THE AUK:

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF

ORNITHOLOGY.

VOL. L. JANUARY, 1933. No. 1.

IN MEMORIAM: CHARLES WALLACE RICHMOND 1868-1932.*

BY WITMER STONE.

Plate I.

ORNITHOLOGISTS are "born, not made" and yet they would seem to be created spontaneously for it is rarely that we can find an ancestral trait that would constitute the source of that devotion to our science which characterizes those who have reached the foremost places in our ranks.

In many cases, too, preëminence has been attained only by indomitable perseverance and by determination to overcome all obstacles that barred the way to the desired career; in the desire, moreover, there usually has been no thought of personal profit, no seeking for renown but merely the opportunity—the privilege, of contributing to the advancement of science.

All of these facts are exemplified, in no small degree, in the career of him whose memory we honor today.

That Charles Wallace Richmond had reached preëminence in his chosen field there is no question; and to his profound knowledge of ornithology we pay admiring recognition. But what appeals more directly to those of us who knew him well was the lovable, generous character of Richmond the man and friend. Always approachable, even to the beginner in bird study; generous to a degree, in sharing his knowledge with others, and bearing no

*Read at the Fiftieth Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, at Quebec, October 18, 1932.

Very truly yours -
Chas. W. Richmond.

small part of the burden which their researches might involve; quiet and retiring with no desire for notoriety and showing irritation only when his associates tried to persuade him to accept positions of honor to which he was abundantly entitled. He has left us an example of unselfish service and generous coöperation that will ever remain a cherished memory.

Charles Wallace Richmond was born in Kenosha, Wisconsin, on December 31, 1868, eldest son of Edward Leslie and Josephine Ellen (née Henry) Richmond.

His mother died early in 1880 and later in that year his father, formerly a railway mail clerk, removed to Washington, D. C., to take a position in the Government Printing House, and there remarried. Richmond, then twelve years of age, with his brother and two sisters, followed in August 1881. The second Mrs. Richmond, a widow, had two children and the family was later increased by five sons, two of whom died in infancy. Young Richmond's education was mainly limited to a few years in the public schools and even that was seriously interfered with by the necessity of caring for younger brothers, and in helping in the support of the family. During two years of his school life, when at the age of thirteen and fourteen, he was taken from school to serve as page in the House of Representatives throughout the winter months, but by intensive study for a few weeks prior to the beginning of the new term, he managed each year to advance into the next grade. In September 1883, however, when nearly fifteen years of age he left school finally and accepted a position which his father had secured for him as messenger in the Geological Survey. Here he remained until 1889, when he was for a short time a special agent for the Census Office collecting statistics on mineral waters.

After leaving school he arranged to take a course in Latin, induced as we shall see by the discovery that birds had Latin names as well as French and English ones, but his father demurred at the cost and the instruction ceased. The boy then purchased textbooks on various subjects and carried on studies by himself, in a desultory way, until about his twentieth year. Five years later, having in the meantime been relieved from the burden of

helping out the family income, he took a course in medicine at Georgetown University and graduated in 1897, though he never practiced. The next year he married Miss Louise H. Seville, who survives him. They had no children.

Such is a brief outline of one side of Richmond's life but there was another side which developed simultaneously and which led to a definite goal which the boy apparently always held clearly in view. The burdens which he had to endure would have discouraged most boys from even trying to realize any special ambition that they may have cherished, but not so with Richmond.

From his early childhood he had taken a passionate interest in birds and while he accepted cheerfully all the duties that were placed upon him at home, he had always definitely in mind a determination to someday enter the field of endeavor in which he was destined to figure so prominently. In an autobiographical sketch,[1] upon which I have drawn for most of the facts bearing upon his early life, he tells us that prior to leaving Wisconsin he had been shown by another boy a Kingbird's nest with three fresh eggs which he thought the most beautiful thing that he had ever seen and he resolved to form a collection of birds' eggs, a project which he put into immediate execution.

Soon after reaching Washington he was taken with his brother and sisters to the museum of the Smithsonian Institution, where there was on exhibition a large collection of nests and eggs; the boy revelled in this display and spent most of his time in studying it. He came to the conclusion that it was useless for him to go farther, as *his* collection could never compete with this one and that he had better turn his specimens over to the Institution. To quote his own words: "He did not know that adults were interested in such matters, thinking it only a boy's pastime, and when he took his treasures to the main door of the Institution was surprised to have the old colored doorkeeper of those days say to him, 'You will have to see Mr. Ridgway.' The doorkeeper directed him across the hall and up five flights of winding stairs, where he met a sign 'No Admittance.' Timidly knocking at the door, he heard a cheery voice say 'Come in,' and upon doing so found Mr. Ridgway at work. The latter pulled up a chair for him, and Richmond sat

[1] Mathews, 'Birds of Australia,' Vol. XII, Suppl. 4.

down beside the first ornithologist he had ever heard of. With much diffidence he unwrapped the cigar boxes that contained his collection and told Mr. Ridgway his intentions. He expected to supply the names of the eggs, and thus set the Smithsonian right, but Mr. Ridgway seemed to have a supernatural gift in this direction and was able to identify them as fast as brought to view. In a few minutes he had given Richmond more items of interest than he had learned to date. A new world had been opened up.

