CLIMACTERIS MELANOTUS. *Cli. strigâ superciliari, guláque, albocervinis; lineâ ante oculum, alterâ post oculum, omni superiore corpore, alis, caudáque, saturatè fusco-nigris; primariis, secondariis, tertiariisque ad basin, et humeris infrà stramineis; corpore inferiore vinoso; singulâ abdominis plumâ lineis duabus spatium album marginantibus nigris longitudinaliter prope caulem ornatâ.*

Superciliary line and throat buffy-white; line before and behind the eye, all the upper surface, wings, and tail, dark brownish black; the base of the primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, and the under surface of the shoulder buff; under surface pale vinous brown; the feathers of the abdomen with two stripes of black running parallel to and near the stem, the space between dull white; at the base of the throat several irregular spots of black; under tail-coverts buffy-white, crossed by broad bars of black; irides brown.

Total length, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches; bill, $\frac{3}{4}$; wing, $3\frac{1}{2}$; tail, $2\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, $\frac{7}{8}$.

The female differs in having the markings of the abdomen larger and more conspicuous, and in having the spots at the base of the throat chestnut instead of black.

Hab. The neighbourhood of the river Lynd, in the interior of Australia.

Remark.—Nearly allied to *C. melanura* and *C. scandens*.

MICROSCOPICAL SOCIETY.

Nov. 11, 1846.—J. S. Bowerbank, Esq., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

A paper was read by Mr. John Quekett, entitled "Additional Observations on the intimate Structure of Bone."

The author, after alluding to a previous paper on the same subject read before the Society in March last, in which he described certain characters peculiar to the bones of each of the four great classes of the vertebrate kingdom, by which a bone of each class could be easily distinguished, and after pointing out the importance of the knowledge of this subject to the palæontologist and geologist in enabling them to determine the nature of any fossil fragment of bone however minute, went on to state that he had ascertained that the cells of the bone bore a certain relation in point of size to that of the blood-discs; thus for instance the blood-discs were found to be largest in reptiles, smallest in birds and mammalia, and were in fishes of an intermediate size; and he had discovered that the bone-cells followed the same law. In the present paper Mr. Quekett stated the results of his examination of the structure of the bone of the perennibranchiate reptiles, viz. the Syren, Proteus and Axolotl, which have the largest blood-discs of all the vertebrata; and he found that in them the bone-cells were the largest also, which fully bore out and confirmed his former statement. Diagrams were exhibited which represented the bone-cells in the human subject, the Ostrich, Turtle, Syren and Lepidosteus, when magnified 450 diameters, by which means their characteristic differences were rendered very evident.

A second paper by John King, Esq., Ipswich, was read, "On a

Method by which all objects may be polarized under the Microscope."

The analyser consists of a double image prism placed over the eye-piece of the instrument, and a plate of selenite is then put upon the stage; the edges of the field will then appear coloured, while the centre remains colourless. Any object introduced into the field will exhibit the effects of polarized light with great intensity and purity of colour.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ADDENDUM TO THE BIRDS OF CORFU.

Platalea leucorodia, the Spoonbill or White Spoonbill.

Corfu, Nov. 15, 1846.

THIS bird, according to Yarrell, is still an occasional summer visitor in England, has been noticed by Mr. Robert Ball in Ireland, by Mr. Eyton in Wales, and by Sibbald and Fleming in the Scottish islands. Of the northern regions its favourite summer resort is Holland, and Temminck says that it is nowhere so abundant as there. In winter it seeks a warmer abode, and flocks amongst other southern localities to the salt-marshes or sea-coast of Italy, being specially abundant, says Temminck, at Cagliari in Sardinia. In these islands the naturalist has not as yet recorded the Spoonbill, and the occurrence of the present bird, the young of the year, is therefore highly interesting, as offering another line or belt of migration. I received the bird with the blood quite fresh upon it on the 31st of October, and therefore conclude it was shot in the island itself. I was unable to ascertain from the bird-dealer (not the sportsman) who brought it whether others had been seen, but I conclude, as the bird was one of the year, or at least an immature bird, as shown by the beak and quill-feathers, and by the absence of elongated occipital feathers, that it was not alone in its flight.—J. E. PORTLOCK.

Corfu, Nov. 23, 1846.

Platalea leucorodia. On inquiry I find that the Spoonbill recorded by me as appearing at the close of October was one of a flock of about seven birds, three of which, all immature, like the one noticed by me, were shot. Signor Gangadi informs me, that though rare at Corfu it has been occasionally observed, and that he believes it appears every season on the Albanian coast. It is recorded amongst the Dalmatian birds by Dr. Carrara in his work 'Dalmazia descritta' now publishing.

I observe also in Dr. Carrara's work, *Aquila nævia*, *Ardea comata*, *Sterna leucoptera*, birds added by me to the former list of Corfu birds. —J. E. PORTLOCK.

ACHILLEA TANACETIFOLIA, ALL.

