From what we knew of the nesting habits of the California Condor, we could not tell whether the old birds would be shy and hard to photograph or whether they would show fight while we were working at their home.

On April 11, 1906 we made another trip to the condors cave we were again in the canon below the condor's cave. While ascending the steep slope to the nest, a large bowlder was accidentally loosened and it dropped to the water below with a loud report. The next moment, the old condor, aroused from her nest, flapped to her perch in the dead tree directly above our heads. We watched and waited, hoping she would return to the nest. But after about fifteen minutes, she raised her wings, hooked her bill about the stump parrot-fashion and climbed to a higher perch. We crawled on up behind a cover of rocks to get a picture. While fixing the camera, I looked up and the old male was just alighting beside his mate on the dead tree. We crouched down to watch. If the birds saw us, they paid no attention to our presence. The mother edged along the limb and put her head under his neck. Then she nosed him as if asking to be fed, but he responded rather coldly by moving away and she followed. This crowded him out where the limb was too small, and he jumped across back of her. He seemed to get more friendly and the two sat there side by side,

nibbling and carressing each other.

We began crawling further up the ridge for a nearer picture. When we came in full sight of the birds, to my surprise, they paid no attention to us. We stopped to take another picture and then climbed on up the steep rock with our cameras on our backs. Under cover of a small bush, I came to a point directly opposite the pair and only about forty feet away. Seeing the condors had no fear of me, I climbed straight out to the edge of the ledge and made some exposures while the mother sat preening her feathers. As neither bird seemed the least anxious as to our presence, I began to enjoy the sensation of getting so close to these big birds in their wild mountain haunt..

In a few minutes, the old male spread his wings and dropped off down the canon. The next time I saw him, he was a mere speck, soaring high above the mountain. The mother kept turning her head and watching him all the while he was in the sky. Finally, she too sailed off.

When we climbed around to the nest, we found the condor nestling had grown from the size of the egg , or from about a double handful till he filled my hat. The down on his body had changed color from pure white to a light gray. Instead of the flesh color on his head and neck, it had changed to a dull yellow. He sat with his shoulders humped and his head hung as if in the last stage of dejection. The minute he saw me, he began crying in a note most peculiar for a bird, for it

sounded exactly like the hoarse tooting of a small tin horn. However he only used this note a few times, then he began hissing. He showed his resentment by drawing in his breath and letting it escape as if through his nose. His feet were short and stubby, the feet of a scavenger. What a deterioration from the eagle! The claws were like those of a chicken rather than a bird of prey. The head, the bill and even the look in the eye were very different from the savage expression of the eagle even in his babyhood.

When we picked the youngster up in our hands, he objected in a feeble way by trying to bite. Both the parents had left the vicinity and we set him down at the entrance of his home to get some pictures. One of the parents was soaring high in the air, and he seemed to see his chick, for he began to descend rapidly. It looked as if he had something in his talons, but when he came nearer, we could see his legs and feet were hanging down as birds often do when about to light. He seemed to do this as an aid in dropping suddenly. He swept in near us and lit on the old dead pine and was soon followed by his mate. The old birds looked so serious as they sat there staring at us and their young, that we hesitated, for we were not in position for trouble there on the steep side of the mountain. But they had no intention of stopping us in our work, for they seemed to take the whole enterprise from a curious point of view.

There was something ominous about the condors and

their nest-cave. Never a sound came from the birds; they came and went like great black shadows. One minute you might see a mere speck in the clouds, and a few moments later, this creature with a wing-spread of ten feet, would skim past only a few yards above your head. There was hardly a swish of the wings to tell of his presence.

April 25, the next trip we made to the home of the condor, the pair of old birds met us at the mouth of the canon. One of the birds sailed out over the top of the mountain, quite high in the sky. In a moment the second bird followed lower down. They were perhaps out for a short morning fly after attending to affairs at home. The lower bird, likely the female, soon flew back up the canon, while the other sailed straight out over the valley toward the East.

Four hours later, I edged down the steep rock as quietly as possible with my reflex camera in hand and worked my way along to the nest. When I got where I could look through the crack into the cave, there sat the old condor mother sound asleep. She was brooding her nestling. I dropped back behind a bush and got my camera ready. It was too dark to catch her as she left, but I thought she might pause at the threshold and give me a chance for a picture. Then with my camera ready to snap, I gave a short whistle to arouse her. Then moving a little closer, I gave a louder whistle. In an instant she knew I was there, for she plunged headlong out from behind the rock and lit scared and half dazed on her perch a short distance

away.

