Osteologically, *Molothrus* and *Pipilo* are not so very unlike." While all this may be true, so far as the skeleton may afford a clue to affinities, other features, we are convinced, obviously point to a decidedly Icterine affinity, rather than Fringilline, for both *Molothrus* and *Dolichonyx*, particularly the texture and general character of the plumage, their musky Icterine odor, pose, carriage and *habitus* in general. These in themselves are but superficial indices and traits of character, so to speak, which point to an Icterine ancestry, and general Icterine structure. It should be further noted that some of the exotic species of *Molothrus* make a close approach to the genus *Agelaius*, and that *Neospar*, *Curæus*, and *Leistes* are not far removed.

Among the Oscines we should not, *a priori*, look for evidence in the skeleton to decide nice points in affinity so much as to other and more superficial clues to relationship. In further illustration of this general point is Dr. Shufeldt's conclusion that the true affinities of the Magpie are Corvine and not Garruline, although this bird may be, as Dr. Shufeldt puts its, "so far as its skeleton is concerned . . . . a *Crow*, pure and simple." While it is important to compare birds of allied groups in respect to minute osteological differences and resemblances, the results are obviously, as Dr. Shufeldt so strongly affirms, to be correlated with the general structure, and conclusions, respecting affinities, to be final, must rest on more than a single system of characters.

The plates give figures of skull and pelvis of *Sturnella m. neglecta* and *Pica pica hudsonica*, the pelvis of *Corvus americanus*, and the skull of *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* (two examples).—J. A. A.

Shufeldt on the Skeleton of the Carolina Rail.—Another recent paper by Dr. Shufeldt contains a detailed description of the osteology of *Porzana carolina*,* with figures of the principal elements of the skeleton. The pelvis is found to possess many points in common with that of *Geococcyx*, each having a probosis and the same peculiar pattern of the pre-acetabular portion of the ilium. Various rather peculiar modifications of other skeletal elements are pointed out.—J. A. A.

Vernacular Ornithology.† — This is a wonderful world of checks, balances, compensations, and reactionary running-gear. For example, the A. O. U. Committee has upset all the technical names of birds that could thus hardly be dealt with, and Mr. Trumbull has set up all the vernacular names that could be treated understandingly. Thus ornithology fattens and flourishes, as on loaves and fishes; for has not our author wrought a veritable miracle; namely, the filling of a 'long-felt

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*Osteology of *Porzana carolina*. (The Carolina Rail.) By R. W. Shufeldt, M.D. C. M. Z. S. 8vo, pp. 16, with 7 cuts in the text. Reprinted from the 'Journal of Comparative Medicine and Surgery,' July, 1888.

† Names | and | Portraits of Birds | which interest gunners | with descriptions | In language understanded of the People | by Gurdon Trumbull | New York | Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square | 1888 | 1 vol. 8vo. pp. viii, 222.