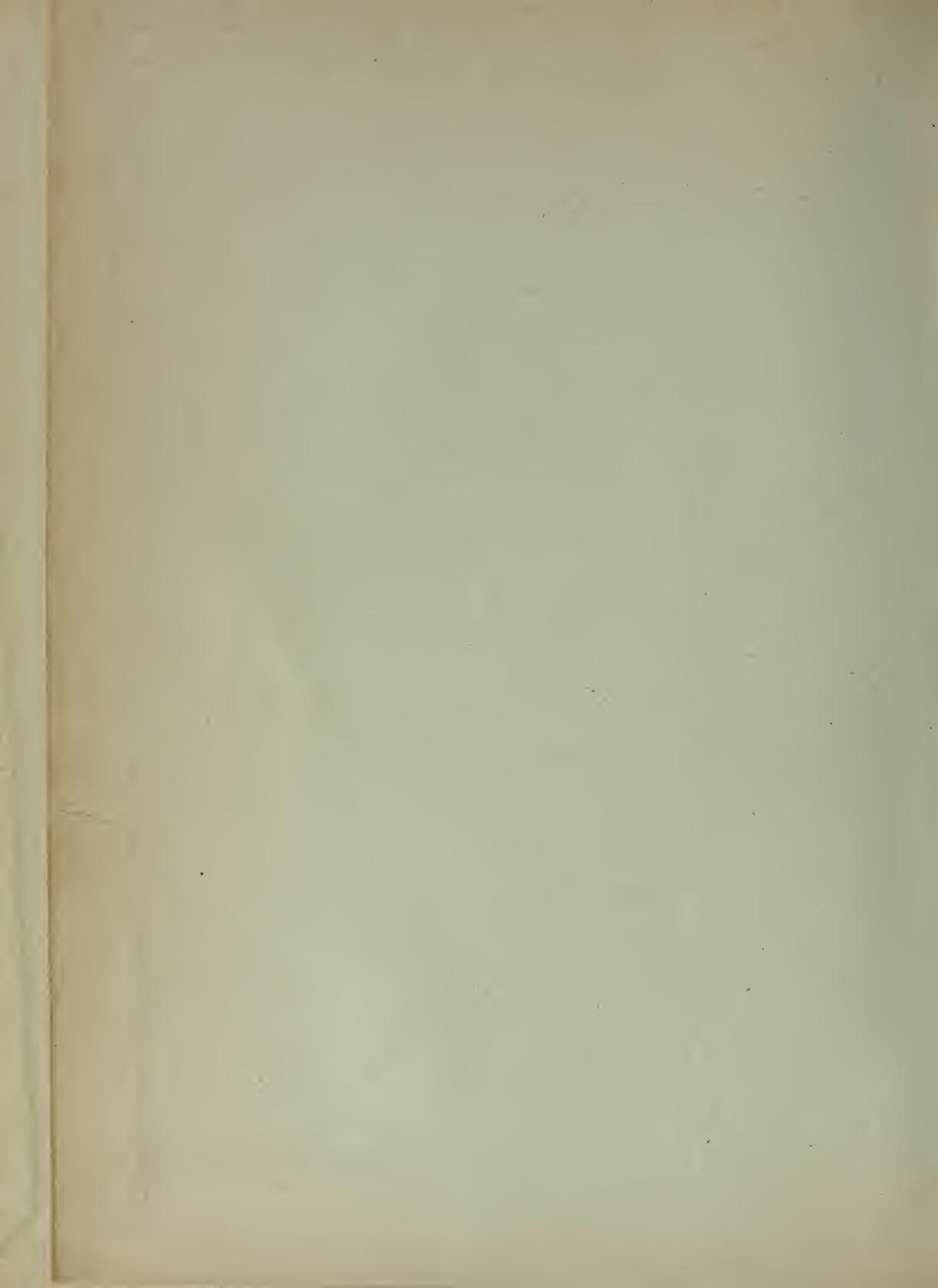
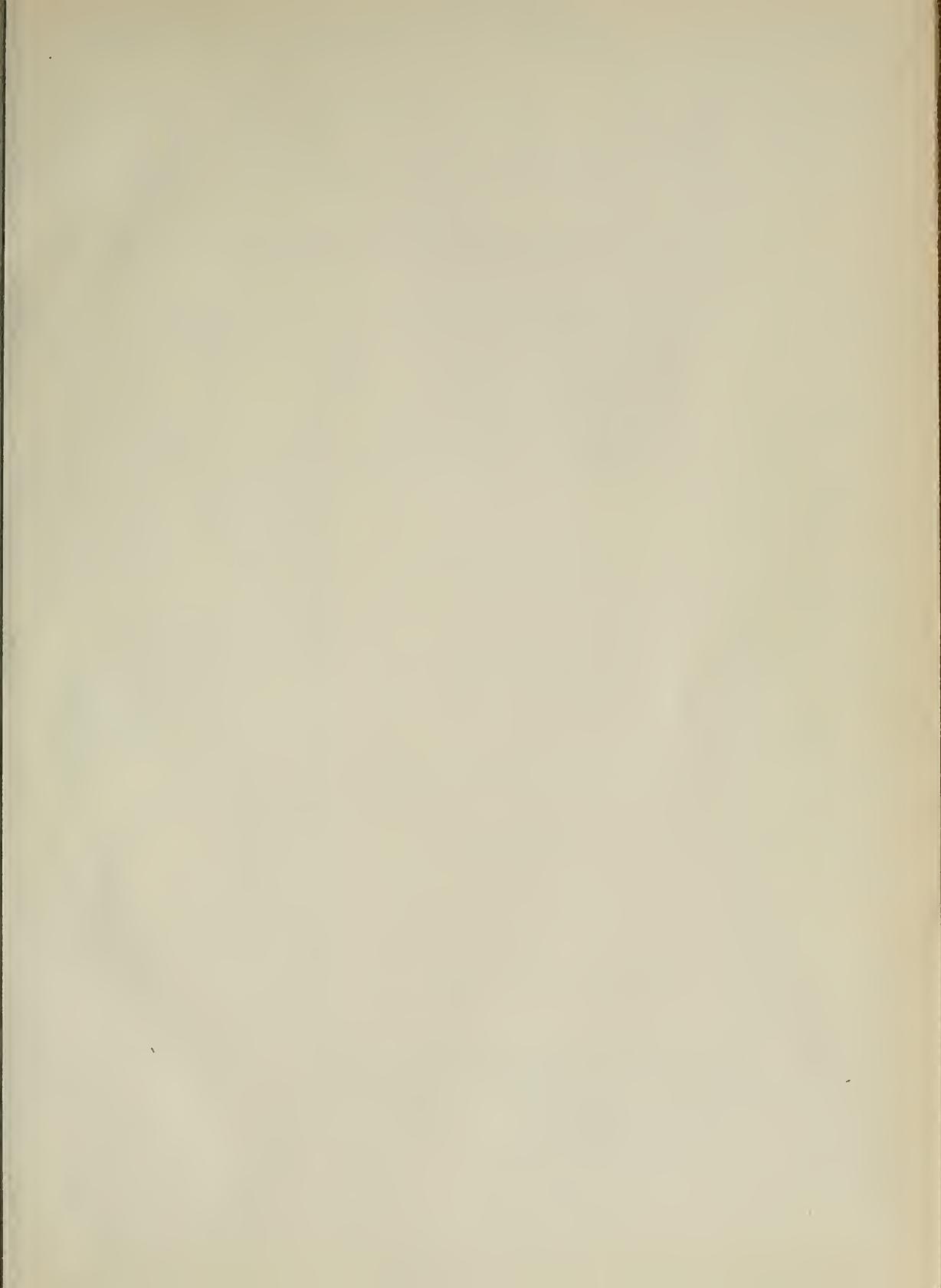
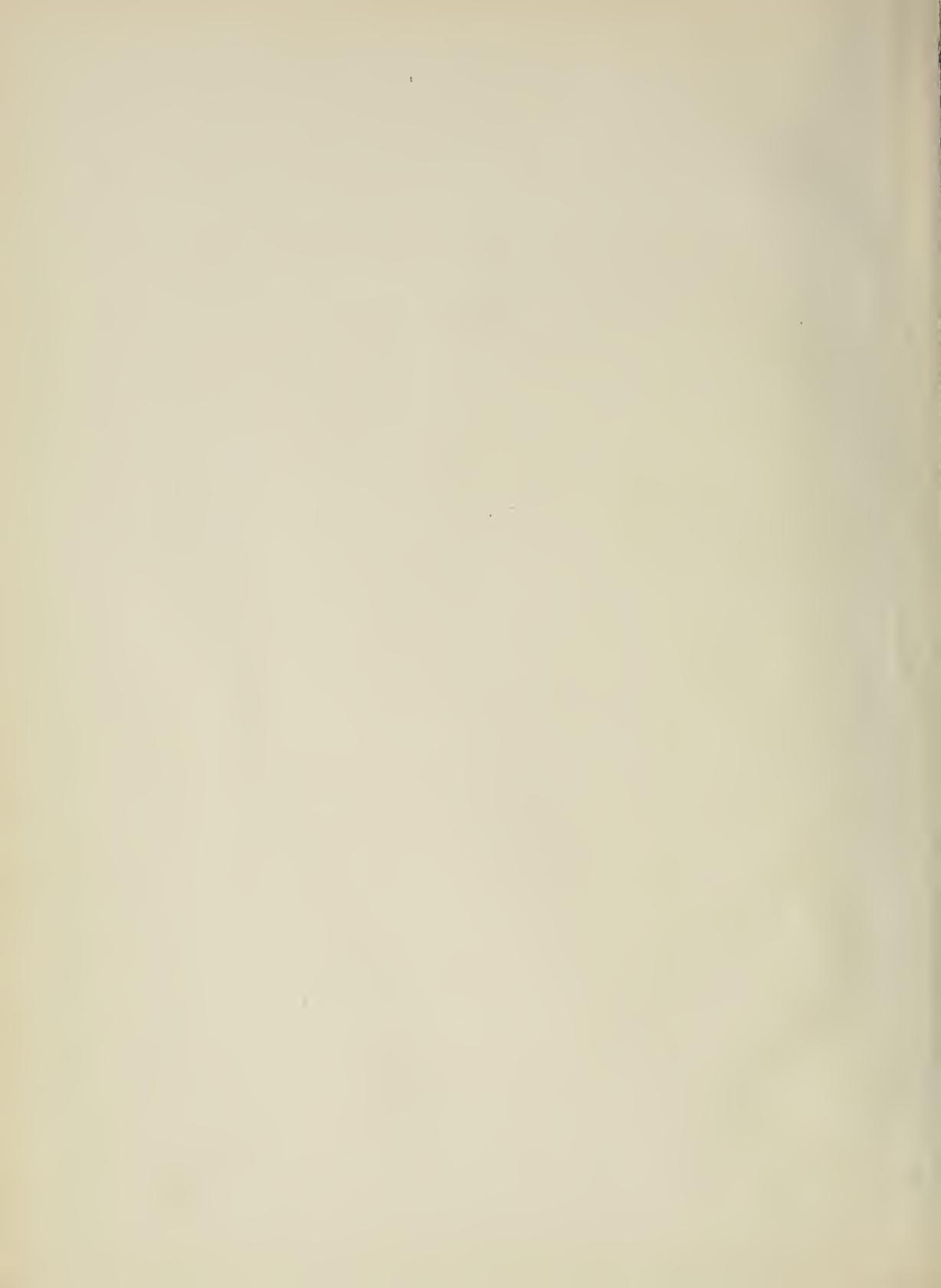


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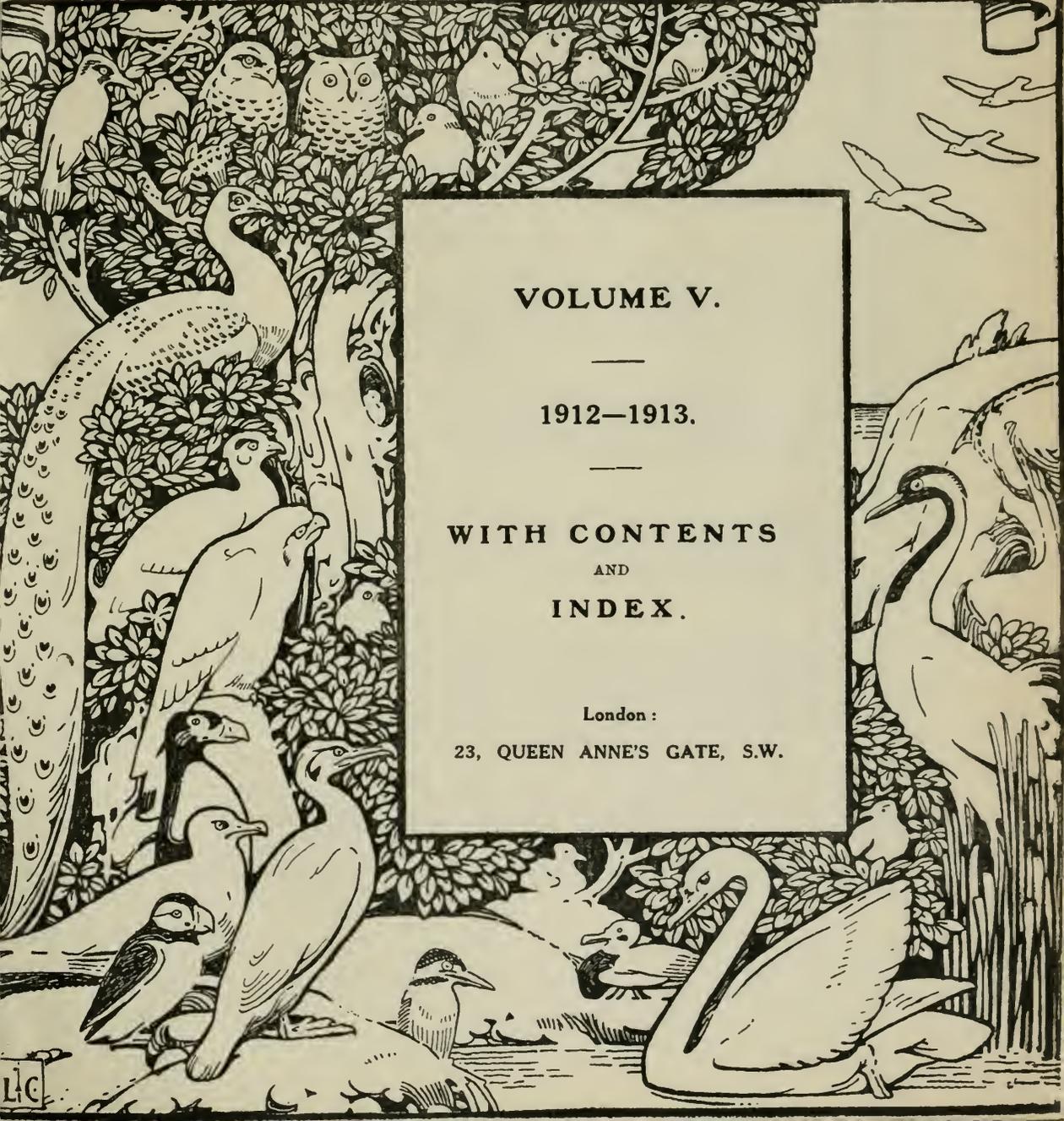




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BIRD NOTES & NEWS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY
FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS.



VOLUME V.

—
1912—1913.
—

WITH CONTENTS
AND
INDEX.

London :

23, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, S.W.

L.C.

BIRD NOTES & NEWS

THE BIRD SOCIETY OF AMERICA
1915-1916

115.68419 Oct 6

The Royal Society for
the Protection of Birds.

