

The Chairman :

"I now call on Mr. T. M. Shortt to read his paper on

'The Fleming Collection'. "

"Mr. Chairman, Members and visitors: Mr. Fleming possessed what was generally conceded to be the world's largest and finest private collection of the birds of the world. It numbered 32,267 specimens representing all of the 27 known orders of recent birds, 163 out of 166 families, 2074 of 2600 genera, and over 6300 species. Mr. Snyder has pointed out that Fleming's interest in ornithology and in collections was worldwide. We have prepared a map showing the geographic distribution of his material. Each red star represents a collection of at least 200 birds. I think the map speaks for itself (the distribution is worldwide and few important areas are blank). The stars on the map account for approximately 25000 skins, leaving over 7000 to be distributed over the remaining portions of the globe. For example, there are 70 birds from the Azores, 100 from Cyprus, 40 from Greenland and so forth, but these are not spotted on this map but only the more complete major collections.

"Noteworthy among the large collections which found their way into the Fleming collection were over 1000 skins from the Sir Frederick Jackson collection from East Africa. This contains several types and was the basis of Jackson's great work on the "Birds of Kenya and Uganda." Another collection of 3000 birds, mostly from the southern United States was made by C. K. Worthen. The collection of the Museum of Christchurch, New Zealand, which contained over 1000 birds from New Zealand, Australia, New Guinea and India is another noteworthy entity. The K. C. McIlwraith collection of 2850 birds originated mostly from the neighbourhood of Hamilton, Ontario. A collection of 800 skins from all parts of the world was made by Robt. Rippon, father of our member, Mr. E. V. Rippon. Other notable collections were as follows: the Meek collection, 500 birds from New Guinea; the Osmaston collection, 600 from the Andamans and Nicobars; the Mounsey collection, 650 from the Phillipines, Verrill's collection, 700 from Hispaniola and Dominica; the Walter Breet collection, 1000 birds from California, Niagara, and Nova Scotia; and the Toronto collections of C. W. Nash and J. Hughes Samuel.

"The Fleming collection contains a great many topotypes and several types. It contains specimens of birds which will probably never again be available. Several of these are extinct; some still exist but are so little known, or their habitat so inaccessible, that most museums can scarcely hope to obtain them.

"The accumulation of such a collection was possible only to one who had the intimate knowledge of other collections and collectors. Mr. Fleming knew the value and rarity of every bird. Of the more unusual, he knew the location and condition of most existing specimens. His almost intuitive ability to acquire a specimen at the most opportune time amounted to genius.

"The importance of the Fleming collection to a young Museum such as

ours cannot be overestimated. Its union with that of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology gives Toronto one of the finest collections of birds in North America. There are but few groups of birds in which a major revision is now possible without reference to the Toronto collection.

"It is my intention now to select a few of the extraordinary specimens from the Fleming collection and briefly review their history and status. Mr. Fleming himself has shown some of these to the club and regaled us with his inimitable accounts of their histories.

"There are many new members and friends here tonight, however, and to those who have already heard them, I think they will bear repetition.

#### The Diablotin or Black-capped Petrel-(*Pterodroma hasitata*)

"This bird formerly bred in huge numbers far from the sea in the high rain forests of the West Indies. For half a decade, starting about 1840 a continual series of misfortunes befell their breeding colonies. In 1847 the great earthquake totally destroyed the colony on Guadeloupe. An introduced marsupial opossum probably the Grenada opossum (*Didelphys cancrivora*) destroyed the colony on Dominica. The few remaining breeding stations were harassed and destroyed by the introduction of the mongoose, the rat and the domestic cat and also by the French who killed large numbers of the adult and shipped them in a salted condition to Martinique as food. In 1910 the A.O.U. Check-List pronounced the Diablotin as extinct. But, the occurrence of specimens in the U.S.A., and Canada, each time after a severe West Indian cyclone proved that the bird still existed, in spite of the Check-List. The bird is still regarded as one of the greatest prizes by Museums and less than twenty skins are known to exist. Of these, two were in the possession of Mr. Fleming. They are the only two Canadian records.

"Mr. Fleming believed this species to be identical to the supposedly extinct *Pterodroma cahow* of Bermuda of which many skeletoned remains have been found and could produce the sternum and other bones of the Diablotin to compare with those he possessed of the *cahow*. At any rate relics of the two are about equally rare in collections. Therefore, it may give some idea of the value placed on these birds to mention the exchange made in 1933 by the United States National Museum of the skeleton of a Great Auk for the skeleton of a *cahow*.

#### "The Helmeted Hornbill - (*Rhinoplax vigil*)

"This hornbill differs from all others in having a solid casque of the consistency of ivory instead of the usual light, hollow, cellular structure.

"This solid casque since the earliest times has been in great demand in Siam, China and Japan, for carving. Jewellers cut the casque transversely into plates, carved brooches and medallions from the sections which from their agreeable colouring, cream with a rose-red rim, formed

a background preferable to ivory for their art. It was also 'in great demand as a love-charm and after being elaborately carved fetches as much as fifty rupees.'

