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XXXI.—Horæ zoologicæ

Sir William Jardine Bart. F.R.S.E. F.L.S.

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it is as follows:—"Ce qui prouve que cette pièce, analogue à l'odontoïde, est dans le fait le corps de l'atlas, c'est que dans la Matamata elle se soude aux trois premières, et prend toute la forme d'une vertèbre, s'articulant avec l'axis, et pourvue, comme lui, en dessous d'une crête longitudinale, et sur les côtés de petites apophyses transverses."—Tome v. part ii. p. 207.

In the Matamata (*Chelys fimbriata*) I find the piece answering to the first wedge-bone in *Enaliosauria*, and to that which Cuvier (*l. c.* p. 96) describes as representing the body of the atlas in the Crocodile, articulating but not confluent with the large odontoid, and articulating also with the fore-part of the base of the neural arch of the atlas. Traces of the suture still exist between the rest of the neural arch of the atlas and the 'odontoid.' The *Emys* (*Cimochelys*) *longicollis* resembles the *Chelys* in the size and shape of the central part of the body of the atlas. The difference between these and other *Chelonia* in respect to the odontoid, relates essentially to the greater proportion of the neural arch of the atlas which it supports, concurrently with its larger size.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD OWEN.

London, October 16, 1847.

XXXI.—*Horæ Zoologicae*. By Sir WILLIAM JARDINE, Bart.,
F.R.S.E. & F.L.S.

[Continued from vol. xix. p. 83.]

Birds of Tobago.

VIREO GILVUS, *Vieill.* N.*

MR. KIRK has appended no note to this species, which from the small number of specimens received does not appear to be very plentiful.

SIURUS AQUATICUS, *Swain.* Gray-throated Wagtail. N.

"Very little is known of this active and restless little bird; they are in general to be found in the bed or channel of rocky rivers, or by waterfalls, and when surprised will fly to a considerable distance, making a noise similar to that of the European 'Stone-chatter.' After alighting they continue to bob up and down the heads, uttering a 'chirk' at every motion, at other times running along the sand nimbly in the manner of the Sandpipers. Feeds on small insects like gnats and ants." We have also received this species from Jamaica.

* Species marked N. are also found in North America; S. in South America; and N. S. in both.

MIMUS GILVUS, *Vicill.* (Mocking-bird.) s.

Apparently a common species on the island and the only one found in Tobago. From Jamaica again we receive the North American species, which seems to take its place there, and according to Mr. Gosse it is common and probably not migratory, as it is stated to be vocal at all seasons. "Frequents our dwellings and builds on fences, &c. It is to be heard every morning at the very earliest dawn of day by those who have trees around their dwellings pouring forth the sweetest notes imaginable, resembling the mavis, although imitating the most of our feathered tribes. They may be easily tamed, and hop along the ground with the rapidity of the magpie in quest of food, which is grasshoppers and worms."

TURDUS JAMAICENSIS, *Linn.* (Mavis.) s.

Utters "a 'chuck chuck' while hopping along the ground, is particularly shy and restless, feeds upon small berries and upon the seeds of the cabbage-tree."

TURDUS XANTHOSCELUS, *Jard.* (Black yellow-legged Thrush.)

"Remarkably shy: a rich mellow note all this month (April) and until July." This species we have been unable to find described or to see in any collection, and three specimens only have been received. The skin of the male somewhat stretched is $9\frac{2}{10}$, though perhaps from $8\frac{1}{2}$ to 9 inches will be nearer the natural dimensions. Length of wing to end of longest feather $4\frac{1}{2}$. The plumage is of a uniform black; the feathers of the vent and under tail-covers tipped with grayish white; bill and legs have been bright yellow. The female is above of a dull olive or oil green, beneath paler and more tinted with ochraceous, the chin indistinctly striated with a darker shade; the under wing-covers and axillary feathers ochraceous; bill and legs brownish yellow, apparently not so brilliant as in the male. A young male has many of the feathers tipped with a triangular spot of yellowish brown, and according to age would be no doubt more or less thus marked.

TYRANNUS CRUDELIS, *Swain.* N.

