

the middle of the upper surfaces of the shafts of the six outer primaries, and is confined to the middle half of the exposed part of each, so that the basal half, and a considerable apical portion, together with all the rest of the wing, is pure white.

In the other extreme, the black covers the exposed portions of the outer surfaces of the shafts of all the primaries (sometimes being as intense on the 8th, 9th, and 10th, as on the 2d, 3d, and 4th) and also of the 'false wing' (alula). The under surfaces show it, but in a much less degree. The black is not limited to the shafts, and in some cases all the primaries, except the first, are extensively blotched and marbled with sooty, the markings being most distinct subapically. The coverts also are occasionally clouded.

Unfortunately, the wings were severed at the carpo-metacarpal joints; consequently it is impossible to say whether the secondaries had black shafts or not. But the primaries present every intermediate phase between their normal winter condition in typical *L. albus*, and the extreme dark mottled form characterized by Dr. Stejneger.

It is worthy of note that many of these wings are deeply tinged with a delicate and very beautiful shade of rose-pink, which is more pronounced than in a freshly killed Roseate Tern. The color is very transient and has already begun to fade in specimens which have been exposed to the light but little more than a week.

RECENT LITERATURE.

Gurney's 'List of the Diurnal Birds of Prey.'*—In a compact little volume of less than 200 pages, we have the fulfilment of Mr. Gurney's promise to supplement his valuable critical notes, published in 'The Ibis' for 1875-1882, on Mr. Sharpe's 'Catalogue of the Accipitres or Diurnal Birds of Prey in the collection of the British Museum,'† by a tabular index to the species, with references and annotations. The plan,

* A list | of the | Diurnal Birds of Prey, | with | references and annotations : | also | a record of specimens | preserved in the | Norfolk and Norwich Museums. | By | John Henry Gurney. | London : | John Van Voorst, 1 Paternoster Row, E. C. | MDCCCLXXXIV. | Small 8vo., pp. i-xv, 1-187.

† Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum. Volume I. London : Printed by order of the Trustees, 1874. 8vo., pp. i-xiii, 1-480, pls. I-XIV.

as originally announced, has been modified so as to include all the species known to the author, together with a series of 'Appendices,' fifteen in number, each consisting of a special paper reviewing critically some particular group or species. Regarding this additional matter we quote from the preface (p. vi) :—"Since my notes on Mr. Sharpe's volume were published in the 'Ibis,' I have seen occasion to modify my views as regards a few species, and have obtained additional information as to some others, and these results I have added to my present list in the form of footnotes, or, when too lengthy to be so introduced, in the shape of Appendices."

The work is based ostensibly upon the collection of Diurnal Raptores in the Norwich Museum, and indeed furnishes a list of the specimens contained in that establishment; but it is replete with interesting information derived from other sources, among which the British Museum and United States National Museum figure most prominently. The unequalled richness of the material which Mr. Gurney has had at his command may be appreciated when it is stated that of the 473 species and subspecies given in the catalogue, and embracing all that are known, no less than 385, represented by 2895 specimens, are contained in the Norwich Museum.*

The 'Appendices' which pertain specially to North American Falconidæ are the following:

'Appendix H. On the Genus *Buteola*.' Pp. 146, 147.

'Appendix N. On the Existence in North America of *Hierofalco gyrfalco*, and its possible Hybridism with *H. holbælli*.' Pp. 161, 164.

Under the first heading are treated the *Buteo brachyurus* Vieill., and *B. fuliginosus* Scl.,† which are considered to be light and dark (melanistic) phases of one species. Regarding the Gyrfalcons, Mr. Gurney says:

"The result of the comparisons which I have here recorded leads me to agree with the conclusion previously arrived at by Mr. Sharpe and by Mr. Dresser that *H. gyrfalco* is found in the northern parts, not only of Europe and of Asia, but also of North America. The North American range of this species, however, has not at present been very clearly ascertained, especially to the eastward, and a similar uncertainty exists as to the western limits of *H. holbælli*, as also to the localities, if such there be, where both races occur and where hybridism may perhaps result from such propinquity. As I have already mentioned in my Notes, the Norwich Museum possesses three immature Falcons from Hudson's Bay, and these I believe to be referable to *H. gyrfalco*; but as they are not in adult dress, I do not feel absolutely certain of the correctness of this identification. The question of the geographical range of these Falcons is one which I think affords an interesting subject for further investigation, and which I trust will receive the attention it merits."

As to other North American species of the family there are few departures from the nomenclature of Bulletin 21 of the United States

* Of Owls, the same museum possesses 171 species and 1009 specimens!

† Cf. Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, VI, Oct. 1881, pp. 207—214.

National Museum ('Nomenclature of North American Birds'), but the following may be noted:

Astur atricapillus striatulus is not considered a "valid subspecies."

The American Golden Eagle is not deemed separable from that of the Palæarctic Region, and is therefore given simply as *Aquila chrysaëtus*.

Buteo borealis socorroensis is ranked as a species.

Asturina nitida plagiata is given as *A. plagiata*.

Elanus leucurus is considered as a subspecies of *E. axillaris*.

Falco albigularis is given as *Hypotriorchis rufigularis*, and *Rhynchofalco fusco-cærulescens* is also referred to *Hypotriorchis*.

Tinnunculus sparverius isabellinus is treated as a species, while *Æsalon richardsoni* is reduced to a subspecies of *Æ. columbarius*.

Hierofalco mexicanus polyagrus is given as *Falco mexicanus*, under the subgeneric heading of *Gennaia*.

Hierofalco gyrfalco obsoletus is recognized as a distinct species, *Falco labradoris*, while *H. g. islandus* and *H. g. candicans* are also considered specifically distinct, under the names of *Falco islandus* and *F. candicans*, respectively.

It is worthy of remark, that in the case of subspecies Mr. Gurney does not use trinomials, the distinction from the species, so far as typography is concerned, consisting only in the heading 'Subspecies,' and the prefix 'a,' or 'b' (according to the number of subspecies) to the name.

The classification adopted strikes us as being far more natural than most of the more recent arrangements; yet we regret to observe the association of such radically distinct forms, structurally considered, as the following: *Herpetotheres* and *Circaëtus*; *Micrastur* and *Geranospizias* with *Accipiter* and allied genera; *Elanoides*, *Rostrhamus*, *Ictinia*, etc., with *Milvus*, *Haliastur*, etc., and *Harpagus* with the true Falcones. A perfectly natural classification of this most difficult group of birds is, however, not possible with our present limited knowledge of their internal structure; and, as Mr. Gurney truly remarks, "it is obvious that a serial arrangement can only record with precision the connection of each genus and of each species with two of the forms which are thus grouped around it, and is therefore so far imperfect that it must of necessity disregard other natural connections, the existence of which cannot be satisfactorily indicated by any method of consecutive linear arrangement."—R. R.

Newton's 'Ornithology.'*—The article on Ornithology in the new edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' like most of the articles on Birds in that great work, is by Prof. Alfred Newton, and could scarcely have been entrusted to better hands. The article—complementary to that entitled 'Birds' in Volume III of the Encyclopædia—is an elaborate historical résumé of the subject, critically tracing the progress of the science from

* Ornithology. By Alfred Newton, M.A., F.R.S., F.Z.S., F.L.S., Professor of Zoölogy and Comparative Anatomy in the University of Cambridge. Reprinted from the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' [Ed. 9, Vol. XVIII, pp. 1-50] by special permission. Dec., 1884.



Gurney, John Henry. 1885. "Gurney's List of the Diurnal Birds of Prey." *The Auk* 2, 203–205. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4625229>.

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