"These ornaments found their way to Europe and were examined by naturalists who believed until 1800 that the bird from which they came might be 'an aquatic bird or perhaps from the extreme solidity and heaviness of the skull a flightless bird, certainly a terrestrial one.' In 1801, however, a complete specimen came to the British Museum and later it has been described as 'the most shy and hardest to procure of all the Hornbills,--It is a forest bird found in the tops of the highest trees!'

"Since then it has been extremely rare and almost unprocurable, being consistently hunted by the natives for the casque. There are two specimens of this bird in Mr. Fleming's collection.

Chatham Island Fern-Wren and Chatham Island Robin -  
(Bowdleria rufescens) and (Miro traversi).

"Very little is known concerning these birds, except that they inhabited the Chatham Islands. They are said to have been exterminated, like many other island forms by the introduction of rats, cats and weasels. About twenty specimens of each are known to exist. Mr. Fleming had in his possession two Fern Wrens collected by Henry Palmer in 1890 and two specimens of the Chatham Island Robin.

Large-billed Finch - (Geospiza magnirostris)

"The type specimens of this huge-billed finch were taken by Charles Darwin in the Galapagos, probably on Charles Island. It seems possible that this bird no longer exists since no recent collector has been able to obtain specimens. As Charles Island has been inhabited for many years and dogs, cats, pigs and other animals have been introduced, it is not at all unlikely that that these latter exterminated Geospiza magnirostris.

"Mr. Fleming had two specimens taken on Abingdon Island close to Charles Island in 1897,--The name 'Hull' on the label is the only reference I could find as to the collector.

The Campbell Island Duck - (Xenonetta nesiotis)

"In 1886 Captain Fairchild collected a flightless duck on Campbell Island while on the annual cruise of government steamer to the Aucklands and nearby islands. He gave this duck to his friend, Captain Donne in whose possession it remained until 1934 when it was acquired by Mr. Fleming.

"Mr. Fleming differentiated this bird from the well-known flightless duck from the Auckland Islands describing it as a new genus and species in 1935 in the Occasional Papers of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. No other specimen has ever been traced and this bird is in all probability extinct and the specimen unique.

"The Laughing Owl - (Sceloglaux albifacies)

"This remarkable owl formerly inhabited New Zealand but is now probably extinct. Like many insular forms, the Laughing Owl showed no inherent fear of man and made no effort to avoid capture. An early writer who was making a rather long trip to inspect some sheep-runs relates the story of finding one of these owls while he was half way to his destination. He picked it up, the owl offering no resistance, and tethered it to a bush intending to pick it up on his way back after he had finished his inspection. When he returned to the spot three days later he found that the owl had broken the cord by which he had fastened it but was perched on a bush a few feet away. He was surprised to find that it was as easily captured as it had been in the first instance merely flapping its wings gently when grasped by the feet and turning its face fully towards him, as if to say, 'Now look here, what's the meaning of this?'

"This specimen was received by Mr. Fleming from the Liverpool Museum in exchange for a Cory's Least Bittern. There are apparently only seven specimens and two of these once changed hands for the sum of \$500.

"The Black and White Wren

"In 1818 a geographical survey was made of Shark Bay, West Australia by the officers of the French survey ship "Wranie". Quoy and Gaimard, the naturalists, attached to this expedition landed at Dirk Hartog island. This island was named after Dirk Hartog, commander of the Dutch ship, 'Concord' which in 1616 made the first authenticated landing of Europeans on the island continent. The collections made on Dirk Hartog by the French naturalists were lost by shipwreck, but one of the birds which had been taken was a Black and White Wren of which the artists of the expedition had taken a drawing. This drawing was preserved at the time of the shipwreck and was afterwards published in Dumonts Atlas Zoologique. A blue and white wren was known from Australia and for 98 years ornithologists were puzzled by the drawing, most of them believing that there had been an error in the colouring. Then in April, 1916 the bird was re-discovered by Tom Carter on Dirk Hartog island. His account of the rediscovery follows: 'Mr. Lloyd, who was leading a string of camels while I tailed them behind, pointed to a wren with white shoulders perched on a bush some distance from the trail. I dismounted and followed the bird a long way before it was secured.' The bird which we have here tonight from Mr. Fleming's collection is the identical bird collected by Tom Carter. Today it remains one of the rarest of all birds in collections.

"The Native Quail - (Coturnix novae-zealandiae)

"This was the sole endemic representative of the gallinaceous or game bird group of New Zealand. It was once very common on both North and South islands but is now totally extinct. Its disappearance was not due to excessive shooting but to the introduction of dogs, cats and rats and to the regular burning of the sheep runs in its favourite haunts, the grasslands. About fifteen specimens are known to exist. One of these was recently sold by a dealer for 50 Pounds.