FOUNDED
1889.

23, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, LONDON, S.W.

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Rutland

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF RUTLAND,
Vice-President Royal Society for the Protection of Birds,
Chairman of Annual Meeting, 1912.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

MARCH, 1912.

[No. I.]

A Holiday with the Birds in Paris.

The Essay for which the R.S.P.B. Silver Medal in the Public-school Essay Competition, 1911, was awarded to Percy Worthington (Harrow).

THE second largest city in Europe is scarcely the spot which one would naturally choose for studying birds in their wild state; yet there are probably few parts of France which can boast so large a number of species in so small an area. The principal haunt of the birds in Paris is the Bois de Boulogne, which lies on the west side of the city, between it and the river Seine. It comprises an area of 2,000 acres of woodland, intermixed with open grassy spaces, the largest of these being the racecourses of Auteuil and Longchamps. Water—absence of which spoils the fine forest of Fontainebleau for the ornithologist—is plentiful, as there are a number of lakes and two or three small and rather sluggish streams. The Bois is broken up by a number of carriage roads which furnish easy access to its different parts. Two large enclosures call for special notice, namely the Pré Catalan and Bagatelle; the former is an open park, the shrubberies of which are much frequented by birds in the nesting-season; the latter is the country residence and garden of the late Sir Richard Wallace, and was bequeathed by him to the city. It has only lately been thrown open to the public, and owing to its seclusion was long a haven for the shy species, and it also harboured the last of the squirrels. On two sides the Bois adjoins

directly the houses of Boulogne and Neuilly, but between it and Paris proper is the line of the now obsolete fortifications, whose wide and deep ditch is one of the best places for nests, particularly of the Warblers. It has an unsavoury reputation as the haunt of *apaches*, but its thick reeds and grass, plantations and trees overgrown by festoons of wild clematis are a real attraction for the bird-lover. On the fourth side the Bois abuts on the Seine, and just across this lie the big woods of Meudon and St. Cloud; plantations and coppices connect these by way of Vaucresson and Rocancourt with the large forest of St. Germain. It is probably by reason of these that a number of species, which one scarcely expects to meet in such close proximity to a large town, enter the Bois.

But, besides the Bois de Boulogne—the Bois to a Parisian—the Bois de Vincennes, the spacious tree-lined avenues with their quiet gardens, the fine parks, and the large cemeteries like Père Lachaise, planted in the middle of a populous quarter, all yield their quota of avian inhabitants. The ubiquitous Sparrow and the adaptable Jackdaw exist quite happily in the forest of brick and chimneys, without any regard to the vegetable world.

To those who think that a town

dweller's acquaintance with birds must be limited to the half-dozen commonest species, Paris would come as a revelation. Within my own observation, or on good authority, I have recorded no less than 82 species. That all these do or have occurred here in the wild state is certain ; but I have no doubt that careful observation, particularly at the season of the autumn migration, would add at least a score more of nesting or visiting species. Of the 82, 50 are regularly breeding species, whether resident or migratory ; seven are normal winter migrants, while the rest are visitors. Of these some are clearly mere accidental stragglers, but others—e.g. the Woodpeckers, which have once or twice been found nesting in the Bois—may be regular inhabitants who have eluded observation by reason of their shyness. The Scops-Owl is another example, the only record of its occurrence being a female taken on her nest in 1899 ; she lived for a long time in the Jardin des Plantes.

It is not at first easy to see what attracts so large a number of species. It must be borne in mind, however, that birds are generally most abundant in localities where man is either a very important or else a totally negligible factor. In Paris the birds form an attraction for the many, who therefore combine to restrain the depredations of the few. The Bois is under the control of a Conservancy Board, and their attitude towards the bird population is that the bird is the property of the State, and that therefore the individual has no right to interfere with it. They go a step further and consider that every bird which is not positively harmful should be encouraged to multiply and replenish the earth. To enforce these views and to keep order generally there are a number of "gardes," retired soldiers for the most part, whose exclusive duty it

is to look after the Bois ; they are under orders to prevent any killing of birds or robbing of nests. They have the right, however, of shooting such birds as are labelled noxious by the authorities, a right only exercised to the extent of keeping down these creatures within reasonable bounds. On this black list are all the Corvidæ, the Hawks, and such birds as are likely to be injurious to the fish in the lakes. The guardian who has charge of the island on the Lower Lake is also instructed to put up Nesting-boxes ; a number of these are in suitable positions at a considerable height from the ground, and are largely patronised by the birds. On the Upper and Lower Lakes, and also to a less extent on the Lac de St. James, ornamental water-fowl are kept. These are regularly fed, and part of the lake is kept clear of ice in winter for their benefit ; it is to their presence that we may directly attribute the visits which occasional wild-fowl pay us in winter.

So much then for what is done by the authorities. Unfortunately their excellent regulations are frequently violated, and nests placed in exposed situations are often robbed. Man is the worst enemy, nay, almost the only enemy, of the birds, for the few stray cats, weasels, and birds-of-prey do not constitute any serious source of danger. The birds have, however, largely learned to adapt themselves to circumstances. Very many species—and they are the most flourishing—habitually nest in holes which, either by their length, narrowness, or altitude, baffle the would-be robber. Among these are the Tits, Starling, Nuthatch, Tree-creeper, Common and Black Redstarts, Robin, House and Tree-Sparrows, all the Owls, and the Hoopoe. Most of the other species select the slender boughs at the top of tall trees in exposed situations for

their nesting-sites, while the Warblers trust to their skill in secreting their treasures in thick bramble bushes. The birds are also for the most part late builders, waiting till the leaves are well out.

It is characteristic of the Parisian birds to use the same site over and over again ; thus, a particularly eligible hole in a tree has been successively used by Marsh, Great and Blue Tits. The Blackcaps are specially attached to one area ; year after year the same pair or their descendants use the same patch of brambles to nest in, although all round there are any number of apparently equally suitable places. At all times of the year the different species appear to be limited in their range ; one may almost say that each section of the area has its own peculiar species.

The summer migrants are as a general thing later in arriving than in the country or than in England. The first Swallow this year (1911) did not appear till the 20th of April, and the bulk of them and of the Martins not for some days afterwards. Willow-wrens and Redstarts appeared on the 19th, Nightingales on the 22nd. These dates are unusually late, especially as the weather had, from the 14th onwards, been warm, with southerly and south-westerly breezes. The numbers of the different species resident and migratory are not in the customary proportions, there being, as above-mentioned, a great preponderance of those species that nest in holes ; even the Hedge-Sparrow is relatively rare compared with the Tits. But the numbers fluctuate considerably. One of the main factors determining them is the date of Easter, for if this falls in the middle of the breeding time the Bank Holiday crowds account for the loss of many broods.

The various finches are on the whole the most prominent family ; the beautiful

Goldfinch is, however, very rare nowadays, while our familiar Linnet appears to have been always unknown. This may be due to the absence of gorse or "common," which is also doubtless why we miss the Chats and the Buntings. Perhaps the most interesting finch is the Serin, a small, canary-like bird, which has occasionally been recorded from the south of England. Originally a southern species it has within the last few years extended its range to Paris, where it now breeds fairly freely ; the nest, containing 4-5 eggs, is usually made in a garden, in thick evergreens. The Warblers are also well represented. The Blackcap, usually said to be a very shy species, is rather tame than otherwise, and even nests in the gardens of houses near the Bois. The Nightingale was very common some 15 years ago, but gradually became quite rare ; of late it has been decidedly on the increase again, and is particularly abundant this year. It is difficult to judge of its numbers, as the nests are so well hidden as to be rarely found. It is probable that the Icterine, Orphean, and Wood Warblers are all nesting species, though I can find no record of this.

The Thrush family is represented by most of its members, but, with the exception of the Blackbird, they are rather scarce, being in great demand throughout France for eating. The bulk of the Song-Thrushes migrate towards the end of October ; they are never common, and I have only once found a nest.

The Corvidæ are very scarce, but one or two pairs of Jays and Magpies manage to maintain a precarious existence. The Jays keep in companies of four or five even as late as April, and are not at all noisy or conspicuous, always keeping to the most secluded parts. Magpies are much less wary in their habits, but both species select high trees to nest in.

Though the Bois is undoubtedly most interesting to an ornithologist in spring and summer, winter has also its peculiar species. It is only then that wild-fowl, the Kingfisher, and the regular migrants such as Redwing and Hooded-Crow put in an appearance. In exceptional years, Crossbills, Waxwings, and even Nutcrackers are recorded. Another interesting winter feature are the flocks of Ring-doves, which stop at Paris about Christmas on their southward migration. Mixed with these flocks, which number anything above 200 individuals, are a few Stock-Doves. None of these stay to breed, nor do they seem to return by the same route in spring, or at least they are never seen then. At all seasons, however, there are some resident Wood-Pigeons, which nest regularly. It is also only in winter that the Gulls come up the river to Paris, a habit they have only recently acquired. The presence of a Gannet, which I noted on the 18th of April this year, must be regarded as purely accidental, although the species has sometimes been recorded in winter. The specimen may have come from the Jardin d'Acclimatation, as I am told that sick birds are sometimes freed in the hope that they may recover in the open. For this reason occasional tropical and foreign birds should not be regarded as birds of Paris.

It will then be seen that, though Paris

is at first sight an unpromising locality for birds, closer observation will reveal a number of Nature's feathered people, whose charms are not one of its least attractions.

[A re-arrangement of the names appended by Mr. Worthington, gives the following list of species recorded by him :—

Nesting Species.—Mistle-Thrush, Song-Thrush, Redstart, Black Redstart, Blackbird, Robin, Nightingale, Hedge-Sparrow, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Garden-Warbler, Reed, Sedge and Willow Warblers, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Goldcrest, Blue, Cole, Great, Long-tailed, and Marsh Tits, Nut-hatch, Tree-creeper, Wren, Golden Oriole, Starling, Jay, Magpie, Jackdaw, Carrion-Crow, Rook, Pied Flycatcher, Spotted Flycatcher, Martin, Swallow, Bullfinch, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Hawfinch, Serin, Siskin, Tree-Sparrow, House-Sparrow, Pied and Yellow Wagtails, Swift, Hoopoe, Barn and Tawny Owls, Ring-Dove, Turtle-Dove.

Winter Migrants.—Brambling, Hoodie Crow, Fieldfare, Redwing, Moor-hen, Stock-Dove, Blackheaded and Herring Gulls.

Visitors.—Ring-Ouzel, Firecrest, Great Grey Shrike, Redbacked Shrike, Sand-Martin, Goldfinch, Green Woodpecker (nest recorded), Greater and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, Kingfisher, Scops-Owl (nest recorded), Kestrel, Sparrow-Hawk, Heron, Mallard, Teal, Wigeon, Coot, Dabchick, Gannet, Snipe, Woodcock.]

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is again offering Silver and Bronze Medals, and certificates and book prizes, for Essays on Birds sent in from the Public Schools in Great Britain. The alternative subjects for 1912 are (A) Birds observed in

a defined area, with a sketch-map and special note of characteristic birds; (B) Summer migrants observed in 1912, with special reference to dates of arrival and to song. Particulars can be obtained from the R.S.P.B., 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.

Economic Ornithology.

THE Board of Agriculture have brought out a new edition of their leaflet on Wag-tails. The following words are now added to the descriptive matter. "It will be seen that these birds are of very great economic value, and should everywhere be carefully protected."

Writing on Cormorants and Gulls in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (February 6th), Mr. F. G. Aflalo says :—

"The public mind is constantly being misled on this subject of the destructiveness of Gulls by journalists with a passion for statistics. Only the other day a morning paper published what purported to be the pictorial menu of a Sea-Gull during the year. It was shown in terms of a great line of barrels of herrings, 146 barrels, each containing five hundred herrings, to a total value not far short of £200. There were two very obvious fallacies in this reckoning. In the first place it assumed that the whole of the 73,000 herrings thus consumed as fry would have grown to maturity if the Gull had left them alone. To put it mildly, this is by no means proved; to put it frankly, it is rubbish. Moreover, this imposing cartoon gave no hint of the tons of offal and garbage which, to the great benefit of many a harbour, these feathered scavengers consume every year. The picture told, in fact, what was not true, and suppressed what was."

Unfortunately journalistic effects of this kind are seized on by an ignorant public, which prefers a startling caricature to the logic of mere facts.

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE.

Sir T. H. Elliott's report on the proceedings of the General Assembly of the International Institute of Agriculture, 1911, has been issued as a Parliamentary paper. The section on Bird Protection states that the subject was considered on the basis of an admirable report presented

by M. E. de Miklos (Hungary), who has made himself master of its practical and scientific aspects. The Assembly, in view of the great importance to agriculturists of such protection, adopted a resolution asking the twenty adhering States to complete laws for the purpose, and States where none yet exist to take the necessary action to establish and create a general feeling in favour of the protection of useful birds. The following rather curious comment is added by Sir T. H. Elliott :—

"In our own country, agriculturists are brought to take active measures more by reason of the excessive multiplication of certain species than from any deficiency of those which are useful to them, and the Wild Birds Protection Acts have been administered more with a view to the preservation of curious and interesting species, the existence of which appeals to our higher and more humane feelings, than to purely economic considerations."

It is however admitted that "the subject is one upon which the last word has not been said," and that the English farmer's knowledge of the economic value of the commoner species is not complete.

THE CHILDHOOD OF BIRDS.

Lecturing at the Royal Institution on the "Childhood of Animals" (January 9th, 1912), Dr. Chalmers Mitchell said it was a curious fact that nearly all young birds are fed upon insects, worms, and maggots, even though the adult birds may be naturally seed-eaters. This, he added, is interesting to remember, seeing that farmers are constantly complaining of damage done by birds to their crops. All the summer, when the seeds are being formed and it would be possible for a great deal of damage to be done, the birds are

busy collecting enormous quantities of grubs and insects of all kinds to feed their young, and the result of killing the birds would be at once a great increase in the number of insects. The latter do infinitely more harm to crops and gardens than do the birds.

The *Times*, in an article on the lecture, observes that "perhaps the heartiest round of applause which greeted Dr. Mitchell was evoked by his explanation of the services rendered to man by insectivorous birds, especially in the work of feeding their young, and of the fact that

any serious diminution in their numbers would lead to plagues of insects. It is, adds the *Times*, "a doctrine that needs preaching."

It may indeed be said that the Close Time instituted for the protection of birds is equally valuable as an Act for the protection of Crops. But man's memory is short, and his observation faulty; as soon as the birds take fruit or grain in autumn, song and service are forgotten, and instead of offering at harvest time the grateful sheaf to his unpaid labourers, he calls for the gun, net, and trap.

The Plume-Trade.

THE Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is officially informed that the Trustees of the British Museum have decided to bring the question of international action for the protection of plume-birds before His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the hope that he may see his way to move in the matter with a view to an International Conference on the subject.

The new and welcome Bird Protection League of France proposes to combine opposition to the destruction of birds for millinery with the encouragement of a trade in the feathers of specially raised and domesticated birds. Before there can be any basis for the encouragement of such a trade in England, it is obvious that the importation of foreign plumage must first be stopped. At present, traders profess that "almost all the plumage of wild birds, such as Marabou, Birds of Paradise, and Ospreys [*sic*], is imitated with the feathers of farmyard birds" (*L'Agriculture Commerciale*, June 25th, 1911). We in England have too familiar an acquaintance with the lie of

the "artificial osprey" to credit this, until at any rate a Bird of Paradise made from a barndoor fowl is submitted to the Natural History Museum for examination. We can only say, if it can be done, why are these wonderful things hidden from the ornithologist? Equally familiar with the sham "artificial osprey" is the feather ornament concocted from the plumage of half a dozen brilliant foreign birds, but vaguely imagined to be "poultry" by women wearers, upon whom the term "made-up" appears to have the reassuring effect of "that blessed word Mesopotamia." It will, unfortunately, be wholly impossible to believe in the barndoor and the specially raised home-product until it is absolutely certain that the feather-trade are unable to lay rapacious hands upon the plumage of murdered wild birds. For this hearty disbelief the trade have themselves to thank, since their own varied assertions and arguments have made it impossible to credit what they say.

