cies thus seem to form only one group, divisible however into still smaller sections from the presence or absence of wings, and form and colouring of the elytra ; the Australian species stands alone ; and the New-World species constitute the four following subgenera :—

AMMOSIA, Westw. Type, *M. bifasciata*, Brullé.

————, Westw. Type, *M. testudinea*, Klug.

ANATRA, Hope. Type, *M. sepulchralis*, Fabr.

TETRACHA, Westw. Type, *M. Carolina*, Linn.

July 8; 1851.

In consequence of the death of the President, no meeting was held on this day.

July 22, 1851.

John Edward Gray, Esq., F.R.S. &c., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The following papers were read :—

1. ON THE LARGEST KNOWN SPECIES OF PHALERIDINE BIRD.
BY CHARLES LUCIEN, PRINCE BONAPARTE.

(Aves, Pl. XLIV.)

Among the new additions lately made to the British Museum I was struck by one of the *Alcidæ*, which I had never seen before, and which was very properly placed close by two beautiful specimens of my singular *Ceratorrhina*, also lately added to the zoological treasures of the English nation. The bird which is the subject of the present note is evidently the *Labrador Awk* of Latham, so miscalled from the erroneous impression that it came from those eastern shores of America, but too well described not to be recognized. Gmelin compiled his *Alca labradora* from the description of Latham, and all those who did not follow him blindly, have referred that indication to an immature state of the Razor-bill (*Mormon arctica*), a course in which they were led by geographical consideration only. Although our bird belongs to the family of the *Alcidæ*, it is not even an *Alcine*, as the Razor-bill, but, as is shown by the nakedness of the cere, it belongs to the other subfamily, or *Phaleridine*, of which it is at present the largest known.

In its family it is certainly allied to *Ceratorrhina*, but well deserving to constitute a genus by itself. The bill still more compressed, is in fact much more angulated beneath, and covered at the base, not by a bony process or *horn*, but by a soft membrane or *saddle*, which leaves a simple slit along the margins for the imperious nostrils.

GENUS NOVUM PHALERIDINARUM.

SAGMATORRHINA, Bp. Saddle-Bill.

Rostrum duplo longius quam altum; maxilla ad basin recta cerâ maximè induta, apice incurva; mandibula ultra medium statim adscendens, angulum obtusum constituens; nares lineares, marginales.

As the bird has been so well described by Latham, Mr. G. R. Gray very properly suggests that its specific name should be taken from that author.

SAGMATORRHINA LATHAMI, Bp. *Maxima; nigricans; subtus albido-fuliginosa: rostro pedibusque rubris; cerâ palmisque nigris.*

Long. 16 poll.; rostr. 2 poll. long., 1 altum, $\frac{5}{8}$ latum ad basin, $\frac{3}{8}$ ad med.; alæ $7\frac{1}{2}$ poll.; cauda $3\frac{1}{2}$; tars. $1\frac{1}{4}$; digitorum longissimus $2\frac{3}{8}$.

This species is the largest of the subfamily, which is well known to contain the dwarfs of the Water birds; it is one-third larger than *Ceratorrhina monocerota*, of which it has precisely the colouring, wanting only (at least in the state we have it) the little white feathers above the eye and at the corners of the mouth. The proportions of wings, tail, feet and toes are the same: the bill and toes must have been reddish; the cere and membranes black. Like the *Ceratorrhina*, it seems to be confined to the North-western Arctic regions of America; and we are led to believe it does not extend to the Siberian shores, from the circumstance of its not having been noticed by Russian naturalists.

The well-marked family of *Alcidæ* forms, with the *Colymbidæ*, *Podicipidæ* and *Spheniscidæ*, the great section of the *Urinatores*, which, with the *Lamellirostres*, constitutes alone the Order *Anseres*, as it must be restricted to the *web-footed Præoces* of Prof. Owen. The other two sections, *Longipennes* and *Totipalmi*, constitute now the Order *Gaviæ* of my *Conspectus*, being, in fact, *web-footed Altrices*, which have no more right to remain in *Anseres* than the *Pigeons* among the *Gallinæ*,—than the *Herodiones* among the *Grallæ*. The passage between my *Gaviæ* or *web-footed Altrices*, and my *Herodiones* or *grallatorial Altrices*, is beautifully exemplified by that most remarkable bird the *Balæniceps*, whose affinity with *Pelecanidæ* has so well been pointed out, and even exaggerated, by Mr. Gould. On the other hand, it is no less obvious that the *Longipennes*, some of which, with tumid bills, have been considered as *Sea-Pigeons*, connect them (the *Gaviæ*) with the *Columbæ*; whilst between the two subclasses the connections and correspondence (affinity and analogy) take place

in different degrees and by different means and sides, chiefly as exemplified in the following table :—

AVES.

1. ALTRICES (Insessores).	2. PRÆCOCES (Grallatores).
1. PSITTACI.	
2. ACCIPITRES.	
3. PASSERES.	
<i>a.</i> OSCINES.	
<i>b.</i> VOLUCRES.	
4. COLUMBÆ.	
<i>a.</i> INEPTI.	8. STRUTHIONES.
<i>b.</i> GYRANTES.	9. GALLINÆ.
5. GAVIÆ.	10. ANSERES.
<i>a.</i> TOTIPALMI.	<i>a.</i> LAMELLIROSTRES.
<i>b.</i> LONGIPENNES.	<i>b.</i> URINATORES.
6. HERODIONES.	7. GRALLÆ.
	<i>a.</i> ALECTRIDES.
	<i>b.</i> CURSORES.

2. ON THE CHANGE OF COLOUR IN A CHAMÆLEON (CHAMÆLEO VULGARIS). By H. N. TURNER, JUN.

Notwithstanding that the peculiarity of the Chamæleon in changing its colour is so universally known, and that an illustrated work on the subject was published by Van der Höven, I have thought that a careful record of the varieties of tint, presented by the specimen which has lived for some time in my possession, might prove serviceable to the naturalist if compared with similar observations upon other species and upon the same one under different circumstances, and might also assist in the determination of the means by which it is effected, the influences by which it is regulated, and the objects which it serves in the œconomy of the animal.

Its general tints vary between different shades of brown, olive, yellow, and light green, the last-named being the most rarely observed, and the yellow being the tint usually assumed when the animal has been hidden from the light. This is the colour it always presents if taken for inspection at night, and when brought into the influence of lamp-light it appears at first almost white, but may soon be seen to darken and some of the markings to appear. The side that is next the light will change rather sooner than the other, the changes being always gradual. It has three distinct sets of markings, the first to appear being two ranges of irregular distant elongated spots, which may appear either as a dark tint upon the ground-colour when that is light, or a light one if it be dark. These marks are never entirely absent when either of the other sets is present, although sometimes but faintly discernible.