"The last record of the Native Quail concerns two birds said to have been shot on 'an island in Blueskin Bay in 1867 or 1868.' The data on this specimen from Mr. Fleming's collection reads, 'Blueskin I. Blueskin Bay, off Dunedin, South Island, New Zealand, 1867 or 1868.' This was possibly the last bird of its race.

"The Island Hen - (*Atlantisia rogersi*)

"This is a small flightless rail found only on Inaccessible Island, a remote and little known island some 25 miles from Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic.

"Until the twentieth century this bird was legendary, being known only from descriptions given by the men of Tristan da Cunha. On the occasion of the visit of the Shackleton-Rowlett expedition to the Tristan da Cunha group, Mr. Wilkins, naturalist on board the 'Quest', was unable to secure skins of the 'Island Hen', but he left collecting materials with Rev. Mr. Rogers, missionary to the Tristan group. In 1932 two skins arrived at the British Museum and the bird was examined and described for the first time by Dr. Percy Lowe. In 1929 a number of specimens (about 12) was obtained by Rev. Phillip C. Lindsay, who was evidently Mr. Roger's successor. These were preserved in alcohol. About half found their way to the British Museum and five came into the possession of Mr. Fleming. He had them skinned and made into study specimens by Mr. Claude Johnson of Ottawa.

"We have not time tonight to tell of all the rare and extinct birds represented in this collection but a brief account of its wealth in some of the better known extinct and rare North American forms should be included. There are 16 specimens of the extinct Carolina Paroquet, including examples of both the northern and southern forms; seventeen beautifully selected examples of the Passenger Pigeon, representing males and females in adult, immature and changing plumages; three specimens of the Eskimo Curlew; an adult and an immature California Condor; and 8 Ivory-billed Woodpeckers. Concerning the last two species I have mentioned, it will be recalled that Mr. Devitt reported at the last meeting of the club that only 35 and 9 birds respectively are known to survive.

"Not only the rare and valuable birds appealed to Mr. Fleming,-- he was intrigued by what we might call ornithological oddities. Any bird possessing strange ornamentation or colouring or showing a wide divergence from the usual was keenly sought after and treasured. We have selected from his collection some of these birds and I know that members will be anxious to examine some of these after the meeting. I might say in closing that the collection has not yet been combined with that of the Museum and members of the staff have not had the opportunity of becoming thoroughly familiar with it. We shall uncover other rarities and oddities, some of which will undoubtedly be the basis for future papers and discussions at the Brodie Club."

Chairman:

"Our next speaker is Mr. R. J. Rutter who will read his paper on --

'James Henry Fleming and the Brodie Club'."

"Mr. Chairman, members and visitors: The Brodie Club was celebrating its second birthday when Mr. Fleming first became associated with its activities. The inaugural meeting had been on November 22, 1921 and on November 20, 1923, the minutes report as follows: 'The Club was honored in having two of Toronto's most distinguished naturalists on hand, Mr. C. W. Nash and Mr. J. H. Fleming.' It was at the next meeting, December 4, 1923, that the Club's name was changed from the 'Toronto Naturalists' Club to the Brodie Club and on December 18, 1923, a motion was passed creating honorary membership, and Dr. Bensley, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Nash and Dr. Walker were elected at once. So it may be said that he was elected at the first regular meeting which was called under the name of Brodie Club.

"For the next 16 years, Mr. Fleming was one of our most valuable and faithful members. His unobtrusive manner and the quiet way in which he spoke and read may have created a deceptive impression as to the extent of his contributions, but rare indeed was the 'Observation and Reviews' period for which he was unprepared. A search of the minute books reveals that he read some 45 papers, many of them short but all prepared with great care. This works out to almost 3 a year. Characteristically, these papers were neatly bound and kept in his library where they have been discovered only since his death. In addition there were innumerable unwritten reports of observations on nature in his own garden, newspaper clippings, reviews, reports on the death or activities of world famous naturalists, etc., some of which have been mentioned by Mr. Ballie tonight.

"Outstanding among longer papers were: 'The Starling Question', December 2/24; 'Birds of Lower California', January 20/25; 'Report on the 6th International Ornithological Congress in Copenhagen', Oct. 5/26; 'On the Identification of Birds,' Jan. 7/30; 'Check-Lists of the A.O.U.' Nov. 17/31; 'Are Small Land Birds becoming Scarce?', April 28/36; 'The Legend of the Migration of the Arctic Tern', Oct. 6/36.

"As was to be expected from a man with a world-wide acquaintance among naturalists, Mr. Fleming contributed to our programme a great number of obituaries into which he was always able to inject items from his own contacts. A few of the outstanding characters thus treated were: Edward Howe Forbush, Edward Gerrard, Jonathan Dwight, Robert Ridgeway and Oliver Spanner. The obituary on Oliver Spanner was his last prepared paper read before this club, on January 24, 1939.

