

NOTES AND NEWS

WALTER FAXON, a former Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at Lexington, Mass., on August 10, 1920. He was a son of Elisha and Hannah Mann Faxon, and was born in Jamaica Plain, Mass., on February 4, 1848. He spent his boyhood in Jamaica Plain, now a part of Boston, and attended the local public schools. From Harvard University he received the degrees A. B. 1871, S. B. 1872, and Sc.D. 1879. From 1874 until the time of his death he was Curator of the Invertebrate Department of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Cambridge. He was elected to Associate Membership in the American Ornithologists' Union in 1891, and was advanced to an Active Member in 1896. He was a Fellow from 1901, when that form of membership was inaugurated, until 1904.

Walter Faxon was the youngest of a family of seven children; he had three brothers and three sisters. When the father died in 1855, the oldest son, Edwin, took his father's place in relation to the two youngest boys, Charles and Walter, the last twenty-five years his junior. His influence in directing the youthful minds of his brothers to the study of Natural History is shown in the choice of their professions; Walter became a Zoölogist and Charles a Botanist.

After leaving home for college, Walter Faxon did not return to Jamaica Plain; upon graduation he lived for a while in one of the college dormitories and then moved into the country on the western side of Boston where he lived chiefly in the towns of Arlington and Lexington. In his young manhood he made an extensive camping tour in the southern states, but he never traveled west of the Mississippi river; he visited England twice, the last time in 1900.

Walter Faxon's interest in birds began in his boyhood and remained undiminished throughout his life, a period of study covering nearly sixty years. His long experience in the field and his alertness of eye, ear and mind, as well as his scrupulous care to avoid error, combined to make him one of the best equipped and accurate of field ornithologists,—the identification of a bird by him was never questioned.

Mr. Faxon (he did not use the title pertaining to his doctor's degree) possessed also a wide knowledge of the history of Ornithology, and during the last thirty years he acquired an extensive and valuable collection of Wilsoniana, which he bequeathed to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy. The most important contributions which Mr. Faxon made to the literature of Ornithology were two papers on Brewster's Warbler, (*Mem. Mus. Comp. Zoöl.*, Vol. XL, Nos. 2 & 6, Jan., 1911 & Aug., 1913.) in the second one of which he demonstrated the hybrid origin of this bird. These papers were written with the pains-taking care in the choice of words and phraseology which distinguished everything Mr. Faxon wrote.

In his writings, however, he displayed the more formal side of his nature, and only those men who knew Mr. Faxon personally are aware of the delightful side of his character which he showed to his intimate friends. He was not free from the diffidence often associated with sensitive natures, and his diffidence added a little stiffness sometimes to his dignity on formal occasions, but at his home or in the field with one or two intimates, he was the happiest of companions, witty, often jovial, brilliant in conversation on a wide range of subjects. He was a charming host, and those who have been his guests will always remember the bright smile which illumined his face in welcome, and the twinkle in his eyes as he told some humorous story.

Walter Faxon was a scholar whose education rested on the firm foundation of the classics. A life of comparative leisure enabled him to make the best use of his erudite tastes and to accumulate a vast store of knowledge. In addition to the Natural Sciences, his field of interest included English Literature, notably Shakespeare, of whose work his knowledge was profound. He was also very fond of music.

Many men came to Mr. Faxon for counsel, sure of receiving careful consideration, sound advice, and intelligent, friendly sympathy, and many are grateful to him for awakening a new interest in their work and for stimulating them to better efforts.

To us who were near Mr. Faxon during the last year of his life, when he walked in the shadow of death, his quiet, patient courage will always be an example,—a courage which never gave way even when he drew his last breath. He died suddenly, as he often expressed the hope that he would do, and as two of his brothers died. He leaves behind many who respected him, many who admired him and a few who loved him deeply
W. M. T.

PROFESSOR JOHN MACOUN, M. A., F. L. S., F. R. S. C., the dean of Canadian naturalists, died at his home in Sidney, Vancouver Island, B. C., on July 18, 1920, aged a little over eighty-eight years. He had been naturalist of the Geological Survey of Canada since 1882, and resided in Ottawa until about eight years ago, when failing health made it necessary to remove to the milder climate of British Columbia. He remained actively at work, however, and up to the last months of his life was an active botanist, specializing on the mosses and fungi of British Columbia. The work of Professor John Macoun and his son, the late James M. Macoun, C. M. G., F. L. S., recently botanist and chief of the biological division, Geological Survey of Canada, built the National Herbarium of Canada from nothing up to over 100,000 specimens.

