

the want of an adequate colour nomenclature, and I therefore feel qualified to know the exact requirements of the case, to meet which and produce a work indispensable to all naturalists, and many others besides, no labour nor expense has been spared.

The new work will present about 1,350 colour samples, arranged after a scientific system, no two of them so nearly alike that the normal eye cannot easily discern the difference. These are named as far as practicable; but, it being obviously impossible to name all of so large a number, an exceedingly simple system of numerals and symbols has been devised, enabling the user to very easily and quickly designate not only any colour actually shown, but also the intermediates, both as to hue and tone. The very large proportion of dull or "broken" colours—the various-coloured browns, greys, &c.—are a conspicuous feature. The size of the book will be about $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the price about \$5 net.—Very truly yours,

ROBERT RIDGWAY.

Washington, D.C., 11th September, 1909.

Death of Dr. Richard Bowdler Sharpe.

MEMBERS of the A.O.U. will much regret to learn of the death of a distinguished ornithologist and one of its honorary members—Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, F.R.S. A full account of his ornithological career, together with a portrait, will appear in the next issue of *The Emu*. Dr. Sharpe took a keen interest in the affairs of the A.O.U., as is evinced by a recent letter received by one of the editors of *The Emu* from the deceased ornithologist:—

"I shall be very grateful to you if you will send me part 4 of vol. vii. of *The Emu*. I have never received it, and it seems to have miscarried. To be without a part of *The Emu*, and to have my set incomplete, is a thing too dreadful to contemplate.

"I have lately been going through the whole of *The Emu* with Dr. Godman, picking up the threads, and seeing whether anything has been left out in his 'Monograph.' Will you allow me the following criticisms which occur to me?

"Taking it as a whole, and considering that it is a new venture, I find *The Emu* wonderfully well managed and edited—a most creditable achievement for the ornithologists who have piloted it to success.

"I think some of the titles are a little spun out. For instance (*Emu* vii., p. 142), Legge's paper, 'Some Notes on the Location of Birds,' &c., &c., could be simply 'On Birds of Homesteads, Tasmania,' leaving the reader to see in the text that Homesteads was in the Break-o'-Day district.*

"This criticism does not go for much, but some of the titles are a little long.

* Dr. Sharpe appears to have been under a misapprehension that, in Colonel Legge's article, "Homesteads" was the name of a place. —EDS.

"The chief trouble I have had has been from the persistent way in which vernacular English names are quoted without the Latin names. Mathews' 'General Index' will, however, put this right. I find him a very good fellow, and an extremely keen man. When once his work gets started I think he will do splendid work.

"In reading through *The Emu* I find that many Australian naturalists—Colonel Ryan for one—have visited England, and apparently have not been to see me. Perhaps they hit on my vacation time, as I do not remember their coming to the Bird-room. As I have not been away on vacation for four years (since my congress), I can't think that I could have missed them. As Le Souëf will tell you, I am a *very* busy man, but I always do my best. I seldom have a moment to myself, and have to do the most of my work at home, and scarcely an evening that I do not work from 8 p.m. till 2 and 3 a.m. I have finished vol. v. of the 'Handlist' at last, thank God!"

Notes and Notices.

ERRATUM.—*Emu*, part 2, p. 70—"I first met with this Robin on 12th November, 1908." The date should read "17th."

A NATIONAL COLLECTION.—With 750 species, Mr. H. L. White, Belltrees, Scone, New South Wales, possesses the largest Australian oological collection extant.

"THE NEW COLLECTING."—A good deal is written just now in denunciation of the collectors of birds' skins and eggs, &c. Why do not these "new collectors" be logical and advocate a heavy tax on cats? For one bird killed by or for ornithologists at least a thousand are killed by the "feline favourites."—*The Bulletin* (London).

NOMENCLATURE.—Since the inception of the A.O.U. the list of Australian birds followed has been that of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, which was adopted at Sydney, 1898. This list will eventually be superseded by the proposed A.O.U. "Check List." In the meantime, if authors of articles, &c., are obliged to use other authorities for nomenclature, references should be given, because it is obvious that only *one* accepted name should be used for a given species in the pages of *The Emu*, otherwise some confusion may arise, for which the editors can hardly be responsible.

THE PRICE OF A PLUME.—The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has been making excellent use of Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley's Egret pictures in England. Six sets of seven subjects, enlarged, are being shown in shop windows in leading thoroughfares, while lantern slides, made from the photos., are being exhibited at many lectures throughout the country. But