"But it was with the short paper, unique in the sense that it was usually on some subject that could not have been treated so authoritatively by anyone else, that Mr. Fleming excelled. How often he would come to the secretary before the meeting and say, 'If there is any time this evening, I have a little thing here I'd like to read.' Here are some examples:

November 4/24 - 'On the Golden Nightjar'; March 17/25 - Reviewed an article in the Illustrated London News on bird paintings found in an Egyptian tomb and showed a series of Egyptian bird skins; January 19/26 - Mentioned an article in Star Weekly which referred to Dr. Brodie; read clipping from long flight of a Sandwich Tern; read clipping on purchase of a Great Auk egg; April 6/26 - read extracts from Letters and Diary of Robt. and John Wade, 1819-42; May 4/26 - showed specimens of rare ground partridge from South America and discussed them; March 1/27 - reviewed article in the 'Murrelet' on food of the Cod, which was found to include 'young guillemots and a can of salmon' (I think we can all hear Mr. Fleming's chuckle as he read that); at the same meeting, showed and discussed specimens of the rare barred phalarope of the South Seas; April 12/27 - 'Remarks on P. T. Barnum as a naturalist'; September 13/27 - presented notes on the geographical variation of chaffinches in the Canary Islands and elsewhere, as usual illustrated with skins; Dec. 6/27 - discussed a report of finding of a human tooth in the Gobi desert; Jan. 2/28 - read a list of winter birds observed at Point Pelee, 1909; Feb. 19/29 - reviewed a newspaper article on a supposed new view of evolution put forth by Dr. Clark of the Smithsonian Institution and offered his own comments, using the birds of paradise as examples; Feb. 17/31 - short discussion on the evening grosbeak and showed a skin of that bird made 75 years before; April 28/31 - showed a scrap book made up by John Neilson, one of Canada's early naturalists, which, as the minutes significantly remark, 'had lately fallen into Mr. Fleming's hands',-- and so on through the years.

"It will be noticed that Mr. Fleming's contributions were by no means limited to ornithology. His passion for accuracy is well known to us all and there was little made public anywhere in the field of natural history that did not, sooner or later, have to pass his censorship. An interesting example of his eye for anything which might be scientifically inaccurate is reported in the minutes of Sept. 21/26, when he drew attention to the fact that a badger was being displayed in the animal exhibit in the Ontario Building at the Canadian National Exhibition and wondered if it should be shown among Ontario animals.

"Observations on birds and animals in his garden were frequently reported and he told many an amusing story of the doings of his screech owls and black squirrels. His last recorded remarks at one of our meetings were on Oct. 24/39, when he told of watching a black squirrel carrying a pear which it had grasped by the small end with its incisors and was able to hold it clear of the ground as it ran. The pear, which was found to weigh 6 ozs., was passed around for inspection.

"As Mr. Snyder has said, it was not Mr. Fleming's nature to play a dominant role in the administrative affairs of organizations to which he belonged. In all the years of his close association with us, as far as can be discovered he was the mover of only one motion and that was on January 8/29, when he moved that the seasonal report be adopted as read. Members will appreciate the significance of that, too, as his dislike for long-drawn discussions on detail was often apparent. He appears perhaps a half dozen times as seconder of a motion, but one of these is historic-

ally important, for on Feb. 17/31, he seconded the motion, creating a committee which was to study and report on the proposal to form a Federation of Ontario Naturalists. In the early days he took his turn as Chairman but during the past ten years nearly always begged to be excused from that duty, usually saying that he thought the younger men should be given the experience. He served on the Programme Committee for several years, on the Library Committee and on a Committee to consider a series of papers on the lives of great naturalists. All this does not indicate, however, that he was unconcerned about the welfare of the Club. On the contrary, no member has ever been more concerned, and he was always ready to give council from his long experience in many natural history societies. About ten years ago, you will remember, there was a great revival of interest in the conservation of wild life, particularly birds of prey and ducks and among other things the Emergency Conservation Committee of New York was constantly urging this and other clubs to campaign for or against some new law or other. Mr. Fleming feared that the Club might lose its distinctive character and in a letter to me at the time said: 'Controversies are dangerous for a society such as ours which exists for the exchange of information and for the common good. I have seen the old Biological Sub-section of the Canadian Institute and its successor the Biological Society of Ontario go under for no other reason than that the members tired of attending meetings that did nothing more than appoint committees to interview the Minister of Agriculture about permits or passed resolutions condemning so and so having a permit.'

"His comments on Dr. Brodie are worth repeating. Of Dr. Brodie, he said: that he was a young man's man; that he was a leader without effort; that he possessed a remarkable knowledge of scientific literature, and, what was one of Mr. Fleming's highest compliments, that his identifications of birds always stood.

"His last attendance here was on November 7, 1939 almost exactly a year ago tonight.

"It is said, truly, that no man is indispensable. It is equally true, though it may sound paradoxical, that we occasionally find a man whose place cannot be taken by any other. The passing of James Henry Fleming has left a gap in the ranks of The Brodie Club which must remain forever vacant."