This beautiful plant has been recently added to the list of British species by Mr. John Hardy. He has found it in two places, as he considers, indubitably indigenous and not an escape from cultivation,

viz. on "Cromford Moor near Matlock, Derbyshire, July 21, 1843," and on "a rough hilly bank near Ringing Low, five miles from Sheffield, July 1844; the plant accompanied by *Vaccinium Vitis-Idæa*, &c., and growing among a profusion of *Lastræa oreopteris*." It is the *A. dentifera* (DeCand. Prod. vi. 25), but that is not separated from *A. tanacetifolia* by many, of which it seems to be only a variety.—C. C. B.

On the Characters separating the four great Divisions of the Animal Kingdom. By J. E. Gray, F.R.S.

Great attention has been paid to the anatomical character which separates the four great divisions of the animal kingdom, but comparatively little attention has been paid to the external form of the groups and the characters furnished by their supports.

Form and Limbs.	Supported
Vertebrata with two pair: two on each side of the body for walking or flight. Organs of sense in pairs.	by a permanent internal cartilaginous skeleton hardened by age, and restored and removed by the vessels like the rest of the body.
Annulosa with five pair: five on each side of the body, for creeping or flight. Organs of sense in pairs.	by a hardened external skin which is periodically shed.
Mollusca: a single central foot for crawling. Organs of sense in pairs.	by two lateral shelly valves* secreted by the skin and attached to the body by muscles.
Radiata: a circular free or attached body. The organs of sense in a circle.	by horny or calcareous matter deposited in the entire or superficial part of the cellular substance of the body, part of which is often killed by the excess of the deposit.

ON THE GENUS CALOPTYLUM.

To Richard Taylor, Esq.

Haslar Hospital, Gosport, January 12, 1847.

Dear Sir,—In the Ichthyology of the voyage of the 'Sulphur' I described a fish from the collection of Sir Edward Belcher which I then considered to be the type of a new genus under the name of *Caloptylum*. Mr. Thompson lately called my attention to the *Bregmaceros MacClellandi* published by him in the fourth volume of your 'Annals,' p. 184 (April 1840), which is evidently of the same genus, but most probably another species. *Bregmaceros* is therefore the prior generic appellation. I remain, faithfully yours,

John Richardson.

* The second valve is sometimes reduced to the form of a lid or operculum, and sometimes entirely wanting, but is often found in the fœtal state when wanting in the adult animal.

THE TEIN-CHING, OR CHINESE INDIGO.

When in the north of China my attention was directed to a plant largely cultivated by the inhabitants for the sake of its blue dye. In the southern provinces a considerable quantity of indigo (*Indigofera*) is cultivated and manufactured, besides a large portion which is annually imported from Manilla and the Straits. In the north, however, the plant which we call indigo is never met with—owing, I suppose, to the coldness of the winters—but its place is supplied by this *Isatis indigotica*, or the "*Tein-ching*," as it is called by the Chinese. I met with it in the Nanking cotton district, a few miles west from Shanghae, where it is considered a plant of great importance, and covers a large tract of country. It is grown in rows a few inches apart, and at a distance looks like a field of young turnip or cabbage plants. In June 1844, when I was in that country, the plants were from 6 inches to 1 foot in height, and being considered in perfection, the natives were busily employed in cutting them and removing them to the manufactory. One of these places which I inspected was close on the banks of the canal, and was placed there for the convenience of the farmers, who brought their leaves in boats from the surrounding country, as well as to be near the water, a large quantity of which was requisite in the manufacture. It consisted of a number of round tanks, which are built for the purpose of steeping the leaves. The leaves are thrown into the tanks and covered with water, and, after remaining for a certain length of time, the juice is drawn off into other tanks, where I believe it is mixed with lime. The colour of the liquid at first is a kind of greenish blue, but after being well stirred up and exposed to the air it becomes much darker and very like the well-known indigo of commerce. I suppose it is thickened afterwards by evaporation in some way, but that part of the process did not come under my observation. I am very much inclined to believe that this is the dye used to colour the green teas which are manufactured in the north of China for the English and American markets; this, however, is only conjecture. The plant has a half-shrubby stem covered with a fine bloom. Its root-leaves are oval-lanceolate, on long stalks, sharp-pointed, slightly toothed, and somewhat fleshy; those on the upper part of the stem, near the flowers, are linear. The stem is decumbent, a foot and a half long, and divided at its extremity into several drooping racemes about 6 inches long; on its sides it bears here and there small clusters of leaves like those of the root. Flowers very small, yellow. Silicles black, quite smooth, 6 lines long by 2 wide in the broadest part, oblong, obtuse at each end, a little contracted below the middle, with a thin edge and a single median line.—*Fortune, in Journal of the Horticultural Society.*

M. SCHÖNHERR.

M. Schönherr the celebrated Swedish entomologist has had a distinguished mark of royal favour conferred upon him in November last by being made Knight Commander of the Royal Order of Wasa, having previously in 1829 by the late King of Sweden been made Knight of the Royal Order of the Polar Star.