Bowdler Sharpe Collection

124 Beckenham Road,
Beckenham, Kent.
May 29th 1905.

My dear Sharpe,

When I was a young man I did not hesitate to stand up in the presence of the giants of the scientific world and express my unfledged opinions; but, in my more mature age I have not the self-confidence necessary, to enable me to read out a paper, containing the reasons for my own conviction touching the instability of colouring in individual feathers, before a

it lies rather in expressing my views, and the reasons for them, through the press. In times past I have not infrequently been complimented by my adversaries, for being fully able to hit hard in self-defence, and give quite as much, if not more, in return for what I have received. But in a public Argus-eyed assembly I get confused, and forget my sense, and give opportunity to the adversary to blaspheme.

You are very kind, but—
I'd rather not thank you.

Yours very sincerely
A. G. Butler.

Dr. R. B. Sharpe.

meeting of the learned of all lands; particularly when I am well aware, that all the facts which I am able to marshal in proof of the correctness of my views, have already been published in 'the Ibis', 'the Avicultural Magazine', and 'the Proceedings of the Zoological Society'.

Although I am certain that every part of every feather, long after it has become perfect, receives constant nutriment from the body through feeders invisible under the most powerful microscope hitherto constructed, just as the veins in the limbs of a midge would be invisible under the same limited power; yet if some learned Theban were to rise and ask me what I imagined I knew respecting the microscopic structure of pinnules or powder-down, I should have to admit absolute ignorance and to accept the contemptuous sneers of those who perchance were equally ignorant as the punishment of my lack of omniscience.

I never was very strong as a speaker; as you well know, "my bodily presence is weak and my speech contemptible"; but if I have any talent at all,

Casey A. Wood Collection

THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY

FOR THE STUDY OF

FOREIGN AND BRITISH BIRDS.

124 Beckenham Road
Beckenham, Kent.
26th October 1900

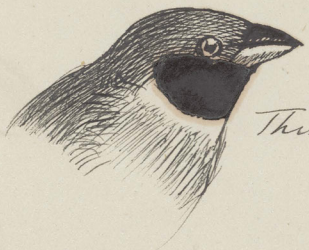
Madam,

I have no doubt that your bird is Dufresne's Waxbill, probably a hen, as that sex wants the black mask of the cock and has much redder upper tail-coverts.

Dufresne's Waxbill is a native of South Africa, from the Knysna to Natal; and from the Transvaal to the Zambesi.

Believe me
Yours very truly
A. G. Butler.

Miss Grace Ashford.



This is the male.