

black speck, which, accompanied by an inverted image of itself, we had reason to believe was approaching us across the glaring white surface of a dry lake, and would presently resolve itself into the truck which had promised to come for us and our outfit at 10 A. M.

At almost exactly 11 o'clock the truck reached us and came to a standstill beside a nearby windmill and tank of magnesia water, where the driver stopped his engine to cool it off. The truck, alas, was not the one we had ordered. It belonged to a mining company and was on its way into the Bullion Mountains above us.

Nevertheless, it had hardly come to a standstill, when a little bird appeared in the road beneath it, walking about gratefully in the small patch of shade afforded. Dr. Sumner spied the bird first. He seemed to think it odd or unusual, and asked me with interest what kind of a bird it might be. The fact that the bird was *walking*, and in a very teetery fashion, allowed me about two guesses, and I replied that the bird was either a Water-Thrush or an Ovenbird. The bird was tame, and I was soon able to see that the back was green and the crown old-gold. I asked Paul, the truck driver, to keep his eye on the bird while I rummaged through the packed outfit for my gun. Paul did as I asked him, and I am now able to prove to any who might otherwise have been skeptical that the bird was an Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*)—a male with testes $5/16$ of an inch in diameter. The study-skin now bears no. 40648, in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

This is the only proved case of an Ovenbird on the mainland of California, though two were observed on the Farallon Islands, May 29, 1911 (Dawson, Condor, XIII, 1911, p. 167), one of which was taken.

I am not properly elated, I fear, at having been placed by chance under the necessity of taking the life of a lost Ovenbird on the inhospitable desert. In fact it seemed the irony of fate that of all birds I should have met this one, whom I have heard sing its ecstatic aerial song by moonlight over the pine forests of Massachusetts in June, and whom I have celebrated in a poem published in "Poetry: a Magazine of Verse."—RICHARD HUNT, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 11, 1920.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

To those interested in the protection and conservation of wild life upon our waters and whose attention has been called to the destruction of sea-bird life by the discharge of refuse oil from the ballast tanks of oil carriers into the water, the news will be gratifying that the only remaining company which persisted in this, the Union Oil Company, has notified the California Academy of Sciences of the cessation of this practice. A letter has been recently received from this company stating that it had completed the installation of ballast tanks to take care of this waste oil instead of pumping it overboard as was the former custom, and that there would be no further cause for complaint. The Audubon Association of the Pacific, the Cooper Ornithological Club and the California Academy of Sciences have fought this indefensible custom so vigorously as to bring about this satisfactory result.

Cooper Club members will be interested in the communication from Mr. W. Leon Dawson, addressed to the Club, as entered in the minutes of the Northern Division (p. 193), and in the Committee's recommendation concerning the subject matter thereof. In accordance with the Committee's suggestion, an understanding has been reached

with Mr. Dawson whereby, agreeable to all concerned, the Cooper Ornithological Club as an organization is no longer identified in any way with the "Birds of California" enterprise. We are assured by Mr. Dawson that prospects are favorable for the appearance of the first fascicle in January next, the plan now being to issue the work part by part.

A contribution of a nature to be exceedingly useful in systematic ornithology has just appeared under the authorship of Richard C. McGregor. This is his "Index to the Genera of Birds", issued March 31, 1920, from the Bureau of Science, Manila ("Publication no. 14", 8vo, 185 pp.). This list, of 8839 names, is rendered in compact form by being printed in small yet comfortably distinct type, three columns to the page, and with citations reduced to the barest essentials. By a special limitation of scope only five previous authors are cited, yet it seems practically certain that every genus name proposed up to 1917 is included. Enough information is given in connection with each name to enable the enquirer to find out all about its history. The amount of work involved in an index of this sort must be enormous. For example, the author states that he gathered 25,000 original reference slips,

as an initial step in the compilation. The results give evidence of the highest plane of accuracy. McGregor has thereby won an enviable reputation for achievement in the field of avian taxonomy.

