

forty-five miles from Paris. "Broken in health, broken in fortune, broken-hearted, the conclusion of Larpenteur's Autobiography is in sad terms, though set off with his usual show of stoicism." He died November 15, 1872.

The editor in note on page 4 confounds the name of Col. George Davenport with that of his son, George L. Davenport, who was born on Rock Island in 1817, died February 28, 1885. A sketch of the latter's life, with portrait, was given in Third Number of THE ANNALS, First Series.

W. S.

---

## A SOUTHERN BIRD IN CENTRAL IOWA.

BY CARL FRITZ HENNING.

Last week a Brown Pelican (*Pelicanus fuscus*) was captured by the Fritcher brothers, on the Des Moines river, about nine miles northwest of Boone, Iowa. The young men, Vetter and John Fritcher, were taking a ramble along the river that passes within a short distance of their father, S. V. Fritcher's home, when they were suddenly surprised at seeing a large and stately bird—a Brown Pelican—swimming in the bayou. Realizing that the bird was a stranger in these parts, the boys took a snap shot at the pelican with their No. 22 rifle. It flew into a large elm that had at one time been a monarch of the forest, but the elements had broken and splintered the tree and thrown it into the upper branches of another, the branches of the fallen one towering about fifteen feet beyond. This point of vantage gave the bird a good "lookout" position; but wisely concluding the place was untenable while the boys were around, it flew down the river, where it was shortly afterward shot by the young hunters.

The Brown Pelicans are Atlantic coast birds, a tropical and subtropical species, inhabiting exclusively the salt water seas, bays and estuaries, its occurrence inland being purely fortuitous. They occur plentifully in the Bahamas and the

West Indies. They rarely come north of North Carolina, and range southward along the Mexican and Central American coast lines. The "American Ornithologists' Union" check list for 1895 refers to the Brown Pelican as accidental in Illinois; but Dr. Robert Ridgway of the Smithsonian Institution in his excellent work, "The Ornithology of Illinois," says the Brown Pelican is barely entitled to a place in the list of Illinois birds, on account of a single specimen having been seen (not taken) by Mr. C. K. Worthen, near Warsaw.

The Brown Pelican has a dark plumage that is considerably variegated. Head mostly white, tinged with yellow on top, the white extending down the neck as a bordering of the pouch and somewhat beyond; rest of the neck dark chestnut. The wings are mostly blackish and the tail is gray. Above, the body is dusky, becoming gray on the wing-coverts, while below it is inclined to be more brown with lateral white stripes. A mixture of yellow, blackish and chestnut feathers are found on the fore part of the neck, low down towards the breast.

The distinguishing feature of the pelican is the great, skinny pouch attached to the entire borders of their very weak lower jaws. This pouch is best developed in the Brown Pelican, where it extends at least half way down the neck in front, is a foot deep when distended and will hold a gallon. The late Dr. Elliott Coues in his "Key to North American Birds," says: "The prevalent impression that the pouch serves to convey live fish, swimming in water, to the little pelicans in the nest, is untrue; the young are fed with partially macerated fish disgorged by the parents from the crop. As Audubon remarks, 'it is doubtful whether a pelican could fly at all with its burden so out of trim.'"

Readers seeking further information concerning the habits of this bird, errant in our region, will find a description in Baird, Brewer and Ridgway's "Water Birds of North America." There is also a reference to it in the "Illinois Ornithologist."—*Boone Standard, July 14, 1900.*

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.