

February 23, 1858.

Dr. Gray, F.R.S., V.P., in the Chair.

Mr. Gould brought before the notice of the Society a highly interesting series of birds collected by Mr. A. R. Wallace in the Aroo Islands. Among them were two species of Birds of Paradise—*Paradisea apoda* and *P. regia*. Hitherto these magnificent birds have only been sent to this country in a mutilated condition, their skins having been prepared and dried by the Papuans frequently without their wings, and almost always without their legs; Mr. Wallace's skins, however, are perfect, and in the highest possible condition. They comprise not only adult males and females, but young birds in various stages of development. Mr. Gould remarked that the ornithology of the Aroo Islands, like that of New Guinea, partook more of the character of the Australian fauna than of any other. The *Picidæ* (Woodpeckers) and *Bucerotidæ* (Hornbills), so common in India and the Indian Islands, are totally wanting, while the *Meliphagidæ* (Honeyeaters) and the *Halcyonidæ* (Kingfishers) are very numerous; on the other hand, the collection did not contain a single *Malurus*, nor any of the *Finches*—forms represented by numerous species even in the northern parts of Australia. Mr. Gould, in remarking upon the beautiful plumes which adorn the *Paradisææ*, stated that he considered they were in their most perfect state just prior to the breeding season, and that the bird was then adorned in its greatest beauty,—a beauty assumed apparently not only for the purpose of attracting the females, but to exhibit to each other their gorgeous finery, when they assemble and perform many curious and extraordinary evolutions. In South America the Cock of the Rock (*Rupicola*) has many singular habits at the like season, while in Australia the Bower Birds attract every one by the curious structures they make for a similar purpose: Mr. Gould instanced also the Peacock, the Turkey, and the well-known Ruff of the British Islands, as birds which assemble and make such displays.

The following papers were read:—

1. NOTES ON SOME BIRDS FROM SOUTHERN MEXICO.
BY PHILIP LUTLEY SCLATER, M.A., F.L.S.

M. Edouard Verreaux of Paris has lately received a very fine series of birds from the *tierra caliente* of Southern Mexico—the same country where the collections made by MM. Sallé and Botteri, which I have already brought before the notice of this Society, were formed. He has kindly submitted to my inspection specimens of such of the species as have not been included in my former lists, concerning which I beg to offer the following remarks, together with a few corrections of statements made in my previous papers on this subject.