Chairman:

"The next contribution will be from Mr. E. J. Deacon, who has just arrived. We had been expecting him and we feared that some mishap had befallen him to prevent his coming. We appreciate his making the trip from London, for the especial purpose of sharing in this symposium, and we are very glad to have with us again one who for many years was a very constant attendant at the Club's meetings. I now call on Mr. Deacon to read his paper on --

'Recollections of J. H. Fleming's Boyhood and Youth'."

"Mr. Chairman, members and visitors: This is again one of those



occasions, on which, with the passing of years, we meet to pay a tribute of kindly memories to a member who has passed on. May one who is a contemporary and knew personally the boy and youth, Fleming, as we all knew the man, try, though imperfectly, to make you who did not know him so long, better acquainted with his boyhood and early youth.

"In the late '80s and early '90s of last century, that small section of Toronto northward from Queen Street to College Street was greatly different from what it is at the present time. College Street was a wide, straight avenue lined with trees and had only an unpaved roadway, westward from Yonge Street to Queen's Park. The original iron gates, usually open afforded entrance from Yonge Street. Those were the days when the city was changing rapidly from almost village conditions to those of a metropolitan centre; the time when gracious homes were found adjacent to the lowly frame cottages of the workers and when horse-cars were mounted on bob-sleigh in winter, the floor deeply covered with straw to keep the passengers' feet warm. These crude conveyances were often stuck in drifts, mostly made by boys who enjoyed watching men, who could only find riding space on the roof, sliding down and laughingly heaving it out. These were the days of the gas lighter who trotted along from lamp to lamp with a short ladder and a torch when darkness was near; the days of the horse, magnificent animals all, from high-stepping carriage horses to massive well-matched teams of Clydsdales and Percherons for heavy draught work. These were merry winter days and nights filled with the music of sleigh bells, finely-made and equipped cutters and family sleighs with great bear, wolf and real buffalo robes to keep my-lady warm. Then, as always, luxury rubbed shoulders with poverty -- Victorian times with all the current virtues and faults, now mostly discarded. Into this environment was thrust the boy, Fleming, and the writer.

"Facing on Yonge Street just above the corner of Elm Street was the Florist Shop of Fleming Senior, the best of any similar stores in the city. Westward along the north side of Elm Street extended the garden and nurseries that supplied the shop. A few blocks south on the east side of Yonge Street just below Wilton Avenue, was the taxidermist shop of Mr. Cross. Here it was that the trails of two boys met and joined in the highway of ornithological pursuits for a time. Fleming's had its origin in the above mentioned garden among the numerous bird visitors; the writer's, as the son of a pioneer, in the rough surroundings and hard circumstances of the backwood of Muskoka, but both became fascinated by the beauty of bird life surrounding them. Though they both lived in the same locality in Toronto from about nine years of age they did not meet until they were nearly sixteen years old. This meeting took place in Mr. Cross's shop! Cross had given the writer a job as "boy" after much pestering (poor man) having been constantly haunted and bothered with questions as to the names of birds displayed in the window. This shop was by way of being a 'club' for all interested in natural history and it was here I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Brodie and Fleming for the first time. Fleming, the youth, was the prototype of the man we so well knew later, -- quietly poised, kindly, courteous and friendly, having then a knowledge of ornithology rather unexpected in one of his years, but

withal unassertive and a willing listener to the other fellow's views on any subject. When I first came to know him he had been for some time collecting his specimens with a .22 rifle and shot shells in his father's garden. We were all ardent collectors in those days since there was no other way to learn. There were few low-priced text books on birds then; our authority on the subject was McIlwraith's 'Birds of Ontario', 1886. Permits were easy to obtain and on the whole wisely used. It was an unwritten law that every bird shot must be made into a skin or mounted. As time passed the number of students increased until through the influence of Dr. Brodie, we became organized as the Ornithological Sub-section of the Canadian Institute. Later, we severed this connection and became the Ornithological Society of Ontario (ambitious, what?) with the meeting place, by the kindness of the late Mr. Ames, in a spacious room over his tailor shop on lower Bay Street. Here the students really made progress and we soon knew the rapid advancement Fleming was making. We all brought our most recent specimens for identification and it was often when we failed that he in a quietly-spoken verdict gave the correct answer. He taught us the value of exchange and purchase from local hunters and shooters in building up our collections and increasing our knowledge. The writer cannot remember that Fleming often joined in our far-afield collecting trips; he was more inclined to study his specimens closely, which made him a great help to us who found more pleasure in field work. There was one memorable occasion when he joined Oliver Spanner and myself on a bitterly cold February day in a trip across the solidly frozen Toronto Bay to the Island to collect Snowbirds and Larkspurs. Going over was not too bad, but after more than an hour's shooting, over the waste lands and swamps, and having secured many fine specimens of both species, we faced a strong, cold wind in returning. It was a tough trip. Perhaps Spanner and I were more inured to out-of-door conditions than Fleming,--at any rate, though he appeared more warmly clad than we, he became so benumbed with cold that about halfway back he would have collapsed had we not supported him on either side and jog-trotted along. However he was his own man and laughed at his semi-helpless condition.