"A native: begin to build about the 1st of April. On pulling down a decayed building some time ago originally constructed of common pine, in which the carpenter-bee had constructed thousands of cells, and which on being disturbed literally covered the place like the casting of bees in Europe, I was amusing myself looking at the workmen and the bees over my head, when suddenly my attention was drawn to an adjoining roof, where the shrill voice of some twenty or thirty Tyrants bursting forth simultaneously showed that their harvest was already begun. I

have often been delighted to see a number of them ranged along like so many sportsmen on one of our roofs, watching with eager eye for every straggling insect or fly which the calmness of the evening had induced out, and to see twenty of them darting off in different directions with their combined twitter, some twenty, some twelve yards, and returning again to the same place. I could observe nothing they were catching, yet they never miss their aim, as I could distinctly see from the circumstance of two adults as regularly as they returned putting before alighting whatever they brought into the mouth of a young one which awaited their return with open mouth, although to all appearance as big as the parent. I have often been surprised to see with what ease this tribe can turn the head right behind them, as if acting upon some double swivel. Without moving the body the eye goes all round the compass, in the same moment as it were, and without any preparatory symptom it leaps upon its prey, giving the shrill twitter just before rising."

TYRANNUS CRINITUS, *Linn.* (Yellow-belly.) N.

"This bird differs entirely in his manners from the Arkansaw flycatcher, although a good deal like it in appearance; feeds on insects and larvæ; has none of the twitter belonging or peculiar to the flycatcher tribe. If it catches its prey on the wing it must be done about the roots of the trees, and not in the bold style of the tyrant flycatcher." The Tobago specimens are all rather less than the dimensions given by Wilson, or those of a North American specimen before us, being from $7\frac{5}{10}$ to $7\frac{8}{10}$ in length. A specimen marked ♀ has little rufous on the wings, and entirely wants all trace of that colour on the inner webs of the tail-feathers. We have not received this species from Jamaica, the bird mentioned by Mr. Gosse under the name being apparently referable to one sent to us from that island of a larger size, and having much more rufous on the wings and tail.

TYRANNUS AUDAX, *Gmel.* (Shrike or Butcher-bird.) S.

"Native: very noisy on the approach of any person, and keeps up a continual chatter like the European magpie: feeds on insects, seeds and berries." We receive this species also from Trinidad.

TYRANNULA TRAILII, *Aud.*? N.

"Feeds about the roots of trees and lives on insects."

TYRANNULA OLEAGINEA, *Lichten.*? (Green-bird.) S.

"Native; little known; feeds upon insects and grass seeds or blossoms, and frequents the roots of trees in the woods."

MILVULUS SAVANNA. N.

PLATYRHYNCHUS CANCROMUS, *Temm.* (Yellow-crested Flat-bill. Duck-bill.) s.

PLATYRHYNCHUS FLAVIVENTRIS, *Spix?* s.

Approaches near to the figure of *Spix* under the name above quoted, but the uncertainty of identifying those closely allied small fly-catching species without actual comparison is very great.

SETOPHAGA RUTICILLA, *Linn.* (Yellow Start, or Red Start.) N.
Found also in Jamaica.

ELANIA PAGANA, *Spix.* (Clear, or Day Clear.) s.

"A strong emphasis put upon the word *clear* will give a pretty accurate idea of their note. Feed upon fruit, fiddle-wood berries, &c. Begin to build about the 1st of April, and make a very neat nest of lichen, laying three or four eggs of a white ground dotted with irregular rust-coloured spots at the large end." Mr. Kirk was indebted to John MacDonald, Esq. for a curious albino variety of this bird killed in 1833 near the sea-shore.

This species approaches nearly to *Spix's* figure, though in making the comparison we added a? The Tobago species is of considerable interest, exhibiting the form and colouring of the small Tyrants, but having the bill less depressed, more rounded, and the rictus furnished with a less-developed array of bristles. The food fruits and berries; the nest showing great neatness of structure. Among the *Ampelidae* then may be its proper station, though wherever placed it will recede from any typical form.

PACHYRHYNCHUS NIGER, *Swain.* s.

