

and fast method by which they may decide which to accept and which to reject. The editor of such a journal is in the same predicament and even though he exercises what he considers to be the utmost discretion he will inevitably err in accepting some erroneous "records." However, the reputation and ability of the observer is after all our best basis for judgement. If, for instance, Mr. Lincoln, with his wide experience, should see a rare bird, such as a Wilson's Phalarope, in the country about Washington, where it is unrecorded, and should send an account of his observation to 'The Auk' we should unquestionably accept it, but if some beginner unfamiliar with shore birds should submit a similar observation we should decline it with thanks.

Sight records must, we fear, involve the personal equation and certain other considerations. We must not forget, moreover, the part that binoculars play in practically putting a bird in arms' reach which formerly was far away, and also the greatly increased opportunity of correctly identifying birds which the numerous popular books and accurate pictures of today offer. At the same time the over ambitious amateur should be extremely careful. If he sends one fantastic "record," that cannot be substantiated, to a reputable journal, his future contributions are likely to be looked upon with suspicion for some years to come. With all their incentives the competitive "daily lists" and the "life list" seem to be deadly menaces to accurate observation.

**Metcalf, Maynard M.**—Parasites and the Aid they Give in Problems of Taxonomy, Geographical Distribution and Palaeontology. (Smithson. Misc. Collns. Vol. 81, No. 8, pp. 1-36, February 28, 1929.)—The presence of the same species of mallophaga on related European and American species of birds, and of closely related or identical forms on various species of Ratitae are cited in the general discussion of the subject, usually from papers by Vernon L. Kellogg and Launcelot Harrison.

**Meylan, O.**—Notes sur les Oiseaux des environs de Genève. (Bull. de la Societe Zool. de Geneve, Vol. IV, Fasc. 1, February, 1929.)—An annotated list of the birds of Geneva with dates of observation and notes on habits.

**Mitchell, Charles A. and Duthie, R. C.**—Tuberculosis in Crows. (Amer. Review of Tuberculosis, Vol. XIX, No. 2, 1929.)—Account of an epidemic in western Ontario and experiments to see if infection is likely to be carried by the birds to other animals.

**Peters, Harold S.**—Mallophaga from Ohio Birds. (Ohio Jour. Science, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, July, 1928.)—An account of the habits of these "lice" and methods of preserving and studying them. There are today about 1700 described species representing some 70 genera, of which 94 species and 24 genera have been found on Ohio birds. A list of these species and their hosts is appended. The importance of the study

of these parasites in shedding light on the relationship of various birds is referred to above (see Metcalf).

**Peters, James L.**—The Identity of *Corvus mexicanus* Gmelin. (Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, Vol. 42, pp. 121–124, March 25, 1929.)—Mr. Peters has unearthed a most unfortunate case of misidentification with far reaching effect upon nomenclature. Fernandez described a Mexican bird which he called "Hoitzanat!" and to which Gmelin gave the Latin name of *Corvus mexicanus*. Subsequent authors, without looking up the original description, took Gmelin's action as authoritative and applied his name to the Mexican Crow. It now turns out that the "Hoitzanat!" is nothing more than the Great-tailed Grackle, a common Mexican bird and the name *macrourus* universally applied to it must be changed to the earlier *mexicanus*. This is bad enough but it is not all. Lesson in 1831 proposed the genus *Cassidix* apparently for the Rice Grackle but included in it Gmelin's *Corvus mexicanus* which Gray later designated as the type of the genus, thus transferring this generic name, also, to the Great-tailed Grackle. A new generic name is therefore needed for the Rice Grackle and *Psomocolax* (p. 123) is supplied by Mr. Peters. One race of Rice Grackle, moreover, has been called *mexicanus* Lesson, but this name being of the same origin as *Corvus mexicanus* Gmel. is not available and a new name *impacifus* (p. 123) is proposed for it, while for the Mexican Crow, also deprived of its old name, *imparatus* (p. 123) is proposed.

**Peters, James L.**—Vertebrates from The Corn Islands [Introduction and Birds] (Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., Vol. LXIX, No. 7, pp. 127–146).—This is an account of a visit paid by the author and Mr. Edward Bangs to the Corn Islands in the western Caribbean Sea which curiously enough had never been visited by naturalists. The results were disappointing as it was found that there was not only no characteristic avifauna, but the islands were almost devoid of birds. A list of thirty-five forms is given, seven being North American migrants and the rest mainly water birds. The breeding species were the Ani, Mangrove Cuckoo, White-crowned Pigeon and possibly a Coot and some Herons.

**Reid, Russell and Gannon, Clell G.**—Natural History Notes on the Journals of Alexander Henry. (North Dakota Historical Quarterly, Vol. II, No. 3, pp. 168–200, April, 1928.)—An interesting series of extracts from the Henry Journals published in 1897 under the editorship of Elliott Coues. All references to mammals and birds have been transcribed and identified in present day nomenclature. The same authors performed a similar service, in 1927, in connection with the North Dakota notes in Lewis and Clarke's Journals (see 'Auk' 1928, p. 120).

**Riley, J. H.**—Descriptions of four new Birds from the Mountains of Northern Siam. (Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, Vol. 42, pp. 161–164. May 3, 1929.)—*Niltava grandis nobilis* (p. 161) Doi Angka; *Niltava*