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inhabits distinct islands with separating sea channels broad enough to make the passage over difficult and infrequent.

The above facts make Philippine species and varieties geographical or local groups depending upon local causes for their existence. They show *isolation* to be the first and the necessary step in the formation of species.

The foregoing facts make the belief in the fusion of closely allied species, when thrown together, almost necessary. The volcanic character of the islands and the shallow seas separating them, with the observed marks of frequent changes of sea level, make it necessary to believe that the land areas of the Philippines have been continually varying and that, in multitudes of cases, closely allied species have been thrown together by the connection of islands formerly distinct. These closely allied species now no longer existing together, they must have disappeared either by the destruction of one or by their fusion. To one who has observed the likeness in size and coloring and notes and food of these allied forms, the latter is the only reasonable hypothesis for the greater number of cases.

A satisfactory explanation of many or most of the phenomena of distribution of genera and species in larger and continental areas may be found in giving the same prominence to isolation and fusion in the formation of the species occupying them.

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## RECENT LITERATURE.

**McIlwraith's Birds of Ontario.**<sup>1</sup>—The first edition of Mr. McIlwraith's excellent manual, 'The Birds of Ontario,' published in 1886 (see Auk, IV, 1887, p. 245), was speedily exhausted, so that for some years past the

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<sup>1</sup> The | Birds of Ontario | being a concise account of every Species of Bird | known to have been found in Ontario | with a | Description of their Nests and Eggs | and Instructions for collecting Birds and preparing | and preserving Skins, also Directions how | to form a Collection of Eggs | By Thomas McIlwraith | Member of the American Ornithologists' Union | — | Second Edition—Enlarged and Revised to Date | With Illustrations | — | Toronto | William Briggs, Wesley Buildings | Montreal: C. W. Coates    Halifax: S. F. Huestis | MDCCCXCIV—8vo., pp. i-x, 11-426.

work has been unobtainable to many who desire to consult its pages. It is therefore with great pleasure that we welcome this valuable handbook, revised to date, much enlarged, and in a dress more befitting its scientific importance and popular interest. In place of the introductory essay 'On Birds and Bird Matters' of the first edition, we have here a few pages on the general subject, with special reference to migration, followed by a dozen pages of directions as to how to collect and prepare specimens for the cabinet.

The species treated number 317 as against 302 in the first edition, to which nearly 400 pages of the work are formally devoted, giving about a page and a quarter to each species. The technical, descriptive portion of the text is printed in small type, the biographical in much larger type. The whole has evidently been carefully revised, and much new matter added to the biographies, which in many instances have been to a large extent rewritten, the recent literature of the subject having been placed under contribution. As the author himself says: "In the present edition, it has been my object to place on record, as far as possible, the name of every bird that has been observed in Ontario; to show how the different species are distributed throughout the Province; and especially, to tell where they spend the breeding season. To do this, I have had to refer to the notes of those who have visited the remote homes of the birds, at points often far apart and not easy of access, and to use their observations, published or otherwise, when they tend to throw light on the history of the birds observed in Ontario." Credit is of course duly given for the information thus obtained.

As ornithologists well know, the author of the 'Birds of Ontario' is well equipped for his task, and, as would be expected, has done his work well, the second edition being fully abreast of the subject, the few faults of the first edition having been corrected, and the more important recent discoveries in the field here covered being duly incorporated. The text is illustrated with numerous cuts, though none of them appear to be here for the first time published. An excellent portrait of the author forms a fitting frontispiece to the volume, which will doubtless prove a boon to the bird lovers of Ontario and adjoining Provinces and States.

We notice that the last bird given — inserted as an addendum — is the Black-capped Petrel (*Æstrelata hasitata*), the record being based on a specimen found dead near Toronto, Oct. 30, 1893. This is of interest as making the third inland record for this species during the autumn of 1893, one having been taken at Blacksburg, Va., Aug. 30, 1893 (see Auk, X, p. 361), and another at Oneida Lake, N. Y., Aug. 28, 1893 (Auk, XI, p. 162). We have private information of the capture also of a specimen in Vermont at about the same time. Doubtless these occurrences of this little known sea-bird so far inland have some relation to the great cyclone of August 26–27, which proved so disastrous to property as well as bird life on the coast of South Carolina (cf. Wayne, Auk, XI, p. 85).—J. A. A.

Sharpe's Catalogue of the Fulicariæ and Alektorides.<sup>1</sup>—In volume XXIII of the British Museum 'Catalogue of Birds,' embracing the two orders Fulicariæ and Alektorides, Dr. Sharpe has given us a most welcome contribution to systematic ornithology. The subject is treated with his usual ability and care, and of course after the stereotyped method of former volumes of this invaluable series. The family Rallidæ is considered as consisting of 187 species, distributed among 61 genera (the latter including several now extinct). The other families are comparatively small, numbering collectively 65 species, of which 30 belong to the family of the Bustards (Otididæ) and 19 to the Cranes (Gruidæ).

