

isfaction of all concerned. I could argue it, and ask which does the most harm, a spyglass ornithologist with a ready imagination, who describes things we never heard of before (and which never really happened), or a sane student of birds who is obliged to use a gun, and whose writings may be depended upon for information and not for imagination? I might do this, but I prefer not to walk in where angels fear to tread.

There are several things well said, and sentiments given noble expressions in your communication, and with these I have no quarrel; but it is the evil men do that lives after them. It is the evil of the writer who talks of "dead and stuffed bird skins," who strains a point to serve his argument, even though the ill-judged reflection be at good men and better ornithologists than he. Here is where the damage of careless spilling of ink on these questions comes in.

You are not fortunate in paraphrasing what you say is a "very bad popular saying," concerning Indians, as, that collectors seem to believe "the only good bird is a dead bird." It may be to your mind a very bad saying that "A good Indian is a dead Indian," but very often it has been true. The late Major Bendire hunted Indians and birds in the same country and killed both with equal lack of compunction, when the blood of murdered settlers cried aloud for vengeance, or the authorities at the National Museum wanted positive identification. A dead Indian was a very good Indian to Major Bendire, and a dead bird in the hand looked better to him where the identity of a rare set of eggs was in question than a squint at a bird through a glass. He used the spyglass on the Indians.

You refer to an "interesting and excellently written article" in the September-October CONDOR on the rufous-crowned sparrow, "the description of a social colony on a little hillside opposite a schoolhouse," and add "where the birds obtained a part of their living no doubt from the scraps remaining of the children's lunches." Then you go on to speak of these "feathered friends" which the teacher, "if she was up-to-date," you think, taught the children to love and protect.

You don't know anything about it, but to add a nice little pathetic touch you "think" all this! Then you go on to score the ornithologist who "collected" the parent after finding the nest, as you say, "merely for dissection to show that her nest of eggs was complete." This statement is not merely absurd, for it is at variance with the facts; it does injury.

The schoolhouse referred to (and I know the country) is properly speaking, in the mountains, and if the nice little school boys spoken of were able to get anywhere near these wary sparrows they probably used a slingshot on them. Without the bird for positive identification the valuable and interesting article, which the southern critic praises so highly, would never have been possible. The bird was shot and properly shot, for identification, as the set of eggs was extremely rare, and was not sacrificed merely to satisfy a puerile curiosity as to a full nest complement, as the well-meaning critic asserts. Without positive identity what could have been written as to the singular differences in color of eggs of this same species? As to the number of skins secured from this favored patch of hillside, the species is rare, and doubtless they are needed in collections. Certainly they will not be missed up there in the hills where we may infer the "Dago" school boy, if he takes notice at all, shies stones at them on his happy schoolward way. There will be rufous-crowned sparrows on many a hillside when you and I are where the daisies grow!

H. R. TAYLOR.

Alameda, Cal.

GENERAL NEWS NOTES

The American Ornithologists' Union held its twentieth Annual Congress at Washington, D. C., November 17-20, 1902. All the officers for 1902 were re-elected. Harry C. Oberholser was chosen Fellow and the following Members were added: Andrew Allison, Paul Bartsch, A. C. Bent, W. C. Braislin, Hubert L. Clark, A. H. Howell, E. A. Goldman, F. H. Knowlton, A. H. Norton, T. G. Pearson, S. F. Rathbun, P. M. Silloway, and C. O. Whitman. The program was one of unusual interest and the attendance exceeded that of any previous meeting. The Union will meet in Philadelphia, November 16, 1903. (See Editorial column).

During the Christmas vacation W. W. Price, as has been his wont in past years, took a party of young men on a hunting and collecting expedition. Last year they descended the Colorado from The Needles in boats, and the two seasons previous were spent on the Colorado south of Yuma, and about the head of the gulf. This year the party penetrated the mountains of northern Sonora in quest of big game. Mr. Price is well known as a prince of good fellows in camp, and it is probable the party had a thoroughly enjoyable time, besides acquiring valuable material. Later we hope to publish an account of the trip.

When we last heard from Joseph Mailliard he was in Valparaiso, Chile, and not altogether infatuated with the place. He finds that he arrived during the closed season for game, and as all birds are classed as such, the outlook for collecting is hardly reassuring. A stranger is able to collect only on large ranches where the owner is sufficiently prominent to hinder constant molestation by "minions of the law." We hope our friend has found the situation more favorable than the outlook would seem to have indicated and has already an interesting representation of native birds.

Recently we had a letter from E. A. Goldman from Zacatecas, which is one of the famous old mining cities of Mexico. At present writing Mr. Goldman is collecting near Ocotlan, Jalisco, in the interests of the Biological Survey.

Wilfred H. Osgood paid us a flying visit en route to Washington from Alaska, where he has spent the summer in the interests of the Biological Survey.

Lyman Belding, our veteran ornithologist, is now at Pacific Grove. Mr. Belding and the Editor spent two pleasant days along the coast in quest of waterfowl.

Joseph Grinnell visited his home in Pasadena during Christmas week and was present at the annual meeting of the Southern Division.

When last heard from, R. H. Beck was in Washington, D. C., hatching schemes for a new collecting trip.

Malcolm P. Anderson recently returned from a collecting trip on the Stikine River, Alaska.

Ralph Arnold is now in Washington, D. C.

MINUTES OF CLUB MEETINGS

Northern Division

NOVEMBER.—The Northern Division met at 405 Kipling St., Palo Alto, November 1, 1902, President Grinnell presiding. In the absence of Mr. Barlow, T. J. Hoover was appointed secretary pro tem. The club then listened to a talk on the "Birds of Laysan Island," by W. K. Fisher. A paper on the "Faunal Areas of California," by Frank Stephens, was read. Mr. Grinnell told of his experiences with "Mother Cary's Chickens" on Los Coronados Islands. After a short recess the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. W. M. Pierce was elected to active membership and Messrs. H. W. Fowler, J. M. Miller and Miss Agnes Frisius were proposed for membership. A communication from Mr. A. M. Shields tendering a gift of birds and eggs to the Club Museum was read, and the President on motion was instructed to appoint a committee to visit Mr. Shields. T. J. Hoover was appointed as a committee. The Club here adjourned by declaration of the President to discuss a subtle brew. After refreshments a communication from Frank Stephens proposing the preparing of a map showing the faunal areas and life zones in California was discussed. After other sundry business nominations for officers for the year 1903 were then called for. Mr. Barlow was nominated for President. For Senior Vice-President, Messrs. Hoover, Emerson and Snyder; for Junior Vice-President, Messrs. Emerson, Thompson, Skinner, Cohen and Keyes. Mr. Keyes was nominated for Secretary. The following nominations for Business Manager-Treasurer were made: C. Barlow, J. Grinnell, T. J. Hoover.

Mr. Emerson invited the Club to hold its Annual Meeting at his home in Haywards. The Club then adjourned to meet at Haywards, January 10, 1903.

T. J. HOOVER, Secretary pro tem.

JANUARY.—The ninth annual meeting was held at the residence of W. Otto Emerson, Haywards, Saturday evening January 10. The gathering was one of the largest in years, there being about eighteen members present and a goodly number of visitors. Mr. Henry Reed Taylor was unanimously elected President for 1903. The full minutes will be published in the March issue.

Southern Division

NOVEMBER.—The Division met at the residence of Mr. F. S. Daggett, Pasadena, on the evening of Friday, Nov. 28. Mr. Daggett presided and there were five other members present, Messrs. B. Franklin, O. W. Howard, Edw. Howard, Prof. Conant and H. S. Swarth. Mr. Chas. Richard-