

Only four changes in names are adopted: *Laterallus* for *Creciscus*, the necessity for which has already been pointed out by Mr. Peters; *Pagophila alba* for the Ivory Gull reverts to *P. eburnea* on the grounds that *Gunnerus Larus albus* is unidentifiable; *Hydroprogne caspia* becomes *H. tschegrava* because our author regards the latter name of Lepechin as acceptable; the generic name *Alle* Link for the Dovekie becomes *Plautus* Gunnerus, which Mr. Peters regards as recognizable, and as a consequence *Plautus Brünnich* for the Great Auk must change to *Pinguinus Bonaterre*. With the exception of the first change, which is not open to question, all of these cases have been before the A. O. U. Committee several times and one, at least has been accepted and later rejected. Such changes, back and forth, are entirely due to personal opinion and the personnel of the Committee, and, it would seem, must go on forever. It is in such cases as these that a Committee vote is more likely to produce stability than an individual opinion.

The questions of the limits of genera and of specific vs. subspecific rank are also entirely matters of personal opinion and views on many of them have shifted back and forth in the several editions of the 'Check-List' and other standard works, and will no doubt continue to shift. However it is a matter for congratulation to know that in the 262 North American species and subspecies of Mr. Peters's list only 27 changes have been found desirable by him as representing his personal opinion as opposed to that of the Committee and that only one is absolutely necessary by the Code of Nomenclature.

Besides the two mentioned above there is one other new name proposed in the volume—*Rallus torquatus limarius* for *Hypotaenidia saturata* Salvadori.

It must be the greatest satisfaction to all ornithologists, especially those in charge of large museum collections to have this admirable, up to date, résumé of the birds of the world which will prove absolutely indispensable in systematic work and our only regret is that the subsequent volumes cannot be speeded up. Our hearty congratulations and encouragement go out to Mr. Peters.—W. S.

Roberts's 'Bird Portraits in Color.'—Following the example of the publishers of the 'Birds of New York' and of the 'Birds of Massachusetts' the University of Minnesota has issued the plates of Dr. Roberts's 'Birds of Minnesota' in a separate volume or atlas.¹ We learn from the introduction that this is done in response to a growing demand for a handy set of illustrations to meet the use of the school room and the casual bird-lover; furthermore the edition of the large work is exhausted with no immediate prospect of a second printing.

Dr. Roberts has improved upon the atlases above mentioned by preparing a brief text to accompany the plates which is printed on the pages

¹ Bird Portraits in Color two hundred ninety-five North American species, text by Thomas S. Roberts, M. D. Minneapolis, 1934. Price, cloth, \$3.50; limp cloth, \$2.50; in portfolio without text, \$1.50. Univ. Minn. Press, Minneapolis.

facing the pictures and cleverly spaced so as to occupy just one page and to cover just the species portrayed, so that no turning of leaves back and forth is necessary. There is also a handy index. The plates figure 295 North American birds and will prove of great educational value.—W. S.

The Ten Year Index to 'The Auk.'—Only those who have had occasion to compile an index can have any adequate idea of the amount of labor involved in preparing one of the ten year indexes to 'The Auk' and the thanks of the Union and of ornithologists in general should be extended to Mr. Harry S. Swarth and his associates for their painstaking work on the volume¹ before us, which covers the ten years from 1921 to 1930.

This index is almost entirely a western contribution since Mr. Swarth's associates, in compiling the index slips—C. G. Abbott, F. N. Bassett, G. Dallas Hanna, Mrs. Elinor B. McCabe, N. P. Skinner and George Willett are all residents of the Coast as are also George S. Swarth and Mrs. Emma D. Benson who made the final copy. Dr. Herbert Friedmann checked the names of foreign species, Dr. T. S. Palmer prepared the biographical index, and Frank Bond checked over 8000 of the cross references—the two latter being veterans in the matter of 'Auk' indexes.

It is becoming more and more necessary that an observer recording a bird from a certain locality, or describing some peculiar habit or behavior, should be acquainted with what has already been written on the subject, and he may be quite unfamiliar with the method of acquiring the desired information. It is for this very purpose that these indexes are prepared. Should one be desirous of gaining information on the Prairie Warbler, for instance, by turning to that species in the index he will find volume and page reference to every mention of the bird in each state in which it has been recorded during the ten year period as well as to notes or papers on its distribution, song, migration, plumage, etc., etc. If it is a paper by a certain author that he is in search of he will find under the author's name reference either to the paper itself or to a review of it; and again, if information on the birds of a state or country is desired he will find references to every item published in 'The Auk' relative to the ornithology of the desired state, as well as to reviews or notices of papers published elsewhere. Even if one does not have a set of 'The Auk' the index is still of the greatest use as he can secure the necessary references and can then apply to someone who has the journal, to look up the information for him.

There are now four of these indexes covering forty-seven volumes and it is hoped that every member of the Union will secure the present one, if not the others, not only for his personal benefit but to aid the Society in financing the publication. If members like Mr. Swarth and his associates are willing to sacrifice their time to produce these indispensable

¹ Ten Year Index to The Auk Volumes XXXVIII—XLVII—1921—1930. Prepared by a Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union, Edited by H. S. Swarth. Published by the American Ornithologists' Union. Lancaster, Pa. 1934. Pp. i-xxiii + 1-328. Price, paper bound \$3.00; cloth \$4.00.