Meanwhile the Feather Sales continue to indicate the slaughter that is still going on. At the February sale, one firm

offered some five thousand ounces of "osprey" feathers (it is computed that the nuptial feathers of six Egrets, or Herons, are required to yield one ounce); nearly four thousand Birds of Paradise, and 14,000 Humming-Birds, in addition to the wings and quills of great quantities of wild Duck. It is to be hoped that any International Committee will quicken its deliberations and come to action before the earth is beggared beyond repair; and that our ingenious neighbours across the Channel will not be driven to provide their substitutes simply because none of the wild birds are left to kill.

THE EGRETS OF FLORIDA.

The following letter is especially interesting as the first-hand experience of an English traveller in the country where the White Egrets and other Herons were most common, and were earliest "wiped out" by the plume-hunters. It is from an Hon. Local Secretary of the R.S.P.B., and bears the date February 21st, 1912:—

"We have just returned from a long tour in America, three weeks of which we spent in Florida. While there we made many enquiries about the White Heron, and always heard the same tale—that it is nearly extinct.

"For a long distance the railway runs along the east shore, close to the shallow inland sea, and many water-birds were to be seen, including the Blue Heron, whose feathers are of no market value.

"Birds are protected by State law, but this is very difficult to carry out properly, owing to the large tracts of land which are either unpopulated or sparsely so. Towards the southern end of Florida there is a large piece of marsh-land, called the "Everglades," which is but little drained, and a great portion of which is unexplored. In this wild region the Indians of that part, who refused to live under the Reservation system, have made their homes, and so have the few White Herons which remain.

"Unfortunately the Indians have discovered that the feathers of the White Heron fetch money, and it is they who are finishing

the work of extinction begun by the white man. It is well known in Miami that certain traders buy the aigrettes, but it is very difficult to bring the matter home, owing to the secrecy with which it is done.

"We made a day's excursion up the Miami River into the Everglades, and came across several boats of Indians, who were returning from one of their periodical visits to the town. We saw numbers of birds, including Blue Herons, but never a white one."

So much for the Trade story, that the birds of Florida have been exterminated by the growth of population and of towns!

In *Bird-Lore* (New York, U.S.A.), February, 1912, Mr. Gilbert Pearson writes:—

"Despite all our efforts, the birds have continually become scarcer, and in fact so depleted are their numbers to-day that we did not know of over fifteen colonies in the United States in the summer of 1911. . . The Audubon workers, by constant agitation and an immense amount of labour, have succeeded in securing the passage of laws which prohibit the sale of these birds in the States of New York, New Jersey, Louisiana, Ohio, Missouri, Massachusetts, Oregon, and California. This is only a beginning of the line for suppressing the traffic in their feathers. . .

"As the birds have become exterminated in the United States, the millinery feather-agents have turned their attention to the *Tierra caliente* of Mexico and the rivers of South America. Here the feather-gatherers are to be found every year. . . It is customary to wait until the eggs are hatched, for then the old birds, responding to the cries of their young, are loath to leave the neighbourhood, and readily fall a prey to the gunners. The millinery dealers, in their efforts to defend this nefarious traffic, seek to mislead the public by statements that aigrettes are gathered from the ground underneath the nests. Every ornithologist, or other person who has had experience of Heron rookeries, knows the falsity of this statement. At least twenty well-known naturalists have filed affidavits to this effect with the officers of the National Association of Audubon Societies."

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE 21st Annual Meeting of the Society was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, S.W., on March 5th, 1912. The Duke of Rutland presided. There was a large attendance. The Medals and other awards made in the Public-school Competition and in the Protection of Crops Competition were presented. An account of the proceedings is published with the Society's Annual Report.

COUNCIL MEETING.

The Council of the Society met at the Offices, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W., on January 26th, 1912, when there were present: Mr. Montagu Sharpe, Chairman (in the chair), Mr. J. L. Bonhote, Miss Clifton, Dr. Drewitt, the Hon. Mrs. Drewitt, Miss Hall, the Hon. Mrs. Henniker, Mr. Hastings Lees, Mr. F. E. Lemon (Hon. Secretary), Mrs. F. E. Lemon, Mr. Meade Waldo, Mr. Ogilvie-Grant, Miss Pollock and Captain Tailby, and Miss Gardiner (Secretary).

Hon. Secretary's Report.

THE HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT dealt with the Essays received on the Protection of Crops and the arrangements made for judging them; with the parade of sandwich-men exhibiting placards of "The Story of the Egret" in London West-end streets, December 11-23; and with the offer of Nesting-boxes for London Parks made to the Bailiff of the Royal Parks and the Chief Officer of the Parks Department of the London County Council. The Society's lantern-slides had been used for the illustration of thirteen lectures since December 1st. Bird Pro-

tection Orders had been issued for Cornwall, Devonshire, Middlesex, Monmouth, Northumberland, and the North Riding of Yorkshire.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE presented the finance statement for 1911, which had been duly audited and found correct, together with accounts recommended for payment. The resignation of the Hon. F. S. O'Grady as Hon. Local Secretary for Derbyshire, rendered unavoidable by his removal from the county, was received with much regret and a vote of thanks was accorded him for his valuable help given to the Society for ten years. The following Fellows and Members were elected:—

Fellows.—Rev. J. Hare Beevor (Wrexham), T. H. Briggs (Lynmouth), Victor Forbin (Paris), Miss Gilmour (Great Malvern), Mrs. Lines (Handsworth), Mrs. McMillan (London, W.), F. E. Marshall (Keswick), Sir Daniel Parkes Masson, C.I.E. (Edinburgh), Mrs. Rackham (Cambridge), Miss Helen Stewart (Clifton), Mrs. Wilson (Edgbaston).

Members.—Mrs. Allhusen (Beaconsfield), Alfred Bellamy (Grantham), J. J. Brigg (Keighley), H. P. Burdett (Wellingborough), Miss Carr (Kensington, W.), Mrs. Robert Cook (Grimsby), Mrs. K. Cooper (Kensington, W.), Mrs. E. Stafford Charles (Stanmore), Miss S. Evans (Kenilworth), S. E. Evans (Doncaster), Miss A. P. Fox (Wellington, Som.), Mrs. Greenwood (Brighton), C. A. H. Harrison (Stalybridge), Admiral Sir Reginald Henderson, K.C.B. (Eastry), Miss E. D. Hill (Cheltenham), Miss Hodge (Highbury, N.), H. Brook Hollinshead (Godalming), Miss L. Hunt (Worthing), Mrs. Key (Kenilworth), Miss Manson (Edinburgh), R. W. May (Brixton, S.W.), Rev. — Paul (Cheddar), Miss Edith Pollock (Putney, S.W.), Percy

M. Randall (Southampton), Miss E. Rolleston (Harlow), Eric Searight (Cheltenham), Mrs. Shepperson (Beaconsfield), Oswald Taylor (Hull), Mrs. R. Taylor (Beaconsfield), Mrs. Howard Vyse (Slough), Miss G. Wyndham (Ventnor).

General Business.

The Annual Report of the Society was read and approved, and arrangements for the Annual Meeting considered. It was agreed to repeat the Public-school's Essay Competition in 1912. The draft of a suggested Bill for the purpose of consolidating the Wild Birds Protection Acts was considered by the Council, by request of the Secretary of the R.S.P.C.A., but the Council regretted their inability to support its proposals, which did not, in their opinion, simplify the existing law or meet difficulties and defects experienced in the working of the present Acts and Orders. Correspondence on several subjects was laid before the Council.

Next Meeting, April 19th.

OBITUARY.

The work of Bird Protection has lost an influential friend, and the Society a distinguished Vice-President, in the death of the Princess Victor of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, which occurred at St. James's Palace, on February 13th, 1912. Princess Victor, who was the daughter of Admiral of the Fleet Sir George Seymour, and sister of the fifth Marquis of Hertford, married, in 1861, Prince Victor (who died in 1881), a nephew of Queen Victoria. In 1906 Her Serene Highness became Vice-President of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, of which her daughter, Princess Feodora Gleichen, well-known as artist and sculptor, is also a Member.

NESTING-BOXES FOR LONDON PARKS.

Notwithstanding the interest undoubtedly taken in wild birds by residents in London, and the amount of protection ensured to feathered citizens by both law and sentiment, no systematic effort has so far been made to encourage nesting in public parks and gardens by the provision of Nesting-boxes. Thrushes and Black-birds may be able to hold their own where park-keepers and gardeners can be induced to refrain from that over-pruning, lopping, cutting-back and "clearing," to which official gardening all over England is too prone to resort; but what of the Tits, Robins, Redstarts, Wagtails, and other attractive species which look for holes in old wood or in mossy banks? Must they be absolutely lost to London and its suburbs, where old trees grow ever scarcer and cats are many? Or can they and shall they not be tempted to return and to remain by the provision of safe and scientifically constructed Nesting-boxes such as Germany has long provided in her cities and forests?

Thanks to the generosity of a member of the R.S.P.B. (Mr. Harry Collison), the latter experiment is to be made. Some hundreds of Berlepsch Nesting-boxes have been offered this spring to the Public Works Department and to the Parks Department of the London County Council. Among the sites selected for the placing of them are Regent's Park, St. James's Park, Greenwich Park, Hampton Court Gardens, Richmond and Bushey Parks, Kew Gardens, and ten of the County Council Parks. Richmond Park already possesses a large number of boxes, given by the Hon. Charles Rothschild, and Hyde Park had also been supplied with as many as the authorities think necessary.

It is to be hoped that the precedent

will be followed in other districts, such as Wimbledon Common, where Woodpeckers, Nuthatches, Tree-creepers, and other hole-building birds greatly need some substitute for the old trees which once gave them lodging. On many suburban commons the breeding of birds has been made impossible through the constant inroads of the public, while the cutting-up of estates has destroyed adjoining garden and woodland; but some species might still be regained through the proper placing of Nesting-boxes in small sanctuaries. The provision of Nesting-boxes in spring, and of food in times of need, would do much to attract the wild birds which are so great a delight to townfolk.

Bird-lovers will be further interested to know that Nesting-boxes will shortly be met with not only in Paris, in German and Swiss towns, and in London, but that the Society's boxes have been introduced into Rome through the initiative of Mr. Collison. Thanks to the sympathetic interest taken in bird preservation by Dr. Boni, some of these are to be placed on no less classic a site than the Virgilian Garden—the *Flora Vergiliana*—on the Palatine.

“PROTECTION OF CROPS” ESSAY COMPETITION.

The Silver Medal and prizes offered by the Society for the purpose of obtaining the opinions and suggestions of practical gardeners and farmers as to the best way of protecting grain, fruit, and flowers from the attacks of birds, without destroying the birds themselves, have been successful in enlisting the interest and co-operation of a number of competitors well qualified by experience to write on the subject. Essays were sent in by market-gardeners, working gardeners, teachers in horticulture, and farmers in many districts,

from Cornwall to Orkney and from Norfolk to Carmarthen.

The judging was kindly undertaken by Mr. G. L. Courthope, M.P., Mr. C. F. Archibald, Lecturer in Agriculture, Leeds University, and Dr. F. P. Haviland.

The Silver Medal and five guineas are awarded to E. Purnell Jones, Sherwin Street, Crewe, who gave the pseudonym “White Heather”; and the second prize of two guineas to Edwin James Platt, The Gardens, Borden Wood, Liphook (“Balance”). Six competitors are highly commended, in the order named:—

N. Rooke, Lawn House, Risby; F. J. Lansdell, Inglewood Nursery, West Moors, Dorset; W. Mason, Halfway Cottages, Tuddenham, near Ipswich; G. Frisby, Quorn, Loughborough; John James, Cromere Farm, Felinfach, Cardiganshire; T. B. Smith, The Yews, Hewelsfield, St. Briavels.

In giving judgment on the essays, Mr. Courthope wrote:—

“I consider the essay of ‘White Heather’ to have reached a very high standard. The author shows a habit of trained observation, developed to an exceptional degree, and considerable knowledge and ingenuity in the methods proposed. This essay also has a distinct literary merit, and is rendered attractive by very artistic illustrations.

The Prize Essays, with extracts from others containing especially useful advice and comments, will be published in pamphlet form by the Society.

MUSEUMS AND BIRD PROTECTION.

Mr. Edmund Selous sends a second long letter, for which it is unfortunately impossible to find room, on the subject of Museums, apropos of the Society's recent Reception at the Natural History Museum. In it he says:—

“Of course I have my own ideas as to what a really enlightened museum should be.

Photographs, paintings, and the best works of reference for those caring to look at them, should, in my view, take the place of the specimen, which destroys what it would show and thus makes it more difficult really to learn that which it so inefficiently endeavours to teach. The best nature-photographs and sketches, the best and closest

field-notes, and only live specimens to aid and supplement these, in adequate parks or gardens adjoining the museum building—this would be infinitely better than what we now have, and all that those whose instincts do not dictate, or whose position does not allow, the study of actual field natural-history, have any moral right to require.”

Bird Protection in France.

MEMBERS of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds will be eager to give a hearty welcome to the new *Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux*, which has been founded by the *Société Nationale d'Acclimatation de France*, thanks to the enthusiasm and energy of M. Albert Chappellier. In the first number of its Bulletin, the President of the Ligue, M. Magaud d'Aubusson, outlines the programme of the new organization. We owe, he remarks, much to the birds; in all places their progressive diminution has coincided with an increase of insect pests; and the birds of France are decreasing in a way that strikes even the least observant eye. Special allusion is made to the destruction by traps, nets, etc., often carried on under the eyes of the authorities. “The real enemy of the bird is not the man with the gun, whose action is limited, but the professional snarer, who counts his daily plunder by dozens and hundreds.” Thanks to inadequate laws, Robins and Warblers and other little song-birds, are seen in the markets in some departments, while in other departments this is severely prohibited. In place of the anomalies of the present law, legislation is needed for the preservation of useful species, not only in nesting-time, but also at the migration season. The League proposes to study systematically the lines of route followed by migrants which cross the

country, or which take their way by the French coast. To encourage indigenous birds it will promote the employment of Nesting-boxes, protection of broods, and food in winter. It will also enter the schools, to speak to teachers and children of the value of birds and to give encouragement and rewards to those who love and protect them.

The League, however, will not stop with the protection of indigenous birds. Over and beyond the *entente* which will be established with societies for Bird Protection which have for a long time existed in other great nations of Europe, it will cross the seas to give its support and influence to the preservation of those species which, through the beauty of their plumage, are made the victims of a barbarous mode.

The first (March) number of the “Bulletin” also includes articles on Nesting-boxes, by Dr. Pierre Vincent, and on the care and feeding of birds in winter, by M. Chappellier.

Starting under influential auspices, the League may be trusted to secure, as it invites, “the co-operation of all interested in the bird, who love it for the charm of its melody, the beauty of its form, the variety and brilliance of its plumage, the friendliness of its ways, and the invaluable services it renders.”

Bird Life in Italy.