"Dr. Brodie was a firm believer in compensations and he would have so reasoned that if Fleming had not the physical ability to stand the rough-edged whimsicalities of our seasonal changes he possessed a larger measure of mentality in pursuing his chosen studies to the goal of success. The other fellow, whose trail of life merged with that of Fleming, parted and merged again on the highway, found more joy in turning aside into attractive by-ways, so missing the goal.

"It was good to have known the boy, better to have known the man, and greater good, mingled now with sadness and regret for his passing, to have walked with him along the Road."

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The Chairman, himself, then read the final paper, "The Old Taxidermy Shop and Point Pelee Days," a contribution of Mr. P. A. Taverner, who was unable to attend the meeting.

"With the passing of Harry Fleming, Canada lost its ornithological dean and I lost an old and valued friend and advisor. Like many prophets his full value was not altogether generally realized in his home environment although he was recognized far and wide abroad as the outstanding representative of Canadian ornithology. Undoubtedly he was largely instrumental in laying wide and deep the foundations of the Canadian ornithology of today and the future. May the enthusiasm he sponsored and created live after him.

"I first met Fleming in the winter of 1896-97, presenting myself hopefully for a job in the old taxidermy shop on Yonge Street. I just missed out on this but the association then initiated continued through the years and produced values to me that I yet cannot estimate. I was at very loose ends and trying my hand at various things with not too great success, and if it had not been for a few good friends, high among them being Fleming, my life might have been far different. I was a rather raw youth with more enthusiasm than knowledge and only vague glimpses of the great field ahead, and I have often wondered why he took an interest in me. I suppose what drew his favorable attention was a number of water color drawings of birds I had made in an amateurish way when bird delineators were far less numerous and competent than they are today, and perhaps he recognized some glimmerings of promise in my untrained ornithological enthusiasm.

"The friendship then began continued to the last. Many were the Sundays I spent at his hospitable table, or postprandially, with cigars over the goldfish pool in the greenhouse in the rear of the Rushholme Road house, imbibing various lores and ornithological standards and ideals. It was my first broad view beyond parochial fields and an introduction to a wider outlook. Part of this time I was living far across the city near Parliament Avenue. It was before there were any Sunday street cars and the eagerness with which I took the long walk back and forth was a slight evidence of my appreciation of the association.

"Fleming had allied himself with the Oliver Spanner's Naturalist and Taxidermist establishment, not as a business venture, but as an assistance to his ornithological research. The taxidermist was then a far more important member of the community than he is now. Shooters were many, some of them had more than a shooting interest in their kills and required preservation of their more notable trophies, feathered and furred. The taxidermist's shop was a common meeting place for the shooting fraternity and many notabilia were brought in for discussion, identification, preservation or sale. Certainly the old shop of Spanner and Co., was the centre of considerable ornithological information and through it Fleming received much data that would otherwise have been lost. Stuffed birds are no longer desired objects of domestic decoration but with the passing of their popularity a valuable source of information was lost to the record. With this passing Fleming's interest in the shop waned and he withdrew his active support.

"At that time the store was down stairs, the shop upstairs, and there were a number who habitually "gravitated" to the upper floor.

Spanner was taxidermist in chief, interminably winding deer head manikins by day and shaving out sail-boat models, half a dozen of which were strung about the wall, by night. 'Fred' Dippie mounted a constant succession of post-moribund canaries, sympathized feelingly with their owners and wondered cynically whether they would ever return and pay for the remains of their dear departed pets. The problem was to finish for delivery the 'naturalized' cadavers before the unassuageable grief of their owners evaporated. This Dippie handled very well, though the long line of the 'uncalled for' relics indicated a less than 100 percent success. He had just returned from the then far west where he had been collecting birds for a rather active commercial market and returned to the shop many evenings to make up his material. He had little to say regarding boat building but enlivened the gathering with many Yorkshire and Rabelaisian tales. At times yachts and yacht racing was the centre of conversation. Spanner designed, built and, through the season, raced his own boats almost weekly. Load waterlines, length over all, beam, sail areas and other yachting technicalities were common discussion. I became part of the crew and many were the exciting races we had with the 'Katy M' and other 19-footers, and we became expert jockeys, often winning races by technicality that we had lost by speed.

"The workshop was a conglomeration of semi-confusion. The walls were, more or less, covered with memorabilia and taxidermic art. Loops of various wires hung suspended from deer horns. A succession of half-hull models showed the development of the present type under consideration or in construction. Hawks and owls still in their string wrappings and examples of the old taped glass bird cases, for which Toronto was famous, gathered dust in the intervals. Later in the season hung row after row of drying deer heads in various stages of completion overflowing finally to the floor of a front room which was a hodge-podge of temporary storage. A box of damp 'pug' occupied one corner of the room and a pile of deer 'scalps' and a tub of 'pickle' another. Under Spanner's work bench, originally a cabinet-maker's, and Dippie's table were indiscriminately piled excelsior, tow, discarded and to-be-used bird stands, deer shields, bunches of tropical grasses and other traditional taxidermic supplies. The legs of the table were multicolored in shades of yellow and green with the beatings from artificially colored grass. A glue pot on a gas plate usually steamed on the end of the bench and cigar boxes of many colored smalts were piled irregularly back against the wall. A small circular coal stove with its black scuttle of supply stood conveniently to Dippie's chair. Often only a passage and standing room was open between these impedimenta requiring periodic clearance and brooming. Outside on the flat roof of a lower extension of the building on either side of the window were great piles of skinned deer heads awaiting boiling in the near by 'store-house' off the garden.