"At the first opportunity Richmond returned to ask Mr. Ridgway a question and from that time on must have bothered him unmercifully, though the latter never complained. He was given a copy of Bulletin 21, or 'Nomenclature of North American Birds,' then recently published, and decided he would have to learn all of its scientific names. After considerable drilling, with the help of his brother, he had learned all but a few of the species of Puffins which he could not master."

This acquaintance with Robert Ridgway at the very beginning of his life in Washington was probably the most important influence in Richmond's life. Ridgway's well known kindness and cordiality to beginners made the boy feel free to come to him when he needed help or advice in his bird study, while the character of the man seemed to influence that of the boy. Ridgway was Richmond's ideal and in his admiration for him he came to be more like him than he probably ever realized. Doubtless even at this early age he had determined that a position in the Department of Birds under Robert Ridgway was his goal.

Later while serving as a page in the House of Representatives, Richmond discovered that there were many books about birds in the Congressional Library and that he might withdraw these on the order of any member of Congress. Thereafter he kept many ornithological books in one of the mail boxes of the House over which he had supervision and perused them at leisure. Among these works he found Gray's 'Hand List of the Genera and Species of Birds,' a dry book for a boy, but he realized that it carried the technical nomenclature beyond that of the North American list that Ridgway had given him so as to include the birds of the world and he began to copy all the names contained in it, but after finishing one volume gave it up as too large an undertaking with

the many responsibilities he had to face at home. Thus at this early date do we see his interest in that branch of ornithology with which his name was to be so closely identified.

Richmond began to form a collection of birds' skins in April, 1884, soon after becoming a messenger in the Geological Survey, and took his specimens to Henry W. Henshaw, whose acquaintance he had made, for identification. The latter commented upon the poor quality of his skins and offered to introduce him to a friend who was at the moment preparing some specimens in Henshaw's rooms. This friend proved to be William Brewster and in a couple of hours, through watching his work and profiting by his advice, young Richmond acquired a knowledge of taxidermy that greatly improved the make-up of his skins and led eventually to the development of his own admirable method of preparation quoted by Ridgway in his 'Directions for Collecting Birds' published in 1891.

In May 1885, Richmond published his first paper, in the 'Ornithologist and Oologist,' on 'My Experience with Screech Owls' and in 1888 made his first contribution to 'The Auk'—'A List of the Breeding Birds of the District of Columbia,' while in the same year he became an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union.

Up to this time his field work had been limited to the immediate vicinity of Washington with an occasional trip to the coast at Cape Charles but in 1888 he was able to join an exploring party of the Geological Survey which worked over parts of Montana, from August 5 to September 27, and in conjunction with F. H. Knowlton, also a member of the party, he made a collection of birds upon which they later prepared a report.

Toward the close of the next year he succeeded in getting a little closer to the work that he had all along had in mind, when he secured an appointment as ornithological clerk in the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy in the Department of Agriculture, now the Biological Survey. He remained there until January, 1892, when he left to join some young men who had planned an expedition to Honduras where they expected to engage in horticultural work. The opportunity to study and collect tropical birds appealed strongly to him and he set forth with high hopes, doubtless encouraged by Ridgway who was deeply interested in

Central American birds. A stop at Jamaica gave opportunity to secure a few specimens and a longer stay at Graytown, Nicaragua, offered further chance for field work, while a boat was being fitted out for the cruise up the coast. This venture, however, proved a failure as they got no farther than Bluefields and, although a trip up the Escondido River added many specimens to his collection, the whole party suffered severely from malaria and some of them returned home, one died, and Richmond and his remaining companion took passage for New York just a year after they had started. He had sold his North American collection to the National Museum to secure funds for the trip and on his return disposed of his Nicaraguan birds in the same way to enable him to start on his medical studies.

He now applied for a position in the Museum and was appointed (July 1, 1893) night watchman in the telephone room being assured that once on the rolls it would be easier to transfer him to a more desirable position. In a short time, accordingly, he was detailed to the Department of Mammals, and on July 1, 1894, became an assistant on the Scientific Staff with instructions to report to Mr. Ridgway. Thus at last he had achieved his great desire.

Richmond's frequent visits to the Department of Birds, which was then located on the gallery of the Smithsonian Building, made him familiar with the collections and the duties of the Curator, long before he became associated with it, so that he was able at once to assume all of the routine work. This was a great relief to Mr. Ridgway who was busy with the preparation of the first volume of his monumental work on the 'Birds of North and Middle America,' the synonymy of which he had about completed. He was glad to be relieved of everything that interfered with the prosecution of this work while to have, as an aide, one whom he had known from boyhood and whose interests he had guided, was a great comfort. Richmond, therefore, soon found himself extremely busy.

