

roundabout manner. Fire broke out in his workshop at Okanagan Landing, British Columbia, and destroyed a part of his ornithological collections including some 2000 skins gathered in his boyhood years. Mr. Brooks's hands were pretty badly burned, but their recovery has been rapid and practically complete, so that his capacity for drawing is in no degree lessened, as might have been feared.

The index to the current volume of THE CONDOR appearing in this issue was prepared by Mr. J. R. Pemberton in his usual painstaking manner. To him we extend our best thanks.

The National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D. C., has issued as its First Memoir, Volume XVI, a brochure entitled "Lower California and Its Natural Resources"; author, Edward W. Nelson, Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey. The contribution is of quarto size and comprises 112 pages and 35 plates. Our copy was received July 5, 1921. Rarely have we read a more fascinating work, for it was written by a true naturalist, based upon personal field experience, and is a straightforward, informative account. In 1905 and 1906 Dr. Nelson accompanied by Mr. E. A. Goldman traversed the entire peninsula of Lower California, their route being shown on an excellent map constituting one of the plates in the report under review. Topography, climate, plant life, animal life, faunal districts, life zones, history of explorations, and agricultural features are among the topics dealt with. The splendid photographic reproductions supplement the text. Lists of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians are given for the different areas. And there is a colored map of the life zones. The paper terminates with a very full bibliography of titles relating in general to Lower California, and to its vertebrate zoology in particular. Because of the immediate contiguity of the territory covered by Dr. Nelson's monograph, ornithologists in the southwestern United States will want to acquaint themselves promptly with this notable contribution.

The death of Judge Edward Wall occurred at San Bernardino, California, September 23, 1921. He was born in the same city, June 29, 1873. "Ed" Wall, as he was familiarly known, was one of the early members of the Cooper Ornithological Club, back in the 90's, though his membership subsequently lapsed for a time. In those early years he was one of the "collecting fraternity" which thrived in the neighborhood of Riverside, Redlands and San Bernardino, and from whose ranks came several men of

recent scientific eminence. Ed Wall, however, specialized in journalism and in the law, in which fields he won marked recognition. For the past six years or so, Judge Wall's early inclinations toward bird study were reasserting themselves, as attested by reaffiliation with the Club (in 1913) and by articles which have appeared under his authorship in THE CONDOR.

Mr. C. de Blois Green spent some weeks during the past summer upon Porcher Island, near Prince Rupert, British Columbia, in search mainly of eggs of the Marbled Murrelet. He was successful in learning hitherto unknown facts regarding the breeding of this elusive though common bird, the eggs of which have not yet, to our knowledge, been taken.

Part XII (vol. II, pp. 257-352, pl. 6) of Witherby's "Practical Handbook of British Birds" was published on October 5, 1921. In all respects, the issuance of this work begun some three years ago is proceeding according to announcement (see Condor, XXI, 1919, p. 174). Six more parts are in prospect. The present installment includes most of the ducks, and from the American standpoint is of special interest as affording detailed description of the eclipse plumage in many of our own species and as discussing the status of American and Old World races where such occur. For example, the American Pintail is commented upon under the accepted name *Anas acuta tzitzihoa*.

Mr. R. H. Palmer, formerly of Pocatello, Idaho, and more recently of the University of Washington, Seattle, has gone to the City of Mexico, where he has received a commission to carry on geological work for the Mexican Government. He plans to embrace the opportunity of doing some ornithological collecting as well.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

FIRST INSTALLMENTS OF DAWSON'S BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA.—The first two "parts" of "The Birds of California", by William Leon Dawson, reached our office on February 23 and March 16, respectively. Each part comprises 64 pages of main text, the two together being paged continuously from 1 to 128, inclusive. There is naturally as yet no title page to be cited; the covers with their announcements are to be considered merely temporary—in the nature of publisher's advertising, as is the customary thing in similar cases.

In addition to numerous half-tone illus-

trations (unnumbered) in the text, there are several full-page inserted plates, unnumbered. We have seen copies of two editions, the "Booklovers'" and the "Presentation" ("Format de Luxe"). These are identical as to printed matter save that in the first named edition, the two parts contain three colored plates and one photographic plate while in the "de Luxe" they include nine colored and four photographic plates.

