

where, in company with a pair of the old birds, they constitute one of the most attractive of the many 'natural groups' which adorn Mr. Sharpe's department.

Lieut. A. W. Greely, U. S. A., Commander of the late Expedition to Lady Franklin Sound, succeeded in obtaining the long-sought-for egg of this species; and has had the extreme kindness to ask me to publish the first account of it.

Lieut. Greely writes me: "The specimen of bird and egg were obtained in the vicinity of Fort Conger, latitude $81^{\circ} 44'$ N. The egg was 1.10 inch [28 mm.] in the longer axis, and 1 inch [25.40 mm.] in the shorter. Color, light pea green, closely spotted with brown in small specks about the size of a pin-head."—C. HART MERRIAM, *Locust Grove, N. Y.*

Southern Range of *Rissa tridactyla kotzbuwei*.—In the last number of 'The Auk' (Vol. II, p. 222), Mr. N. S. Goss mentions the capture of *Rissa tridactyla kotzbuwei* in Washington Territory, and thinks it to be its most southern record. We have, however, received it from Mr. Charles A. Allen, taken at Nicasio, Cal.—SOUTHWICK & JENCKS, *Providence, R. I.*

The Relationship of *Podiceps occidentalis* and *P. clarkii*.—About four years ago Mr. Henshaw* discussed the relationship of *Podiceps occidentalis* and *P. clarkii*, as shown by a series of eleven skins collected by me in San Francisco Bay, Cal. Owing to lack of specimens from different localities, and from the breeding grounds of these forms, I am unable to give a definite opinion respecting the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Henshaw, but will leave the now generally accepted belief of the specific identity of the two forms until they can be studied from fresh specimens on the breeding grounds. From my own investigations I decidedly incline to the opinion that the differences which, prior to Mr. Henshaw's investigations, were supposed to characterize different species or varieties, are in reality only sexual.

Of the twenty skins of this bird which I have prepared fifteen are females, and can easily be distinguished from the males, the female differing from the male in size and in the general appearance of the bill. In fact, I find no difficulty in distinguishing the sexes in the fresh bird before skinning. The color and curvature of the bill as seen in skins are of little aid, as the bill so warps in drying that a bill slightly recurved in life may become very much recurved in the dried skin. The color of the bill, also, soon changes after death, especially if the bird be suspended by the legs for a time before skinning. Through the courtesy of the authorities of the National Museum I was kindly afforded an opportunity to examine twenty-five specimens of these Grebes in the collection of the Museum, and with one exception I correctly determined the sex at sight by the

* On *Podiceps occidentalis* and *P. clarkii*. By H. W. Henshaw. Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, VI, pp. 214-216.