

## NOTES AND NEWS

VICTOR RITTER VON TSCHUSI ZU SCHMIDHOFFEN, a Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1884, died March 5, 1924, at Tannenhof near Hallein, Salzburg, Austria, where he had lived for fifty-three years. He was born at Gute Smichow, near Prague, Bohemia, December 28, 1847. His father was at one time an officer in the Imperial Service and was descended from a family of nobility of Tyrol. To his mother Josephine, as well as to his father, he apparently owed much of his early interest in natural history. During the years of gymnasium training he spent much of his time at a Jesuit college at Kalkburg, near Vienna, and later when his parents moved to Krems on the Donau he began his scientific studies under a private tutor. When he was 17 his father died and the family moved to Schlosse Arnstorf where he had further opportunities to pursue his ornithological work.

After leaving the gymnasium and when living near Vienna he pursued his natural history studies with great zeal and from a preparator at the Hofmuseum, learned to skin and preserve birds, an art in which he became an adept.

In 1865, at the age of 18, he became a member of Zoologisch-Botanische Gesellschaft of Vienna and three years later a member of the Deutsche Ornithologische Gesellschaft in Berlin. The years from 1868 to 1870 were spent in travel in the various provinces of Austria, in Bohemia, northern Italy, Germany and Helgoland, and gave him an opportunity of meeting many noted ornithologists and of examining the more important collections of birds.

Late in 1870 he purchased Villa Tannenhof where, in April 1871, after his marriage to Fraulein Natalie Kuhn von Kuhnenfeld, he took up his residence in what proved to be his home for the rest of his life, a spot made famous by the visits of many of the leading ornithologists of the last half century.

Tschusi was a tireless collector and during his years of activity made several collections, aggregating over 10,000 specimens. Three of these collections, one of 554 mounted birds and two others of 6,756 and 700 skins, are now in the Hofmuseum at Vienna. Another of 1,600 skins is in the Museum at Munich, and a fifth comprising 1,578 specimens in the Museum at Salzburg.

Tschusi was also an indefatigable writer. His first publication appeared at the age of 18 and his bibliography at the time of his death numbered more than 700 titles. Most of these papers related to Palæartic ornithology, a field in which he was a leading authority. Probably his best known work was the 'Ornithologisches Jahrbuch,' which was founded in 1890 and continued for 29 volumes, until it suspended on account of financial exigencies following the war. He also published several bibliographies or lists of papers relating to the birds of Austro-Hungary.

During the war and the years immediately following, Tschusi and his wife suffered severely through loss of income and the difficulties of obtaining even the ordinary necessities of life. But his later years were brightened by the honors which he received at the time of his golden wedding in April, 1921, when he was given the degree of Doctor honoris causa by the University of Innsbruck and was granted a pension by the Austrian Republic. A more detailed account of his life, accompanied by a portrait, was published by Dr. J. Gengler in the 'Journal für Ornithologie' for July, 1924, pp. 450-460.—T. S. P.

J. DOUGLAS OGILBY.—On August 11, 1925, at Brisbane, Queensland there passed away one of Australia's most famous Ichthyologists. For the last forty years he has contributed articles on the group to the number of one hundred and seventy odd. As Mr. G. P. Whitley of the Australian Museum was compiling a Bibliography (as his articles are somewhat scattered), he drew my attention to a paper on birds which is of American interest. Born in the north of Ireland, Ogilby was early following nature and contributed notes on birds and fishes as early as 1876. Thereafter he migrated to America and later contributed a "Catalogue of the Birds obtained in Navarro County, Texas," to the *Sci. Proc. Roy. Dublin Soc.*, n.s. III, 1883, pp. 169-249. This is an excellent account and after studying it the admiration of the writer is puzzled by the author's after lack of interest, in the subject. Arriving a little later in Australia, he was first employed at the Australian Museum, Sydney, and then at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, but never wrote anything about Australian birds. This note is mainly to keep in view the fact that the author of the Texan bird article was the same individual as the Australian Ichthyologist.

TOM IREDALE.

The Walker Prizes in Natural History, offered annually by the Boston Society of Natural History, will be awarded in 1926 for the best memoirs submitted on any subject in the field of ornithology. Two prizes, the first of sixty to one hundred dollars, and the other not exceeding fifty dollars, may be awarded. They will not be awarded unless the memoirs submitted are of adequate merit. While the competition is open to all, the prizes are intended more in the nature of encouragement to younger naturalists than as rewards for the work of mature investigators.