MR. W. P. D. STEBBING sends the following interesting Bird Notes from Rome, where he has been spending the winter :—

“The abuse of bird-life in Italy is a matter almost too painful for bird-lovers to talk about. The subject has struck me especially, as it has doubtless struck others, on a first winter visit to the country. The country groans under a burden of insect life; yet neither size nor nature of bird seems to stay the hand of the still primitive man out for the pot or a few *soldi*. In the matter of netted birds, no small species seems to be ignored, as in a cage of Goldfinches, Greenfinches, and Linnets were several Hedge-Sparrows. Near by, an unhappy Crow was restlessly craning his neck for some opening in the bars. On another occasion one of the larger Hawks was noticed, tethered by some cages in the sun.

“But it is not so much the live birds wearing out their little lives in cages that affect the bird-lover in Italy; it is the absence of all respect for species when the thought of the pot comes in. On the marshes between Palermo and Paestum, as well as about the Campagna and the country round Viterbo, the “sportsman” is ready with his gun for everything that flies, with the exception perhaps of Magpies. The piles of Gold-

finches, Robins, Blue Tits, Greenfinches, not to mention Larks, Blackbirds, and Thrushes, that disgrace the poulterers' shops in Rome sicken one; while I actually saw hanging up, among a bunch of other small birds in a shop in Viterbo, the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. At the beginning of March I saw Larks, unplucked, priced at 3 *soldi* each, while the other smaller birds could be bought for 2½ *soldi*. As nothing comes amiss to an Italian, there seems little hope, with the prices of foodstuffs rising so tremendously, that he will modify his diet to the extent of reducing his consumption of small birds.

“The method of cooking such little morsels was another revelation to me, and may also be unknown to others; it is a further instance of ways long given up in England, but still continued in countries like Italy. Above a grilling fire is an iron revolving framework driven by clockwork. The framework takes iron rods on which are spitted the small birds alternately with thick squares of bread. The bread thus absorbs any juice given from the tiny morsels, and is toasted at the same time. This form of roasting-jack is used for various other kinds of meat.

“Small birds are quite commonly offered at meals in hotels and pensions in this part of Italy, so I am sadly afraid that the foreigner accepts them as one of his courses, in common with the Italian.”

Bird Protection Orders.

[A (b): Sanctuary Area for Birds. A (e): Sanctuary Area for Eggs. B: Birds added to Schedule. C: Close time altered. D: Species exempted from protection. E: Eggs protected. F: Species protected all the year.

The following Bird Protection Orders have been issued since Jan. 1, 1912, with the alterations indicated :—

CHESHIRE, Jan. 29. A (b) A (e) B C E F. Slight changes in the list of parishes in which Gulls and Terns have all-the-year protection.

DEVONSHIRE, Jan. 22. A (e) B C D E F. Cormorant and Shag exempted from protection until end of year 1912.

HUNTINGDON, Feb. 2. B C E F S. Close time for Wild Duck to be from March 1 to Aug. 1 only. All-the-year protection of Owls not to include Little Owl.

LINCOLN, KESTEVEN DIVISION, Feb. 15. B C E F. Removes Starling from the Schedule,

to which it was added by previous Order.

YORKS, NORTH RIDING, Jan. 15. A (b) B C E D E F. Much-extended Order, with numerous species added to Schedule and protected all the year; eggs of various species protected; Sunday protection.

SUFFOLK, EAST, Feb. 22. B C E F S. Eggs of numerous species protected. Additions to B and F lists.

ANGLESEY, Feb. 14. C E F. Addition to list of eggs protected.

CARDIFF (County Borough). Feb. 19. B E F. Numerous species added to Schedule.

GALWAY, Feb. 27. E. Renewal for five years of Order of 1907.

Notes.

CORNWALL has now a Bird Protection Order. No doubt in time the Duchy will also imbibe a Bird Protection spirit. A correspondent sends the following handbill as illustrative of present-day amusements :—

St. Stephen's by Saltash

BLACKBIRD SHOOT,

Monday, January 29th, 1912.

The following birds to count for Prizes : Blackbirds, Hoops, Homescreeches, Thrushes, Jays, Magpies.

A Special Prize will be given for the greatest number of Starlings shot. These birds, however, will not count with the above-mentioned birds.

Then follow the rules, an appeal for subscriptions, and notice of the inevitable dinner at a public-house in celebration of the day's "sport." "Homescreech" is west-of-England for Mistle-Thrush, and "Hoop" for Bullfinch.

* * *

Not the least of the services performed by the introduction of Bird-and-Tree work into schools is that children may learn the correct names of birds. It may be quaint and interesting from the point of view of the student of country things to hear of an Ellygug, a Sandy-Loo, a Cherry-Chopper, or a Blithering Tam ; but if these are the only names known, what avails it for County Councils to issue edicts for the protection of Guillemot, Ringed Plover, Flycatcher, or Stonechat ? In a prosecution at Weston-super-Mare the other day* it appeared that the shooter of a "Sea-pie" did not know he was unlawfully killing a bird protected as an Oyster-catcher. If the Staffordshire game-keeper, convicted of shooting a Bittern, had

said that he knew the bird only as a Bumble, a Butter-Bump, a Buttle, or a Bumpy-Coss (all among the Bittern's aliases), some allowance might have been made for him. As it happened the defence was that he did not know the bird at all, which is no defence ; no keeper should be employed who shoots at birds he does not know. It is suggested that the County Councillor who objected the other day to the protection of the Bee-eater was under the impression that he was talking about the Great Tit ; and reports as to the abundance of Goldfinches in certain districts have to be received with caution until it is certain that the birds alluded to are not Yellow-hammers. Unless, indeed, to call a bird a Goldfinch proves it to be one ; after the fashion of a correspondent of one of the newspapers during the discussion on the Lark question, who proved completely to his own satisfaction that there are "Ground Larks" because Buntings are called by that name in the Fens.

* * *

The recent report in the papers that a ton and a half of Larks were, during one week in February last, sent up from Royston to the London food-market, led to various explanations. "These Larks are not Skylarks" ; "Skylarks are injurious to the farmer and must be killed" ; they are "only migrants," and therefore their slaughter is of no consequence. An interview in the *Daily News* with one of the catchers is eminently characteristic. "I mind snaring larks this forty year, and I never see any wrong in it. . . Snaring larks has put many a shilling into the pockets of a poor man when he wanted the money badly. I've earned a pound a day lark-snaring easy. . .

* See page 16.

'They're wicked, mischievous birds.' Then, by way of exhibiting his own peculiar ornithological knowledge, and of expressing scorn of a clergyman who objected to the trade: "How often is he up in the morning early enough to hear the lark sing, I should like to know"! The birds, explained this worthy, are tempted in hard weather by a spread of food, and are caught in horsehair snares, which remain set all day. There they struggle piteously through the long hours, starving in sight of the food round about, until in the evening the snarer comes round and wrings their necks. And then smart society can have *mauviettes* on the *menu*. At other times the birds are netted or taken with decoys and lime, for the business goes on briskly in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. As the *Leeds Mercury* observes:

"The stomach triumphs over sentiment, and the choir of birds, whose music is the best and cheapest that the world has to offer, is thinned with the recklessness that usually obtains when there is £ s. d. as the reward."

Whether they are British-born or merely immigrants, England, it must be admitted, is somewhat unpleasantly weighted with a ton and a half of Skylarks on her shoulders, when she expresses natural indignation at the export of her song-birds and at the terrific destruction of migrants in Italy.

* * *

The appeal for "Homes for Birds" made at the Society's Annual Meeting by Mr. Collison, who has backed up his views in so practical and generous a manner, must have reminded his hearers how very recent is the growth of the popularity of the Nesting-box in Britain. When the R.S.P.B. first ventilated the idea it was generally regarded as a fanciful absurdity, and the boxes were often supposed to be for birds to roost and shelter in through the winter. We are still

indeed behind the Germans in such matters. According to a leading German agricultural paper, the Kaiser, who takes great interest in Bird Protection, has ordered that the whole eminence to the west of his Castle at Celle is to be a bird-sanctuary; bird-shelters have been instituted in the gardens of military barracks and hospitals, and an official Rescript has been issued to Lords-Lieutenant and Railway Boards bidding them especially to protect the Swallow. In the Government's forests of the Grand Duchy of Hesse, 9,300 Nesting-boxes have been put up, and an order given that old trees are to be left standing. In Hungarian State Forests 14,000 Nesting-boxes are in use.

* * *

Three books lately published tell of three bird-lovers of curiously contrasting characters and epochs. In her "Letters and Recollections of Mazzini," Mrs. Hamilton King reminds us of the Italian statesman's love for animals. "The little birds that flew about his room, nestled on his shoulder, and fed from his hand, were one proof of this." It was a characteristic he shared with Garibaldi. "Two Years in a Forbidden City," by Princess Der Ling, records that the ex-Empress of China celebrates her birthday each year by buying up vast numbers of caged birds and liberating them. (No doubt the bird-catchers provide well for the occasion.) Finally, in Dr. Preserved Smith's "Life of Luther," there is a charming letter written by the stern Reformer to a student-servant who had turned bird-fowler. He writes as the spokesman of the birds, bringing their complaint to the master:—

"We Thrushes, Blackbirds, Finches, Linnets, Goldfinches, and all other pious, honourable birds who migrate this autumn over Wittenberg, give your kindness to know that we are credibly informed that one

Wolfgang Sieberger, your servant, has conceived a great, wicked plot against us, and has bought some old rotten nets very dear, to make a fowling-net out of anger and hatred to us. He undertakes to rob us of the freedom God has given us to fly through the air, and he puts our lives in danger, a thing we have not deserved of him."

So it goes on, with the birds' wish that dreadful things may happen to Wolfgang, and it ends with a text from St. Matthew and the subscription: "We hope to God that, as many of our brothers and friends escaped from him, we too, who saw his dirty old nets yesterday, may also escape from them. Written in our lofty home in the trees with our usual quill and seal."

* * *

The private collector who gives, or hopes to give, the *coup de grâce* to rare species, is being seconded better and better every day, not only by the plume-hunter in other lands, but by the bird-fancier in our own country. A couple of years ago the Society had reason to protest against the recommendation in a journal of the "fancy" that the Dartford Warbler should be hunted down in its furzy

home and captured for show purposes. The writer described how the law was dodged in order that nestlings might be secured and proudly exhibited. The "fancy," like the collector, is now hot on the trail of this rare little bird, as the recent Crystal Palace Show witnessed. Another species commended for caging is the Water-Ouzel or Dipper. Deaf and dumb indeed to every charm of nature, and fit himself for nothing but the

"Desert desolate
Of fabrics grim and gaunt and smoke-
begrimed,"

must the man be who has watched the Dipper bobbing and curtseying on the stones of its mountain stream, or running under the crystal water, or who has heard its loud liquid notes, attuned to the splash and gurgle of the rivulet, and who can without ineffable disgust think of this fascinating bird of the water and the wild, prisoned within bars and submitted to the appraisal of dealers.

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor Day.)

ALL Teams and Cadets should now be busily at work preparing for the Competition of 1912; and if any School has forgotten to enter, either for the County Challenge Shields or in the Open Class, application should be sent in at once.

Festivals in celebration of the 1911 Competition are still being held among competing schools, but the majority took place in December, January and February. The great meeting at Wellingborough, when some 1,000 children witnessed the presentation of the Inter-County and the Northants Shields to the Victoria County School, Wellingborough, was alluded to in the last number of *Bird Notes and News*, as were also the Festivals of the Shield-winning Schools of Bedfordshire (Mogerhanger), Cumberland (Melmerby), Hampshire (Sholing Girls' School), and Warwickshire (Henley-in-Arden). The Bucks Shield, won by the Stony Stratford (with St.

Mary Wolverton) National School, was presented on December 16th, by Rev. H. Last.

The Frome Boys' (C.E.) Team had the privilege of receiving the Somerset Shield at the hands of Mr. Henry Newbolt, the eminent poet and novelist, who in the course of an admirable address remarked that the first object of Bird-and-Tree work was to teach boys and girls to be alive and to see the things by which they were surrounded. The boy who went through a wood and saw only one of ten different kinds of trees in it, and noticed only a sparrow among ten different kinds of birds, was only one-tenth alive.

WOBURN BOYS' SCHOOL, taking second place in Bedfordshire, were entertained at the Town Hall with a cinematograph show of bird and insect life, through the kindness of the Duchess of Bedford, who also presented the awards, together with extra prizes given

by herself and Major Haines. At Princes Risborough (Bucks) Mrs. Dixon Davies gave a stimulating and instructive address. At Greystoke (Cumberland), Mr. H. C. Howard presided, and Mrs. Chance presented the prizes. At Ridge (Second Prize, Hants) Mrs. Suckling gave additional prizes, and Mr. Wilfred Ashley, M.P., the tree. Sandown (I. W., Second Prize), Bournemouth (St. Peter's), Laverstoke, Christchurch (St. Joseph's R.C.), Ellesborough, Cargo, Hinton Ampner, Hinton Waldrist, Keswick (St. John's), Middleton (Warwickshire), Morland (Cumberland), Thurleigh, Topley (Derbyshire), Wickham (Hants), and other Teams and Schools have also had successful celebrations.

An offer of special prizes to Bucks Schools by Mrs. Dixon Davies, for Essays on "Bird Observation in Winter," has had a large and excellent response, especially from Coleshill, Ellesborough, Lacey Green, Long Crendon and Princes Risborough.

IN THE COURTS.

SHOOTING A BITTERN.—At *Ecclesall* on February 29th, Henry David, gamekeeper, was fined 5s. and 8s. 6d. costs for killing a Bittern at Copmere Pool, near Ecclesall, and Thomas Plant was fined 6d. and 8s. 6d. costs for being in possession of it. The specimen (which is worth a good deal more than 6d.) was, unfortunately, not impounded. The bird was seen in the reeds with a fish in its mouth, but the keeper made the customary defence, that he did not know what bird it was. The case was taken up by the police at the instance of the R.S.P.B. The bird is fully protected in the county, where it formerly bred, and where it would no doubt breed again if not shot on sight.

CRUELTY TO A ROOK.—At *Ludgershall* on February 2nd, James Eyles, a farmer, was fined £1 for cruelty to a Rook. The bird was shot at and winged, and then tied on top of a rick without food or water for several days, when it was noticed by the police and killed. Eyles said the rooks attacked his ricks, but admitted that his action "was a silly thing to do," and offered a subscription to the R.S.P.C.A.

THE BIRD-CATCHER.—At *Bristol*, on December 12th, three professional bird-catchers, Samuel and Henry Griffiths and Henry Parsons, were charged with being in possession

of newly-taken Linnets within the city. The men were in possession, among them, of 78 Linnets, fresh-caught, a Lark, a Chaffinch, and a Cirl Bunting, and also a number of call and brace birds, and the usual bird-catchers' outfit. It was urged that Parsons had been bird-catching for many years, had a wife and nine children, treated the birds as tenderly as his own offspring, and was so kind that he gave them rum-and-water to keep out the cold. Fined 5s. and costs each; the catching outfit confiscated, but allowed to retain the decoy birds.

WILD-FOWL SHOOTING.—At *Weston-super-Mare*, on December 15th, John Counsell was ordered to pay the costs for shooting Oyster-catchers. The case was brought by Mr. H. Cox, of the R.S.P.B., as a warning, as the birds were being shot by a number of men who knew them only as "sea-pies."

SHOOTING GULLS AT FILEY.—At *Filey*, on February 16th, Thomas Featherstone was fined 1s. for shooting a Sea-gull on the foreshore on Sunday, February 4th. Defendant said that people stood all day on Filey Brigg and shot Gulls.