"Spanner was an artist of resource. At one time Fleming secured a gunny sack of old buffalo robe trimmings. In it were found a bit of nose skin and part of a face mask. Buffaloes then seemed headed straight for extinction and Spanner, by adding bit to bit, patch to patch, from the scraps evolved an entire buffalo head that it took some one in the secret to detect from an authentic original.

"Fleming usually occupied a chair in the corner keeping one ear open for the bell announcing a customer (or the game warden) downstairs, when he descended to attend to business or to pump a visitor for information, occasionally to ward off too pressing minions of the game law. Visitors came upstairs after a hail announcing them had drifted up. They sat about as they could, or occasionally in time of stress, good-naturedly pitched in to help skin out deer heads or an unusual influx of owls. The old tobacco guillotine on the corner of the table, through constant use, was worn down in a semi-circle half through the wood block. The air was usually blue with tobacco smoke and the odor of stale nicotine almost covered up the smell of salt skins in pickle and of over-ripe specimens.

"I cannot remember all the more or less regular visitors. There was Jimmie Thurston dropping in inconsequentially. Periodically George Atkinson appeared from Manitoba with great tales of duck and goose shooting and the rare or interesting birds that had passed through his hands. Western ornithology was then in its infancy, or one might say its adolescence, and all such news was of interest. Once he brought a number of live Snow Geese which, with wings clipped, he kept for a time in the old green house grounds at the rear of the store that still showed the remains of its former use. Another occasional "bird of passage" was a Mr. Thompson from the Bahamas. I do not know his business but once he brought on speculation a lot of sprouting cocoanuts that were heeled in the 'garden'. What became of the geese or the nuts I do not remember, if I ever knew. The 'Garden' before it was cleaned and levelled up for a skating rink was under constant observation. It was grown up with clumps of lilac and other shrubbery between the foundations, rotting frames and rusty iron mongery of the old green houses. The birds that in species and number appeared from time to time there in the heart of the city was surprising. It was the only Toronto locality we had for Lincoln's Sparrow and it could be observed only as taken in rude brick traps set under the bushes. An occupied Martin house was one of the items of attraction.

"George Pierce always brought in his new takes in the flesh for necessary corroboration and possible sale. He got several Cory's Least Bittern and other rarities and played off Fleming against J. H. Ames for the best price for the same.

"Walter Raine was in the heat of his dispute with Major Bendire over the eggs of the Little Brown Crane that he claimed to have taken in 'Assiniboia'. He was often highly excited and protestant and brought in specimens, affidavits and other evidentialia that I fear were received rather skeptically.

"The painter, Mower Martin, even then an old man with his mountain-eering life past, occasionally dropped in, set up his easel and painted some of the birds and mammals that had freshly come in. I remember a Goshawk 'As it fell' and a wild cat picture that Fleming bought. A number of Martin's pictures are still hanging in the house.

"Alec Day, an habitue of Ashbridges Bay when it was in its prime, was often in. I accompanied him a number of times to his chosen haunts, particularly on the holiday of the Diamond Jubilee, and was astonished at his familiarity with winding ways and his unerring estimate of just where a bird fell in its reedy maze.

"There were many others: Charles Nash, and the patron saint of this club, Dr. Brodie, dropped in occasionally, the latter usually to our profit. Others came in, passing ornithological or other gossip and went on.

"One day there appeared in the daily paper a news item of a terrible bird that had been killed with a paddle in the marsh after a furious battle with some boatman. It was some 14 feet in extent and was on exhibition at one of the boat houses on the water front. Of course we had to investigate this wonder. We found it,--a Least Bittern, only the reporter had substituted feet for inches and added the fight that the size seemed to call for.

"Often live owls were brought in. These were usually released out the back door and were almost invariably shortly brought in the front entrance, dead and to be mounted. Thus the shop did one of its daily good deeds, before the Boy Scout was heard of, to the benefit of business.

"All this went on for a number of years until I left Toronto but without losing contact with Fleming. I saw him periodically by mutual visit and our continued correspondence files might constitute a nearly complete history of ornithology in Canada since. He began regularly attending meetings of the A.O.U. and making personal contacts that had heretofore been by mail. I was in Chicago when an A.O.U. party came through en route to a San Francisco meeting. I was not even an Associate of the Union and Fleming, too, then had not a large personal acquaintance in it. I accompanied Fleming to a reception at the house of Ruthven Deane. We stood largely on the side lines in awe of the ornithological lions gathered about and Fleming pointed out who was who. I remember the hospitable and friendly welcome of our host, the leonine head of C. Hart Merriam and we chuckled over a gathering about Chapman of bubbling women, who chorused as he was leaving,--'Oh Mr. Chapman, do come back and tell us about those dear little shrikes'.

