

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

We are not infrequently asked why *THE CONDOR* is not printed on a highly surfaced quality of paper such as will give a greater brilliancy of contrast and more detail in the photographic illustrations. There are two reasons why we adopted the present dull-finish, uncoated paper. Durability was the first consideration. The distant future should be considered in that our magazine is a repository of recorded facts which we want to be available in libraries 200, 500, years hence; and the lasting qualities of surfaced paper are very much in doubt. Just dampen a copy of *THE CONDOR*, indeed soak it over night, and do the same with a glossy-papered periodical, then dry them both, and compare results! Furthermore, and an immediate concern, as it happens, of those of us who have to do a great deal of close reading, the eyestrain is very much more trying on the reader in the case of glossy paper than with a dull surfaced stock. The Editor admits that he now rarely undertakes to read any publication in which surfaced paper is used—simply because of the personal, physical factor of eyestrain. On the whole, and lacking the resources for running separate "plates", we decided in favor of the present paper. Even so, did not our printer get admirable results with the halftones in the January *CONDOR*? Is there not something appealing as well as restful about those gray-toned Solitaire pictures?

From the very beginning of our interest in the names of birds we have been accustomed to use the generic name *Falco*, and this name has come to attach itself conveniently and with apparent scientific exactness to our ideas of the relationships of the raptorial birds. Now comes a school of genus splitters which is attempting to get the ornithological public to accept generic refinements which provide us with the name *Hierofalco mexicanus* for the Prairie Falcon, *Rhynchodon peregrinus* for the Duck Hawk, *Tinnunculus columbarius* for the Pigeon Hawk, and *Cerchneis sparveria* for the Sparrow Hawk. This is merely one instance in illustration of the tendency of the times in certain taxonomic circles. We have thought about the matter a great deal, and we have read the current literature relevant to these specific cases. We hereby challenge somebody or anybody to advance adequate grounds, either profoundly scientific or utilitarian, in justification of such ultra generic splitting! It is apparently the line of least resistance, when group relationships are in question, to subdivide, rather than unite; and hence the tendency. What we need is the higher plane of ornithological scholarship which will go at the expression of *likenesses* as

well as differences between groups of species with a view to most exactly representing genetic relationships. Meanwhile, it seems to us that the general use of these questionable generic names had better be avoided, in the interests of uniformity and of clarity of understanding.

Many accounts of the damage done to rice by ducks have recently appeared in the newspapers, but gross exaggeration is manifest in the majority of these. Furthermore, the attitude taken by many sportsmen in their attempts to vindicate the birds has done more harm than good. The real facts in the case are now before the United States Department of Agriculture, as a result of the investigation by Mr. Alexander Wetmore, he having spent two months the past autumn in the four counties of California which lie in the Sacramento Valley, where large quantities of rice are grown. Dr. H. C. Bryant, Game Expert for the California Fish and Game Commission, has also been on the ground. The reports of these two men have shown that ducks do destroy rice after it has matured and also after it has been cut and is in the shock. The duck responsible for the damage is the Pintail. Although the ducks will not drop down into a thick stand of rice, they will seek out thin rice or places where there is open water. From such places they work out into the good rice, stripping the grains from the head and doing serious damage. Bombs have proved to be an economical means of driving ducks from rice fields. A few bombs properly handled will drive the birds from a large area and the birds are so frightened that they rarely return to the same place the following night. The rice grower who studies the situation and decides that he will outwit the birds need not suffer from depredations. The grower who says much and does little is the one who loses most. The United States Department of Agriculture has taken proper steps to give the rancher a fair chance to protect his crops.

MILITARY SERVICE RECORD

This list contains all the names which have come to the attention of *THE CONDOR* staff. The dates in parentheses indicate when the last word was received; in most cases this came direct from the one named or from a near relative. A few names with data have been taken from the last *Auk*, in which cases it is so noted. So far, no word has come of any casualty to a Cooper Club member.