THE BIRD-SHOP.—At the *North London Police Court*, on March 12th, Eliza Weddel, of Dalston, was fined £1 and 42s. costs for cruelty to birds by keeping them in dirty cages. A Thrush suffering from cramp and a one-legged Lark were in a cage which the magistrate described as horribly loathsome, and the veterinary witness stated that they were dying of blood-poisoning. The Secretary of the Cage Birds League gave it as his opinion that a dirty cage did not necessarily mean that its occupant suffered.

LEAFLET.

"A Thrush that Never Lived."

By W. H. HUDSON.

With Illustration in colour by H. Gronvöld.

Price Sixpence per doz.

BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.



The R.S.P.B. Exhibit of Nesting-Boxes, Food Tables, and Literature at the Royal International Horticultural Show, Chelsea, May 23-30, 1912.

AWARDED A BRONZE MEDAL.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

JUNE, 1912.

[No. 2.]

“Farm, Garden, and Birds.”

IN “Farm, Garden, and Birds,” the latest publication of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, a somewhat new departure has been made. The pamphlet is the outcome of an invitation given by the Society to practical agriculturists and horticulturists to contribute, in the form of essays, their experience and advice on the best methods of protecting grain, fruit, and other crops from the attacks of birds without destroying the birds themselves. It is not propagandist literature; the writers were not asked to argue about the utility of birds, nor was there any allusion to this phase of the subject in the conditions laid down. Contributors were free to assume, either that birds are on the whole destructive and must therefore be kept off the land; or that birds are on the whole useful and should therefore be preserved. All that was asked was a description of useful methods for guarding crops from their attacks.

The invitation was well responded to, papers of an eminently practical character coming in from all parts of Great Britain, detailing measures taken and recommended by those who have a thorough knowledge of their subject, and who are by no means inclined to be sentimental where practical working directions are required.

The essay to which the Silver Medal was awarded, also the Second Prize

essay, are printed in full. Many of the others were of so interesting a character that the Society would have been glad to print them also in their entirety; but it was decided that the practical utility of the publication would be greatest if a number of selections bearing on special points were made from some of the papers and placed before the reader as concisely as possible. Extracts are accordingly grouped under various heads, dealing with the protection of field, fruit-plantation, and vegetable garden; and giving a large number of full and definite directions, suggestions, and working instructions for the safeguarding of crops by means of scares of various kinds—rook-boys, automatic guns, scarecrows, kites, tin and glass, windmills, etc.; for the provision of cages and netting for fruit; for the preparation of seeds and the protection of seeds and seedlings; for the best washes for fruit-buds, etc. It is believed that these will be of great value to thousands of growers, and the cordial thanks of the Society are offered to all the Competitors for having placed their knowledge and experience at the service of the many professional and private cultivators who would prefer to preserve fruit and corn without the destruction of bird-life.

The fact of such a competition being organized by the R.S.P.B. may be taken as evidence that the supporters of the

Society do not shut their eyes to the damage done to various crops by various birds at certain seasons; and of their consequent sympathy with reasonable complaints of cultivators of Farm and Garden. But though the Society encouraged and anticipated no bias in favour of the birds, the institution of the Competition is in itself evidence of the importance attached by them to the preservation of bird-life, and their conviction that in urging such preservation together with measures for the safeguarding of crops in their seasons, they are demonstrating the truest and most practical form of sympathy with the troubles of farmers and gardeners. In this they have, without asking it, the support of every one of the competitors in a greater or less degree. While it is demonstrated to be possible to keep birds off crops at a time when they take seed or fruit, it is admittedly impossible to provide insecticides or weed-destroyers comparable in assiduity, in thoroughness, and in cheapness to the beak of the bird that is at work throughout the year. Full and appreciative acknowledgment of the services of the birds is made by nine-tenths of the writers taking part in the Competition.

The point is likewise one to which particular attention is directed by the new *Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux*, in the third number (April, 1912) of the League's Bulletin. The Comte d'Orfeuille, its Secretary, quotes passages from an official letter addressed to the Minister of Agriculture on behalf of the agriculturists and vine-growers of the Côte-d'Or, "protesting with energy against the culpable indifference" which has slighted the provisions of the International Convention relative to the protection of small birds "indispensable to our agriculture and vine-culture," and

citing the increasing invasions of insects, and the danger, expense, and unsatisfactory results of insecticides. The Comte d'Orfeuille quotes also some striking facts given by M. Rouviere-Huc. In 1906 the Gironde lost more than 20 million (francs), and in 1910 l'Aube 40 millions owing to the destructive work of insects; while, it is pointed out, the Tit will consume 500 insects in a day. "What is necessary is to demonstrate mathematically the results of the thoughtlessness which we have to deplore in France. Why, if there is a law, not enforce it? Why, if it is insufficient, not re-make it?"

Among the many suggestions for keeping birds temporarily from field or garden, one of the most constant is that of providing them with food and water. For after all, birds must eat, and if the new-sown seed is to be kept from the busy little beak, and the luscious pear is to be denied to the thirsty little throat, it is but reasonable to supply a substitute. A small sanctuary where peace and food may be found when the bird is scared by some effective means from the cultivated crop, seems the ideal state of things.

For the many excellent hints and directions given by Mr. E. Purnell Jones, Mr. E. J. Platt, and twenty-six other authorities, readers of *Bird Notes and News* must be referred to "Farm, Garden, and Birds." Apart from its primary object, the Competition has, to quote from the preface to the pamphlet, served two good purposes:—

"It shows plainly, on the evidence of men who have succeeded, that crops of all kinds *may* be defended from the attacks of birds (by those who will take a little trouble in the matter) at a cost no greater than that entailed in their destruction. But it also shows that, beyond the ingenuity of farmer and gardener, there is ample room in the market for improved methods of scaring. The means detailed in the Essays may be

put, as some competitors put them, under three heads: (1) Wire netting and nets to make the plants inaccessible to birds; this is obviously limited to small areas of particular crops, and has various drawbacks; (2) alarming noises, created by the firing of guns, automatic explosions, "rook-boys" with clappers and rattles and yells, jangling windmills, clattering tin and glass, bells, etc.; (3) alarming sights, such as real or imitation hawks and cats, scarecrows on the "dummy" plan, streamers of rag and paper, and zigzagging of black cotton. These things are found effective, but it cannot be denied that in the main they are eminently

primitive in character. The thought naturally occurs, if such devices, which have for the most part to depend upon the resource and ingenuity of the individual grower, are yet pronounced efficacious in keeping hungry birds from tempting food, how much more easily might not success be attained by some practical scientific invention or inventions! . . . The wits of man have lagged far behind the wits of Birds, whose intelligence soon describes the harmlessness of the clang that reverberates every half-hour and does no execution, and of the bogey that remains in one spot without swoop or pounce or step forward."

Economic Ornithology.

IS THE GULL ECONOMICALLY USEFUL?

THE Rev. E. T. Daubeny (Southacre Rectory, Norfolk), writes:—

"At the present time constantly recurring attacks are made on Gulls as inimical to anglers, fishermen, and farmers; and it is for those who have made a study of the habits of these birds, and also the habits of the creatures on which they feed, to sift the evidence and see whether these attacks are justified or not. In so doing it is my endeavour to lay aside humanitarian considerations, and feelings of admiration that have crept over me after long and close association with many of the gull tribe. When speaking of Gulls, I mean Gulls proper, such as the Common Gull, Kittiwake, Black-headed, and Herring-Gulls. These should not be confounded with those sea-birds that swiftly swoop down on living fish, and pursue them in their native element: such as Gannets, Cormorants, Guillemots, and many divers. In watching the habits of Gulls, especially when on land, a knowledge of entomology is sometimes of great service, as indeed it is in estimating the economic value of most other birds.

"It is difficult to place too high a value on the usefulness of Gulls. They belong to Nature's mighty army of scavengers, whose unceasing work it is to keep our shores clean and sea-breezes sweet. Were it not

for them many a beach would be fouled, and the air tainted, by putrid masses of dead fish, and other creatures cast up by the waves. In places such as Lowestoft the absence of Gulls would be wellnigh disastrous. During the fishing season Lowestoft Harbour, which is imperfectly flushed by the tide, is covered with carcases and fragments of fish. Were it not for the Gulls the water of the harbour would be contaminated, and the health and prosperity of the town endangered. Gulls are splendid sanitary inspectors.

"Fishermen sometimes complain that Gulls are harmful to their trade. They say that they consume vast quantities of fish and injure the fisheries. But is there not another side to the matter? The real question, as far as they are concerned is, what fish do Gulls consume? Live? or dead? If it can be shown that they feed almost exclusively on fish that are either dead or dying, the hue and cry against them is surely far louder than it ought to be. The swoop of the Gull upon its food on the surface of the water is not a rapid one. The bird picks it up with the tip of the beak while flying. It is the lifting up of a dead thing, for living fish, unless in an enfeebled or dying state, are rarely caught by such an act. How utterly different from the 'bolt from the blue' of the Gannet, that with downward rush is on to his living prey in an instant, and impales it with his terrible bill whether beneath or on the surface of the

water. How different too from the way the Kingfisher drops like a stone from a branch above the quiet pool upon the unsuspecting minnow, and goes in over head and ears when so doing.

"Gulls do not pursue fish on the surface of the water: nor do they dive in search of them. I once had a pair of Gulls in my garden where there was a moat full of trout, for whose safety I had no fear. I knew them all, and knew their number, for they were pet show fish. None were touched: they were far too sharp for that. On one occasion I threw into the moat three or four herrings which sank two feet to the bottom in clear water. The Gulls swam about without attempting to take them. At last after two days I raked them out of the moat; and the Gulls eagerly devoured them when thrown upon the lawn.

"Here we are ten or twelve miles from the sea; and there are great numbers of Gulls, principally Blackheaded, all the year round, which are sometimes to be seen on the river Nar either resting or washing in the water. They do not fish the stream, nor do they patrol the banks as they patrol the seashore. It is not worth their while, though the river is well stocked with trout. They seek their food in the open fields, and there they do a vast amount of good. Early this year I watched a sight commonly to be seen. Five hundred Gulls were following the plough in one of our fields. They lined the new-cut furrows, eagerly devouring the grubs in the upturned earth. These five hundred birds, in the course of twelve months, account for several hundredweights of insects and their larvæ which prey upon the farmers' crops.

"I have just been staying on the coast where there are mussel beds. The fishermen say that Gulls do not attack the beds when exposed at low tide; but that the Hooded Crows often do. Anyone acquainted with a part of the coast like Hayling Beach must have noticed these crows cracking shell-fish by dropping them from a height on to the shingle.

"At times Gulls drop a fish they are carrying, but not for the same reason as the Crow. It breaks away or slips from the bill, as a fisherman said to me a day or two ago. They often drop it on the sea and pick it up again. Gulls find a ready

morsel in a mussel cast upon the shore dead and gaping, but not in one alive and shut.

"The above are some of the reasons for thinking that Gulls are useful birds."

The attempt made to weaken the Gulls Act of the Isle of Man has failed for the present. By this Act, passed in 1868 (the time of the agitation for the Sea-Birds Preservation Act in England), complete protection is given to all Gulls and their eggs, "Gulls" including Gannets and Guillemots. A proposal to authorize owners of land to shoot the birds was made in the supposed interests of the farmers; but the Manx Legislative Council, on May 10th, rejected the Bill, holding that no sufficient evidence had been furnished and that the allegation against the Gulls had not been proved.

SIX FRIENDS OF THE TREES.

Six feathered friends of the trees were selected by Mr. Cambridge Phillips as the subject of his address at the annual meeting of the Woolhope (Herefordshire) Naturalists' Field Club in April last. First, the Green Woodpecker, who is able by his powerful bill to reach insects and caterpillars boring under the bark; second, the more uncommon Great Spotted Woodpecker, which also feeds on insects and grubs, and in winter lives largely on the destructive larvæ of the leopard-moth; third, the Lesser Woodpecker, keeping clean twigs and buds that would not support so heavy a bird as the Green Woodpecker; fourth, the charming little Nuthatch; fifth, the Wryneck, which assists in summer, when insects abound; and, sixth, the small Tree-creeper which devotes the whole of its useful life to searching for insects in the crevices of the bark.

Mr. Phillips added that he had not alluded to the Golden Crested Wren, which does an amazing amount of good to young fir and larch plantations, or to any of the Warblers, which are great insect-destroyers in summer. To make the list complete he would also have had to give a good place to the Tits, which range the woodlands so industriously summer and winter in quest of insect food; and to have named even the House-Sparrow. This summer, when the oak-trees have swarmed to an unusual degree with caterpillars, which have reduced the leaves to shreds, the Sparrow has been noted at Kew and elsewhere, hanging to the twigs almost with the agility of a Tit and picking off the insects by the hundred.

"If landowners, more particularly owners of woods," said Mr. Phillips, "only knew and considered the great value of Woodpeckers and their allies in continually cleansing and freeing from all vermin their trees, they would not be satisfied until they had the feathered friends of their trees adequately protected, as is now being done in the United States. Wood free from insects is practically indestructible." But owners of woodland can already do more than any law can effect: they can insist upon their keepers preserving birds that are far more precious to the community than Pheasants.

A LEGEND OF ST. DRUON.

Le Petit Journal (April 11, 1912) welcomes the new French League with the recount of a legend which is reminiscent of the "Birds of Killingworth," and of

many an experience of hard fact in France and other countries:—

"The Société Nationale d'Acclimatation has founded a League for the Protection of Birds. This is an excellent movement. Let us protect the birds, and especially let us inspire the country-folk with the desire to protect them. How unlucky it is that we no longer believe in legends! I know one which was told me in my childhood in my good country of Flanders, and which is, of its kind, the prettiest and most persuasive in the world. It is the legend of St. Druon, Bishop of Arras, an unpretending saint known only in Flanders and in the Artois (Pas de Calais), but who seems all the same to have been a good sort of saint.

"St. Druon, then, was walking near Arras at the seed-sowing season, and as he passed by a field he met a peasant whose newly-sown furrows were being pillaged by a flight of birds. 'Who will rid me of these accursed thieves!' cried the man. 'I would part with my share of paradise if not one single bird could approach within a league of my farm.' 'Never mind,' said the Bishop, drawing near; 'there is no need to call so loud for such a favour.' Then, tracing a sign in the air, he said, 'My friend, your prayer will be granted.'

"Returning to the village a year later, he found the same peasant seated outside his cottage, dejected, his head buried in his hands. 'What ails you, my friend?' asks the Bishop. 'What ails me?' repeats the other in anger. 'It is you who are the cause of my misfortunes. The insects devour my crops, because the birds no longer come and eat the grubs and worms; the field-mice ravage my ground, and leave me not a single root now that the Owls and Hawks no longer make war upon them. And all round me is dull and sad because I hear no more the songs of the Nightingales.' St. Druon said to him with a smile, 'A year ago you wanted to give your share of paradise if no bird could come within a league of your fields, and now you are in despair because you have your wish!'"

Bird Protection in Switzerland.

At the time of the International Convention on Bird Protection, Switzerland stood in the happy position of having already made laws in advance of those recommended by the signatory Powers. Their character, and the general attitude towards bird-life, is markedly superior to that which obtains in Italy, and, so far, in France. The existing law is based on the principles adopted by the Convention, making the utility of birds the ground for protection; but it possesses also two admirable features: instruction on the subject must be given in schools, and bird-catching by all methods is absolutely prohibited.