A feature of the volume is the large number of recently new generic names introduced, proposed and first published mainly within the year 1893 by Mr. Sharpe in the Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club. In addition to these (10 in the family Rallidæ alone) various groups usually treated as subgenera are here raised to full generic rank. Among the latter, as regards North American birds, are *Coturnicops* Bon. (recently 'emended' into *Ortygops*), and *Creciscus* Cab. *Limnogeranus* appears as a new generic name for our Whooping Crane, while *Ionornis* Reichen. is treated as a synonym of *Porphyryula* Blyth, our Purple Gallinule thus standing as *Porphyryula martinica*. As regards species and subspecies, *Rallus beldingi* is considered as a subspecies of *R. elegans*; *R. scottii* is made a synonym of *R. saturatus*, the latter, together with *crepitans* and *obsoletus*, being treated as subspecies of *R. longirostris*. Of forms extra-limital to the A. O. U. Check-List, *R. coryi* is made a synonym of *caribæus*, the latter also standing as a subspecies of the *longirostris* group. We infer from this that Mr. Sharpe has never seen *R. coryi* (his three specimens of *caribæus* are recorded as from Jamaica). *R. longirostris cubanus* Chapman is entered in the 'Addenda,' and in the 'Systematic Index,' as a subspecies of *longirostris*, as described. A closely related South American form of *R. virginianus* is separated specifically (and figured) as *R. æquatorialis*. All of the American forms of *Gallinula* being referred to *G. galeata*, the habitat of this species is given as "the greater part of the New World," while, following Stejneger, *G. sandwichensis* is also recorded as a subspecies of *galeata*. The Andean *G. garmani* is considered as "a fairly distinguishable race," but, it is added, "if the Chilian and Bolivian bird is recognized as a race, the West Indian bird will have to be admitted as a subspecies also." As a matter of fact, however, the differences presented by the latter are trivial in com-

<sup>1</sup> Catalogue | of the | Fulicariæ | (Rallidæ and Heliornithidæ) | and | Alektorides | (Aramidæ, Eurypygidæ, Mesitidæ, Rhinochetidæ, | Gruidæ, Psophiidæ, and Otididæ) | in the | Collection | of the | British Museum. | By | R. Bowdler Sharpe. | London: | Printed by order of the Trustees. | Sold by | Longmans & Co., 39 Paternoster Row; | B. Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly; Dulau & Co., 37 Soho Square, W.; | Kegan Paul & Co., Paternoster House, Charing Cross Road; | and at the | British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, S. W. | 1894. = Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum, Vol. XXIII. 8vo., pp. i-xiii, 1-353, pl. i-ix.

parison with those which separate *garmani*, in which, in Lake Titicaca specimens, the length of the wing runs up to 9.10 inches, with an average of 8.50, — a difference one-fourth to one-third of the total length of the wing in average *galeata*, combined with much darker coloration and a great reduction in the amount of white. In West Indian and Bogota specimens there is very little reduction in size from average *galeata*, but the frontal shield is larger, the back darker and less olive, and the front of the tarsus more or less strongly tinged with red—the latter a feature sometimes seen in Florida specimens. While we should not deem it advisable to name the West Indian form, the case is very different with the Andean form, although it may grade into *galeata*.

According to the characters given for the separation of the subspecies of the *Aramides cayanae* group, of six Trinidad specimens (all females), collected by Mr. Chapman, two would be referable to *A. cayanae* and four to *A. cayanae chiricote*, in these last the hinder part of the crown and nape being strong rufous brown, instead of gray. This feature is thus shown to be variable in specimens from the same locality, independently of either sex or season. The species and subspecies described apparently for the first time in the present work are: *Rallus æquatorialis* (figured, pl. ii); "*Limnopardalus rytirhynchus*, subsp.  $\beta$ . *Limnopardalus vigilantis*" (figured, pl. iv); *Aramides gutturalis* (figured, pl. v); *Porzana galapagoensis*; "*Corethura, elegans*, subsp.  $\alpha$ . *Corethura reichenovi*"; *Grus lilfordi*.—J. A. A.

**Elliot's Monograph of the Pittidæ.**—Part III, dated February, 1894<sup>1</sup>, contains the following species: *Eucichla guiana*, *Pitta lorix*, *P. steerii*, *P. concinna*, *P. rubrinucha*, *P. nepalensis*, *P. koeki*, and *P. celebensis*. Figures are given of the young birds in first plumage, as well as of the adult male and female, in two of the species (Blue-tailed Pitta, *Eucichla guiana*, and the Nepal Pitta, *P. nepalensis*), and there is also some account of the habits of these species. While the sexes are alike in coloration when adult, the young in first plumage are almost as different as possible from the adults. The Blue-tailed Pitta's nest is built in bushes six or eight feet above the ground, and is ball-shaped; the Nepal Pitta nests on the ground, while the Celebes Pitta (*P. celebensis*) nests "in a hole dug in the slope of a river bank." The eggs are in each case white, spotted and streaked with dark markings.—J. A. A.

**A Bird-Lover in the West.**<sup>2</sup>—A desire to widen the circle of her feathered friends has led Mrs. Miller further afield and in 'A Bird-Lover in the West' she gives us the results of her studies in Ohio, Colorado, and Utah.

<sup>1</sup> For notice of Parts I and II, see Auk, XI, pp. 62 and 173.

<sup>2</sup> A Bird-Lover in the West. By Olive Thorne Miller. Boston and New York. Houghton, Mifflin & Company. The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1894. 12mo., pp. i-vii, 1-278.