The late Professor Macoun, while best known as a botanist, was one of the old school of naturalists who took the whole field of natural science for his province. In addition to his botanical work, he gathered a collection of several thousand birds and about 2,000 mammals, with many

invertebrates and fishes, from all parts of Canada. He was an indefatigable worker and a man of indomitable will, as shown by the fact that when over eighty years of age, having suffered a partial stroke of paralysis which left his right side helpless for many months, he learned to write with his left hand and carried on his voluminous correspondence until his death.

Professor Macoun was elected an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1883. As an ornithologist his best known work was the 'Catalogue of Canadian Birds,' 1900-1904.

Professor Macoun was born near Belfast, Ireland, April 17, 1832, and came to Canada in 1850. For a number of years he taught school, retiring in 1882 when professor of natural sciences at Albert College, Belleville, Ontario, to become naturalist of the Geological Survey. Previous to this he had done more or less work for the government, joining Sir Sanford Fleming's exploratory party in 1872 at Port Arthur, and crossing the plains. From Edmonton he went with a small party through the Peace River Pass to the coast. Three years later he again crossed the continent, travelling from the Pacific coast eastward. In 1879, 1880, and 1881, he exhaustively explored the little known parts of the great northwest country, and his capable reports had a great deal to do with making known the immense potential resources of that vast territory, which is now the great grain producing region of Canada. At later periods, he worked in every province of Canada, from the Maritime Provinces to the Yukon.

In 1862 Professor Macoun married Miss Ellen Tyrrell, who survives him. He is also survived by his son, Mr. W. T. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist, Ottawa, and three daughters. His eldest son, Mr. James M. Macoun, who was his father's assistant, died at Ottawa last January.

R. M. ANDERSON

NELSON R. WOOD, died suddenly in Washington on November 8, 1920. For many years he was employed in the taxidermical department of the United States National Museum and as a scientific and artistic taxidermist had not an equal in this country. Birds were ever the special object of his skill, and to the mounting of them for museum exhibition the greater part of his life was devoted. While a consummate master with birds of all groups, certain families were his especial favorites, such as the game birds, pigeons and fowls. Much of his work is on exhibition in the cases at the United States National Museum, and will probably be viewed for many generations to come.

Mr. Wood gained his knowledge of the normal attitudes of birds in nature through his life-long study of them in their various habitats. More than this—he had skillfully mastered the imitation of the notes and calls of a large number of birds of many species, both wild and domesticated.—R. W. S.

THE EMERSON COLLECTION OF BIRD SKINS.—Readers of 'The Auk' will be interested and pleased to learn that the California Academy of Sciences has recently acquired the entire W. Otto Emerson collection of bird skins, which numbers about 5500 specimens.

This collection is doubtless one of the most complete and valuable local collections ever made in California. Mr. Emerson began observing, collecting, and studying the birds of California some forty years ago. He very naturally gave most attention to the birds about his home Palm Cottage, near Hayward, Alameda County, Calif., but his numerous collecting trips, oft repeated, into every part of Alameda County.—the fields, the bay shore and salt marshes, the creek bottoms and ponds, the orchards, vineyards and pastures, and the canyons, hills and mountains, gave him an acquaintance with the birds of that part of California probably more intimate than that possessed by any other ornithologist. The collection is therefore particularly complete as to that territory. Many species are represented by very full series of specimens showing the differences in plumage for age, sex, and season. The series of sparrows, grosbeaks and warblers are very full. There are also several "record specimens" for California, among which may be mentioned the Redstart, Slate-colored Junco, Black and White Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, and Harris's Sparrow.

The late Dr. James G. Cooper was for several years a near neighbor of Mr. Emerson's at Hayward, and at his death in 1902, a number of his manuscripts and notebooks were secured by Mr. Emerson, who has turned them all over to the Academy. Among these are the original manuscript of Cooper's 'California Ornithology,' 1870, and that of the 'Birds of Washington Territory,' 1860-65. The note-books or diaries date back to 1853.