"After I moved to Detroit about 1904 we formed what we called the Great Lakes Ornithological Club involving most or all of the serious ornithological workers in our immediate section. It consisted of W. E. Saunders of London, A. B. Klugh then of Guelph, Fleming of Toronto and B. H. Swales and self of Detroit. Communication was through a system of circulating manuscripts. A paper was contributed and mailed around the circle, comment or additions were added by each individual who removed his contribution after it had been seen by all. An outcome of this was our first visit to Point Pelee in May 1905, by Swales, Saunders and self, followed by others in which Fleming and Klugh joined. Later J. S. Wallace was annexed to the Pelee group and we built a shack as an observation centre which for some years was occupied by one or more on every possible

holiday occasion. Fleming came not infrequently. He was not an active field collector and did practically nothing in the preparation of specimens, but was always interested in seeing birds and had a sharp eye for rarities. On one of his visits we were going out toward the point when we came to a narrow forking of the way such as is common on unimproved country roads. Naturally he went one side of the parting strip and I the other. I heard his gun and when we met where the roads again joined, he had a Chuck-Will's-Widow. His elation was evident while I was a bit chagrined that so desirable a specimen had fallen to a less constant visitor and less active collector.

"Once while in Detroit I had a help-help telegram from Fleming. I managed the time off and took the next train to Toronto, finding the shop buried under 40 Whistling Swans that had been salvaged after going over Niagara Falls. We skinned swans until we were saturated with swan. An attempt to eat one was not successful. I stayed about three days and all specimens were saved but Dippie was left with weeks of work fattening and making up 40 swans. Fleming and I had been particularly interested in Swans, and helped out by occasional birds killed on the St. Clair Flats, had put in a good deal of work upon them. I still have a thick file of notes, drawings and elaborate tables of measurements of a great array of them, but we never arrived at conclusions worth publication. As an indication of the luck or the reward of diligence on Fleming's part may be cited an interesting coincident in this connection. We lacked an important illustrated paper on Trumpeter and Whistling Swans by Yarrell, and were almost brought to a stalemate for it when Fleming in a second hand book store in Toronto, found a volume of separates including Yarrell's own copy of this particular paper with his holographic annotations on the margins.

"Fleming's work and collection was unique in America. He was deeply interested in developing Canadian ornithology, but from the very beginning he never lost sight of his primary object of building up a complete synoptic series of birds of the world. He was continually on the lookout for representations from out of the way localities or of little known, rare, interesting or disappearing species. He was in close contact with sources of supply all over the world and had a genius for locating and acquiring desiderata. When it became known that he had a better and more completely representative collection of world forms it created a stir in the big museums of America and energized them to fill their gaps to or beyond equality with him. Of course, with their vastly superior means this was soon accomplished but not too easily. However, it remains that the Fleming collection is one of the outstanding ornithological collections in America and one to which many specialists must still come to see forms not otherwise readily available on this continent. Parallel with specimens Fleming built up a remarkable library of ornithological and of zoological travel as an essential part of his collection. All this he did, not in the spirit of narrow personal acquisition, but with the aim of providing his country of Canada with scientific ornithological resources that will be required for future generations of Canadian students. His depositing of them freely and without entangling strings in the Royal Ontario Museum ranks him among the notable benefactors of the Dominion.

That he did not receive more public honor in his own country is a reflection on that country, not upon him."

Chairman:

"Gentlemen: We have heard papers covering a wide range of Mr. Fleming's activities throughout most of his life, especially as they brought him into contact with naturalists, either amateur or professional; and the memories of some who have contributed go back beyond those of most of us here, so far, indeed, that they recall the days when Canadian ornithology, in its modern sense, was in the making, and they help us to understand how large a share Mr. Fleming had in shaping it truly.

"We appreciate perhaps more fully than before--though it was by no means unknown to us -- that he was an international figure in his chosen field.

"We are glad that he found this Museum, in which we meet and with which we are all informally or formally associated, a fit repository for the great collection he had brought together; no naturalist will deny the magnificence of that gift, at once a monument to the man and an enrichment of his country.

"But more than all these, I think we like to recall the man himself. Speakers tonight have mentioned his charm combined with his insistence on intellectual honesty, which made him at the same time a good companion and a good scientist. It has been remarked that he was reticent when in a group of people, but that reticence could not dim his influence, and I think that those who met and knew Mr. Fleming at meetings of this Club and elsewhere could not help feeling that in his company they were in the presence of greatness.

"It will be among the Brodie Club's best memories that Mr. Fleming was one of its members."

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Meeting Adjourned.