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# SOUTH AFRICAN QUARTERLY JOURNAL. SECOND SERIES.

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**JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1834.**

**Part 1.**

## ANNUAL REPORT

*Of the Council of the South African Literary and Scientific Institution, for 1833—34, read at the General Meeting on the 2nd of August.*

ON account of the departure of Dr. SMITH, one of our Secretaries, close upon the period fixed by the Regulations for convening the Annual General Meeting of this Institution, and on account of the leisure and attention of many members of the Council being occupied in preparations of various kinds for that event, it has been found necessary to defer convoking the members till this day. The Council requesting the indulgence of the members for this deviation from its rules, would respectfully submit to them, as the Report of the Institution, the following review of the few transactions in which it has been engaged during the past year :

First, As to the business, generally, of the Institution, and its present condition and prospects :—The Council has to remark, that during the year now elapsed an attempt was again made to increase the attendance of members at the Monthly Meetings of the Institution, by changing the hour, but that no perceptible advantage has attended it.

The Institution has always contemplated a two-fold purpose, both capable of exerting extended influence on the condition and progress of society. The first of these is the gathering and spreading of information, and aiding or fostering the facilities by which it may be acquired and rendered useful. To this purpose, especially, is the system of public meetings at stated times applicable and subservient, either by attracting information from those of the surrounding community, who possess it, or by the increase or confirmation of individual knowledge, which arises from mutual communication. Its fulfilment depends evidently on the activity, zeal, and power, and the facility of research possessed by individuals, and must vary with the number of those who are thus equipped for unveiling the mysteries of science, or rising to the triumphs of literary success.

*Strix Capensis*, Smith. Upper parts brown, clouded with black-brown, and thinly spotted with white dots; under parts yellowish white freely mottled with small brown spots. Facial disc clear white with a large black blotch at the inner angle of each eye; cervical collar dull white, the feathers tipped with tawny-brown, and streaked along their centres with dark brown. Wings about two inches longer than the tail; primary wing feathers brown, irregularly mottled with fulvous towards quills; secondaries tawny without, white within, and imperfectly barred with brown, the tips chiefly brown, edges of shoulders tawny-white, insides white, mottled with black spots. Tail short, two centre feathers brown with some white spots at tips, outermost feathers white imperfectly banded with brown, intermediate ones tawny-brown on outer vanes, white on inner, and both partially barred with brown. Tarsi an uniform yellowish white; bill yellowish white; eyes brown-black; toes yellow with a thin sprinkling of rigid yellowish hairs; claws horn-yellow. Length seventeen inches.

Inhabits South Africa.

### Genus *Bubo*. *Curier*.

*Ear opening small; facial disc indistinct; head with two egrets; tarsi feathered to the toes.*

*Bubo lactea*. Bill large, blackish blue towards tarsi, yellowish towards point, and furnished on each side with long, narrow, bristly, black feathers; cheeks white, broadly margined behind with deep black; egrets black towards points, waved black and white towards bases; crown waved black and white; rest of upper parts dull brown, finely and irregularly waved with dull white lines; chin white, undulated with brown; throat pure white; breast and belly dull white, waved with delicate irregularly disposed zigzag lines. Primary wing feathers white towards quills, brown towards tips, and banded with blackish transverse bands; secondaries banded alternately brown and dull white, the latter with fine brown undulations. Tail rounded, banded alternately brown and white, the white bands about four in number, are mottled with brown; on the outer vanes of all the feathers; legs dull white with waved transverse brown lines; claws black. Length of male about twenty inches, of female about two feet.

Inhabits South Africa and Senegal.

*Strix lactea* Temm. *pl col.* 4.

*Bubo Capensis*, Smith. *Young*.—Upper parts of head blackish brown, the feathers blotched and tipped with tawny; egret blackish, variegated on inner edges with clear tawny; back and

sides of neck dark brown, mottled with fulvous, the latter in large spots upon both vanes; back and shoulders blackish brown dashed with fulvous or tawny-white. Wing feathers black-brown with tawny bands, the latter often brown in the middle, particularly on the secondaries. Facial disc principally pale tawny-brown, at inner angles of eyes white; the rostral feathers tipped with black; cervical collar blackish, mottled with white at the throat, towards extremities brown; chin, and a large crescent in front of breast, white; breast and belly blackish brown, variegated freely with large transverse tawny blotches, which, towards the thighs, exhibit a whitish tint; legs rufous-white with small brown blotches; toes rufous-white, without variegations. Tail slightly rounded, the outermost feathers of each side banded black-brown and tawny-white, the bands of the latter colour brown in the middle, the centre feathers blackish brown with tawny bands, dusky in the middle; tips of all the feathers tawny-white, finely mottled with brown. Bill black; eyes yellow; claws light horn-coloured, darkest towards points. Length twenty-two inches.

Inhabits South Africa.

*Obs.* This bird I am convinced is distinct from the *Bubo Europeanus*. Adult specimens are said to be marked nearly as the young ones.

## ORDER INSESSORES. *Vigors.*

Bill various; legs short or moderate; tarsi usually clothed with feathers; toes flat beneath; claws slender, movable, somewhat retractile, curved and acute.

### TRIBE FISSIROSTRES.

Bill broad at the base, gape very wide; legs short.

### FAM. MEROPIDÆ.

#### GENUS MEROPS.

*Bill longer than the head, curved, rounded, slightly compressed on the sides, and pointed; nostrils lateral, rounded or in the form of a longitudinal fissure. Wings long and pointed, first or third quill the longest. Tail long, even, graduated or forked, often the two middle feathers longer than the others and terminating in narrow points. Tarsi short, slender, and scutellated.*