

required the greatest skill and patience to save them unbroken, and in some cases to save an unusually fine piece it was necessary to sacrifice inferior ones surrounding it." A short time ago I visited Vasiliki myself under the guidance of Mr. Seager, and can testify to the great interest of his work there. The plaster-filled houses are remarkable. May it not be possible that this hard stuff, which makes the excavation of the houses at Vasiliki so difficult, can be explained in a manner different from that adopted by Mr. Seager? At Phaistos the older palace (*Middle Minoan* or *Kamáres* period) was partly razed, and the remains filled up and covered with a layer of hard beton or cement, as hard as that of Vasiliki, on which the *Late Minoan* palace was built. I would suggest that the plaster of Vasiliki may be in reality a cement filling-up, on which later houses were built. There are certainly two or three distinct superimposed "towns" at Vasiliki. Mr. Seager is now proceeding with the work at Vasiliki alone, as Mrs. Hawes (Miss Boyd) has not visited Crete this year.

Thus Miss Boyd's Mycenæan Pompeii still continues to be interesting, and we hope that she will be enabled to go on with her work in Crete. Miss Boyd's is the most important archæological work connected with the University of Pennsylvania, and we hope that the authorities of that institution adequately recognise this fact.

H. R. HALL.

THE IMMIGRATION OF SUMMER BIRDS.¹

THOUGH great advance in our knowledge has been made during recent years concerning the migration of birds as observed in our islands, yet much remains to be learned, and any inquiry that will add to what is already known must be hailed with satisfaction. In what direction and by what methods such advancement is to be sought are questions requiring not only careful consideration, but a full knowledge of what has already been accomplished.

In electing to investigate the immigration of summer birds, the committee appointed by the British Ornithologists' Club has selected the best known of all the phases in the phenomenon. It is true that a special feature has been added in the endeavour to trace the movements of the migrants through the country after their arrival on our shores, but it is much to be doubted whether the results will contribute anything of material importance or at all commensurate with the labour involved. On the other hand, our knowledge of the autumnal departure movements, both from their inland nesting haunts and from our shores, of these same birds is far from complete.

The new committee labours under a misapprehension in supposing that the south coast was entirely omitted from the scope of the British Association committee's inquiry, for part of both the eastern and western sections were scheduled annually. Moreover, the migratory movements on the whole of that coast, for both spring and autumn, were afterwards fully investigated for three years, and the results incorporated in the later reports submitted to the Association.

Then as to methods. It may be well, perhaps, to remind the new committee of the opinions, based on long experience, expressed by Prof. Newton and his colleagues in their final report to the Southport meeting of the British Association in 1903. They say, "the last thing your com-

¹ "Report on the Immigrations of Summer Residents in the Spring of 1905." By the Committee appointed by the British Ornithologists' Club. (London: Witherby and Co., 1906.)

mittee would wish is to discourage the prosecution of observations, but they feel bound to express the opinion that no great advance of our present knowledge of the subject seems likely to be made until new methods are applied. What they should be it is impossible to suggest, but those used at present appear to have reached their limit." In this mature opinion the present writer fully concurs.

The report under notice is not lacking in interest, but it does not add anything material to our knowledge; indeed, several years' observations will be necessary before conclusions of permanent value, though possibly not advancing what is already known, can be expected. By premature publication much harm may be done, and it is to be feared that writers will arise and tell us, on the strength of this report, that, among other things, whinchats, redstarts, whitethroats, reed warblers, cuckoos, and other species do not arrive on the western section of the south coast, when further investigations by the committee will prove that they *do*. It is certainly surprising to find the new committee instituting a comparison between the weather conditions prevailing in the English Channel and the arrival of birds on its shores (of course with abortive results), for it was hoped that it had been clearly proved by exhaustive investigations that the meteorological conditions influencing such movements must be sought in the area whence the migrants took their departure.

In conclusion, one is tempted to suggest that it would be well if the members of the committee of the British Ornithologists' Club, before proceeding further with their arduous labours, took stock of the situation, and asked themselves if their energies might not be advantageously directed to more useful and productive branches of the subject they have at heart.

NOTES.

PROF. I. P. PAVLOFF, professor of physiology in the University of St. Petersburg, will deliver the Huxley lecture at the Charing Cross Hospital Medical School on Monday, October 1.

PROF. EMIL FISCHER, professor of chemistry in the University of Berlin, has been elected a foreign member of the Royal Society of New South Wales.

AN Irish International Exhibition will be opened in Dublin in May next. It will be the first exhibition of its kind to be held in Ireland for nearly forty years.

THE Italian Electrotechnical Association will meet in Milan on September 30, when visits will be paid to various factories in the neighbourhood and the hydro-electrical installations which have been recently constructed.

THE Right Hon. Sir John Eldon Gorst has been appointed special commissioner to represent His Majesty's Government at the New Zealand International Exhibition, the opening of which is to take place on November 1 next.

WE regret to have to record the death of Prof. W. B. Dwight, who occupied the chair of natural history in Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Prof. Dwight was an original member of the Geological Society of America, and interested himself for many years in the Palæozoic rocks of Wappinger Valley and others in the neighbourhood of Poughkeepsie.

THE programme of the prize subjects of the Industrial Society of Mulhouse for the competition closing in 1907 has just been issued. Little change has been made in the pro-