

most primitive being represented by the living okapi of the Belgian Congo, the second by the typical giraffes, the third by such massive giants as *Sivatherium*, whose skull bore huge branching bony "horns."

In the closing analysis on the migration of certain mammals to and from the Siwaliks we see India as at the crossroads, exchanging mammals with Europe and Africa on the one hand and with Asia and North America on the other.

In view of the merits of this work mentioned above, as well as others, the committee has unanimously recommended the award of the Daniel Giraud Elliot medal and honorarium for 1935 to Edwin H. Colbert.

WILLIAM K. GREGORY

**PRESENTATION OF THE DANIEL GIRAUD
ELLIOT MEDAL FOR 1936, WITH AC-
COMPANYING HONORARIUM OF
\$200, TO ROBERT CUSHMAN
MURPHY⁴**

FEW writers have had a more prolonged and varied preparation for their task than Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy as author of the "Oceanic Birds of South America." Soon after graduating from Brown, Dr. Murphy shipped aboard the whaling brig *Daisy* on a voyage of nearly a year's duration in the South Atlantic. For the longer part of this period he was associated with birds of the high seas, pulling an oar with the best of the shearwaters and other pelagic species; but for four months he lived on the island of South Georgia. There he obtained the rudiments of a course in South American littoral ornithology. Penguins, albatrosses and other species little known on their breeding grounds were his teachers, but the day was to follow when he would become their monographer.

Several years later, Dr. Murphy passed six months among the bird islands of the Humboldt Current off the coast of Peru. Here, in the world's greatest demonstration of certain phases of bird-life, his education in the ways of marine birds and the factors governing their distribution were still further advanced. In 1924 he returned to this region and extended his studies to the coast of Ecuador.

In these three productive expeditions, Murphy found the field in ornithology in which he has distinguished himself, and when opportunity offered for the formal pursuit of his researches he was equipped to embrace it. Meanwhile, the American Museum of Natural History, under the patronage of Messrs. Brewster and Sanford, commissioned R. H. Beck to collect the marine and littoral birds of South America from Peru to Pará, including Cape Horn and the Falkland Islands. This master of his profession was in the field for four-and-a-half years securing 7,853

⁴ Read by Dr. Ross G. Harrison, in the absence of Dr. Chapman.

specimens, each one a potential source of original information. Murphy was the one man qualified by experience, training, and desire to interpret this collection. Fortunately, he was now on the American Museum's staff. With most of the species represented, he was familiar in life; and he had visited a large part of the area whence they came. Thus his field-studies, added to Beck's collections, made the ideal laboratory combination. With it was included a thorough review of all pertinent literature. Several years were required to digest the whole and present the resulting facts and conclusions in two eminently readable volumes of objective and subjective ornithology.

To the systematic treatment of all the forms concerned, there was added an exposition of Murphy's discovery that oceanic birds are subject to the same kind of environmental control as seals, sea-turtles and even fish. The part played in distribution by the temperature of water as well as air, the influence of wind and of currents and the effects of insular isolation are also considered. Full biographies, when available, are given with each species, and long-standing biologic problems like that presented by the confusing relations of the steamer ducks are satisfactorily treated. All this, and more, is set forth in the 1,245 quarto pages entitled "Oceanic Birds of South America," forming a work of such high merit that, *Mr. President*: The committee has recommended the award by the Academy of the Elliot Medal for 1936 to Robert Cushman Murphy as its author.

FRANK M. CHAPMAN

**PRESENTATION OF THE JOHN J. CARTY
MEDAL AND AWARD (MONETARY
AWARD \$4,000) TO EDWIN
GRANT CONKLIN**

THE Committee for the Award of the John J. Carty Medal has had an easy and a pleasant task to perform, for once the name of Conklin was suggested as recipient, so appropriate was his selection that there scarce could be a competitor.

In the citation which has been read are indicated many ways in which Edwin Grant Conklin merits this medal and award, but there is another and unique way in which Conklin qualifies. I refer to Carty's friendship and admiration for Conklin which all Carty's close associates attest, and to the influence of Conklin's philosophy on Carty's thinking as indicated by his writings.

Conklin had pointed out that man's future development lay not in the evolution of man as an individual but in the evolution of society—the building of an harmonious body out of cooperating human elements, with man adding to his own power the forces of nature. Carty saw in the telephone system of his