

Stone on the Genus *Psilorhinus*.* — Of the four species described by authors—*P. morio* (Wagl.), *P. mexicanus*, Rüpp, *P. cyanogenys* Sharpe *P. vociferus* (Cabot)—*P. cyanogenys* Sharpe is referred to *P. mexicanus*, the characters of *P. cyanogenys* being individual and inconstant; *P. vociferus* also proves barely separable from *P. mexicanus*. The type of *P. vociferus* is in the collection of the Academy. —J. A. A.

Professor Thompson on the Systematic Position of *Hesperornis*. — Among the more recent of the anatomical papers from time to time published by University College, Dundee, is one by Professor D'Arcy W. Thompson 'On the Systematic Position of *Hesperornis*,†' in which the author, after a careful and concise comparison of *Hesperornis* with *Colymbus*, sums up as follows: "It appears to me that from purely osteological characters, the wide differences between *Hesperornis* and any Ratite, and its close resemblance to *Colymbus* or to *Podiceps* is clear and patent."

The Colymbine affinities of *Hesperornis* have been dwelt upon at some length by Dr. Fürbringer; and Dr. Shufeldt, although giving no reasons for his conclusions, has stated his opinion that the Loons and Grebes are derived from the same ancestral stock as that to which *Hesperornis* belonged. Professor Thompson seems to have to some extent misunderstood Dr. Fürbringer's conclusions, and the latter in a recent paper has felt the necessity of giving full quotations from his 'Morphology' to show that Professor Thompson's views were substantially those previously brought forward by himself.

We are not quite prepared to accept the statement that the resemblance existing between *Hesperornis* and *Colymbus* are "as great as between *Strigops* and the other Parrots," preferring to hold with Dr. Helm that *Hesperornis* is an early and highly specialized offshoot from the stem of which the Loons and Grebes are later branches.

In respect to the pelvis, it hardly seems that Professor Thompson or Dr. Helm lay quite enough stress upon the general character of the pelvis and the separation of ilium from ischium; although, on the other hand, this does not necessarily indicate Struthious affinities, a more exact statement of the case, perhaps, would be that the pelvis of *Hesperornis* is of a low, or generalized type, highly modified for swimming.

There are many interesting points that might be dwelt upon, but space will not permit.

The many structural resemblances—morphological and physiological—between *Hesperornis* and *Colymbus* are well brought out, and we think that most ornithologists will agree with Professor Thompson that the proper place for *Hesperornis* is a long distance from the Ostriches.

* On the Genus *Psilorhinus* Rüppell. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1891, pp. 94-96.

† Studies from the Museum of Zoölogy in University College, Dundee, Vol. I, No. 10.



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