I first became acquainted with Richmond in 1890 and we soon became close friends and constant correspondents and a file of some five hundred letters from him, almost all in long hand, covering the period from 1890 to 1932, is a valued possession. These give an intimate account of the activities of the Department of Birds, the visitors who stopped there, the progress of field operations and the

collections which were arriving, but are mainly concerned with matters of nomenclature and bibliography, while through the whole runs a vein of quiet humor so characteristic of the writer.

The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia possesses one of the finest scientific libraries in America and it contains many rare works that were not to be found in Washington, so that it became a veritable Mecca for Richmond whenever he could get away from the Capital. As these trips were few, however, he was constantly asking me to examine books which promised interesting nomenclatural developments or to look up some reference, and this file of letters is replete with notes and suggestions of the greatest interest and value.

Richmond's time was so entirely taken up with his duties in the Department of Birds that he seldom got away except occasionally to meetings of the A. O. U. and I believe that during the entire period of his curatorship there were but two occasions when he was away from Washington for more than a few days. In 1901 he was assigned to install and supervise the Museum exhibits at the Buffalo and Charleston Expositions, tasks not at all to his liking but which were performed as conscientiously as were all duties that were entrusted to him. The other occasion was a collecting trip to Porto Rico, in 1900, in company with Dr. Leonhard Stejneger. This was apparently undertaken at short notice. He had written me to look up an important reference for him and then on February 4 wrote:

"If you reply Monday address me at the Astor House, N. Y. City. After Tuesday my address will be San Juan, Porto Rico, for a short time, and after that I don't know whether I shall have any address!"

Then on April 11, 1900, he wrote from Utuado, P. R.:

"Dear Stone:

"In a letter from you, before I left, you said to send you the news from this part of the world. I will now proceed to do so, but will confine it to ornithological news as much as possible.

"Dr. Stejneger and I left New York Feb. 7, and reached San Juan on the morning of the 12th. We immediately proceeded to get accustomed to a chunk of butterless bread and some coffee in lieu of a decent breakfast, and then went out for a stroll. I saw no birds worth shooting but we got some lizards and on the way met a soldier from N. Y. who has

been collecting birds here for a year or more. While in San Juan I examined a collection of Natural History objects formerly in possession of the religious orders (since removed from the Id.) but now under the military authorities. In this collection (mainly from P. R. and Cuba) I found a good mounted specimen of the Cuban Macaw! I am going to bring it to W. with me when I come back!! I named the birds in the lot, and they are to be put on exhibition in San Juan. At my suggestion the soldier we met is to be placed in charge of them and he is very much pleased and will get us any birds we need in P. R. So far so good.

"We left San Juan bound for El Yunque the highest peak on the island. It is however only about 3400 ft. I will pass over the harrowing details of the ascent of this peak, which were really somewhat arduous. We had 11 packers, guides, cooks, etc., in the outfit, and camped about 400 feet from the top, where the last water occurred. We spent 5 days here, and were enveloped in clouds the entire time, not to mention drizzling rain. On this trip I got 8 specimens of the rare *Neospingus speculiferus* (3 or 4, skins only, in collections) and a few other things, like *Sporadinus maugaei.*

"Our next stop, after drying out at a coffee plantation, was Luquillo, where we had miserable quarters in a room in the last house in town. In a few days we had good cases of dengue fever and were laid up about 3 weeks. We then thought we would go down to some of the other islands but found it was impossible to get a steamer bound for any place except Venezuela. We went to the island of Vieques, belonging to P. R., and tried to get over to St. Thomes, which was in plain sight, but Uncle Sam's custom laws would allow no boats to clear for there. I got about 60 birds here and when the first steamer came along we went back to San Juan. Next we went to Arecibo, near the west end of the island, and after a week there we came up to the mountain town of Utuado, 18 miles inland. Tomorrow we go to Adjuntas, still further inland, and of greater altitude. Next we go to Ponce on the south coast and then back over the military road to San Juan where we expect to take a transport for New York about the 23rd. . . I had intended to stay two months more, but have decided to go home with Dr. S., owing to the difficulty of collecting here. The country is very densely populated and the heavy forest is all gone. The natives seem to dislike trees and are constantly clearing and burning down the trees and bushes. What trees occur are mostly at the tops of steep hills and to climb these every day is too much of a good thing. The country is covered with solitary hills, some of which are so steep as to be inaccessible. The general vegetation hardly looks tropical, barring the cocoanut trees and royal palms scattered here and there. Bird life, with the exception of a very few species is scarce. The Gray Kingbird is everywhere, with the Honey Creeper a close second, Seed-eaters, Grackles and Yellow Warblers are fairly common. In the coffee belt the Tody is conspicuous. Some of the native species like *Vireo latimeri, Euphonia sclateri, Dendroica adelaidae,* & *Saurothera vieilloti*

I have not been able to hear or see. In other words the very birds I most want seem to be *non est.* I therefore think it will hardly pay to go looking for them for another two months.

