

as a reason for not quoting all the names given by the older authors. Wherever they could be with certainty determined, they have been quoted under the species to which they are believed to refer. The numerous divisions which more modern writers have deemed it necessary to propose will be given in the proper place.

Latham, who added little or nothing to the previously recorded notices of this group of birds, enumerated sixty-five species in his 'Index Ornithologicus,' published in 1790, and ninety-five in the third volume of his 'General History of Birds,' which appeared in 1822. Of these about two-thirds are real species; the remainder cannot be determined, as they are so indefinitely described that it is impossible to ascertain whether they are species or not.

In 1802 the 'Oiseaux dorés,' the great French work of Audebert and Vieillot, was given to the world. In it, besides figures of all the Jacamars and Promerops then known, were included seventy plates of Humming-Birds. These plates represent species which were then rare, but are now extremely common, and which, although not so numerous as those contained in the later work of Latham, had the advantage of being illustrated in a manner which was intended to convey some idea of their brilliancy. In most instances the species may be recognized; in others they are doubtful. Independently of the illustrations above-mentioned, these authors attempted to explain the laws which produce the splendid colouring of certain parts of these beautiful birds, and have given a plate illustrative of their views on the subject.

In 1823 appeared the second part of the ornithological portion of the 'Tableau Encyclopédique et Méthodique des Trois Règnes de la Nature,' by Bonnaterre and Vieillot, with an enumeration of ninety-four species of Humming-Birds, but no additional information as to their habits and manners. A few years later (between 1829 and 1833) appeared M. Lesson's well-known works, the 'Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux-mouches,' 'Histoire Naturelle des Colibris,' and 'Les Trochilidées,'—publications which added considerably to our previous knowledge of the group, although they enumerate no more than 110 species. How little progress, then, had been made towards an intimate acquaintance with these lovely birds between the date of the twelfth edition of the 'Systema Naturæ' and that of the last-named publications, a period of more than seventy years!

If the illustrious Humboldt paid no very marked attention to the *Trochilidæ*, he must have noticed many of the fine species lately brought to light; and it is therefore somewhat surprising that he should have been so remarkably silent respecting them when writing the 'Personal Narrative' of his travels in the new world. It is to him and to his associate Bonpland, however, that I consider we are indebted for our acquaintance with many of them; for the perusal of the interesting account of their enterprising travels has doubtless created a desire in others to follow in their footsteps. Thus succeeding travellers, who have not been slow to perceive how wonderfully different are the productions of the great Andean ranges from those of the other parts of South America, have ever been active in forming and transmitting to Europe collections in nearly every department of science; and no objects have been more assiduously sought for than the flying gems which constantly greeted them at every turn and must have been always before their eyes. Among the most eminent travellers who have succeeded Humboldt are D'Orbigny, Schomburgk, Tschudi, Castlenau, Burmeister, and others, who, with more recent but less-known explorers, have added so largely to our knowledge of the *Trochilidæ*. Both Frenchmen and Belgians have proceeded to South America to procure