The outstanding features of Dawson's work, as indicated by these initial offerings, are the extraordinary abundance and excellence of the illustrations, and the vigorous literary style characterizing the text. Words fail us to express adequately our admiration of practically every one of the large number of photographic studies, either from the artistic or the natural history standpoint; usually it is from both standpoints. The best we can do is to refer to a few of the pictures which happen to have afforded us particular pleasure in their contemplation.

The full-page photograph by the author (p. 106) captioned "A Tempest of Blackbirds" affords endless material for study of flight attitudes of Red-wings. The Brewer Blackbirds foraging and bathing with perfect obliviousness "in the estero" (p. 87) and also those on the telephone wires (p. 85), with suggestive caption "High Notes", call to mind these exact scenes from one's own experience. Dawson's photograph of "A Flight of Western Crows" in Santa Barbara County (p. 17) and that of "Ravens at Play" in Los Angeles County (p. 8) are both, to our mind, of exceptional merit.

Perhaps the rarest bird photograph ever secured is that of a California Jay *in the act* of taking an egg out of a Black-headed Grosbeak's nest. An excellently executed photogravure plate is assigned to this study. Donald R. Dickey was the lucky photographer; we wish we could be told the "story" as to just how he obtained this picture.

Then there are the fine colored plates, from water-color drawings by Allan Brooks. (There are some text illustrations from black-and-white drawings by the same artist, as well.) It is difficult to say which of these plates is best. Possibly the Scott Oriole plate takes first place; but all are in every respect on a very high plane.

As to general plan of treatment for each species, "The Birds of California" follows closely that employed in Dawson's "Birds of Washington". A series of small-type paragraphs contains information of a popularly less assimilable kind, and this is followed by the running, "readable" account of the

species. Page 1 begins at the other end of the list as regards phylogenetic sequence of species, namely with the Raven instead of a Grebe; and of this departure from the usual custom, especially in a popular work, we heartily approve. The full species covered in the two parts at hand number just twenty, representing the Corvidae and most of the Icteridae.

The accounts of species vary considerably in merit; some, for instance that of the Tricolored Blackbird, approach exhaustiveness; others, for example that of the Steller Jay, fall far short of being a full treatment. We would not have ventured this criticism if it weren't for the claim of scientific and popular completeness set forth on the cover—which inscription we hope will be left off from the permanent title page. All bird students together can hardly be said to possess a "complete" knowledge of even our best-known birds. And several of the accounts in "The Birds of California" are only fragmentary as compared with the total of information already *published* in regard to the species concerned.

As previously intimated, Dawson's literary style is vigorous. There is an abundance of allusion and of figures of speech, as a rule hitting off most aptly the peculiarities of behavior and temperament of the bird dealt with. We think that the author is about at his best in his account of the California Jay. Particular phrases or modes of expression, which must be read with the context to be appreciated, portray the bird with thrilling vividness. Personal reaction to the Dawsonian style will of course vary infinitely; but as far as our acquaintance extends, we know of no one who has not enthused over the majority of the text accounts in "The Birds of California". We will confess that now and then an extreme expression has struck us as unfortunate. One account, that of the Cowbird, is rather full of extravagant language; and also, humanistic terms are employed to a degree that makes it to us displeasing. The fact that the Cowbird constitutes a very interesting type of bird, biologically, is scarcely to be detected amid the mass of maledictorious verbiage.

Here and there the philosophically inclined reader will find suggestions or bits of theorizing that are pleasingly stimulative. The author's ideas with regard to the phylogeny of the Yellow-billed Magpie constitute a case in point; and another is comprised in the population-estimates of the California Jay. Dawson has very positive beliefs as to the baneful relationships of

the jays to other birds. His figures as to the destruction of birds' eggs by jays are interesting but in all likelihood excessive.