"We have collected a lot of lizards, frogs, etc., including a very scarce toad. Have also collected over a hundred bats of 6 or 7 species. We have seen a number of Mongooses but have not bothered with them.

"Altogether we have done pretty well, and hope to be back in Washington about May 3. Have not heard from Mr. Ridgway since I left and have heard no bird news since Feb. 5! This letter has been written largely by moonlight so please forgive any indistinct words.

Yours etc.

Chas. W. Richmond.

"P. S. Adjuntas, Apr. 14.

"I have just killed my first *Vireo latimeri.* Was on his trail two days!

C. W. R."

This trip seemed to disgust Richmond with field work and I never heard him express any desire or inclination to engage in it again. He was becoming entirely engrossed with other lines of work.

When he first became connected with the Department of Birds he was assigned to work up the collections sent in by Dr. W. L. Abbott from Africa, Madagascar, Kashmir, Turkestan and Sumatra and published complete reports on most of them and descriptions of new species contained in the others, but we soon find him giving more and more aid to Mr. Ridgway in his great undertaking, sending out the lists of specimens desired from other institutions, verifying references and reading the proof sheets, all of which made it more and more difficult to work up incoming collections and he allowed most of this work to go to others. Furthermore he became deeply interested in bibliographic work. As early as 1897 he had begun a card catalogue of all ornithological specific and generic names, whether tenable or synonyms, which eventually developed into the monumental card index now preserved in the bird room in the National Museum, the most pretentious thing of its kind ever undertaken and the greatest possible aid to workers in systematic ornithology. Had Richmond done nothing else this would have constituted a monument to his memory for all time to come, and as it is stands is his *magnum opus.*

Under date of January 29, 1897, he wrote me describing the undertaking that he had in view. He said:

"I am employing my spare time (what little I get) in making a card catalogue of described species of birds, both living and extinct, and genera, giving the names, as originally spelled, complete reference and date of publication, type locality; also data for the type specimen when given. During the past year I have compiled about 1500 of these cards, going through works where the date of publication was more or less certain.

"I have a small printing press which saves much time where there are many cards of one series to be filled out, as in the P. Z. S., Ibis, etc., in which I can print off a lot of cards similar to the one I enclose. Well! the point of my story is this: I hope to take hold of the Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phil., next spring, and go through the whole series. Is there any way to get the dates of publication of the different parts? . . . Take for example Vol. 5 (1850), No. 1 includes pp. 1–20, or the meetings of Jan. and Feb. We cannot tell whether the lot of shells described on pp. 10–11 should date from Feb. or possibly any other month in the year. The date of receipt, by the Academy, of this part, would practically be the date of publication as the first is generally followed by the second with very little delay. I have waded through a large assortment of receipts, record books, etc., and have the dates of publication of every signature in the first eight vols. of the Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. which I hope to put within the reach of all some day. In the case of our museum Proceedings a date purporting to be the date of publication was given at the bottom of every signature. This was really only the date of stereotyping the pages, and in some cases three months elapsed before the same pages were received at the Smithsonian."

I quote this in full to illustrate the importance of the work he was doing. All sorts of complications have resulted from lack of knowledge as to the dates of publication of various papers in various countries and no one knew, in many cases, which of several names for the same bird was the earliest, causing many changes back and forth. This work of Richmond's did more to stabilize nomenclature than perhaps any other single effort, although it naturally made some changes necessary, at once, which would probably have been left in doubt for many years to come.

Some critics have claimed that this sort of research is carried on simply to enable the one engaged in it to secure the credit for proposing a new name. While this criticism may have been justified in some cases it could not have been said of Richmond. He probably pointed out more necessary changes in names to others, and allowed them to publish them, than all that he proposed himself. To quote from one of his letters on this subject he says:

"Unlike some naturalists I prefer to see a man get his data straight and not wait until he has published his paper and then rush into print to point out his errors."

In response to my assurance that I would look into the matter of the dates of publication of our Proceedings he replied:

"I am glad to hear you will try to recover the dates of publication of the early numbers of the Phila. Acad. Proc., also that you are interested in my 'colossal' job, which appears (to me) to grow more so every time I have an opportunity to work on it. I had made a start on it several years ago and had finished most of the P. Z. S. On going to Central America I left the cards with Mr. Ridgway and during my absence he distributed them among his mss!"

From this letter we discover that his catalogue really had gotten under way as early as the period 1889–1891, when he was a clerk in the Department of Agriculture, and quite probably had its real inception in the perusal of Gray's 'Genera and Species of Birds' by the thirteen year old page in the House of Representatives.