In a review published in the "Transactions of the North Staffordshire Field Club" (vol. III, 1917-18, p. 97), our British confrere, Mr. F. C. R. Jourdain, makes some timely comments on the standards that should be demanded in modern ornithological work. Compilers of local reports may well take these remarks to heart: "Ornithology must necessarily be a progressive science and what was deemed satisfactory half a century ago ought not to satisfy the student of today. A far higher standard of accuracy and precision is demanded from the recorder of the present day than in time past, and the bald and unconvincing statements, often entirely lacking in detail, which fill the pages of the older writers are now quite out of place. A county recorder must also be capable of discriminating between dubious and unreliable material and dependable observations, and should allow no personal considerations to influence him in accepting or rejecting records."

Northern Division members, and others likely to visit the San Francisco Bay region, should take note that the meetings of that Division are now scheduled for the *fourth* Thursday evening of each month. See announcement on inside back cover of this issue.

If a fair degree of prosperity has been yours this year, share it with the Cooper Club. Make a substantial contribution to our Endowment Fund. Become a benefactor in ornithology.

Collectors should bear in mind that for many reasons the autumn season is the most favorable time of the year for securing specimens. Plumages are then complete and unworn and they present their colors with intrinsic tones unfaded. Then, too, there is no danger of breaking up families, as during the spring months. Remember that adequate value, scientifically, is to be secured from a dead bird, only by recording, in addition to the usual data, its weight, its age (as determined from the condition of the skull), and the colors of the soft parts (by comparison with Ridgway's *Color Standards*).

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

JULY.—The regular meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology the evening of July 15. In the absence of the president and the vice-president,

Mr. Storer presided. Those present were: Members: Mesdames Abernathy, Allen, Hendren, Lander, McLellan, Mead, Schlesinger, and Thomson. Messrs. Bell, Carriger, Davies, Evermann, Storer, and Swarth. Visitors: Mesdames Lueddemann, Swarth, and Thomson; the Misses Barron, Bennet, Cowan, Jefferson, Lander, Lane, Latta, Livingstone, MacMillan, McCardle, Potter, Vaughan, and White. Also Messrs. Abell, Bean, and Master George S. Swarth.

The minutes of the June meeting were read and approved. Mr. A. C. Maxson, Mr. Roy B. Lyon, Mr. E. S. Cheney, and Mr. L. A. Elmore were elected members of the club. One name was proposed: Mr. R. Bruce Overington, 220 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, by J. Grinnell. There was also a recommendation filed, signed by four members, that Mrs. Florence Merriam Bailey be elected to Honorary membership in the Club.

Informal reports included those of two additional nests of the Western Robin found in the Bay region, one in Golden Gate Park, and one on the Berkeley Campus; also a report of crossbills feeding on aphides at Seattle. A report of the June Seattle meeting in connection with the meetings of the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science was given by Dr. Evermann. The program for the evening consisted of a talk by Mr. Carl Abell on "Color Engraving as Applied to Bird Pictures," using as an example of the complicated process the four color plates used in printing a group of Fox Sparrows as painted by Allan Brooks.

A motion presented by Dr. Evermann provided that the chair should appoint a committee of three to cooperate with the Audubon Association of the Pacific in an effort to bring about the repeal of the Alaska Bald Eagle Bounty Law. The motion was carried, the committee to be instructed to investigate also the movement to commercialize the waters of the Yellowstone. (The committee as appointed later consists of Dr. Evermann, Mr. Storer, and Mr. Lastreto.) Adjourned.—AMELIA S. ALLEN, *Secretary*.

AUGUST.—The regular meeting of the Northern Division was held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, August 19, at 8 P. M. President Wright called the meeting to order. Those in attendance were: Members: Mesdames Allen, Bridges, Davidson, Griffin, Grinnell, Mead, Neugass, Parsons, Roe, Thomson, and Wythe; Messrs. Bell, Carriger, Cooper, Davies, Dawson, Gignoux, Grinnell,