It will be recalled that the J. and J. W. Mailliard collection of bird skins, nests and eggs, numbering some 25,000 specimens, was by them donated to the California Academy of Sciences in 1918. Before acquiring the Mailliard collection, the Academy was strongest in water birds. The Mailliard and Emerson additions now give the Academy a good working series of the land birds of North America.

The Academy has been able to acquire the Emerson collection of specimens and manuscripts through the generosity of two of its many public-spirited members.

Although Mr. Emerson has practically ceased collecting, his interest in bird-life continues undiminished and, with note-book and camera he continues to record his daily observations on the birds which he sees.

ERRATUM. In the notice of the meeting of the British Ornithologists' Union in the October 'Auk' an unfortunate misstatement occurs in connection with the appointment of a committee to revise the Check-List and keep it up to date. Such a committee *was* appointed. It was the proposal to place these duties on the General Committee that was rejected.

THE exhibit of ornithological art held in connection with the 38th Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was a great success and was pronounced by various officials of the Library of Congress, in which it was held, to be the finest exhibit ever shown in the Library.

Officials of the Library were most helpful in arranging for the installation of the pictures; they also served a dinner at a special hour for the benefit of members of the Union, after which the exhibit was viewed, and the courtesy of a special inspection of the Library building and the system of handling books was extended.

In general the exhibit consisted of the work of American contributors but by the kindness of Col. Anthony R. Kuser specimens of the work of G. E. Lodge and H. Gronvold were shown, together with reproductions of pictures by these and other artists and photographers who prepared illustrations for the pheasant monograph. Etchings by George M. Benson were loaned by the Library of Congress, water colors by Miss Mary E. Eaton by the Church and Dwight Co., of New York City, and various original drawings, paintings and photographs by the Biological Survey.

Chiefly, however, the success of the exhibit was due to the cordial cooperation of the individual contributors, who assumed the risk involved in the shipment of their pictures to and from Washington, and the burden of packing and defraying expense of the incoming parcels. The total valuation of the pictures ran into many thousands of dollars. Generally speaking, each contributor was represented by six pictures, the photographs in practically every case being enlarged to 11 by 14 inches or larger.

A wide variety of birds were illustrated, the total number of 'Check-List' species being more than 180 and of foreign species 50. In general the more common birds were illustrated most frequently, pictures of the Robin being submitted by six exhibitors, of the Brown Thrasher by five, and of the Bluebird, Red-eyed Vireo, Purple Grackle, Great Horned Owl, Osprey and Wood Duck by four each.

The artists represented were: W. T. Allan, Frank W. Benson, Frank Bond, Courtenay Brandreth, Allan Cyril Brooks, H. C. Denslow, Mary Eaton, Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Carl F. Gronemann, Charles E. Heil, Frank C. Hennesey, Henry Hintermeister, Robert Bruce Horsfall, Edwin Richard Kalmbach, Charles Robert Knight, Karl Plath, Earl Lincoln Poole, Robert Ridgway, John Livzey Ridgway, Ernest Evan Thompson Seton, Edwin Sheppard, Althea Rosina Sherman, Robert J. Sim, George Miksch Sutton.

The photographers represented were: Arthur Augustus Allen, Stanley Clisby Arthur, Guy Andrew Bailey, Ernest Harold Baynes, Leverett White Brownell, Verdi Burtch, Frank Michler Chapman, Howard Henderson Cleaves, William Leon Dawson, Alexander Dawes Dubois, William Lloyd Garrison Edson, Edward Alphonso Goldman, Herbert Keightley Job, Claude Willard Leister, Robert Cushman Murphy, Jenness Richard-

son, Thomas Sadler Roberts, G. R. Salisbury, Hugo Harry Schroder, Robert Wilson Shufeldt, Henry Emerson Tuttle, Edward Royal Warren, Frank Alexander Wetmore, Frank Nunn Whitman.

The historical exhibit held in connection with that of the modern pictures comprised chiefly sets of illustrations of the Great Auk and of the Bald Eagle. The latter set was supplemented by coins, seals, coats-of-arms and other representations of eagles, conventionalized or not, used now or in the past by the Federal Government. A few of the most ancient bird pictures were also shown.—W. L. McATEE.