At the 1901 meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, Richmond and I were chosen members of the new Committee on Classification and Nomenclature of North American Birds and upon the occasion of the first meeting of this body in Washington, in April, 1902, he wrote me: "Are you coming on to the A. O. U. Committee meeting? If you have made no other arrangements you might stop with me. I have a 2 x 4 spare room overlooking a small apricot tree. Don't think I have forgotten your 'Corwin' inquiry and the Coues bibliography. Great bodies move slowly (I weigh 206½ lbs.) and take time to get a start."

That was the first of many delightful visits to his home at 705 9th St. N. E., and in the basement dining room I saw the preparation of the card list actually under way. The printing press and type cases stood in one corner of the room and his book case in another. After the table had been cleared and a reading lamp adjusted, he removed his coat, for he, like many another man who has accomplished great things, could not satisfactorily carry on his work either at home or at the museum unless he were in his shirt sleeves; then he would get out his box of cards and the volume upon which he happened to be working, light a cigar, wind up an

early variety of phonograph in which he took great delight, and begin the compilation.

The music and desultory conversation did not appear to interfere in the least with his work, and seemed indeed to be a necessary accompaniment. A friend who used to spend many evenings with him, and who was making a study of the Koran, frequently broke in with choice passages from that work which interested and amused Richmond, but caused no cessation in his writing, nor did my comments on such work as I might be doing. The session usually lasted until 12 or 1 o'clock when we had an improvised lunch and retired.

He always worked deliberately and methodically and thus avoided any possibility of error through haste. Sometimes we were diverted to other matters. One evening Richmond discovered the announcement, some ten years previously, of the death of a foreign ornithologist who was still retained on our list of Correspondents and immediate search elsewhere discovered several similar cases. After my return home he followed up this line of research, which has been so ably prosecuted in recent years by Dr. Palmer, and wrote me: "I have discovered that Knudson died 24 years ago. I expect to depopulate the Corresponding Fellow list before I get through."

On another evening I had discovered that Swainson's Warbler, through some nomenclatural complication, was left without a tenable generic name and we discussed, in a humorous way, all sorts of possible Latin and Greek combinations that might be used finally selecting *Limnothlypis* which I promptly sent to 'Science' for publication. Many obscure books some of which we had never seen and the status of many debatable names were discussed on these occasions and I was amazed at the extent of his knowledge of such matters.

Night after night the steady grind of preparing the cards went on, sometimes compiling the data and at others entering them on the cards or printing the headings for the latter. Richmond rarely went out, not caring for lectures or the meetings of the local societies, although later he did attend the gatherings of the Baird Club. He became so engrossed in the catalogue that he neglected almost every other line of work outside the necessary routine of the office and at the close of 1907 wrote me:

"It is now two years or more since I have figured in print as the author of any note or paper on birds and I am contemplating turning over a new leaf. To make the leaf turning as impressive as possible, I think Jan. 1 would be about the right time to start. I propose to devote Sundays to this purpose and see what I can accomplish by going to the office on that day, where I shall be away from my endless card-writing."

Richmond had developed a systematic method of compiling the data from which his cards were prepared so that he seldom had to refer again to a book that he had once been over. Upon taking up a volume he entered the number of every page upon which desired bibliographic information occurred and transcribed under it everything that he thought he might have use for, including not only new names but also misspellings, synonyms, etc., etc., and finally a description of the work with any indications of date of publication or mention of contemporary publications, or reviews. All the sheets relating to the same work were clipped together and filed. An additional scheme was the manufacture of a dummy set of the British Museum 'Catalogue of Birds' with the name of every species entered on the exact page and position which it occupied in the original. He then copied from his notes any data relative to a given species in the proper place where it was always available, but the plan proved too laborious without clerical assistance, of which he had none, nor, apparently, did he desire any.

On February 2, 1912, he judged that the card catalogue was about three-fifths completed. There were then, he estimated, about 30,000 regular cards and perhaps 10,000 extra ones, containing fragmentary or supplementary data. About this time he conceived the idea of printing the cards in their entirety and selling them in sets. I have many letters on this subject, which we discussed at length, and I published an editorial on the plan in 'The Auk' for 1912, p. 279.

By July 16, he had 267 cards printed with the desired number of each but the entire edition narrowly escaped destruction when a heavy rain flooded the basement room in which the cards were stored, and he paused temporarily. When writing to me at this time he, with his characteristic humor, would print across the top of the letter sheet the card that he happened to have on his press at the moment. I have several letters so ornamented.

About this time a German zoological society offered to print a complete list of generic names of birds if he would compile it in the form they desired. He had already published several supplements to Waterhouse's 'Index Generum Avium' and set about the preparation of the proposed list at once, thinking that the printing of the cards could wait. Just as he had this manuscript completed the World War rendered its publication impossible. This discouraged him not a little and as his health began to fail at about this time he did only desultory work on the card catalogue, and gave up all idea of printing sets of the cards, distributing those already printed to friends who had been interested in the proposition.