ANDERSON, Ernest M., Private, Co. A, Royal Canadian Regiment, B. C. Special Ser-

- vice Unit, Quebec, Can. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- BARROWS**, Dr. Albert L., First Lieutenant, 347th Machine Gun Battalion, 91st Division, A. E. F., Belgium. (Feb., 1919.)
- BERGTOLD**, Dr. W. H., Major, Medical Corps, U. S. General Hospital no. 21, Denver, Colo. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- BROOKS**, Allan, Major, 11th Canadian Infantry Headquarters, British E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.) In the service the entire period of the war, in sniping organizations. (Jan., 1919.)
- BURLEIGH**, Thos. D., Private 3d Detachment, 10th Engineers, Forestry Division, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- CALDER**, James A., Master Gunner Class, Enlisted Specialists' Preparatory School, 60th Co., Coast Artillery Corps, Ft. Winfield Scott, Calif. (Dec., 1918.)
- CAMP**, Charles L., First Lieutenant, Headquarters, 7th Field Artillery, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- CHAPMAN**, Dr. Frank M., Red Cross Commissioner, South America. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- CROSBY**, Maunsell S., Captain, Quartermaster Corps, Finance Officer, Camp Mills, N. Y. (Dec., 1918.)
- DICE**, Dr. Lee R., Private, Medical Department, Yale Army Laboratory School, New Haven, Conn. (Dec., 1918.)
- DROWNE**, Dr. F. P. (Dec., 1918.)
- EASTMAN**, F. B., Major, Infantry, Camp Grant, Ill. President of Discharge Board, and Camp Morale Officer. (Dec., 1918.)
- FOWLER**, Frederick H., Captain, Engineers, Office of Chief of Engineers, Washington, D. C. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- GIBBONS**, Dr. Morton R., Major, Medical Corps, Commanding Officer, Hospital, Camp Pike, Ark. (Feb., 1919.)
- GOLDMAN**, E. A., Major, Sanitary Corps, A. E. F., France. In charge of rat depredation control about supply depots. (Dec., 1918.)
- GOSSE**, P. H., Captain, 22d Army, British E. F., France. Later transferred to service in India. (Sept., 1918.)
- HARTMAN**, P. J., Engineers, A. E. F., France.
- HOLDEN**, F. Harvey, Captain, Battery F, 62d Regiment, Coast Artillery Corps, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- HUNT**, Edwin B., Aviation, Naval Reserve. (Feb., 1919.)
- KELLOGG**, Remington, Sergeant, Camp Hospital 29, Base Sec. 2, A. E. F., France. (Nov., 1918.)
- KELLOGG**, Vernon L., Food Administration work with Mr. Hoover in Europe, and Relief Commission work in Belgium. (Dec., 1918.)
- KIRN**, Alfred J., Base Hospital 55, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- KITTREDGE**, Jos., Jr., Captain, Engineers, Forestry Section, A. E. F., France. Firewood production for the advance section. (Dec., 1918.)
- KOFOD**, Charles A., Major, Sanitary Corps, Laboratory, Port of Embarkation, New York City. (Jan., 1919.) Now lecturing before army medical organizations. Earlier conducted hook worm survey of the Southern Department.
- LINCOLN**, F. C., Corporal, 8th Service Co., Signal Corps, Presidio, San Francisco. (Jan., 1919.) In charge of Headquarters Loft (Carrier Pigeon), no. 7.
- LOTFIELD**, Gorm. (Dec., 1918.)
- LORING**, J. Alden, First Lieutenant, Ordnance Department, in Texas. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- MAGEE**, William A., Jr., Ensign, Instructor, Naval Aviation School, Pensacola, Fla. (Jan., 1919.)
- MEYER**, Miss Heloise, Red Cross, in France. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- MITCHELL**, Dr. Walton I., Major, Medical Corps, 805th Pioneer Infantry, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- MOFFITT**, James, Seaman, U. S. Naval Reserve, San Francisco, Calif. (Jan., 1919.)
- MUELLER**, Carl S., Second Lieutenant, Quartermaster Corps, Finance Division, Camp Merritt, N. J. (Dec., 1918.)
- MURIE**, Olaus J., Cadet, Army Balloon School, Ft. Omaha, Neb. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- PALMER**, R. H., Reserve Officers' Training Corps no. 9, Presidio, Calif. ("Nov. 1917"—*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- PEYTON**, Sidney B., Corporal, Machine Gun Co., 160th Infantry, 40th Division, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- PHILLIPS**, Dr. John C., Medical Corps, Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Ind. ("Dec. 1917"—*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- REDINGTON**, Robert R., Engineering Department, Dupont's, Wilmington, Del. (Dec., 1918.)
- RICHEY**, Howard J., Corporal, Ambulance Service Training Camp, Camp Crane, Pa. Enlisted in June, 1917. (Dec., 1918.)
- ROBERTSON**, John McB., Master Gunner Class, 60th Co., Coast Artillery Corps, Enlisted Specialists' Preparatory School, Ft. Winfield Scott, Calif. (Dec., 1918.)
- SCHAEFER**, Oscar F., Sergeant, 3d Detachment, 10th Engineers (Forest), A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.) Enlisted in June, 1917.)
- SCHUSSLER**, George W., Staff Sergeant, Of-

