

Wednesday, 16th August (1911).--Held in the Geology Theatre, the President in the chair. L. Harrison read a paper, illustrated with lantern-slides, on "The Taxonomic Value of Certain Parasites." The parasites referred to are the biting lice (Mallophaga) found upon birds or mammals. Owing to both environment and food remaining unchanged through the centuries, these insects have not differentiated as fast as their hosts, and afford indications of original relationship between birds that have diverged widely from parent stock. Though birds can be divided into good natural groups, the relationships between these groups have not, and cannot, be satisfactorily determined on anatomy alone. So any line of investigation that is likely to aid the solution of bird phylogeny deserves consideration. Some evidence is afforded confirming parts of existing classifications. Among other results, a study of the Mallophaga would suggest the inclusion of the penguins with the fowls, pigeons and tinamous, a relationship that has never before been suggested. Such results could, of course, only be put forward as suggestions to the morphologist. A preliminary examination, however, of this group of parasites, certainly suggests that more complete knowledge will afford valuable clues towards the solution of bird taxonomy.