Through all these years and up until the time of his death Richmond maintained a correspondence with C. Davies Sherborn, Gregory M. Mathews and others interested in bibliographic research, and furnished them with much important information and valuable suggestions, while at the same time he read proof of all ornithological publications of the U. S. National Museum, all the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington (of which he had been editor for many years) and many other works, especially check lists and bibliographic publications.

His reputation as a critical proof reader and his wide knowledge both of birds and scientific literature spread rapidly and we find acknowledgments of assistance of this kind in publications appearing in various parts of the world. A set of corrections to a paper published in the Proceedings of the North China Branch of the Asiatic Society arrived too late for inclusion in the main text and the authors decided to publish it as an appendix but, through some misunderstanding on the part of the printer, only the title and author's name appeared. Richmond in writing to me about it said: "The 'appendix' as it appeared is a perfect blank, and therefore, constitutes the shortest paper in my bibliography." He was happily always able to see the comical side of every situation which made his correspondence and personal contact with him always delightful.

A further evidence of his tireless energy and cheerful assumption of the burdens of others is seen in the assistance that he rendered to his brother who was taken seriously ill with typhoid fever while

visiting him. His brother was engaged in compiling city directories and realizing the impossibility of his completing the work that he had in hand, Richmond, in spite of his numerous other duties, prepared for the printer the entire directory for the city of Alexandria, Va.

While much of his vast knowledge of ornithological bibliography is incorporated in the manuscript card catalogue, in the bird room of the U. S. National Museum, it is a curious fact that apart from scattered notes on necessary changes of names and a few accounts of rare volumes, his actual publications in this field are limited to his four supplements to Waterhouse's 'Index Generum Avium.' The amount of information contributed by him to the works of others, however, is enormous and his knowledge of bird books and bird names could only be appreciated by those who knew him intimately or who profited from his assistance.

Richmond refers in his autobiography to the apparently "supernatural" gift displayed by Mr. Ridgway in identifying on sight the eggs that he, as a boy, brought to him. Certainly Richmond's marvellous bibliographic knowledge of later years appeared to others equally uncanny.

His knowledge of birds was quite as remarkable. He seemed to know by sight every species in the National Museum and I have heard him remark when looking at collections in other institutions: "That is a bird not in our Museum" or "that is so and so but I never saw one before." A remarkable illustration of his acute perception and accurate memory was his discovery that the obscure little bird described by Gould in 1843 as *Cactornis inornata*, supposedly from Polynesia and which had never been found again, was in reality the Cocos Island bird subsequently named *Cocornis agassizi* by C. H. Townsend.

Richmond devised an ingenious aid for those setting out on extensive collecting trips to remote countries, by making up a manuscript volume with brief descriptions of the more desirable species that they were likely to find, with keys for determining them and much other important data. One of these little volumes made three trips to Africa and back accompanying the Roosevelt and the Frick Expeditions of the Smithsonian Institution, and the Gray Expedition of the Philadelphia Academy. His thoughtful sug-

gestions resulted in the discovery of various species that would probably otherwise have escaped the attention of the collectors.

Richmond seldom became excited over anything but if he was aroused to enthusiasm it was by the discovery of a long sought book rather than a new bird. One such occasion was his discovery of the second known copy of Lacepede's 'Tableau' in the Library of the Philadelphia Academy. The pamphlet had neither title page nor author and he recognized it wholly from a memorandum of its contents that had been sent him by Sherborn. Again I recall his enthusiasm when he examined a copy of Bilberg's 'Synopsis' which Prof. Alfred Newton had been kind enough to loan me.

A few additional quotations from his letters will further illustrate the delightful combination of scientific data, kindly suggestion and dry humor which were so characteristic of him.

One publication that he knew contained new bird names but which he was quite unable to trace was a French journal, the 'Echo du Monde Savant.' On August 4, 1900 he wrote me:

> "Glad to hear from you and glad to see you get worked up over an old book. If you can resurrect a complete set of the 'Echo du Monde Savant' or 'L'Hermes' I will come up and visit you next day. They were semi-weekly small folio journals and probably most of the subscribers treated them as newspapers and threw them away, the result being that they are the rarest of all scientific literature."

Two years later he writes again:

> "After several years of correspondence I have finally discovered an incomplete set of the 'Echo du Monde Savant'!! We got a circular not long ago from a Paris Natural History dealer and I had an attack of heart failure when I saw that his name was the same as that of the editor of the 'Echo.' I wrote at once. The other day I heard from him with a list of the parts he had * * * The Department of Agriculture will buy it. I die happy!" He adds: "Another matter of startling interest is this: the other day I found a pamphlet of 200 pages by A. deWinkelried Bertoni published in 1901, in which are 31 new genera, 1 new family and 104 new species from Paraguay!!! The author does not seem to know that any headway has been made in ornithology since Azara visited that country; as a result he finds everything is new. * * * He is writing on the plants, geology, climate, mammals & reptiles of Paraguay too, so there will be more to follow. * * * Just received 30 vols. of old Dutch periodicals!"