Mdlle. R. de la Rive, whose name is well known to Bird-protectionists in three countries, in writing to the R.S.P.B. to express her satisfaction at the establishment of the new *Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux*, says:—

“The Bird Protection movement in France and Switzerland, as is the case in most countries, depends in the main on private activity more than on public initiative, and protection regulations are, in general, due to the unwearied efforts of individuals, single or grouped, waging war against the indifference and apathy of the State. This is far more true of France than of Switzerland. In Switzerland the destruction of small birds has never been a national pastime as it is in France, where the dawn of a new state of things is only now beginning to be felt after ten years of protective legislation. How inadequate legislation, feebly applied and running counter to deeply-rooted instincts and habits, must always be proved in this case, where the trapping, netting, and shooting of insectivorous birds has been carried on from one end of France to the other for the last decade, very much as if there had been no International Convention . . . The League hopes that by edu-

cating the people who destroy, they may be turned into bird protectors, taking measures to avert the decrease of the most precious allies of man, and aiding legislation instead of thwarting it. The League will also discourage the wearing of wild-birds' feathers . . .

“In Switzerland the plumage question does not play such an important part as it does in France, but the *Ligue contre le port des plumes d'Oiseaux sauvages* and the *Ornithologische Gesellschaft für Vögelkunde und Vögelschutz* are stirring to bring home to the public as well as to the State, the responsibility incurred towards other lands by the importation of the feathers of fast-disappearing species.

“M. von Burg, who is president of the *Ornithologische Gesellschaft*, is also on the State Ornithological Commission, which is making a special study of migratory birds and collecting information as to their decrease in numbers. It is largely due to the efforts of this Society that bird-reservations have been set aside in several parts of Switzerland, chiefly in marshy districts, for the preservation of water-fowl. The National Park created in the Engadine by the *Bund für Naturschutz* protects more especially the Alpine fauna and flora of the country. The Society has also striven to create nesting-places for the smaller species by drawing the attention of the authorities to the benefits derived from plantations along the railway lines. This system has been very successful in Germany, where many birds are to be found nesting quite fearlessly in the hedges along the lines. It is a measure rendered very necessary in Switzerland by the decrease of hedges as boundaries and of waste-land formerly covered by low copses and bushes.

“Nesting-boxes for Tits and other birds nesting in holes, have found a warm advocate in Dr. Bourget, a well-known man, whose publications on the subject have roused much interest in the Canton de Vaüd, where boxes have been placed in large numbers in the orchards and near the vineyards.

“Cats are extremely numerous in Switzerland, and do much havoc among the birds.

A tax seems to be the only way of keeping down their number, but the measure has not been adopted so far."

According to the Paris correspondent of the *Standard*, the Swiss Government is taking in hand the preservation of Eagles; not, it would appear, on account of Swiss appreciation of the magnificence of the birds, but because tourists require that the picturesque grandeur of lake and mountain should be accentuated by the presence of the soaring bird. National gamekeepers are instructed to preserve birds and nests, and the national Treasury

undertakes to pay farmers for any destruction wrought among their live stock. In Great Britain it is not always possible to persuade local bodies even to give legal protection to Peregrine and Buzzard and Raven, while anything in the shape of keeper or compensation has to be provided by private societies; yet the mountains of Wales and Scotland, and the rocky coasts of south-west England require more than do the Alps the enhancing presence of the hovering bird-form, in order to intensify the sublimity and wildness of inanimate Nature.

Bird Protection in Holland.

THE R.S.P.B. learns from M. van Vollenhoven that a new and excellent law for the Protection of Birds was passed by the House of Commons of the Netherlands on March 29th last. Although Holland was not one of the parties to the International Convention of 1902, the country has somewhat elaborate laws on the subject, the principal enactment dating from 1880, the year of Great Britain's principal Act. By this Act the killing, catching, sale, or possession was forbidden of birds useful to agriculture or forestry, the protection extending (as is usual in the legislation of countries other than Britain) to nests and eggs. The birds placed in this category included the Swallows, Martins, Swift, Warblers, Pipits, Nightjar, Cuckoo, Tits, Hedge-Sparrow, Tree-creeper, and Goldcrest; while for nine months in the year Thrush, Blackbird and Skylark were included. Exemption was given to owners and occupiers of walled or fenced-in properties. It is now proposed to accede to the requirements of the Paris Convention, and the new law, in place of scheduling,

or attempting to schedule, the useful birds will prohibit the catching and killing, sale or possession of all birds, together with the destruction of nests and eggs, and the transit of birds, eggs, or skins, excepting only poultry, game-birds, and a few species recognized as harmful. A certain exemption is to be given in favour of science, and householders may destroy nests on their own buildings; eggs of Peewits and Gulls may be taken between fixed dates; the catching of Thrushes is to be permitted for five years, and estate owners may destroy birds and nests if they prove damage done by the birds.

M. Vollenhoven writes on June 11th, that the Bill was then before the House of Lords, but was meeting with considerable opposition, with regard to some of its propositions and also on account of its length and complexity as compared with the existing Act.

From reports received by the R.S.P.B. the chief danger and worst enemy of the birds of Holland appears to be the British collector.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

COUNCIL MEETING.

THE Council of the Society met at the Offices, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, on April 19th. Mr. Montagu Sharpe, Chairman, presided, and there were present: Mr. E. Bell, Mr. J. L. Bonhote, Miss Clifton, Hon. Mrs. Drewitt, Dr. Drewitt, Miss Hall, Mr. W. H. Hudson, Mr. Hastings Lees, Mrs. F. E. Lemon, Mr. F. E. Lemon (Hon. Secretary), Mr. Ogilvie Grant, Miss Pollock, and Captain Tailby, and Miss Gardiner (Secretary).

Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Hon. Secretary furnished particulars of seven Bird Protection Orders, for Cheshire, Huntingdon, Lincoln (Kesteven), East Suffolk, Anglesey, Cardiff, and Galway respectively, issued since the last meeting of the Council, and reported on the Protection of Crops Essay Competition. Twenty-four lectures illustrated with the Society's slides, had been given as follows:—

Wellingborough, Christ's Hospital (Hors- ham), Dorking, and Lewisham, Mr. Hastings Lees; Lahill, Miss Rintoul; Liverpool (St. Andrew's Church Hall), Mr. J. C. Hamilton; Stony Stratford, Mr. Baldock; Middleton (Bird and Tree Day), Mr. Hopkins; Rugby School, Mr. Collison; Bancroft's School (Woodford), Mr. Playne; Burton-on-Trent Natural History Society, Mr. Hanson; Don- caster Grammar School, Mr. S. E. Evans; Woolton (Liverpool), Miss Gillie; Grange- over-Sands, Miss Kershaw; Lancaster, Mr. Turney; Westminster, Rev. J. E. Kelsall; Maidstone Museum, Rev. J. Hale; South- ampton, Mr. P. M. Randall; Chichester (Boy Scouts), Mr. Weller-Poley; Sheffield (Pupil Teachers' Centre), Miss E. Atkins; Wicklow, Mr. R. M. Barrington; Poplar (Public Library), Miss Clifton; Sutton, Miss E. Smith.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The resignations of two Hon. Local Secretaries were received with regret, namely, Mrs. W. B. Gerish for East Herts, and the Rev. A. F. Curtis, for Witham, on leaving the district. The appointment was approved of Miss G. Baker for Purley and Wallington. Mr. R. M. Barrington, F.L.S., of Fassaroe, co. Bray, was elected a Fellow of the Society, and the following Members were elected:—

Sir Henry Burdett, K.C.B. (London, W.), C. Collison (St. Bees), G. E. H. Ellis (Croy- don), Miss Harrison (Lincoln), Miss Hen- derson (Kinross), Miss Jackson (Evendon, Ross-shire); A. G. W. Murray (Tunbridge Wells), Charles Nicolson (Chingford), A. Pereira (Wimbledon), Mrs. Rivers Pollock (Liverpool), Duncan F. Robertson (Kirkwall, Orkney), E. M. Brooke-Taylor (Bakewell), T. Weller-Poley (Chichester), H. Willford (Isle of Wight).

The quarterly statement of accounts was submitted and approved.

Publication Committee.

The Publication Committee reported the issue of a new leaflet-prospectus, which it is hoped will be largely used by friends of the Society for enclosing in private correspondence; of the Spring Number of *Bird Notes and News*, per- manently enlarged to 16 pages, and form- ing the first number of Vol. 5 of the Society's organ (established 1903); and of the Prize Essays on the Protection of Crops, under the title of "Farm, Garden, and Birds." The question of reprinting the "Story of Bird Protection" which ran through the last volume of *Bird Notes and News*, was considered.

Watchers Committee.

The employment of twenty-two watchers for the breeding-places of rare birds in numerous districts in England, Wales, Scotland, the Shetlands and the Orkneys, was approved, and it was reported that bird-catchers, dealers' shops, and other matters were being followed up by the Inspectors. A considerable correspondence had taken place with county authorities and with societies in Norfolk, with reference to the statements made by the Duke of Rutland and Mr. Bonhote at the Annual Meeting of the R.S.P.B., as to the destruction of Bearded Tits, Bitterns, Kingfishers, and Nightingales. Mr. Meade-Waldo and Dr. and the Hon. Mrs. Drewitt were thanked for gifts of field-glasses for the use of Watchers.

General Business.

Mr. Montagu Sharpe reported that during a recent visit to Egypt he had, as Chairman of the Council of the R.S.P.B., interviewed various Government officials on the subject of the protection of native birds, especially Quails and Herons. It appeared that most of the bird-trapping was done by aliens on land over which it is very difficult to exercise control; also that the Egret has practically disappeared from Lower Egypt. The Egyptian Department of Agriculture had issued a circular on the importance of protecting Herons, and it was believed that the interviews held by the Chairman and the suggestions made on both sides would have useful results. The Standing Committees for the year were appointed and the action of the Watchers in co-opting Miss E. L. Turner and Mr. Keith Henderson was approved.

Meetings of the General Purposes and Watchers Committees were held on May 17th.

Next Meeting of Council, July 19th, 1912.

THE CAGING OF BIRDS.

The following letter (dated May 6th, 1912) from the Duchess of Portland, President of the R.S.P.B., has appeared in a large number of newspapers:—

“As the season has arrived when our wild birds are nesting, I beg you will allow me the opportunity of appealing through your columns to the public to refrain from buying or catching them and confining them in small cages.

“Of course, the Acts of Parliament and Orders prohibiting the taking of wild birds are in force all over the country at this time of the year; but, apart from that, I should like to entreat people, on the ground of humanity, not to condemn wild birds to life-long imprisonment in cages of totally inadequate size. Captive birds in such cases, besides bruising their wings and bodies in fruitless endeavours to escape, are apt to be neglected, possibly more from want of thought than any desire to be cruel, but in either event suffering is caused to a more or less degree.

“The sight of these innocent little prisoners sometimes crowded together in one small cage, is not a pleasing one; in my opinion it is a selfish practice and should be discouraged.

“The large majority of wild birds, as is well known, serve a useful purpose to mankind, and I earnestly appeal to everyone to allow them to enjoy their liberty instead of bringing them into captivity under conditions which cause great suffering to the unfortunate victims and distress to lovers of animals.”

INTERNATIONAL HORTICULTURAL EXHIBITION.

The Society had a stall for nesting-boxes and literature at the International Horticultural Exhibition at Chelsea, May 22 to May 30, 1912, and were allotted space at one end of the Sundries Tent. The general appearance of the stand is shown by the photograph in this number of *Bird Notes and News*. Nesting-boxes, British

and Berlepsch, food-tables of various patterns, and food-bells, were effectively exhibited; and large numbers of leaflets dealing with the relations of birds to horticulture and with the general subject of bird protection, were taken by the thousands of visitors who passed through the tent, many of whom were greatly interested in the display. Many questions were asked as to the work of birds in the garden and the work of the Society for the birds, as well as about the boxes and tables. The stall was not entered for competition, but the Judges awarded the Society a Bronze Medal.

BILLS IN PARLIAMENT.

A Bill to amend the Ground Game Act of 1880 was introduced into the House of Commons on March 19th, by Mr. Hay Morgan, supported by Sir George C. Marks, Mr. Haydn Jones, and Mr. R. Lambert. Under the plea of befriending the tenant-farmer, it proposes to allow the setting of spring-traps otherwise than in rabbit-holes (as decreed by the present law) "provided such traps are completely and securely covered during the hours between sunrise and sunset." The extended permission thus suggested for the use of these cruel instruments, and the certainty that birds as well as animals would suffer greatly in consequence, naturally ensured strong opposition from the R.S.P.B. A member of the Society who is in Parliament undertook to move the rejection of the Bill if it came to a second reading, and other Members of Parliament are ready to resist its passage. The second reading has, however, not been reached. The *County Gentleman* (May 18) comments on the Bill;—

"The proposal to allow rabbit traps to be set in the open all night, with a proviso that somebody shall go round at sunrise

and cover them up, displays at one and the same time a cynical disregard of humanitarian sentiment and a touching faith in the farmer's boy . . . The implied suggestion that good husbandry can only be served by enlarging the right to maim inoffensive birds and beasts can hardly be passed over without a protest."

Mr. G. Greenwood brought in, on June 13th, a Bill to prohibit the hunting, coursing, or shooting of any animal or bird released from captivity for that purpose.

THE NEW FOREST.

Last year leading naturalists signed a protest against a proposal of the War Office to use the New Forest for military manœuvres in the height of the breeding-season of wild animals and birds, among the signatories being the Chairman and members of Council of the R.S.P.B. The proposal has happily not been repeated this summer, thanks in great measure, no doubt, to the exertions of Mr. Trevor-Battye, who promoted the memorial.

BIRD-PROTECTION ORDERS.

A circular letter has been addressed by the Society to the forty County Boroughs of England that are without Bird Protection Orders, drawing attention to the fact that the Order for an administrative county is not operative in a county borough, and urging that the absence of Borough Orders (1) causes confusion in the public mind; (2) allows birdcatchers and egg-robbers to destroy the bird-life of the suburbs, where its preservation is peculiarly desirable; (3) permits the possession and sale in the Borough of species illegally taken in the County.

Official replies promise that consideration shall be given to the subject, and the Boroughs of Northampton and West Ham have already decided to apply for orders uniform with those of their respective counties.

The Plume-Trade.

At a meeting of the Edinburgh Merchants' Company on March 28 the Committee recommended that the Company should petition against Lord Avebury's Plumage Bill, contending that it would destroy a great industry in "the making of artificial birds," and drive the industry over to France and Germany. Mr. Somerville Grieve, in opposing the motion, said he was appalled that any committee of a great educational institution like the Merchant Company should propose to petition against a Bill which was meant to protect the birds—the poets of the air and pilgrims of the night—from slaughter. At that moment there were swarms of birds flying from Africa to their own homeland to help the farmers of this country, but in other lands birds were being done to death by millions for the sake of their plumage, and he hoped that something would be done to stem the shocking sacrifice of bird-life. Mr. John Cowan, in seconding, said that in his boyhood Jamaica was the home of countless humming-birds; now they were gone—gone to trim women's hats. In 1908 the Company petitioned in favour of the Bill. The recommendation was lost by 27 to 24.

In the "Naturalist Notes" in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (May 18, 1912) Sir Herbert Maxwell writes:—

"Two conditions seem mainly to interfere with bringing home to the minds of ladies the realities of the plume trade. First, the scenes of massacre are very remote from this country, and hearts that might be painfully stirred by the barbarity of a British birdcatcher may remain comparatively indifferent to similar operations on a far larger scale at the Antipodes. Secondly, lady customers are constantly imposed upon by the assurance that the plumes they buy

are ingenious and innocent imitations, manufactured out of the feathers of domestic fowls. Plume traders have been set on the alert by recent manifestations of opinion, and are diligently circulating reassuring statements to this effect. Thus in June last year it was [announced in *l'Agriculture Commerciale* that 'almost all the plumage of wild birds, such as marabou, birds-of-paradise, and ospreys is imitated with the feathers of farmyard birds,' and this is the sort of warrant under which lady customers now conduct their purchases with an easy conscience. Needless to say that the only modification which has been wrought recently in this form of commerce is the addition of wholesale lying involved in statements such as I have quoted."