When we stooped to look at the nestling in the cave, he jumped right out at us. He was in a savage mood. If his mother would not stay to defend him, he intended to fight for himself. I could see that he was developing good fighting qualities. His mother would have showed fight too if she were cornered as he was.

The young condor was growing steadily, for he was now thirty-five days old and as large as a good-sized chicken. His whole body was covered with dark gray down with the outer edgings of lighter gray. When I put down my elbow, he lunged forward and struck it such a hard blow with his bill that it would have drawn blood had he hit my bare hand. The minute I appeared, his neck puffed out with wind and his whole crop filled till it felt just like a rubber ball. He seemed to use his crop as a supply tank for air, which he blew out slowly through his nose to express his anger. He sat with his head down and mouth open. The front part of his tongue was round and from the point it folded over from each side and met in a little crease down the front. About an inch back, it looked as if it were partly cut in TWO for it was narrower and flatter. Such a breath as that youngster had! I could not describe it, for I tried to forget it as soon as possible.

That evening we watched the old condor to see if she would go back to the nest. But at six o'clock she settled down on her perch with her head drawn in and went to sleep. The young condor had to sleep alone.

We awoke at daylight in the morning with a cold draught drawing down the canon. The old condor was still sound asleep on the dead tree up the mountain side. At six-twenty, she sailed across over our heads and lit on the side of the cliff. She was there but a moment when she spread her wings and dropped back across to the nest where she stayed an hour, after which she took up her perch on the tree.

We examined both the old birds from a near point of view and found they were almost identical. We were not positive, but took it for granted that it was the mother who stayed at the nest. The other bird, likely the male, seemed to be a trifle larger. At this season as well as during the period of incubation, the female seemed to stay on the nest or nearby while the male did all the hunting.

We had seen nothing of the male since the morning before about ten o'clock, when he disappeared high to the East. As the mother sat there on her perch, she often turned her head and scanned the heavens, looking for the coming of her mate. By watching her, our attention was first called to a mere speck in the sky. It grew with surprising rapidity, and as it took better form, we could see a bird coming toward us with extreme speed. Through the field-glass, we could see that the feet were dropped, and we knew it was the male condor, for this was the way he always came. With one great slide to the West and a long swerve to the North, he circled with the curve of the canon and brought up on the top of the dead tree only thirty feet

away. I never saw such a slide as that bird took. Such smoothness and grace! And such tremenduous speed!

Each day at the nest, we seemed to be getting on more intimate terms with the old birds. The minute we lifted the young condor out from behind the rocks, the old birds were very much interested. They both came over to a nearer perch where they could see, and they twisted their necks to watch every move we made. When the mother saw her gray nestling, she flew across to the rocks above us. Then she ran along the steep slope, but had to help herself with her wings to keep her feet, and hopped up on a small oak limb just above the nest and only twenty feet distant. The old male followed and both sat watching us from the tree. It was all anxiety with them, and we were so anxious to get their pictures that we could not shoot fast enough. In a short time, all our plates were gone and we had to sit down and watch and wish for more.

This gave us the best chances to study both the old birds. Their bills were of dark horn color and the RED skin of the head extended down, covering the bill about half way. The feet were of similar color, but on each knee was a patch of red. There was a brighter patch of red on the breast of each bird, which could occasionally be seen when they were preening and when they spread their breast feathers. Both had light-colored wing-bars and the primaries were well worn. The skin on the throat hung loose and the lower mandible fitted in close under the upper, giving the bird a peculiar expression. The chin was

merging into brighter orange on the sides and back of neck.)
orange and below this on the neck was a strip of greenish-yellow. The top and front of the head were bright red, but between the eyes was a small patch of black feathers, and these extended down in front of the eye till they faded into the orange-red of the neck. The pupil of the eye was black, but the iris was deep red and conspicuous. The top of the head was wrinkled as if with age. The ruff or long shiny black feathers about the neck was often ruffled up, giving the bird a savage appearance. Behind the ruff on the back, the feathers were edged with dark brown.