In 1906 the Committee on Nomenclature was having a strenuous time trying to devise a definite method for determining the type of

a composite genus. While our efforts were, I think, largely responsible for action by the International Commission which ultimately provided a satisfactory method, there was much argument about the matter at the time. In the heat of the discussion Richmond who, with me, was a staunch supporter of the "first species" method and opposed to the old method of "elimination" which we found to be impossible in yielding uniform results, wrote me:

> "Sorry for your troubles over elimination. It is just as *easy*. You must first decide upon your method of elimination—there are various methods—all we need to do now is to explain the proper method and things will go smoothly—perhaps! I may as well confess that I don't know which is the proper method. Mr. Ridgway takes out all congeneric species, Dr. Allen takes out only the type and I presume Gill, Jordan, etc., have various refinements all of which will lead to different results in complicated cases!"

In some of Gregory Mathews' investigations on the nomenclature of Australian birds some complications developed in connection with certain genera of Ibises which Richmond thought untenable in their former application but Mathews was not entirely convinced and thought that a way could be found for retaining one at least. In discussing the matter Richmond wrote me "Mathews has just sent over the *ms.* of a paper he wants published in 'The Auk' on *Ibis* and *Egatheus* which like Paul and Virginia have a sad fate. I stirred him up to this deviltry but he endeavoured to make the story end well without regard to the real facts so I am sending it back for revision." The paper appeared shortly afterward and the author concludes by saying "all of Richmond's suggested changes are necessary."

As early as 1896 Richmond compiled a list of the birds of the District of Columbia, and as there seemed no other way to publish it began to print it page by page on his hand press. Only twelve pages appeared, for, as he stated later, "The slow progress made by an amateur with a small hand press and the rapid advances made in local bird-lore followed by a flood which destroyed the remaining copies of certain pages, caused the author to abandon the project." In 1917, however, he issued a cover and title page and in writing me about the matter said: "It will probably be the only case on record where a cover follows a pamphlet after a lapse

of 21 years." Under date of September 3, 1914, he wrote me about the last Passenger Pigeon as follows:

> "Dear Stone: Yesterday we received from the Cincinnati Zoo, by express, packed in ice, the last Passenger Pigeon. It arrived near closing time and we put it in the ice chest where it would be safe over night. This morning we notified Dr. Shufeldt and William Palmer of the arrival of the bird. The former to learn what he could of the fresh anatomy while the latter skinned it. The bird was weighed, photographed from three angles in the flesh, and they then repaired to Shufeldt's house where it was skinned. The plan was to make a skin for mounting when our taxidermist returns, also to save as much of the body anatomy as possible including eyes, tongue and brain. The abdominal cavity was to be opened up and the various viscera were to be photographed *in situ* while still in a fresh state. Dr. Shufeldt is an expert photographer and could handle this feature of the work better at his house than at the museum. I have not seen either of them since, so I think they have put in the whole day at it. We have no word from the Cin. Zoo yet, but I suppose the bird died on "September morn."
>
> Yours, etc. C. W. Richmond."

In the autumn of 1914 Richmond removed his residence to the other side of Washington, to Park Road, near Rock Creek Park, where a number of native birds came frequently to his yard. For many years he had given up entirely any sort of field work about the city, and with the exception of an occasional trip to the Naturalists' Field Club on Plummer Island, on some special occasion, such as the seventieth birthday celebrations of John H. Sage and Dr. A. K. Fisher, he never went out into the country. He therefore greatly enjoyed the novelty of wild birds about his home and established a feeding shelf at the dining room window in which both he and the birds took great delight. He wrote me about this on February 4, 1918, "Cardinals, male and female, feed from my window, as well as male and female Downy Woodpecker, Juncos, Song Sparrows, four Tufted Tits and two or more Nuthatches." Sometime later he wrote: "Yesterday I put up my Wren box and I expect the male of my last summer tenants to announce his presence in a couple of days. During the winter I was surprised one Sunday morning to find a male Red Crossbill eating sunflower seeds on my lunch counter. He came back once after the Purple Finches, with whom he associated, took flight at something, but I never saw him after that. He did not shuck the seeds as Purple

Finches and Cardinals do, but held them in his feet and gave a sideways twist of his bill to tear off the outer covering." This illustrates Richmond's keen powers of observation and his capability in the field of bird biography, had inclination led him in that direction.

