

tion, I am happy that several reliable witnesses can be named. At the time of the occurrence I corresponded with Dr. T. S. Roberts, under whom I had studied. Since then, he has reprimanded me each time I have visited him for never having written the story for publication. That is why, after three and one-half years, I have finally written the account, although it should have been done sooner.—JAMES W. KIMBALL, *Senior Biologist, Nebraska Game, Forestation, and Parks Commission, Pierce, Nebraska.*

Are the seasons changing?—It is often said that the seasons are changing, but here is a bit of evidence to the contrary. At Williams College, situated in Williamstown, Massachusetts, there are official weather reports from 1816 to date. The early ones were made by Prof. Chester Dewey and, along with weather data, he noted other happenings including dates of arriving spring birds. These make interesting comparisons with my own records of birds made one hundred years later in the same place. In the first volume of records from 1816 to 1838, the average date of the first Robin was March 15 and my records from 1916–1938 give exactly the same average date. The dates of the first Robin ranged from March 3 to April 2 a century ago, and from March 1 to March 30 in the latter group of years. For the Bluebird, the early records averaged March 14 for the first one seen, and mine average March 18, with a range in those previous twenty-three years of March 5 to April 1 and in the corresponding years of this century it was March 7 to April 14.—WM. J. CARTWRIGHT, *Williamstown, Massachusetts.*

Cractes vs. Perisoreus.—Ridgway (Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., 50, pt. 3: 750, 1904) proposed the use of *Cractes* Billberg (Synop. Faun. Scand., 1, pt. 2: 14, 1928) as an earlier valid name for *Perisoreus* Bonaparte (Giorn. Acadico, 49: 42, 1831), and cited *Corvus infaustus* Linnaeus as type species. The A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature rejected this proposal on the grounds that *Cractes* was simply a substitute name for *Garrulus* Brisson (*see* Auk, 25: 394, 1908), but Sharpe (Hand-L. Gen. Spec. Birds, 5: 614, 1909) adopted Ridgway's arrangement as did Hartert (Vög. Pal. Fauna, Ergänzb.: 22, 1932). More recently, Amadon (Amer. Mus. Novitates, no. 1251: 5, 1944) has reopened the discussion by similar use of *Cractes* instead of *Perisoreus*.

In order to examine the case at first hand, and lacking a copy of Billberg's exceedingly rare work, I wrote to Dr. W. H. Thorpe of the University of Cambridge, England, where a copy is preserved. Dr. Thorpe most kindly sent me a transcript of the original account of *Cractes* which deserves reprinting here in order to make the evidence accessible to interested workers. The original description is contained in a footnote to which reference is made in the generic heading, as follows:

"G. 6 CRACTES*), Sv. Skrika.

.....

"*) Hab. Gener. fere Corvi; sed capite proportionaliter majore et multo minore; pennis capitis longis pro lubitu erigentibus.—Sine omni dubio hoc Genus distinctum; sed nomen genericum *Garrulus* Brissonis speciebus pluribus avium ut triviale attributum, ineptum est, unde *Cractes*, e voce Κράκτις (clamator), adoptavimus."

From this paragraph it is clear that Billberg was simply proposing *Cractes* as a substitute for *Garrulus* to which he took exception. He designated no type for his genus. Consequently the type first to be established for either generic name