

THE CONDOR

An Illustrated Magazine
of Western Ornithology

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EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

As CONDOR readers make use of the Ten-Year Index, they are sure to run across errors. We hope errors are few, but it is safe to say there was never yet published a perfect index or catalog. The compiler of our Index, Mr. H. B. Kaeding, proposes to issue an errata-slip, to be mailed to all members and subscribers. And to the end that this may approach completeness, he invites everyone to send to the Editor of this magazine a memorandum of whatever errors have been found; whether one or many.

As announced by our Business Manager on inside back cover of present issue, Cooper Club members are entitled to space in THE CONDOR to use in letting their wants be known in the line of exchanging books, photos or specimens. We hope this feature of our magazine will be recognized, and made use of.

We assume the privilege of quoting the following passages of general interest, from a personal letter (dated August 20) from Dr. Chas. W. Richmond, Acting Curator of Birds in the United States National Museum at Washington: "We are going over the new building next week! After living for 20 odd years on this gallery, we are about to move into new quarters, where all of our collections can be brought together. When the Division of Birds was moved from the old South Tower (five flights up from the ground) to its present quarters, our catalogs had about 95,000 entries, and the collections were all contained in cases on the gallery, ex-

cept the large species which were stored in the basement. Since that time we have expanded until the eggs occupied one room (in 70 cases) in a far corner of the "old" Museum building; the Picarian and some other groups filled a room in the north tower of the Smithsonian building; and the waders, water birds, game birds, and other large birds filled the west basement. Our catalog entries now run up into the 212,000's, meaning that we have received over one hundred thousand specimens in this time. In a few weeks we will have all our material together, including about 12,000 duplicates which have been in storage for several years. We are very much elated over the occasion!" And naturally enough. We offer congratulations not only to those immediately connected with the National Museum, but to ornithologists in general. For our national collection of birds is by far the most important one, as far as America is concerned, in existence, as it has been used most widely. Its adequate housing has been a desideratum for many years; and now that this is accomplished, the accessibility and consequent value to bird people at large becomes still greater.

A correspondent in another column of this issue describes a published Code of Colors which it is urged is an improvement in its method of designation over that employed by Ridgway in his widely used "Nomenclature of Colors." We have just secured a copy of the new work in question. Its sole point of superiority, to our mind, lies in the much greater number of tints and shades presented. But their designation by number is certainly not an advantage. For a color description would only be comprehensible in the presence of the Code itself, unless a person had had long enough experience with it to remember the color-groups by number. "Lavender" brings to one's mind a more vivid realization of the tint so called, than "496"! So with russet (= "103"); sea green (= "382"); orange-vermillion (= "81"); etc. Of course the new system *could* be mastered. And it *might* lead to more exact color-definition in scientific descriptions. But at the same time it would render these descriptions useless to the multitude of amateurs who, as a rule, would not bother to secure a copy of the key. We still hope for an enlarged nomenclature of colors, after the style of Ridgway's. We have heard a rumor to the effect that Ridgway, himself, is at work on a new and improved edition of his book. This would be ideal. If an American nomenclature does not materialize shortly, we will *have* to use the Frenchman's "Code des Couleurs"; for the few copies of Ridgway's old "Nomenclature of Colors" accessible are just about worn out; and, as previously hinted, fading is feared.

A useful feature of our magazine is the publication from year to year of the "Directory of Members of the Cooper Ornithological Club", as in the present issue. Members who see where corrections should be made, should inform us accordingly, so that our card list can be kept up to date, preparatory for next year's Directory.