Richmond's services to the American Ornithologists' Union are as notable as those to individual members and authors both at home and abroad. He was elected an Associate in 1888; became a Fellow in 1897 and a member of the Council in 1903. He served as secretary to the Committee on Nomenclature for some years before he became a member of the body and thereafter until 1922. He was largely responsible for the revision of the technical matter of both the third and fourth editions of the 'Check-List' and for the determination of the type localities in the former, while he read all of the proof of both. In preparing the several 'Ten-Year Indexes' to 'The Auk' he acted as one of the indexers in the first and in all three is credited with supplying the synonymy of exotic species and in reading the proof. He also served on several of the committees on the Brewster Medal award and on committees of arrangements for Washington meetings of the Union.

It was the earnest desire of the Fellows and Members that they might elect him Vice President and then President of the Union but he voiced his determined opposition to such a proposition and no amount of persuasion, even from his closest friends, could change his attitude. In answer to an urgent appeal to permit his nomination he wrote to me on February 4, 1918:

> "As to the vice presidency of the A. O. U. I hold that we should have only dignified men in such offices and men who know something of parliamentary procedure. I know nothing of the latter and have never been able to take any interest in such matters, furthermore I do not care for any office where I may be put in the limelight. I will always fight any plot to put me there!"

This was in line with Richmond's attitude all through his life. He disliked prominence or notoriety, never read a paper before the meetings of the Union and shrank from any appearance before committees or executives in connection with the conduct or the needs of the Department of Birds. He also had a great aversion to the preparation of the annual reports which Mr. Ridgway, who

disliked this work as much as he did, from the beginning of his service had passed on to him.

In the meetings of the Baird Ornithological Club of Washington, however, he took great pleasure and frequently took part in the discussions seeming to lose, in this informal atmosphere, the reticence that ordinarily beset him in public gatherings, and the same was true of the meetings of the A. O. U. Council.

Richmond gained some measure of the honors due him by election to honorary membership in various societies. He was made a Foreign Member of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1908 and an Honorary Member in 1915, Correspondent of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Corresponding Member of the Bavarian Ornithologists' Union, China Society of Arts and Sciences the Peking Society of Natural History, etc. He also joined various local ornithological and other scientific societies contending that we should support such organizations at least to the extent of paying annual dues. Among such societies of which he was a member were the American Society of Mammalogists; the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists; Washington Academy of Sciences; Biological Society of Washington; Cooper Ornithological Club; Wilson Ornithological Club; and Baird Ornithological Club.

As early as 1922, and perhaps before, Richmond had developed an intestinal ulceration which caused him much suffering and occasional severe hemorrages which weakened him not a little but in the intervals he was nearly as active as formerly and kept up all of his work at the museum and at home. He, however, became more pessimistic as time went on and wrote me in August, 1923, regarding assuming the full responsibilities of the Curatorship of Birds a position to which we all hoped to see him appointed:

> "I am too old to bother with it. All I want is to be relieved of the deadly routine, annual reports, etc., and to pursue certain lines that I have started but never finished. And that is that! If I can't secure the freedom any other way I will resign and work here as a free lance. If no other way is open I will resign and work at home. If that fails I will refuse to work at all! * * * I am an old man when the temperature is rambling around 95° with about an equal percent of humidity though I spruce up when we have a cool spell. The only trouble is that cool spells come so rarely in summer!"

After the death of Robert Ridgway, however, Richmond was

appointed Curator of Birds in the National Museum, on July 1, 1929, but voluntarily relinquished the position on September 16 to resume his former status as Associate Curator which was in line with his attitude as expressed in the preceding letter. With the appointment of Dr. Herbert Friedmann as Curator, he was now relieved of all of the "deadly routine" of which he had complained but his physical condition was such that much of his initiative for research was lost. He spent most of his time in reading proof of various works and helping others in matters of nomenclature and bibliography, occupations which had become second nature to him.

His periods of illness year by year became more frequent and he showed more and more the ravages of disease. The end came suddenly on May 19, 1932, in the Georgetown Hospital in Washington.

How seldom do we stop to realize the breadth of ornithology or pause to consider the various factors which enter into its advancement.

The ornithologist who makes a trip far afield and brings back trophies from the tropical forests of the Amazon, from the Arctic tundra, or from the deserts of China, and possessses the ability to write of his experience, achieves fame at one stroke, so far as the general public is concerned. But all the while there are others who are conducting painstaking researches in the study room or library of the museum, and who are unknown outside these walls except to a few colleagues interested in the same fields.

Yet their work is often more important in the development of ornithology than the more spectacular achievements of the explorer.

It was to this latter category that our friend belonged and among those who devoted themselves to the problems of bibliography, nomenclature and systematics, he stood in the very front rank.

He spent a life-time delving into the archives of ornithology, bringing into order the scattered and often careless work of our predecessors, to the end that the work of his contemporaries and of those who come after us may be the more accurate and free from error.

Though his modesty prevented us from bestowing upon him, during life, the rewards that his unselfish work abundantly de-

served, we shall I trust, in the years to come, as we recognize more and more our indebtedness to him, continue to remember and honor the work and character of Charles Wallace Richmond.

Academy of Natural Sciences
Philadelphia.