

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

During the coming summer there is to be inaugurated a school of "Field Natural History" in Yosemite National Park. Instruction is planned primarily for the training of nature study teachers, those who are called upon to act as leaders of Boy Scouts or Campfire Girls, or as nature guides at summer camps. Emphasis will thus be placed upon out-of-door knowledge of living things. The new Yosemite Museum, affording exceptional facilities for the work, will serve as headquarters. Dr. Harold C. Bryant will be in charge, and the seven or eight individuals serving as nature guides in Yosemite will act as instructors. During this first year the number of those who can be received in the school will necessarily be limited. Anyone interested in obtaining detailed information may apply to the Park Naturalist, Yosemite National Park.

In the death of John Van Denburgh, on October 23, 1924, the general field of science lost a worthy exponent and the Cooper Ornithological Club lost a member of long standing and loyal influence. In 1898 and 1899, Van Denburgh published articles on birds of various parts of California, which remain to this day models of accuracy and sources of important distributional and biographical data. His attention for many years subsequently was absorbed in the study of herpetology, in which subject he contributed with great authority. Of late years his interest in birds had returned, as witness several articles in recent volumes of *THE CONDOR*, the last of which appeared in the March issue of last year.

We learn through Professor Junius Henderson, Curator of the Museum of the University of Colorado, that two important collections of bird skins have been received by that institution during the past year. Dr. Leonard R. Freeman, of Denver, presented his entire collection, consisting of 645 skins taken by him in the Ohio Valley from 1875 to 1880. This accession proved to be in excellent condition and to be especially rich in plumage phases of the warblers. Dr. W. H. Bergtold donated his collection of 576 skins and many sets of eggs, taken chiefly in the Rocky Mountain region and New York. These two accessions add many species new to the University of Colorado collec-

tions, and there are also some record specimens of importance.

COMMUNICATION

ANENT THE CROW

Editor *THE CONDOR*:

While deploring the introduction of controversial matter into the pages of our ornithological magazines, I would like to take some exception to the address of Dr. Witmer Stone which you extoll on page 44 of the January *CONDOR*. The sentiments you quote are sentiments only, and especially in regard to "the much maligned Crow" are obviously biased by the author's regard for that bird. No notice is taken of any recent publications dealing with the increasing menace of the Crow; on the contrary, the definite statement is made that "he is doing no more harm today than he did fifty years ago, if as much."

It is exactly on account of the prodigious increase of the Crow, particularly in the West, an increase that threatens the existence not only of our game-birds and waterfowl but also of the entire bird population of regions affected by agriculture, that true conservationists who have really studied the question are advocating the absolute outlawing of the black villain. Besides the evidence of my own observations extending over a large portion of the West and covering a period of thirty-eight years, all observers whom I meet and others who voluntarily write to me are unanimous as to this increase which probably amounts to thirty-fold in the last twenty years. A sample letter dated September 24, 1924, from a veteran naturalist, Mr. Wm. B. Mershon, whose last book you review on the page preceding your review of Dr. Stone's brochure, is as follows:

"I have just read what you have to say about crows in the *CONDOR* in the September-October issue just at hand, and this is simply to let you know that I agree with everything you say.

"I have a ranch up in Saskatchewan, about twenty-five miles northeast of Moose Jaw. I began going into that country in 1903. The crows were few then. I rarely noticed them. Of late they have been there in droves, and there is no question but that they destroy the eggs of the ducks. Grouse have become very scarce