

EXPLANATION

OF THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BIOLOGIA CENTRALI-AMERICANA

(Epitomised from DR. F. DUCANE GODMAN'S Introduction)

A short account of the events that led to the publication of the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana' may be of interest to our readers, and I will therefore first give a sketch of the early days of Salvin and myself, so far as they have a definite bearing on the study of Natural History, and of the circumstances which drew our attention especially to Tropical America.

Osbert, the second son of Mr. Anthony Salvin, the eminent architect, was born at Finchley in 1835 and educated at Westminster and Cambridge. That he developed a very early taste for natural history is clear from the series of bird skins, now in the Natural History Museum, collected by him as a boy and labelled 'Finchley.'

I, Frederick Ducane Godman, third son of Joseph Godman, of Park Hatch, Surrey, was born in January 1834, and at the age of ten went to Eton, but three years later a very severe attack of what was then called low fever necessitated my removal, and for some years I was unable to work at all. When my health was sufficiently re-established, I received instruction from tutors until I was eighteen years old, when I made a trip to the Mediterranean and Black Sea, visiting Gibraltar, Southern Spain, Athens, and Constantinople *en route*. During the time spent at home I interested myself in Natural History, paying special attention to the British Mosses and Ferns, of which I made a considerable collection. Birds were always a source of delight to me, and I could recognise a large number of British species as well by their flight as by their note.

In 1853 I entered Trinity College, Cambridge, as an undergraduate, and Salvin, in the following year, went to Trinity Hall, of which College he became a scholar; he graduated as a Senior Optime in the Mathematical Tripos and was afterwards made an Honorary Fellow. With similar tastes, it was only natural that we soon met