When we made the next trip into the mountains, to our surprise a third condor appeared above the nest in the afternoon. He was a ragged-looking bird, with two or three feathers out of his wings and one missing from his tail. We first noticed the new bird as we saw the parents watching him intently when he was high in the sky. He began circling nearer and nearer till he finally lit on the side of the mountain a few hundred yards up the canon. The parents watched him closely for some time without a move, till the new arrival thinking his presence was not objectionable, flew down and lit nearer the nest. The male set out after him and the third condor flew back up the canon. There was some objection to the new comer, but it was not serious, for he stayed about all afternoon, and at one time lit for a moment on the dead tree near the nest. The male drove him off, but only chased him a short distance.

The third condor seemed a trifle smaller than the

other two, but he was almost as brightly colored as the parents. We were inclined to think he was one of the children of former years. We watched the three birds till six o'clock and then climbed down to make camp. The parents were perched on the dead tree in front of the nest and the third bird on the mountain side above, and there they went to sleep for the night.

Early the next morning, we found one of the birds, presumably the male, and the intruder gone, while the other still sat on the tree-perch. About noon the father appeared in the eastern sky. The mother saw him first and we were attracted by her watching. We were surprised again to see the third bird following a little in the rear, and he came on down and stayed during the afternoon. The crops of both birds were bulging out when they returned, showing that they knew where to get food.

The young condor was now fifty-four days old, but he was still clothed in gray down. It was over two months before the first black feathers began to show on his wings, and they developed very slowly, for by the first week in July when we had expected to complete our series, the young bird was not half feathered out, although he was three months and a half old, and weighed over fifteen pounds.

We could see that the parents were becoming more and more attached to the nestling, and they were becoming tamer and tamer while we were about. The nestling was wilder and more ferocious as he grew. The only way we could touch him, was by

wearing heavy gloves or by blindfolding him. He lunged about and fought while he was in the cave, but when we got him out of his home, he seemed to change tactics and to become quite meek. While we were getting pictures of him, the parents sat about only a few feet away. They were almost devoid of fear, for several times they stood within five or six feet of us in perfect unconcern. Of course, we had been extremely careful from the first not to scare them and not to make any quick movements while they were so near. In all our study of the home life of these birds, there was never the slightest indication of ferocity on the part of the parents. Their attitude was one of anxiety and solicitation.

The last afternoon when we took the young condor out of his cave and he appeared blindfolded, the mother jumped back as if scared, for she could hardly recognize him without a head. We placed him on a narrow ledge of rock, removed the blind and the mother edged down to her young. Then she began carressing him, pushing her head under his wing and biting him gently on the leg. I never saw a greater show of affection in any bird than the two condors seemed to have for each other and for their young. The longer we studied and the more we watched this family, the stronger our own attachment became for the birds.

While we were taking our final pictures of the condor family, two more condors appeared high above. With a field-glass, we recognized one as the former visitor, the ragged bird

with missing feathers in the wing and tail. The two new arrivals sailed about in circles for a while and then we saw the ragged bird descending. The father of the young condor seemed to get more anxious and flapped across the canon and back. On came the visitor till he was only a short distance above the top of the mountain. Then the father sailed rapidly down the canon and around the bend out of sight. The third bird dropped lower and lower in circles while his mate stayed higher up in the sky. The father of the young bird was gone about five minutes when he suddenly appeared right over the top of the mountain and higher than the visitor. He had made a feint and got the advantage of position. Drawing his wings partly in, he dove at the intruder, who saw him coming and increased his speed down the canon. Dodging the enraged condor, he circled back up a small side ravine and both disappeared behind the mountain. In a few moments, they came into view again higher in the air and going toward the West, the old condor flapping wildly to strike a blow and the pursued one dodging back and forth to escape. They were undoubtedly two males, for the mother sat calmly looking at the chase, while the mate of the ragged bird sailed above watching the outcome. After another wait of several minutes, the two birds appeared again, but far up in the sky; the ragged bird was flying straight to the East still dodging the mad condor at his tail. And on they went as far as I could see, with the mate of the ragged bird following some distance in the rear. In about half an hour the father again appeared, sailing slowly back alone, victorious in the chase.

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PORTLAND, OREGON.