

Destruction of Sea Birds in Labrador.—The following extract from a letter received from Dr. Robert T. Morris of New York City, is deserving of wide publicity and is therefore placed before the readers of 'The Auk.'

" ' Dear Dr. Townsend,

Your treatment of the subject of conservation in Labrador in the book, "In Audubon's Labrador," which I have read with great interest, meets with my approval or more than that. On my trips to the Gulf Coast of Labrador and on the eastern coast as far north as Hamilton Inlet I observed that the Newfoundland codfishermen were in the habit of raiding all of the islands and adjacent mainlands on Sunday and making away with the eggs and the young of all of the seabirds. Some of the islands were wholly deserted so far as bird life was concerned and your Captain Joncas told me that in addition to the Newfoundland fishermen a number of men were engaged in the business of egging and that the eggs were preserved in brine and sold to the crews of various vessels. He said that the egg hunt was continued until such a late date in the season that the young birds which were finally hatched were not strong enough to withstand the autumn storms and he had seen thousands of young birds thrown up on the beaches. When I have been on the coast the Newfoundland fishermen not only destroyed young birds and the eggs but they shot many of the mother birds for sport, leaving them where they fell on the ground if they were of species not good to eat.

The waste of food fish also is very great along the Labrador coast. Small cod and hake which are not desired by the fishermen are often smothered in traps or killed when the traps are emptied and I have seen them floating for miles on the surface when the trappers were at work. The cod trappers catch a great many adult salmon by setting their nets in the channels when the salmon first make their way toward the rivers. This is illegal but is winked at by the officials. A remarkable waste of salmon occurs in September when the herring nets are used near the coast. This is the time of year when the smelts are descending from the rivers and putting out to sea. They are captured in quantities in the herring nets." — CHARLES W. TOWNSEND, *Boston, Mass.*

Specific Names in the Nominative Case.—It is a satisfaction to receive corroboration of the *Hirundo erythrogaster* ruling from Dr. Dwight, with his most timely citation of the International Code definition of the sort of words that may be used as specific names (see *Auk*, XXXVI, 1919, p. 117). It is curious, however, that he should reverse his stand when it comes to the subspecific name *salicarius*. In this connection I have again appealed to my senior colleague, Professor W. A. Merrill, head of the Latin department of the University of California. Professor Merrill assures me that although the word *salicarius* is not to be found in any Latin dictionary, it is "in good Latin form" and may be considered *either* as a noun, meaning "something which has to do with a willow tree," or as an adject-

tive, meaning "pertaining to a willow tree." A parallel is afforded in the word *legionarius*, originally an adjective but which came to be used as a noun—a legionary, that is, a soldier of a legion. A great number of similar nominatives are listed by Professor Merrill in a special paper of his (Univ. Calif. Publ. Class. Phil., vol. 2, 1910, pp. 57-65).

It is true that Professor Merrill also says that the combination *Guiraca cærulea salicarius* is in poor taste as regards its "Latinity"; that is, the Latins would not have written it that way. This consideration is, of course, immaterial in nomenclatural questions, which questions are now settled by arbitrarily formulated rules, one of which prescribed retention of words of this category unchanged in construction from the form in which they were first proposed.

As originally proposed, the word *salicarius* was a noun, and it must retain its own gender, masculine, irrespective of the genus name with which it is associated; it is, in truth, a "substantive in the nominative in apposition with the generic name." It would thus appear that *Guiraca cærulea salicarius* is, from the nomenclatural standpoint, a perfectly tenable combination for the California Blue Grosbeak, and must be kept inviolate.—**J. GRINNELL**, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California*.

Editions of Baird, Cassin and Lawrence's 'Birds of North America.'— This well known work appeared first in 1858 as Volume IX of the 'Pacific Railroad Surveys' and constitutes a complete summary of the ornithology of the various expeditions as well as of the Mexican Boundary Survey. The separate report on the ornithology of the last as well as of several of the Pacific Railroad expeditions, did not appear until a year or two after Volume IX, but their contents are included in it. While no plates accompanied Volume IX there were thirty-three colored plates published along with the reports of the various surveys and twenty-five with the Mexican Boundary report.

In 1860 Volume IX appeared under a new title, 'The Birds of North America' with the imprint, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott & Co. The text is exactly the same from p. xvii of the introductory portion to the end of the volume and apparently printed from the same plates as the original. The four pages of "Preface" are reprinted in three pages, apparently without change of wording but in smaller type, the "Contents" are reprinted and slightly altered, and a page of "Advertisement" is added as well as a different title page.

An atlas of one hundred colored plates accompanied this work. There is a title page identical with that of the text except for the substitution of "Plates" for "Text"; pages i-ii contain a preface; pp. iii-viii, "Explanation of Plates"; and ix-xi "Systematic List of Illustrations."

Of the thirty-three plates of the various survey volumes, thirty-one appear in this atlas, nearly all of them being retouched and some of them redrawn but all these closely resembling the originals, names have been