

# THE CONDOR

A Magazine of  
Western Ornithology

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Cooper Ornithological Club

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## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

Every one of our readers will doubtless join with us in congratulating Mr. William Leon Dawson on his remarkable success with the Suri-birds, as described on the first pages of our new volume. Here is a bird so rare that many a large collection entirely lacks a specimen; yet a flock was "captured" by the camera, and the results now presented bring the species to the intimate acquaintance of anyone who sees our magazine. We may say *sub rosa* that Dawson has some more conquests, to be announced in the course of the year.

The publication of two more numbers of the Cooper Club's *Avifauna* series is planned for the year 1913. The manuscripts for both are now in the Editor's hands and will go to the printer as soon as our Business Managers, Chambers and Law, give the word. The titles of the two new brochures are: "Birds of the Fresno District, California", by John G. Tyler; and "Distributional List of Arizona Birds", by Harry S. Swarth.

Mr. George Willett left San Francisco December 5 as one of a party headed by Commodore Salisbury, U. S. N., organized to visit several of the small islets northwest of Hawaii. The expedition is sent out under the auspices of the U. S. Biological Survey, and has for its chief object the inspection of Laysan Island. Here it is proposed to take a census of the sea-bird population and to take steps for further protecting the colonies

of albatrosses recently threatened with extermination through the raids of plumage hunters. Another danger menaces the burrowing petrels, namely, rabbits. These mammals were thoughtlessly liberated on the island some years ago and it is feared will rout out certain birds from the very limited nesting area of the latter. It is hoped that some means may be discovered by which Laysan will be entirely rid of the mischievous rabbits.

Mr. R. H. Beck, so well known for his splendid make of water-bird skins, left San Francisco December 15 for a year's field work around the southern end of South America. He will pay especial attention to the sea-birds, collecting on this trip in the interests of Dr. L. C. Sanford, of New Haven, Connecticut.

Mr. A. C. Bent is planning an expedition for the early spring along the coast of Lower California in quest of birds. He will be accompanied by H. H. Kimball and H. W. Marsden.

It is perhaps oftenest the wisest thing to hush up an unpleasant matter, especially if it involve a member of one's own household or an associate in social or club affiliation. In the present instance, however, the opportunity for the pointing of a good strong moral seems to overbalance the instinct for clannish secrecy.

The Cooper Ornithological Club has always stood for absolute honesty, more particularly in regard to whatever relates to its own field of interest. One purpose of the Club is to contribute to ornithology as a science, in other words to add *facts* to our knowledge of birds.

The case referred to is one where the evidence pointed toward the fabrication of data by a Club member, such spurious data having been put in circulation attached to certain specimens. To state the case plainly, "facts" were forged, and might easily have found place in published literature. Who knows but what such has really happened, though now beyond finding out?

Needless to say, the tainted name has been expunged from the Club's membership roster, after due procedure, as noted in the Minutes.

Unscrupulousness in the statement of scientific detail is, of course, not distantly allied to "nature-faking." The former is criminal, the latter very nearly so. Neither are to be countenanced by the true student, typified in the Cooper Club's membership.

It is probably superfluous to urge the distinction between the above exhibition of perversity, and the innocent making of mistakes. Not one of us has contributed to published ornithology but what experiences gnawing regrets over mistakes of which he was originally unaware. As long as these regrets stir the soul, one may be sure that he is possessed of a scientific conscience justifying him, with increased care for accuracy, in further contribution.

The California Associated Societies for the Conservation of Wild Life, of which the Cooper Club is a member, has practically concentrated its attention on the proposed bill prohibiting the sale of game. The measure as drawn up is in ideally good hands. Senator William R. Flint, popular, influential and able, has already introduced the bill.

Communications and editorials from all over the State and the United States are being received demanding that the sale of game be prohibited. A book by Dr. Wm. T. Hornaday, Director of the New York Zoological Park, just issued, says California's game is doomed unless a non-sale law is passed at once.

The National Association of Audubon Societies, the New York Zoological Society, and the Campfire Club of America are urging California to join the distinguished roll of eighteen states that have entirely prohibited the sale of game.

Now! Every reader of THE CONDOR, and especially every Cooper Club member, who believes in the justice of this cause, can render effective help by writing immediately to his Assemblyman and Senator as well as to Hon. George J. Hans, Chairman Senate Committee on Fish and Game, and Hon. John H. Guill, Chairman Assembly Committee on Fish and Game, requesting their support for the Flint bill, prohibiting the sale of game. Write also to Senator Flint, assuring him of your hearty support.

The following extract from an editorial in the FRESNO REPUBLICAN makes short work of the absurd claim that the man who does not hunt is deprived of a natural right if he cannot buy game to eat. The great mass of people hunt for sport; only the hotelman and the market gunner hunt for private pockets in order that lazy Croesus may "buy a duck when he wants it!"

"They will simply have to go without it for awhile," was the reply made at a hearing in Sacramento to the query what the people who do not shoot will do for game, pending the development of its commercial production for sale. And the *Examiner* takes this as a confession of the absurdity, and injustice of the whole scheme of reserving wild game from tame commerce.

But why not? Are the only privileges to be those of money? Are we so commercialized that the normal way of getting everything must be to buy it? There are plenty of things—diamonds and champagne and automobiles, for instance—that most people must go without. Those who can afford these things see no injustice in the exclusion of those who cannot. The exclusion is commercial, and therefore, to the commercial-minded, it is conclusive. But when any other standard of dis-

tinction is suggested, by which they would be the excluded ones, then they grow righteously indignant. Yet once it was quite axiomatic that all good things belonged to the strong as it now is that they belong to the rich. The mighty hunter had the game, the mighty warrior the government and the mighty miser his gold heaps—unless the warrior and the hunter took them away from him. The mighty thinker, then as now, had no privilege but the hope of posterity's recognition. But now the mighty miser demands the first fruits of all the others; and sets himself up as the only privileged class. That the game should be the privilege of the hunter strikes him as an invasion of his own right to monopolize all privileges to himself.

Yet already most of the best things of life are attainable only by other processes than purchase. *The best part, even of the game, is not the eating, but the hunting of it.* Pampered Croesus, at Delmonico's may eat his canvasback, and carp because it was on the fire nineteen minutes instead of eighteen. But who shall buy the sunrise, the tang of the morning air, the mists on the salt marshes, the spell of the hunting and the triumph of the successful shot? *Ten thousand generations of hunting ancestry bequeathed us the instinct whose satisfaction is the huntsman's joy. But it is a thing to be achieved by stout legs, clear eyes and steady nerve, and is for sale to no fat purse except for personal exertion also. Is it imperative that the mere incidental gastronomic product of that uncommercial activity shall be open to commercial access?*

The two finest mountain views on the American continent are doubtless those from the summits of Mt. Whitney and Mt. Dana. They are open to any man with strong legs and sound lungs, and the price of beans and bacon, but a million dollars will not carry a man to them in a Pullman car. The love of a good woman is one man's freely, for his own devotion in return, but it is no man's for pay. Money will buy books and pictures and music, but not the knowledge to appreciate them. And the touch with wild things, and the hereditary lure of the wild man's chase for them—these are something better than buying and selling. *If, to preserve the wild poesies and to keep alive the untamed pursuit of them, it becomes necessary to separate the products of the hunt from organized commerce, until commerce itself can produce what it consumes, there is no injury done except to the fiction that all things are the natural right of him who is able to pay for them.*—W. P. T.

#### REPORT OF PROGRESS IN CONSERVATION

To contingent organizations making up the