Sir Herbert Maxwell proceeds to appeal once more to the humane feelings and the intelligence of the women of Great Britain; to cite the example of the States of New York, New Jersey, Louisiana, Ohio, Missouri, Massachusetts, Oregon, and California, which have prohibited the sale of "ospreys" altogether: and to regret that the report of the Select Committee of 1908 on Lord Avebury's Bill has as yet borne no fruit.

The plume-trade boast at present that since the Royal Society took up the matter the demand for "ospreys" by English women has been unexampled; this being the trade way of stating that it has been pushing its wares to the uttermost, with the help of the method cited by Sir Herbert Maxwell. Government mills, it is true, grind very slowly. It is to be hoped that they will in the end "grind exceeding small."

A west-end firm which has made itself conspicuous by a constant display of osprey-trimmed headgear in its advertisements, recently wrote to a lady in Society to deplore that they had not for some time been favoured with her custom,

and to express their anxiety "to retain the patronage of an old and valued customer." The customer replied that she had not given further orders to them because she understood them to be among the most active supporters of the iniquitous feather-trade, and she preferred to deal with firms not implicated in a slaughter which she considered a disgrace to humanity. This brought a rejoinder assuring the customer that she was "quite wrong;" they were "compelled to stock a certain amount of plumes and feathers," being "as tradesmen compelled, sometimes most reluctantly, to supply the public with what it wants." So, no doubt, Mr. Pecksniff if he were to advertise

the Pecksniff Pernicious Pill on every hoarding, would gently say that he had no wish to sell the pill, but reluctantly yielded to an obligation to supply the public with an article for which it was mutely yearning.

* * *

"I am glad to see that certain milliners are substituting the tulle aigrette for the Heron's plumage, which, alas, figures in profusion on many of the expensive hats of to-day. Indeed, so ruthless must have been the slaughter of these poor parent-birds in anticipation of the present season, that unless the Plumage Bill is passed without further delay, the bird will become extinct." (*Sphere*, May 18th, 1912.)

Notes.

THE Penguins of the Falkland Isles are to be protected in the interests of scientific ornithology. In the course of Dr. Charcot's last expedition to these islands, coloured celluloid bangles were attached to the feet of various birds with a view to assisting in the study of migration. But a number of the birds were killed by whalers, who have hitherto considered them, remarks the *Standard*, "as a species of living Aunt Sallies, to be a mark for the cock-shying sticks of any crew of sailors." Dr. Charcot accordingly appealed on behalf of the Penguins as British subjects, and the Governor of the Falklands has replied that the Customs officer attached to the whaling service of the South Shetlands will instruct the manager of whaling companies to forbid their servants to kill Penguins or other birds, and to collect information as to the movements of the decorated Penguins. The granting of fishing licences is to be conditional on a promise to respect both seals and Penguins, and if possible other birds.

Decrease in the number of Swallows is again noted this year in many parts of England, and also in Ireland. Various explanations have been attempted, but the true cause seems still to seek. One curious reason suggested is that owing to the larger number of houses now in Algiers, the birds are not obliged to come to Europe for convenient eaves and rafters to which to attach their nests. Apart from the fact that Swallows built before there were houses even in Europe, it is fairly certain that migration is an inherited instinct of return to the land of birth, handed down from the time when winter, creeping in upon tropical Britain, gradually drove them afar for food. A more probable supposition is that wireless telegraphy may have a disturbing influence on the migrants. In France the disappearance of the Swallows is once more deplored by M. Cunissot-Carnot in his charming column "La Vie à la Campagne" in *Le Temps* (June 1st, 1912). This year, he says, there are not more nests in the whole of the village

where his country-home is situated, than were fifteen years ago on the house itself. Equally startling, he tells us, is the rapid decrease of the Skylarks. Shooting "snobs" are responsible for some Swallow destruction. The restaurants devour many thousands of both birds. Is there in France or Spain, as in Italy, some organized slaughter on migration (suspected long before electricity could have affected the question), and, if so, where does it take place ?

* * *

This story of a Wagtail is sent by a correspondent, who has no doubt often watched these active and graceful little birds running over the fields and lawns and leaping lightly into the air in quest of flies, and who has listened to their quick "Chissick" and their sweet warbled song :—

"Herewith you will find a poor dead Wagtail. I saw it in a cage at ——'s bird-shop, a cage so narrow that it could not put its tail straight. It had canary seed given it to eat (the Wagtail feeds exclusively on insects), and looked the most pathetic picture of misery it is possible to imagine. I never buy caged birds, as I think it encourages the trade, but I had to buy this starving captive. Before I could get it to a quiet place to release it, or could give it proper food, it gave up its poor little life, one more victim of this disgusting traffic which we still allow in a Christian country. In the same shop were two Blackbirds and a Thrush, dying by the look of them, each in a cage about 8 in. long, 6 in. wide, and not more than 5 in. high. We talk about the Italians; I really think we are worse. They do kill the birds; we torture them."

But has not the bird-cager proclaimed on the house-tops that he benevolently rescues wild-birds from "the cruelty of Nature" ?

* * *

The Wildfowlers' Association, a body usually supposed to confine their attention to the subject they presumably understand, have been expressing regret and alarm that full protection should in some counties be

given to the Lapwing, "a bird, in their opinion, quite capable of taking care of itself." The Wildfowlers are alarmed lest "to raise this species to abnormal quantities might bring serious evils." The "unreasonable protection of the Starling and Skylark" has, they think, "caused serious suffering to many persons" (possibly to the bird-trappers and snarers of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire); and the enormous numbers of roosting Starlings have, game-keepers tell them, killed the trees thus weighted. If the Lapwing, which at present indeed feeds on insects, is protected in this dreadful way, "there is no telling what it may turn to attack" after it has "annihilated" the useful worm. Who can say that the power of imagination is lacking at the present day? Or can it simply be that the Wildfowlers do not want to be deprived of the pleasure of shooting Lapwings !

* * *

The provision of water for birds to drink and to bathe in during dry weather, is now almost as well-recognized a duty as is the provision of food in winter. If everyone cannot furnish his gardens with such ideal bird-baths as those from the Compton Potteries, shown by Mrs. G. F. Watts at the Chelsea Flower Show, it is easy to put out a pan or dish on lawn or flower-bed and keep it filled. A correspondent sends another hint :—

"I hope that members of the Society who have gardens, try to provide the birds with water during the summer. We prop our garden hose (with the rose on it) on to the hose-wheel, and let the water run for a time each day, placing it in the middle of the lawn, well away from bushes, where cats could ambush, as they can catch the birds so easily when they are wet with bathing. The birds drink and bathe in numbers, and during the long drought last summer it was a great boon to them."

The following frank statement of the doings of Sparrow Clubs, even where House-Sparrows are the only birds for which a reward is offered, comes from the Secretary of a Club which boasts of having killed over eleven thousand Sparrows last year. It is also interesting as showing the extent to which Bird-protection laws and notices are disregarded where police and magistrates do not enforce them. Needless to say it was not addressed to the R.S.P.B. :—

“Yes, all kinds of birds get killed with our sparrows, but the club pays for sparrows only. Where sparrows are numerous clap-nets are very effective; then, of course, all kinds of birds are caught, but of course you *can* let them off again if you think fit. All kinds of notices are put up by officials with regard to protection of certain kinds of birds, but naturally the farmer has to look after his own interests, and these inspectors rarely trouble us.”

The italics are the Club Secretary's. It would be interesting to know what proportion “all kinds of birds” bear to the 11,000 sparrows; what protected species are among them; and how far the farmer is looking after his own interests in encouraging their indiscriminate destruction.

* * *

It is singular that in England, a country

where birds are celebrated for the variety and beauty of their song, the music of birds should be, as a study, almost entirely neglected, and their notes unknown to 999 persons out of 1,000. The scope for such study is brought into prominence by an interesting article in the latest volume of *Aquila* (the official publication of the Hungarian Chamber of Ornithology), where the winter notes of many species are recorded and four pages of music are devoted to those of the Great Tit. In the United States also the matter receives more attention than in Britain. Mr. B. Haworth-Booth sends the R.S.P.B. a Boston (U.S.A.) newspaper report of a lecture, given by a naturalist-musician, Mr. Schuyler Matthews, who rightly points out that bird-music is a study with a great future and one that must bring about a better understanding of bird-life and form one of the strongest bases of bird protection. Mr. Matthews deals with it scientifically, and comes to the conclusion that the musical scale in bird-land is the pentatonic, the primitive scale in which nearly all the old folk-songs are written. He seeks out the *motif* of each species, and holds that the bird keeps perfect time, as tested by the metronome, but does not always sing true.

Books Received.

REPORT OF THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, Berlin, 1910. (Berlin: Deutsche Ornithologische Gesellschaft). The papers are published in the language (usually German) in which they were read.

DYREVAERNEFORENINGEN “SVALEN.” Copenhagen, 1912. The report for 1911 of the excellent work of the Danish Society.

AMERICAN GAME PROTECTION.—The U.S.A. Department of Agriculture has issued a useful Chronology and Index of the more important events in American Game Protection from 1776 to 1911. The need for some such index

is shown by the fact that in the first decade of this century 1,324 Acts were passed by the States of the Union.

THE RARER BIRDS OF SOMERSET. By Amy Smith. (Taunton: The Wessex Press). It is rather difficult to say what purpose this neat little compilation will serve. The descriptions are too detailed to be much guide to outdoor bird-watchers; size and song are entirely overlooked.

DIARY OF BIRDS' NESTS AND EGGS. (London: Hugh Rees, Ltd.) Blank sheets for records.

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

"WHENEVER the children in my room get listless and seemingly indifferent to their work, I always can awaken a keen interest and get them all stirred up by introducing the subject of Bird Study." This is the comment of one teacher quoted by another in the Illinois (U.S.A.) *Bird and Arbor Day Annual* for 1912. Illinois is one of the States where the day is observed by proclamation of the Governor, and he commends it in the following words :—

"I hereby urge that city and village authorities make a special effort by public exercises and by enlisting the local Press to arouse interest in the planting of trees along the streets and in the protection of song birds; that all organizations for social and civic betterment use their influence to promote the observance of these days in order that the wealth, comfort, and attractiveness of our State may be enhanced; and more especially that school authorities secure the observance by school children by appropriate exercises and by planting trees, vines, and flowers about school buildings and their homes, in order to arouse and fix in the minds of our future citizens proper sentiments towards Birds and Trees."

In the celebration of Bird Day recently at Carrick in Pennsylvania, the Governor of the State and the Mayor and Corporation of the town were present, while 2,000 children had their celebration fête. The Governor gave some hundreds of cherry and mulberry saplings and the same number of nesting-boxes for children to take to their homes, and a great "Nesting Town" for 60 Martins to be put up in the school-ground.

Le Chenil (Paris) chronicles the first distribution of medals and certificates made by the Société d'Acclimatation of France in connexion with that Society's new organization for encouraging the study of Natural History in the primary schools. The success of the scheme in the schools of Paris has so far been complete, and it will now be introduced into a wider area. Each school sends up its six best essays, and stress is laid on the need for direct personal observation rather than lessons learned in class or from books.

"We have essayed," said M. Edmond Perrier, President of the Society, "to place the hosts of our fields and our woods under the protection of those who are, through curiosity or idleness, their most dangerous enemies: the children. We would have them use the time they now spend in robbing the nests of Goldfinch and Chaffinch, in learning that it is necessary to respect them, and in seeking to comprehend that all that lives compels too much admiration ever to be wantonly destroyed."

Le Chenil also draws attention to the R.S.P.B. Silver Medal Essay by Mr. Percy Worthington on "The Birds of Paris," as one that should stimulate the ambition of young bird-students of France not to be beaten on their own ground.

School Teams competing for the Society's Bird-and-Tree County Challenge Shields and Prizes, are reminded that Essays should reach the Society's Office, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, not later than the first week in August.

IN THE COURTS.

A CAPTIVE OWL.—At *West London Police Court*, on June 18th, Charles Vogan, chimney-sweep, of Childs Street, Earl's Court Road, was charged with taking and possessing a Brown Owl. An agent of the R.S.P.B., with a police sergeant, went to the house and saw defendant, who protested that he trapped the bird because it took his caged Linnets, and that it had since escaped; it was found in a loft, in a miserable condition, and was subsequently released in a suitable place. For the defence it was alleged that the Owl was caught three weeks before, and was therefore not recently taken. Mr. Mead said the offence was fully proved, but dismissed the summons under the Probation of Offenders Act rather than grant a case.

THE NATURE STUDENT ABROAD.—At *Horsham*, on May 4th, a boy, named Jock King, was fined £2 and 16s. costs for shooting a tame Macaw, stated to have cost £20, belonging to Mr. Hiley, of Ifield. The boy said he thought it was an Eagle and might attack his father's chickens.

CATCHING "SPARROWS."—At *Eastbourne*, on April 30th, William Morley, senr., and William Morley, jun., were convicted of being in possession of thirteen newly-taken Linnets. The men were on the Crumbles with three decoy birds and nets, and said they had "an important order for five hundred Sparrows" and had a perfect right to catch the birds. The birds caught, and in a basket with a false bottom, were all Linnets. It was urged that the Order was not advertized in the local papers as required by the Act, and on this ground and on the ground that Linnets have only recently been added to the Schedule, the men were let off with a fine of 10s. and costs. It is to be hoped that the Eastbourne authorities will not be caught napping again, and will realize that even Sparrows may not lawfully be caught on public land during the Close Season.

MORE BIRD-CATCHING.—At *Stockport*, on May 16th, John Clarke was convicted of using bird-lime to catch birds. He had a decoy bird and freshly limed sticks, but said he had seen a notice about catching wild-birds and meant to use the lime for

catching flies. Although this was his second appearance he was let off on payment of costs. At *Gosport*, on April 24th, Robert Paton was fined 14s. and 16s. costs for being in possession of two newly-caught Goldfinches and ten Linnets. He had a net and four decoy birds, and had been at work in a disused garden near Fort Monkton, where nine dead hen Linnets were found, killed and left as useless. Apparatus and birds were confiscated.

"HUNTING FLOWERS."—At *Chester*, on May 18th, Charles Woodcock, a schoolboy, was ordered to pay costs for taking two young Thrushes. When spoken to by the policeman he said he was hunting flowers, but the birds were found in his pocket. It was stated that posters relating to Close Time had been left at the schools in the division.

TORTURING A CROW.—At *Mullingar*, on May 25th, James Barry, a caddie, was sent to a reformatory for a month for mutilating a Crow on the golf-links.

Now Ready, Price One Shilling, post free.

FARM, GARDEN, and BIRDS :

How to protect Corn, Fruit, and Vegetable Crops without destruction of Bird-life.

Price-winning Essays, by E. Purnell Jones and E. J. Platt, with extracts from papers by twenty-six other Competitors.

The subjects dealt with include : Scares and Scare-crows; Guns; the Rook-boy; Windmills and Kites; Nets and Netting; Protection of Fruit and Fruit-Buds; Protection of Seeds and Seedlings; etc.

"Every farmer, market gardener, or indeed grower of any crops, should read the pamphlet before he complains about there being too many birds. He will see that if he is suffering from birds it is because he fails to employ simple safeguards during a short season, for at times the birds are invaluable to him."—*Manchester Guardian*.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR
THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS,
23, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, S.W.

BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.



From a Water-colour Sketch.