THAMNOPHILUS DOLIATUS, *Linn.* (Qua Qua, or Cata-bird.) s.

"A native: always in pairs. I trust I can convey a perfect idea of the note of this bird, although it possesses two, the one resembling the *craw* of the rook, but more hollow, and although close by, appearing as if at a great distance; but the most common note it possesses and is responded by both, is a repetition of *cac, ac, ac, ac, ic, ic, ic, ic, ic, ic, ic, ic, ic, ca, ca*; while performing this note being destitute of all shyness. The crest stands erect, while the tail and every feather in the body seems in violent agitation. Builds upon low bushes and lays three eggs. A slave called this bird 'Carpenter-bird's water-fetcher,' an attendant on the woodpecker."

MYIOTHERA SCAPULARIS, *Vieill.* (Black and White Creeper.) s.

"A native: feeds on insects; their general manner of feeding is low down, not like the Woodpecker tribe, but flying from one

tree root to another with a low 'chirp,' and carefully examining every crevice in the bark, picking from thence insects and larvæ, ants, &c."

METOPIA PAREOLA, Swain. (Manakins.) s.

"Birds of the first year are destitute of the scarlet crest, when they afterwards gradually assume the light blue back and black belly; feeds upon seeds and berries."

*TANAGRA CANA**, Swain. (Blue Bird.) s.

TACHYPHONUS LEUCOPTERUS, Gmel. (Tanager.) s.

"Native. This bird is related in some degree to Wilson's Red-winged Starling. As far as his description regarding the destruction of corn goes, it strictly applies to this bird, and the only difference is, that the 'Tanager' can scarcely be called gregarious. Although I have seen them assembled in considerable numbers among the corn about the same place, yet the flight or departure of one seemed to be entirely independent of the other."

TIARIS JACARINA, Linn. (Blue-throat Grass-bird.) s.

"Native: gregarious, found in small flocks of twenty or thirty; feed on the ground on grass seeds, &c. A beautiful warbler, and sprightly in appearance as well as in song: although a grass bird, it may frequently be found pouring forth his song from the top of a tree." A white variety has also been received.

TIARIS OMISSA, Jard. (Grass-birds.)

"Feed upon the guinea grass." The species which we have named as above appears to be distinct from the *Fringilla bicolor* of Linn., which agrees with Jamaica birds and with the figure of Catesby, which we believe is the foundation of that bird as well as of Brisson's *Chloris bahamensis*. There is a bird figured in

* We are indebted to Mr. Strickland for the following note to this species:—"Much confusion exists among the blue species of *Tanagra* commonly called 'Bishop Tanagers.' These birds appear to constitute at least three species:

"1. *Tanagra episcopus*, Linn., founded on Brisson, Orn. vol. iii. pl. 1. f. 2. Its synonyms are, *Gracula glauca*, Sparrm., *Tanagra caelestis*, Spix, *T. sayaca*, Linn., and *T. serioptera*, Sw. Lesser wing-covers light gray with a violet tinge. Length of wing $3\frac{4}{5}$ inches. Guiana.

"2. *T. virens*, Linn.—Syn. *Sayacu*, Edw. Buds, pl. 351. f. 1; *Loria virens*, Linn.; *Tanagra praelatus*, Less. Tr. Orn.; *T. episcopus*, Sw. Orn. Drawings, pl. 39. Lesser wing-covers deep blue, back and flanks more or less greenish. Wing $3\frac{2}{5}$ inches. Brazil.

"3. *T. cana*, Sw. Orn. Drawings, pl. 37. The *T. caelestis*, Sw. Orn. Dr. pl. 41, seems to be the female. Lesser wing-covers deep blue, back and flanks cærulean gray. Wing $3\frac{2}{5}$ inches. Swainson refers this bird to Brazil; my specimens are from Bogota. The Tobago bird agrees with the latter except in being of a more vivid blue on the back, upper tail-covers, outer margin of remiges and flanks, but I would hardly venture to separate it as a species."

Edwards's 'Gleanings,' iii. pl. 362. f. 2, which although mentioned as received from Africa agrees with our Tobago bird, and of which we cannot help thinking that the locality may have been incorrectly given; and it is remarkable that although the other figures on this plate are quoted by Linnæus and by Gmelin, this little bird seems to have been overlooked or omitted both by them and subsequent authors.