- office of the American Representative, Franco-American War Affairs Commission, Elysée Palace, Paris, France. (Dec., 1918.)
- SHELTON, Alfred C., Second Lieutenant, Sanitary Corps, Camp Crane, Pa. (Jan., 1919.) Discharged.
- SILLIMAN, Edmund, Naval Reserve. (Feb., 1919.)
- SMITH, Allyn G., Second Lieutenant, Air Service, Instructor, Radio Officers' Training School, Columbia University, New York City. (Dec., 1918.)
- STIVERS, Dr. C. G., Captain, Medical Corps, Air Service, San Francisco. (Dec., 1918.)
- STODDARD, H. L., Sergeant, Co. B, 311th Ammunition Train, A. E. F., France. (Dec., 1918.)
- STORER, Tracy I., First Lieutenant, Sanitary Corps, Laboratory Car 'Metchnikoff,' Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. (Jan., 1919.) Discharged.
- SWEENEY, J. A., Private, Co. E, 2d Battalion, 20th Engineers (Forest), A. E. F., France. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- TYLER, Dr. Winsor M., Captain, Medical Corps, Ft. Adams, R. I. (*Auk*, Jan., 1919.)
- UFFORD, Elmer D., A. E. F. (Feb., 1919.)
- VAN ROSSEM, Adriaan, First Lieutenant, Machine Gun School, Camp Hancock, Ga. (Dec., 1918.)
- WALKER, Alex., Battery A., 45th Regiment, Coast Artillery Corps, A. E. F., France. Dec., 1918.)
- WOOD, Casey A., Lieutenant Colonel, Medical Corps, Staff of Surgeon General, Washington, D. C. (Dec., 1918.) Entered service, June, 1917. Earlier, in charge of Examining Unit, Chicago, Ill., and then Chief of Head Survey, Camp Sherman, Ohio. Recently, Acting-Director of Board on Medical and Surgical History of the War. (Dec., 1918.)
- WRIGHT, Howard, Navy.
- YOUNG, John P., Major, Camp Dix, N. J.

COMMUNICATION

TRINOMIALS AND CURRENT PRACTICE

Editor THE CONDOR:

It seems to me that various points brought up by Swarth in his review (CONDOR, xx, 1918, pp. 141-142) of Taverner's papers in the "Summary Report of the Geological Survey, Department of Mines, for the Calendar Year 1916" (Ottawa, Canada), and Mr. Taverner's reply to the same (*ibid.*, pp. 213-216), are worthy of further discussion. There have been several innovations in ornithological practice during the past year, and at least the main points of these merit careful consideration by American ornithologists.

For bird papers of a strictly "popular"

style, the method of procedure adopted by Mr. Taverner in his articles could be used with gratifying results. This class of literature is increasing in quantity and popularity, and for such, the purely trinomial nomenclature is admittedly cumbersome and confusing to many readers. How much better would it be for authors uniformly to use the binomial for the Latin, and the specific name for its English equivalent, instead of the name of the eastern race as is commonly employed in such case. For entirely scientific, and what I may term popular-scientific work, however, the old system seems better, although it is far from ideal.

Mr. Taverner says that the plan which he has followed "discourages the unconsidered copying of names and encourages original research". In future years, however, when gathering published information for a report on some general region, another author cannot personally verify all binomial records and identify all the specimens referred to. In fact, if this binomial system were in general use, it would be almost impossible for anyone to prepare an authoritative report on a region, because of this difficulty of using previously published information. Even though Mr. Taverner does make trinomial notations at other points in his papers, that does not alter the general complexion of the matter, for an article which is both binomial and trinomial in nomenclature has the faults of both systems and the advantages of neither.

I think that the majority will agree with Swarth that "the value of such a list lies largely in the exact subspecific determination of the various forms at the points at which the specimens are taken"—all of the forms, and not just those which the author deems worthy of special notation. Unless some contributions to the habits and life histories of birds are given also, that is its *only* value, as I see it. Although in the vast majority of lists, specimens of all subspecies mentioned have not been secured, one who is familiar with his locality can be reasonably certain of identities, usually, and if he is not, he should, and often does, indicate his uncertainty. To an expert in geographical distribution, the binomial name possibly conveys all that is necessary, but the average reader and bird student wants to know the *probable* form encountered, and will almost never bother to search out its logical identity.

I heartily agree that too many articles are "thrown together" without the proper