Each memoir submitted must be written in English, and is to be based on a considerable body of original and unpublished work, accompanied by a general review of the literature of the subject. Anything in the memoir which shall furnish proof of the identity of the author shall be considered as debarring the essay from competition. Each memoir must be accompanied by a sealed envelope enclosing the author's name and superscribed with a motto corresponding to one borne by the manuscript, and must be in the hands of the Secretary on or before March 1, 1926. Any further

information desired may be had upon application to the Secretary of the Boston Society of Natural History, Boston, Mass.

THE Federation of Bird Clubs of New England has issued a most creditable account of its activities during the second year of its existence. Thirty-two clubs are now affiliated in the federation, the President of which is Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson; Vice President, Edw. H. Forbush, Secretary, Laurence B. Fletcher; Treasurer, Charles B. Floyd and Assistant Secretary, Miss Alice B. Huntington.

The Sanctuary Committee has made a census of all Tern, Gull and Heron colonies of New England and has decided to restrict its efforts in the future exclusively to the protection of island colonies, which, from present indications, will, if properly protected, maintain an adequate supply of these birds for all time. A bill for the maintenance of Massachusetts colonies is to be introduced in the Legislature. The Heath Hen Committee reports at least twelve of these birds still present on Martha's Vineyard on November 12, 1925, and every effort is being made for their protection and increase.

THE Massachusetts Fish and Game Protective Association is collaborating with the Ruffed Grouse disease investigation being carried on by the American Game Protective Association and is raising a fund of \$10,000 to further the work. An appeal has been made to sportsmen to send to Dr. A. O. Gross, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Me., any Ruffed Grouse found dead, or weak from apparent disease, and intestines of all Grouse killed whether healthy or not, to aid in studying the Grouse disease and devising methods for checking it.

THOSE who have visited the Yosemite Valley will be glad to learn of the establishment of 'The Yosemite Natural History Association' for the purpose of disseminating information regarding the natural history of the region, of publishing a mimeographed bulletin, 'Yosemite Nature Notes,' and of maintaining the Yosemite Museum and a library, in the valley. Such an organization should do much toward the conservation of wild life in the famous reservation. We note among the Trustees and Council the names of Dr. Joseph Grinnell, Dr. Barton W. Evermann and Dr. H. C. Bryant, which should be a guarantee of the sincerity of the effort and its restriction to the lines laid out. Carl P. Russell is the Director of the Association. The membership fee is \$2.00 and those desiring to support the work should remit to "The Park Naturalist, Yosemite, National Park, Calif."

INITIAL steps are under way for the purchase of lands for the Upper Mississippi River Wild Life and Fish Refuge, authorized by Congress in June, 1924, \$400,000 having become available for the purpose on July 1, 1925. The refuge is limited to the overflowed lands lying between the high bluffs which border the river on either side, from Rock Island, Ill. to Wabasha,

Minn. The refuge will be under the jurisdiction of the U. S. Department of Agriculture which will control all wild mammal and bird life, fish, trees and wild flowers within its limits.

ON October 12, 1925, there was unveiled at Alton Bay, N. H., a tablet bearing the inscription "William Charlesworth Levey Park. This woodland has been preserved in memory of William Charlesworth Levey, a member of the American Ornithologists' Union and of the New Hampshire, Massachusetts and National Association of Audubon Societies. A passionate lover of nature and an earnest advocate of conservation. 1923."

The pine grove comprising the park was purchased by subscription and deeded to the town of Alton in March, 1924, and named in honor of Mr. Levey who was accustomed to spend his summers there, and who, from 1908 to his death in 1914, was an Associate of the A. O. U. One of the addresses was written by Charles J. Maynard who had instructed Mr. Levey in ornithology.

THE rapidly growing sentiment that game and the wilderness do not belong exclusively to the sportsmen finds forcible expression in a recent circular by J. M. Johnson, chairman of the Biological Department of the Haaron High School, N. Y. City. He says: "Gunners and fishermen have seemed to regard the wilderness and its inhabitants as their exclusive property and have failed to realize the rights of the nature lovers. Their attitude is shown by the movement to bring about the extermination of all animals which feed wholly or in part on game. . . . It is time for the conservationists and nature lovers to demand their right to enjoy the wilderness to the same extent as any other class. They are tax payers and support game laws. . . . Why should not *some* Pheasants and rabbits be taken by birds of prey? These birds are among the most interesting of feathered creatures. . . . Why should not *some* fish furnish food for Kingfishers and Herons, which give added interest to the wilderness? The sparing on the part of the sportsman of the few destructive birds and mammals which remain is little enough compensation for the work the nature lovers have done in conserving game. The wilderness belongs to all classes which use it intelligently. Think it over." The idea here set forth will appeal to ornithologists, for it was only recently that efforts to "exterminate" instead of to "control" certain predaceous species met with widespread condemnation.

