

one of which I secured. Several others were seen at about the same time and place by Mr. W. M. Small of Highland Light. The specimen taken is in first plumage, though fully grown and evidently old enough to have come from some distance.—G. S. MILLER, JR., *Cambridge Mass.*

**Uncommon Birds for Nantucket Island, Massachusetts.**—*Ardea egretta*, AMERICAN EGRET.—On September 20, 1890, while shooting at the eastern end of this island, I saw in the distance a large white heron-like bird, which I thought might be *Ardea occidentalis*, but unfortunately I failed to secure it. The following day it was again seen, near the same locality. On September 23, 1890, this bird was shot, and I saw it; it proved to be *Ardea egretta*, and was without any plumes. This is the first record of one being taken on this island.

*Mimus polyglottos*. MOCKING BIRD.—On November 20, 1890, while driving on the western part of the island, and passing near a large swamp, close to which was an unoccupied farmhouse, I saw a Mocking-bird running along the ridge pole of one of the small buildings. On getting out of my wagon to secure it, the bird flew into the middle of the swamp and perched on the top of a bush in full sight. Although a very difficult matter, owing to the water, I determined to go in after it. I had just started, when the bird flew towards me and alighted on a fence post, from which I shot it. This is the *third* instance of my shooting this bird here, besides seeing another flitting among the houses in the town on August 11, 1889. These birds were all full-grown, and probably migrants, as I have never heard of their breeding on the island. They have never before to my knowledge been noted here.

*Crymophilus fulicarius*. RED PHALAROPE.—On October 25, 1890, a Red Phalarope (in the gray plumage) was shot near the 'No Bottom Pond,' on the outskirts of the town. Only one was seen. This is the first time to my knowledge that *C. fulicarius* has been taken here. I have in the past taken *P. lobatus* (September 20, 1870) and *P. tricolor* (August 31, 1889) on the island.—GEORGE H. MACKAY, *Nantucket, Mass.*

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

Dr. FERDINAND KRAUSS, of Stuttgart, Germany, an Honorary Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died Sept. 15, 1890, at the age of 78 years. He was director of the Natural History Museum of Stuttgart, and had special charge of the departments of Botany and Zoölogy. His scientific papers cover a wide field, mammals and mollusks especially, as well as birds, coming within the scope of his work.

MR. HENRY DAVIS MINOT, an Associate Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, was killed in a railroad accident near New Florence, Penn., Nov. 13, 1890, aged 31 years. Mr. Minot, born in West Roxbury, Mass., Aug. 18, 1859, was a son of William and Katherine Maria (Sedgwick) Minot, and a brother of Professor Charles Sedgwick Minot of Boston. He entered Harvard College in 1875, but owing to ill health did not graduate, leaving the college during his sophomore year. He early evinced a passionate fondness for bird life, and when but sixteen years old wrote a very creditable manual entitled 'The Land and Game Birds of New England' (Boston, 1877, 8vo., pp. 472), showing keenness of observation and originality of treatment. He also published later 'A Diary of a Bird' (April, 1880), with the humane purpose of promoting sentiment favorable to the better protection of our song-birds. He also published various minor papers, including a list of birds observed by him in Colorado (Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, V, pp. 223-232). Of late years his attention has been devoted almost exclusively to railroad matters, in which he soon became a leading financial expert, and for the last few years has been one of the best known business men, in connection with railroad enterprises, in the Northwest, his residence being at St. Paul, Minn. Although thus deeply engrossed in business he retained a strong interest in ornithology, and was looking forward, we are informed, to a period of leisure when he could resume his favorite studies. With a high order of intellectual ability, genial, warm-hearted and sympathetic, he will be deeply mourned by all who were blest with his personal acquaintance.

THE EXHIBITION of photographs and stereopticon slides at the Eighth Congress of the A. O. U. was so far a success as to show the great interest of such exhibitions and the high importance of this class of illustrations as an aid in ornithological work. At the next Congress of the Union, to be held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, arrangements will be made for placing the pictures on exhibition throughout the meeting, while perhaps a special evening session may be devoted to stereopticon illustrations. It is therefore hoped that during the intervening months the members of the Union will make special effort to secure photographs *from life* of as many subjects as possible, especially for the stereopticon series. The Committee of Arrangements, to whom the matter was entrusted, was much gratified by the cordial response made to the call for pictures for the Eighth Congress.

BY A VOTE of the Union the address of the Retiring President, entitled, 'The American Ornithologists' Union,—a Seven Years' Retrospect,' was ordered to be printed separately, and a copy sent to each member of the Union. The address will be ready for distribution, as a separate publication, early in the present month.

THE ACTION on the Amendments to the By-Laws of the A. O. U., proposed at the Seventh Congress and referred to the Eighth Congress, resulted as

follows: All of the proposed amendments to Article I were rejected. Article II, Section 3, was amended to read as follows:

*Article II, Section 3.* The Secretary shall keep a record of the meetings of the Union and Council; shall give at least three weeks' notice to Active and Associate Members of the time and place of meetings; shall report to the Council all nominations for membership received by him; and shall send to each Active Member, at least three weeks before each stated meeting, a list of the nominees for Active Membership, with a statement of the residence of each nominee and the names of the Active Members signing his nomination; and also notify them of all proposed changes in the By-Laws; shall notify Members-elect of their election and Committees of their appointment; shall acknowledge all donations to the Union, and report the same at the next Stated Meeting; and he shall have charge of the Corporate Seal of the Union.

The amendment to Article III, Section 3, making five members of the Council a quorum for the transaction of business, was adopted.

The amendment to Article IV, Section 2, was rejected.