Taken as a whole, these first fascicles of Dawson's "Birds of California" are quite acceptable, more especially from the standpoint of the esthetic enjoyment of bird study. The typography and make-up are neat, and satisfyingly free from error. We hope that the undertaking will come to completion without further delay, and with the same plane of merit sustained to the end.—
J. GRINNELL.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

SOUTHERN DIVISION

AUGUST (meeting for July).—Regular monthly meeting of Southern Division Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Los Angeles Museum at 8:00 P. M., August 2, 1921. In the absence of both presiding officers, Mr. G. Freaan Morcom was acclaimed chairman. Other members present were: Messrs. Chambers, de Groot, Hanaford, Howell, King, Lamb, Law, Robertson, Trenor, Wheeler and Wyman; Mrs. Law and Miss Germain. Mrs. Wheeler and Mr. Enochs were visitors.

Minutes of the July meeting were read and approved. New applications for membership were presented as follows: Miss Marie Pauline Coppee, Ross, Marin County, by Miss Miller; Rex P. Enochs, 715 So. Hope St., Los Angeles, by L. E. Wyman; Walter Mackay Case, Box 399, Prescott, Ariz., and Joseph Edward Hallinen, Cooperton, Kiowa County, Okla., by W. Lee Chambers; Mary Caroline Coman, 1644 Berkeley Ave., Stockton, by Tracy I. Storer; Mrs. Wm. Clark Brown, 945 Orange St., Los Angeles, by H. C. Bryant. The names of Robert Cunningham Miller and Wm. Polk Farber, of Berkeley; and Mrs. Mildred Tiffany Wood, Hopland, were received from the Northern Division.

Formal business ended, members who had recently been a-field related some interesting experiences and observations. Adjourned.—L. E. WYMAN, *Secretary*.

AUGUST.—Regular monthly meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Division, was held at the Los Angeles Museum at 8:00 P. M., August 25, 1921. In the absence of both presiding officers, Dr. L. H. Miller was acclaimed chairman of the meeting. Other members present were: Messrs. Chambers, Edwards, Warmer, Wheeler and Wyman; Mesdames Brown and Warmer; Misses Beers and Pratt. Mrs. Beers, Mrs. Wheeler, Alden Miller and Mr. Patterson were visitors.

Minutes of the July meeting were read and approved, and those of the Northern Division for July were read. Names presented for membership were: Miss Coral Canby, San Fernando, by R. C. Ross; John Jonas, 215 West Park St., Livingston, Mont., by E. R. Warren; Otis Howard Wade, 1353 Vine St., Los Angeles, by W. Lee Chambers.

The Secretary announced that the missing parts of *The Auk*, needed to complete the set belonging to the Southern Division, had been donated by members. An invitation from Dr. Miller to the Club to hold its September meeting at his home, on the Arroyo Seco, was unanimously accepted.

Formal business completed, members who had recently returned from their summer outings contributed to a half hour of informal bird talk. Adjourned.—L. E. WYMAN, *Secretary*.

SEPTEMBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Division, was held at 3:00 P. M., September 25, 1921, at the home of Dr. L. H. Miller, on the Arroyo Seco, Los Angeles. In the continued absence of both presiding officers, Dr. Miller was appropriately called to the chair. As testifying to the popularity of the occasion, about sixty members and friends attended.

Since the meeting was more than ordinarily of a social nature, formal business was limited to reading of minutes of the August meeting, and presentation of three new names, as follows: Mrs. Josephine Jackson Bates, 1267 Sunset Ave., Pasadena, and Miss Jessica A. Potter, 1118 Santee St., Los Angeles, by Miss Mary Mann Miller; and Mrs. Adelaide R. Bartlett, Assessor's Office, City Hall, San Francisco, by W. Lee Chambers.

Numerous members then contributed their most interesting recent observations, among them a record of the Sabine Gull near Los Angeles, by Mrs. Bicknell; mating antics of juvenile Anna Hummers, by Miss Miller; and feeding habits of the Black Phoebe, by Mrs. Terry. Mr. Law then spoke of the entertainment and knowledge derived from bird-banding, giving results of some recent work in this line, and exhibiting the traps used for the purpose. Dr. Warmer stated that homing pigeons used during the Great War were now on exhibition at Arcadia Balloon Station, near this city.

On motion by Laurence Peyton the meeting adjourned to the informality of a water melon feast, without which this annual event would be incomplete. Adjourned.—L. E. WYMAN, *Secretary*.