discriminating subspecies.—J. GRINNELL, *University of California, Berkeley, California.*

The Early Western Surveys.—In Mr. Rockwell's interesting paper on "The History of Colorado Ornithology," in the January-February number of THE CONDOR there are several erroneous citations, which, coupled with a number of similar errors recently appearing in scientific publications, lead to the belief that a general account of several of the western surveys and their publications may be timely. For those who are familiar with the publications referred to, citations are not necessary, and if the references are not correct they are worse than useless to those for whom they are intended.

In the paper just referred to, Coues' "Birds of the Northwest" is attributed to the Bulletins of the United States Geological Survey, instead of to the Miscellaneous publications of the "Hayden Survey" of the Territories; and Henshaw's reports are attributed to the same survey, instead of to the "Wheeler Survey" of the region west of the one hundredth meridian. Ridgway's report on the Maxwell collection was first publisht, so far as I am able to learn, in 1879, in Mary Dartt's (now Mrs. Thompson) "On the Plains and Among the Peaks," instead of in 1877 as Mr. Rockwell has it. Afterward, according to Professor Cooke, it appeared in 1887 in "Field and Forest," a publication not now accessible to me. Either Mr. Rockwell's date is an error or both Professor Cooke and I have overlooked the earlier publication. However, that is of minor importance. The important item is the confusion of entirely distinct surveys.

The United States Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, under Dr. F. V. Hayden, began operations in 1867 and ceased field work in 1878, tho some of its publications did not appear until several years later. Its principal publications are contained in four distinct series, numbered separately, i. e., Bulletins, Annual Reports, Monographs or Final Reports, and Miscellaneous Publications, in addition to some unclassified papers. Each series contains papers on both fossil and recent plants and animals, and should be carefully distinguisht to avoid misleading the reader who is not thoroly familiar with them. For instance, Coues' "Birds of the Northwest" cannot be found in the Bulletin of the Hayden Survey, but is No. 3 of Miscellaneous Publications, and is not in the United States Geological Survey publications at all, altho on the title page the words "and Geographical" are omitted, the words "of the Territotories," which at once distinguish it from the present survey, being retained.

The United States Geographical [Explorations and] Surveys West of the One Hundredth Meridian (title varying somewhat on different publications), under Lieut. Geo. M. Wheeler, was in the field from 1869 to 1884, its chief publications being Annual Reports, Maps, and seven large quarto Final Reports or Monographs, of which Vol. V is of most importance in the matter of recent zoology and contains Henshaw's reports hereinbefore referred to.

The United States Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel, under Clarence King, was in the field from 1871 to 1878 inclusive, its chief publications being an Atlas, Annual Reports, and several large quarto Final Reports or Monographs, about half of Vol. IV being devoted to ornithology.

The United States Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, under J. W. Powell, publisht quite a number of special volumes from 1877 to 1880, not numbered in a serial way, such as the "Geology of the Henry Mountains," all of them being confined to geography in its limited sense, geology, paleontology and ethnology. The publications, together with a number of reports by Powell before the organization of the Rocky Mountain Region Survey, are briefly referred to as the Powell Survey Reports.

The foregoing were all western surveys, Hayden and Powell reporting to the Secretary of the Interior, Wheeler and King reporting to the Secretary of War, in accordance with the statutes under which they operated, and were entirely distinct surveys, tho their work to some extent overlapt. In 1879 the present United States Geological Survey, under the Interior Department, began operations; some of the other organizations at once, and all eventually ceasing field work. At the present time nearly all of the strictly geological and paleontological work of