Article IV, Section 3, was amended in the second paragraph to read as follows:

In the ballots for Vice-Presidents and for members of the Council each voter may write on one ballot as many names as there are officers to be elected, viz: two on the first ballot for Vice-Presidents and seven on the first ballot for members of the Council; and on each subsequent ballot as many names as there are persons yet to be elected; and those persons who receive the votes of a majority of the members voting shall be declared elected, provided that the number of persons receiving such majority does not exceed the number of persons to be elected, in which case the vacancies shall be filled by the candidates receiving the highest majorities.

The amendments to Article IV, Section 4, were amended and referred to the next Congress for final action.

The amendment to Article IV, Section 8, was rejected.

The amendments to Article VIII were amended and referred to the next Congress for final action.

Rule VIII of the By-Laws and Rules was amended to read as follows:

*Rule VIII.* The printing for the Union shall be under the direction of the President, the Secretary, the Editor of 'The Auk', and four other members of the Council, and these seven shall constitute a Committee of Publication.

DR. C. HART MERRIAM, Chief of the Division of Ornithology and Mammalogy of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, will this year make a detailed biological survey of one of the least known, most interesting and inaccessible regions of the United States. On Jan. 1, 1891, a party under the leadership of Mr. T. S. Palmer, began an exploration of that particular portion of the desert region of southeastern California known as Death Valley, which can be entered only in the winter season, and

then only with great risk to the explorer, owing to the total absence of potable water for long distances. The party is expected to occupy the field for at least eight months, extending the survey over a considerable area of contiguous country, including the Mount Whitney region at the westward. The party is especially equipped for the trying work before it, every precaution being taken to guard against undue risk, and to secure the best results. In personnel and outfit, no party was ever better prepared for systematic field work in biology. The scientific staff will include, in addition to Mr. Palmer, Dr. A. K. Fisher, Mr. Vernon Bailey, Mr. E. W. Nelson, and Mr. F. Stephens, as zoölogists—all trained experts in this line of research. Prof. F. W. Coville, of the Botanical Division of the Department of Agriculture, has been detailed to accompany the expedition as botanist. A topographer accompanies the party for the purpose of running contour lines and determining with precision the altitudes of the life zones. Dr. Merriam, with other assistants, will join the expedition later, when the party will number not less than ten, exclusive of cooks and packers. It is expected that an area of not less than 30,000 square miles will be mapped, on a scale of four miles to the inch, with contour lines for every 100 feet. A portion of the region is depressed from 200 to 300 feet below sea level. Under all these conditions the results cannot fail to be of the utmost interest.

DR. EDGAR A. MEARN'S, U. S. A., proposes to make a critical study of the Sparrow Hawks (the *Falco sparverius* group) and the Snipes (*Galinago delicata*) of North America, and for this purpose solicits the loan of material for use in these investigations. Due credit will be given for aid thus rendered, and the specimens returned to the owners at the earliest practicable moment. The packages should be addressed, Dr. Edgar A. Mearns, Capt. Medical Department, U. S. A., Fort Snelling, Minn.

MR. J. A. ALLEN desires to make a careful investigation of the relationships of the various North American forms of the genus *Colaptes*, and solicits the loan of material for examination. Large series of specimens representing, respectively, *C. chrysoides*, *C. cafer*, *C. cafer saturator*, *C. mexicanoides*, and *C. ruficapileus* are especially desired. Also, *C. auratus* from any point west of the Mississippi River, or any specimens from the East showing any departures from the typical phase of the species.

Specimens may be forwarded at any time prior to November 1, 1891; but as many as possible should be in hand by October 1, in order that a report on the material, with an exhibition of specimens, may be presented at the next A. O. U. Congress, immediately after which the material will be returned to the owners. The packages should be addressed to Mr. Allen, American Museum of Natural History, 77th St. and 8th Ave., New York City.

AT THE late meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a formal organization was effected, by the ornithologists in attendance, of a 'Sectional Club' to be accessory to the A. A. A. S.

According to previous arrangements several papers had been prepared upon special topics. Among them may be mentioned one by Mr. Lynds Jones, of Iowa, on the Meadow Lark; by Mr. Widmann on the Orchard Oriole; by Messrs Butler and Everman upon the Baltimore Oriole. Prof. Steere, of Michigan, gave an extended account of the birds of the Philippine Islands, based upon observation made there during a series of years. A number of specimens were exhibited illustrating certain theories of coloration and distribution. Mr. Butler presented notes upon the distribution of the Evening Grosbeak. Prof. Osborn, of Iowa, spoke upon parasites of birds. From his observation he inferred that few of these actually feed upon the blood of their host, most of them subsisting upon feathers, hairs, etc.

The following officers were elected for the coming year: President, A. W. Butler, Brookville, Ind.; Secretary, Charles W. Hargitt, Oxford, Ohio; Treasurer, Otto Widmann, Old Orchard, Mo.; Executive Committee: Messrs. Evermann and Osborn, together with the foregoing officers.

Another meeting will be held at the time of that of the American Association next year, at Washington, D. C.

D. H. TALBOT, of Sioux City, Iowa, well known as a collector and naturalist, has recently presented to the Iowa State University his entire scientific collections and library. The natural history collections will be at once transferred to the University, but the library he will reserve till his death. The collections represent a wide range of subjects, including minerals as well as every department of zoölogy. The collection of birds is especially interesting and valuable.

MR. W. E. D. SCOTT, sailed for Jamaica, W. I., early in November last, for the purpose of spending six months collecting and studying the birds of the island. Late advices announce his safe arrival, and that he finds the outlook favorable for successful work.

ATTENTION is called to the change of address of the Treasurer, Mr. William Dutcher, which will be, after January 1, 1891, **No 525 Manhattan Avenue, New York City.** Members remitting by post office orders will please make them payable at **Station J, New York City.**