In this connection, too, a practice which should elicit general protest is the recent tendency of game commissions to adopt an old English usage and stigmatize our Hawks, Eagles, Owls and Herons, the most picturesque of our wild birds—by the term "vermin" which is usually and more properly applied to lice, fleas and bedbugs. It is poor and a weak policy to try to turn public opinion against a bird by giving it a bad name!

WE HAVE recently received the data presented at the Pittsburgh meet-

ing of the A. O. U. by Mr. Charles P. Shoffner, Associate Editor of the 'Farm Journal' of Philadelphia, relative to its questionnaire regarding the status of the Crow. Information was solicited from the readers of the journal, who are scattered all over the agricultural districts of the United States, as to the injury done by the Crow to crops, poultry, game, etc., and as to such good as it might do to agriculture. Some of the replies were copied directly from the reports of the Department of Agriculture or other sources, but 9731 were selected as being apparently based upon personal observation or opinion. Among these 1801 were in favor of the Crow and 7829 against him. Of the latter 7573 replies charged damage to crops, 6937 to poultry, 4112 to young pigs, sheep, rabbits, etc., 6796 to song birds and 6493 to game birds.

As Mr. Shoffner truly says due weight must be given to the fact that reports were solicited by mail and it would be natural for farmers who had suffered serious damage to write their disapproval while those who had suffered little or no loss would not take the trouble to do so.

In all such investigations, moreover, which are based upon promiscuous data the personal equation enters into the question. While a few persons are able to be impartial judges in such matters the great majority are unintentionally prejudiced and most people are unduly influenced by the *conspicuous* evidence, it being easier to see a Crow carry off a young chicken than to see him catch a cutworm, and almost none of these reports are based upon stomach contents. Inference, too, enters into the matter, many persons accepting evidence without question which is by no means conclusive.

The interesting point is that so many persons defended the Crow and we think that the conclusions of the 'Farm Journal' are in the main perfectly just, viz.:

"1. The Crow *wherever found in large numbers* is injurious to farmers from March to December.

"2. Where Crows are numerous they should be reduced in numbers and this should be done under and with the active cooperation of State or National agricultural authorities. *The Crow need not be exterminated.*

"3. The good Crows do by eating insects does not compensate for the damage done by eating eggs and young of other birds.

"4. In acting as scavengers, Crows carry disease; farmers should bury or burn at once all dead animals."

The great difference in local conditions should, however, be more strongly emphasized as in some places in the West, Crows are a serious menace, while in parts of the East they are neutral or actually beneficial. From the nature of the data we do not think decision "3" is warranted.

PLANS are well under way for the first of a series of annual meetings of the Cooper Ornithological Club to be held this year in Los Angeles, Calif., on April 5, 6 and 7, and all members of this active organization are urged to make their plans now, in order to be present. The committee of ar-

rangements is particularly anxious to have as many members as possible from the East, in attendance.

The date has been purposely fixed at the opposite end of the calendar from that of the A. O. U. meeting so as to avoid any possible conflict, while it is also the time at which southwestern bird-life is at its best and an attractive time of year for a California trip.

It has always seemed to us that one of the great needs of the Cooper Club was an opportunity for the two Divisions and the scattered members to get together and here is the opportunity. It is manifestly impossible for meetings of the A. O. U. to be held frequently on the Coast, nor for many of the western members to come to the eastern meetings, but some eastern ornithologists go west every year and some westerners come east, so now it would seem to be their duty to ornithology to arrange their trips so as to coincide with the annual gatherings of the Cooper Club and the A. O. U., respectively.

Any meeting of bird students benefits both the participants and the science of ornithology so we wish all success to the Los Angeles meeting and urge every eastern ornithologist to seriously consider the possibility of being present on April 5, next. The Arrangements Committee consists of Harry Harris, W. Lee Chambers and J. Eugene Law, who will be glad to furnish any additional information.

The members of the British Ornithologists' Union have long delighted in referring to themselves as "Ibises" and following this precedent we say: "Let the loyal 'Condors' from all parts of the range, foregather in Los Angeles on April 5-7, 1926."

OWING to reduced income and the publication in the past year or two, of larger numbers of 'The Auk' than our funds warranted, the magazine suffers a much reduced appropriation for the year 1926. Fortunately, some of our members have come generously to our assistance by paying the costs of publishing their papers, which will make unnecessary as serious a decrease in the size of the journal as would otherwise have been inevitable. We have many times been indebted to Mr. S. Prentiss Baldwin for meeting the cost of the articles on bird banding which have appeared from time to time, and to Messrs. Maunsell S. Crosby and Ludlow Griscom we are under similar obligations in connection with their paper on the "Birds of the Brownsville Region," which is completed in this issue while Mr. Bayard H. Christy has generously borne the expense of his article on the engravings of Alexander Lawson.