

cliffs. The maps illustrate the invasion of the Little Auk in 1894-95; the dispersal of the nesting of the Starling and of the Tufted Duck, the Firth of Tay and adjoining region, and there is a general map of the Tay Basin and Strathmore, shaded to show relative elevation of the country.—  
J. A. A.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### The Concilium Bibliographicum as a Bureau of Ornithological Information.

TO THE EDITORS OF 'THE AUK':—

*Dear Sirs:*—The Concilium Bibliographicum was founded in 1895 by the International Congress of Zoölogy for the purpose of recording in a permanent way all notices regarding zoölogy published since 1896. Every paper is entered on a bibliographical card, usually with a short statement of the contents, and these cards are most minutely classified. Thus a paper on the Limicolæ of Michigan, with notes on nesting and observations on albinism would receive four entries, Limicolæ, Fauna of Michigan, Nesting, and Coloration. If the paper contained descriptions of new forms, each of these would be noted on a separate card. The cards relating to new species are not as yet printed; but the others are supplied in any desired combination, *e. g.*, cards on the Fauna of Michigan, on Nesting or Bird-song, on Migration, on Coloration, or references to a given group of birds, as Limicolæ or Parrots.

A large portion of the expense of maintaining the Concilium is defrayed by the Swiss government. There is, however, a fee charged for every set of references, depending on the number of cards supplied. Soon after its foundation the Concilium was universally recognized as the central agency of the whole world for such work, and to-day there is no country participating in the scientific movement that does not receive cards, the total number annually distributed aggregating nearly one million.

There are, however, certain strange anomalies in the participation of various constituencies. The most singular fact is that American *ornithologists* have remained aloof. This circumstance paralyses all our efforts at improving this section of the work. We can not feel justified in attributing any large portion of our subsidies for preparing lists that are not used. Nevertheless, with the positive conviction that this is only a transient feature, we have for over ten years never wavered in prosecuting

the work in ornithology. Yet how discouraging it is to day by day file away references to the avifauna of each State in the Union, when the information thus collected with endless pains is never used! That there are imperfections in our work has been inevitable; but the only way to remedy these is for us to come into closer relations with American ornithologists, whom our organization is designed to serve.

I wish to lay this matter before the A. O. U. with the hope that a means may be found for securing the support of the Union and its members. It would be especially pleasing if the A. O. U. could appoint a committee to coöperate in making our work more serviceable.

Respectfully,

HERBERT HAVILAND FIELD.

[It may be added, for the information of our readers, that the American Museum of Natural History, of New York, is a volunteer agency for the distribution of the cards of the Concilium, through which institution they may be ordered. As the cards are held in stock, orders can be filled without delay. They may also be ordered through Edward S. Field, 427 Broadway, New York City.—EDD.]

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

WILLIAM THOMAS BLANFORD, an Honorary Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at his residence in Bedford Gardens, Campden Hill, London, on June 23, 1905, at the age of 72 years. Dr. Blanford was an eminent worker in other fields of scientific research as well as in ornithology. His explorations in Abyssinia, Persia, the Peninsula of India, the Himalaya, and other portions of Central Asia, as a geologist, a physical geographer, and zoölogist, gave him a wide range of experience, which fitted him to deal authoritatively with the problems of zoögeography, to which subject he made important contributions, especially as to the faunal subdivisions of the Oriental Region. He published many papers on mammals, reptiles, and mollusks, as well as on birds. He was employed for many years on the Geological Survey of India, to which he was appointed in 1855, and from which he retired in 1882.

His ornithological papers relate mainly to the birds of India, and were published at intervals from 1867 to 1894; he was also the author of two of the bird volumes (Vols. III and IV) of the 'Fauna of British India' (of which seventeen volumes have appeared), of which great work he was the editor. Among his other principal works are: 'Observations on the Geology and Zoölogy of Abyssinia' (1870; birds pp. 285-443); 'Eastern Persia: an Account of the Journeys of the Persian Boundary Commission, 1870-72' (birds, pp. 98-304); 'The Distribution of Vertebrate Animals