♂ Forehead dull greenish black, shading backwards into oil-green on the whole upper parts, wings and tail; chin, throat and breast black, shaded into pale brownish gray on the belly and under parts. Entire length 4 inches, of wing 2 inches.

SPERMOPHILA FUSCIVENTRIS, *Bodd.* s.

SPERMOPHILA IGNOBILIS, *Spix.* s.

"Builds on the grass: beautiful warblers."

SPERMOPHILA MISYA, *Vieill.* s.

"A native." The name of "*grass-bird*" seems generally to be applied to the small Tobago Finches; the three last being all so marked without any distinguishing epithet.

CASSICUS CRISTATUS, *Gmel.* (Yellow Tail.) s.

STURNELLA GUIANENSIS, *Linn.* s.

CHRYSOPTILUS RUBIGINOSUS, *Swain.* (Woodpecker, Golden-winged.) s.

"Native: feeds like all the tribe on insects and larvæ. With a shrill piercing note it flies from tree to tree, and although often found low it will ascend from the root spirally to a great height, examining with surprising dexterity every crevice as it moves along. I have seldom observed this species tapping the dead limbs of trees so much as the spotted and red-tailed woodpecker." We have also received this species from Trinidad.

CHRYSOPTILUS KIRKII, *Malh.* (Woodpecker, Red-tailed.)

"Native. The note of this species is three syllables, sounding like the words 'click, click, click,' pronounced very sharply towards the end."

This species was submitted to the examination of M. Malherbe while in London last year collecting materials for a monograph of the family; he considered it undescribed, and suggested the specific name which we have adopted above. The most nearly allied to this is the "*petit pic de S. Domingue*" of Brisson, on which is founded the *Picus passerinus*, *Linn.*; but it differs from it, as well as the *P. affinis* of Sw., in the markings of the wings and tail, and in the rump and upper tail-covers being red, whereas in the others they are olive or yellowish.

CENTURUS TRICOLOR, *Gmel.* (Woodpecker, Spotted.) s.

“Native, and the most domestic of its tribe; I have lately shot them tapping at the facings around the corners of this dwelling-house. Feed like all the tribe upon insects; but this species is particularly noted for destruction to the Indian corn when in a soft and milky state, and may then often be found with the celebrated corn thief the Tanager (*Tachyphonus leucopterus*). In making this accusation against this species, I am inclined to think that while tearing the ears of corn and exposing them to the rain, &c., it is more with a view to secure ants than to destroy corn, as a great many ants are in general collected around the ears once exposed in that soft state. They have two different notes, the regular response being a prolonged whistle, sharp, strong and piercing, at first slow, about sixteen times repeated, quick towards the middle and again prolonged towards the conclusion.”

[To be continued.]

XXXII.—*On the different Beds of the White Chalk, and on the Faults and Dislocations which they exhibit.* By J. TOULMIN SMITH, Esq.

It is certainly no less true of geology than of any other branch of natural science, that it is endangered as much by “false facts as false theories.” Such “false facts” are not merely neutrally mischievous: they are fertile sources of positive error and erroneous induction. Even if the true character of the “false fact” is perceived, it will often not be till it has added much to that labour which every true naturalist must oftentimes undergo of “laboriously groping about in the dense labyrinth of facts*.”

I called attention some months ago to an important instance of such a “false fact” very authoritatively put forth as to the existence in one geological æra of one of the most extraordinary creatures which geological research has yielded—the Pterodactyle†. It is important to my present purpose to repeat this instance, as it originated in a very common source of such false facts, and one against which the most able inquirer has no defence if he depend for his material on the dealer instead of obtaining it as the reward of the personal exploration in the field of himself or of a confidential collaborator. Many other instances might be cited of positive error which has in this way been promulgated, or in which the danger of promulgating still greater and more sweep-

* Oken’s preface to the Ray Society’s ed. of his ‘Elements of Physiophilosophy.’

† See vol. xix. of this Journal, p. 295, *note*.