

found in their stomachs in comparison with those of some members of other families. For instance the Robin which is a common winter resident here, some ten or twelve stomachs examined contained little gravel; they are filled with everything like an insect that can be found, more particularly a small white larva which they seem to pull out of the ground but which I have not been able to find in the very places where they have been feeding. Where the old "turned out" fields have been burned over, the Robins are the most plentiful and there they seem to find most of their food. The stomachs appear to contain more dirt than gravel, although a small amount of sand or gravel is evident.

Of course the Song Sparrow is a hard-billed bird and it not only swallows a much larger amount of gravel in proportion to its size in comparison with the Robin, but it is particular to the kind it takes into its stomach. Those that I have taken this season have been secured in low marshy ground adjoining streams. In these little streams, often mere ditches, is found small white gravel mixed with the gravel of a dark brown color, and the white gravel is invariably found in the gizzards of these little birds. Of course the reason is obvious why a seed-eating bird requires more grinders than one that is purely insectivorous, but what is the virtue of the white gravel alone?

Another thing I have noticed is that birds like many other bipeds "only scratch for a living when necessity make scratching compulsory." Mockingbirds, Catbirds and Brown Thrashers though insectivorous, will simply move into a wild cherry tree or a place where the berries of the pokeweed are ripening, and stay until everything in the fruit line is consumed. An examination shows that few or no insects are found in their stomachs at this time, and the underparts of their tails are stained with the juices of the fruit, being plainly seen when they take flight. It is a common saying of the negroes of the South when speaking of a man when drunk that "his face looks like a Catbird's tail in pokeberry time."

ROBERT WINDSOR SMITH, *Kirkwood, Ga.*

VERNANCULAR ORNITHOLOGY OF DELAWARE.—When business called me to the Southern border of Kent County,

Delaware, for a few days in midsummer, I had hoped to do something in the ornithological line in the moments of leisure which come to us all. For reason's unexplained the Blue Hen's Chick has not been "in it" ornithologically. I am unable to recall a single prominent name identified with the avifauna, indeed very little appears to have been written when compared with the activity of surrounding States. The list made by me was not a large one—58 species. Birds were for the most part silent and moulting. Then the temperature was against me, the mercury often well above 100° F., and few excursions were made. The Turkey Vulture flying about the village and down in the back yards in a semi-domestic state was a most novel sight to me.

I made the acquaintance of a resident who had made a collection of eggs some years previous. I shall never forget the conversation I had with him one evening while seated on the bank of a large mill dam waiting for the festive "Bull head" to bite. "Yes-sur, I've took de eggs of about all kinds of birds dat nest aroun' yer—de Blackbird, Bluebird, Yellowbird, Redbird, Indigobird, Railbird, Ground Sparrow and Tree Sparrow. See dat ole Crane flying up creek? No sah, never took no Crane eggs, dey build too high, but I done took Mudhen's, and plenty of Killdee, Patridge and Turtle Dove—Buzzards too. Dat Fisher's after yellerneds—we call him Kingfisherman sometimes. What kind of Hawks and Owls? Why down yer we have 'em all—Fisher Hawk, Hen Hawk, Turkey Hawk, Privteer, Bird Hawk, and Cat Owl, Booby Owl, and little Squinch Owl." (Osprey, Redtailed, Red-shouldered, Cooper's and Sparrow Hawks; Great-horned, Barn and Screech Owls,) "Three kinds of Crows—Chicken Crow, Jackdaw Crow and Rain Crow," (American and Fish Crows, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo.) We got a little bit of a bird aroun' yer called Locust, never seen it but once, can't describe it, but it sings jes' like a Locust. No, not Locustbird, jes' Locust, (Probably the Blue-winged Warbler.) Thar's another little bird that used to build its nest all covered with moss on a limb, that's the Tomtit." (Blue-grey GnatCatcher.) "Not many Woodpeckers, only the Big, Little and the Yellow-hammer" (Pihated, Hairy

and Flicker) "Them thar's Bullbats flopping over the water. We used to find plenty of their eggs but no Whipper-will's eggs. Reckon the Whipper-will's the old he-un and the Bullbat's the she-un, for I never heard the Bullbat sing." The local names of the Spotted Sandpiper and Green Heron followed but are too fearfully expressive for these pages. We had nearly exhausted the list of some forty species which he asserted was all that nested thereabout, some few of which we both knew by the same names, but—"Mockingbird? Yes-sir, we got *two* kinds, the English and the French Mockingbirds. Oh yes dey's both Mockers shore, but the English's the best." The last remark deserves more than a smile when one discovers that this title designates the Southern Mocker, knowing that it ranks above the Brown Thrasher as a songster. Truly the early settlers, from whom this and many other of the local names originated, thought the word "English" donated something a little superior to that of "French." I also heard the Brown Thrasher called "Red" and "Rusty Mockingbirds."

FRANK L. BURNS, *Berwyn, Pa.*

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## EDITORIAL.

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With the completion of the October number, Professor Lynds Jones who has so ably conducted the WILSON BULLETIN for the past seven years, retires from the editorial chair, and the writer assumes the management for the current year. It will be continued as near as possible on the same lines as heretofore. It is essentially an outdoor bird students' journal, appealing for support to no particular faction or hobby, nor to state or sectional pride, but rather to that growing body of everyday bird lovers. The BULLETIN has survived scores of more or less pretentious ornithological periodicals. It has seldom failed to give more than value received. To many of its subscribers it has been a training school, teaching honest, painstaking, persevering observation, accuracy and fluency in description, which has resulted in increasing experience and proficiency in the field selected, and the accumulation