BREAN DOWN.

As seen from Weston-super-Mare.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

SEPTEMBER, 1912.

[No. 3.]

Brean Down : The Hill of Birds.

A BEAUTIFUL thing has been done for the birds of Britain. A sanctuary has been found in the west country, where some of the rarest and strangest can henceforth build their nests, rear their young, and live in peace, and where those who love them may watch their ways.

Of "protected areas" there are already a certain number in Britain*; but this Hill of Birds, Brean Down, is the most important and the most romantic place of its kind that yet exists in our green islands; and only the funds are needed to ensure it to the birds as a breeding and dwelling-place in perpetuity.

Brean Down is in Somersetshire, a rocky peninsula jutting out into the sea, within sight of the bathing-machines of Weston-super-Mare. Mr. Hudson has likened it finely to a hippopotamus standing belly-deep in African waters. That is how it appears from a distance. But walk along the sands for a mile and a half until you come right up to the queer

stranded hill and listen to the Curlews on the mud flats, and you will think that Brean Down looks a fitting refuge for the Raven and the Peregrine, the Ring-Ouzel and the Whimbrel, the Sheld-drake and the Rock-Pipit—a splendid dome heaving itself out of the surf into the sky.

Luckily for the birds nobody can approach their hill except by ferry across the river Axe or along the coast from the south—the side away from Weston; and the latter is a long tramp over flat pasture lands which extend right away to the blue Quantocks. Having crossed the ferry you are at the threshold of the hill. It is tenanted by Mr. Jesse Hawkings, who will perhaps tell visitors who are members of the R.S.P.B. something about the Ravens and their even fiercer neighbours the Peregrines, and about other birds the Society and he protect. Possibly he may also show them his Kiwi skin and the old skeletons which his sons have dug up on the foreshore.

*There are areas in which no birds may be molested and also areas where no eggs may be taken. There is the wide area of Dungeness, now extending over the Kentish border to Rye and Pett Level; there are parts of the coast in Somerset, in Yorkshire, and elsewhere; portions of river and river-banks; a little island or two, and some fragments of common-land. These are protected by order of County Councils, or by other enactments; but for the most part

there is no guarantee that the law will be respected unless the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds provides Watchers. In the case of the latest addition to the list the Society itself holds the sole rights in the bird-life; the County Council has, at the Society's request, made of it an area in which all birds and all eggs are to be preserved; and the Society will have Watchers to watch over their little winged tenants.

Then you are free to ascend the hill—your heart gladdened as you pass on by the mincing Redshanks, and by the sight of a notice-board warning all who come that this is holy ground. Woe to the collector who ventures here! Woe to the fool with a gun! The authorities will deal firmly and sharply with such persons on Brean Down. Up and up you go along the narrow path. The Gulls and Herons and Oyster-catchers and Sandpipers that are standing about on the flats below are becoming mere dots at the edge of the Atlantic. The path turns a corner, and suddenly up the wind come the cries of the Sheld-drakes. They have seen you. A great whistling of wings and a clamour of cackling as they rise by the hundred into the air above you, their brilliant plumage showing gorgeously in the sun as they pass to and fro, sometimes within a few yards of your head.

The path turns another corner, and there, behold, on a crag against the skyline, a heavy and sombre form, with sus-

picious eyes that are watching you. It is the hen Raven. She puts down her head and speaks in a solemn ogre-like voice. Then spreading her wings she floats off into space, circling in wide circles until you are out of sight.

Further on a Peregrine flashes screaming and chattering from the face of the cliffs below. A Whimbrel calls, high and shrill, and up from the tumbled boulders by the sea a tiny Rock-Pipit rises—and descends again like a parachute, singing his sweet clear song. Birds are everywhere. It is a wonderful enchanted place. The precipitous island of Steepholm across the water looks almost unreal.

And when you feel tired, you can lie down among the white rock-roses and watch the bunnies playing.

Such is the Hill of Birds. May the mean and contemptible work of pilfering and carcase-collecting, which has been done there every year, cease now and for ever.

K. H.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds have secured Brean Down by renting the shooting rights in order to prevent all shooting. On their application, the County Council of Somerset, at their Meeting on July 2nd, agreed to apply for an order prohibiting all killing or taking of birds, and all taking of eggs, in the area. The Order will be signed by the Home Secretary in due course. Watchers appointed by the Society will see that these provisions are duly regarded.

It will readily be understood that the rent of the "shooting" and the provision of Watchers constitute a heavy pull on the Watchers Fund; and it is

earnestly hoped that nature-lovers, not only in Somerset and neighbouring counties but in other parts of England, will come forward with regular subscriptions in order that this Hill of Birds may be maintained for the preservation of the many rare and interesting species which breed there.

It is surely no small thing that Ravens and Peregrines, with Sheld-duck, Sandpipers and other shore species, and with charming little birds like Rock-Pipits and Linnets and other haunters of the downland, should dwell at peace within so short a distance of a popular seaside resort. For lack of rigorous safeguards they must speedily have been exterminated

by the collector, the man with a gun, and the common egg-lifter. Only this spring the solitary nestling of the Peregrine's eyrie was stolen away in spite of the vigilance of a member of the Society who has done the utmost that can be done by a non-resident guardian. Fortunately a clue was obtained two days later. The Watcher, with the police, motored to a village some six miles away, and not only found the offenders, but got back the young bird, and with some difficulty and exertion placed it once more under the care of the mother-falcon; she, after a moment or two of doubt, recognised and joyfully fed her nestling. It was an achievement of which the main actor may well be proud.

The promontory of Brean Down is about a mile and a half long by a mile in width. At the eastern angle are the ruined fragments of a Roman fort; on the summit are traces of earthworks, with what is believed to have been a British signalling-station. Roman and Briton passed away, and long after their time modern military authorities erected a fort at the eastern extremity of the peninsula, but this was destroyed by an explosion and not rebuilt. "Fifty years ago an ambitious project was set on foot for transforming Brean into a channel port. Its proximity to one of the trunk railway lines, and the depth of water beyond the cliff, tempted some speculators to sink £36,000 in the construction of a harbour. A pier was actually commenced, but a furious storm broke up the unfinished work, and the scheme was abandoned." ("Rambles in Somerset," by G. W. and J. H. Wade, 1912). Thus Nature herself seems to have stepped in to preserve the last spur of the Mendips for her own children; and Brean Down was happily left to the wild birds and flowers, and to the rambler who wishes

to share with them its pure air, and its peaceful solitude. The collector, as deadly a foe as commercial speculators, is now to be held at bay, to the infinite gain of the genuine ornithologist and botanist. There are said to be a hundred varieties of wild-flowers on the Down, including one or two very rare species, and it will be the effort of the Society to preserve these as well as the birds from the destructive tripper.

Mr. Hudson's reference to the hill has been mentioned. The passage must be quoted further (from the chapter on "The Strange and Beautiful Sheldrake" in "Birds and Man") in order to set forth the more completely the charm of the place and how well worthy it is to ask tribute, or endowment, from lovers of nature.

"At the point where the Axe flows into the Severn Sea stands Brean Down, a huge isolated hill, the last of the Mendip range on that side . . . Down at its foot, at the point where it touches the mainland, close to the mouth of the Axe, there is a farmhouse, and the farmer is the tenant of the entire hill, and uses it as a sheep-walk. The sheep and rabbits and birds are the only inhabitants. I remember a delightful experience I had one cold, windy, but very bright spring morning near the farmhouse. There is there, at a spot where one is able to ascend the steep hill, a long strip of rock that looks like the wall of a gigantic ruined castle, rough and black, draped with ancient ivy, and crowned with furze and bramble and thorn. Here, coming out of the cold wind to the shelter of this giant ivy-draped black wall, I stood still to enjoy the sensations of warmth and a motionless air, when high above appeared a swift-moving little cloud of Linnets, seemingly blown across the sky by the gale; but quite suddenly, when directly over me, the birds all came straight down, to drop like a shower of small stones into the great masses of ivy and furze and bramble. And no sooner had they settled, vanishing into that warm and windless greenery, than they simultaneously burst into such a concert of sweetest wild linnet

music, that I was enchanted, and thought that never in all the years I had spent in the haunts of wild birds had I heard anything so fairylike and beautiful.

"On this hill, or down, at the highest point, you have the Severn Sea before you, and, beyond, the blue mountains of Glamorganshire, and, on the shore, the town of Cardiff made beautiful by distance,

vaguely seen in the blue haze and shimmering sunlight like a dream city. On your right hand, on your own side of the narrow sea, you have a good view of the big young growing town of Weston-super-Mare. On your left hand you look over long miles, long leagues, of low flat country, extending to the Parret river, and beyond it to the blue Quantock range."

The Plume-Trade.

IN a letter to the *Times* of August 21st, 1912, the Duchess of Portland once more appeals to women to refrain from buying or wearing osprey plumes, citing the example of Her Majesty Queen Mary.

On the eve of the day on which the Plumage Bill (No. 2) was down for second reading in the House of Commons (July 29th, 1912), a letter in its support was addressed to the Prime Minister by the R.S.P.B. In expressing the hope that the principle of the measure would be adopted by the Government, the Society urged that such an enactment would be warmly welcomed by the Colonies, as furthering efforts in those lands to save ornamental-plumaged birds from practical extermination; would be a signal encouragement to the United States of America, where similar efforts are being made; would have a powerful influence on other European countries, which await Great Britain's lead in this matter; would benefit the trade of Great Britain and the Colonies by stimulating the sale of ostrich feathers and of manufactured ribbons, and other ornaments; would prevent the importation into and sale in Great Britain of feathers illegally exported; and would check the wholly deplorable and disastrous destruction of valuable and beautiful bird-life which is now proceeding at an alarming rate, and

which has been condemned by every naturalist of modern times. The letter also referred to the fact that a Bill of still more comprehensive character passed the House of Lords in 1908, and was pronounced practical and workable by representatives of H.M. Boards of Trade and of Customs.

At the University Extension Students' Summer Meeting at Cambridge last month (August, 1912), Sir Harry Johnston lectured on Tropical Africa, and in reference to the terrible sleeping sickness and its conveyance by the tse-tse fly and the mosquito, said:—

"One way of abolishing the pests would be to put a stop to the plumage-hunting which is needlessly destroying so much of the bird-life of tropical Africa at the present time. He considered it should be made a criminal offence by the strictest legislation to wear plumes from Birds of Paradise, or any feathers of insect-eating birds, which devoted their lives to the killing of obnoxious insects. The beautiful white Egrets lived almost entirely on flies and insects, and followed great herds of wild and domestic animals, picking from their backs the ticks and flies."

These remarks were received with loud applause. Adverting to the same subject in a letter to the *Times* on the Indian fauna (August 27th, 1912), Sir Harry Johnston writes:—

"The question of the preservation of the Indian fauna is not merely raised by those

who are interested in abstract zoology and who admire the beauty of birds and beasts in landscapes, but it is one intimately connected with the welfare of man in Southern Asia. The reckless destruction of insect-eating birds (for example) which has been going on unchecked for 50 years to feed the wicked plumage trade is causing a great increase in germ-spreading insects and ticks, and consequently of the germ-diseases which destroy human beings and the domestic animals on which they depend for their food supply."

A correspondent who writes above the initials "H.F.H." in the *Times* of August 29th, observes that in India it is not the cultivator who has, as a rule, to be guarded against, but the "sportsman" and the "shikaree" who come to shoot for shooting's sake or to get saleable feathers; he urges that Burma's old sanctuaries should be re-established. On this Mr. Buckland comments:—

"Of what avail to the Indian farmer will be the establishment of a few reservations for the saving of a miserable remnant of wild bird life when his fields are bared to the attack of ever-increasing hordes of devastating insects? This disaster will come upon him as surely as night follows day if the present wholesale and illegal traffic in the plumage of Indian birds is not checked.

"The situation is desperate, and nothing but a law prohibiting the sale in this country of illicitly exported plumage will avail anything worth while. Let Great Britain give the lead to the other European powers in this great civic and economic movement, and the wild bird life of India and elsewhere will be saved."

Sir Harry Johnston quotes from a correspondent in Burma the remark that "migratory birds, such as Duck and Teal, have suffered a woeful diminution. Lakes which used to be crowded with them in 1885 are now solitary. The Demoiselle Cranes have almost dis-

appeared." The writer attributes the destruction to "the lust for killing." Possibly this is not the only factor. It is at least illuminating to find 44,000 pairs of Duck's wings catalogued by one firm for the August feather-sales in London; 8,000 (besides 3,000 odd bundles of quills) offered in April last, over 10,000 in February, and over 40,000 (Duck and Teal) last October. The Plume-trade would of course wish it to be believed that these come from birds "killed for food"! Many thousands of white Crane feathers also appear in the lists, and among other recent entries are 12,800 Terns, 6,800 Kingfishers, and nearly 1,000 Emu Skins. The Emu exists only in Australia; Australian law forbids the export of skin or plumage.

The wife of a London Vicar (one of the clergy who did not forget the birds on "Animal Sunday," and has an "Egret" poster on the notice board of his church), writes to the R.S.P.B.:—

"I was in a fashionable west-end shop, in the millinery department, when two very smartly dressed ladies came to the counter where I was sitting and asked to be shown ospreys. While the assistant had gone to fetch them I summoned courage and asked them if they knew the horrible cruelty that took place to obtain these plumes, describing it as well as I could. The tears came into their eyes; they said they had never realized the cruelty of it before. When the girl brought the box of ospreys they told her what I had said and would not have them. Then the younger lady said she would have 'artificial' ones. I was obliged to tell her even in wearing imitations she would encourage the fashion. To my delight they chose other things. I think if more ladies would make a point of keeping their eyes open in shops and in a tactful and pleasant way pointed out the facts to thoughtless women, good would result."

Economic Ornithology.

MR. V. H. LUCAS, one of the practical gardeners who contributes to *Farm, Garden, and Birds*, writes:—

“I have read with very much interest the short article in *Bird Notes & News* on the above subject, as it affects Gulls. I can very truly endorse every word written, because I have personally for a long number of years studied the habits of Gulls at close quarters, both on land as grub destroyers, and along the seashore and on tidal estuaries as scavengers of filth, etc. I have, and always shall defend the birds of the seashore as the best friends of the nation in general. To understand the true value of bird-life, I have said before and I repeat with greater sincerity than ever, it is an absolute essential to know something of Botany, Entomology and Ornithology, and those who condemn birds most, are just the very persons whose knowledge of these subjects is most scanty or almost *nil*. I have challenged charges which have been made concerning the destructiveness of Gulls to shell-fish, etc., but those who have made the charges have not taken up the challenge, and I can only conclude that they have had such slender evidence to work upon that their case would be lost.

“As a daily observer of bird-life from a very wide vantage ground, and as one who has most to lose or gain from whichever point of view we study them, I am yet convinced that with all the mischief such birds as Rooks do on the land in digging out some potatoes, etc., they more than compensate the loss by the destroying of the many insect pests. I have evidence of it this season; I know they have taken out many seed potatoes, but they have also taken something which if left in the ground would have been of infinite harm, so that if I lose in one way I gain in another.

“Again, I had last year about half an acre of late carrots which were terribly attacked by the Rooks, and on making investigation I found that the whole lot of carrots were infested with wireworm; these birds had found it out, and thus proved a theory of mine which I have often advanced, that

where their natural insect-food is, there you will have bird-life. On another piece of land, I also had carrots; these were free from pests, also free from bird destruction. I could go on giving similar cases, but surely no more need be said to convince all who will think, of the economic value of bird-life to the nation. As education advances, that value will be more fully appreciated.

“Gulls as scavengers of all kinds of filth are worth their weight in gold. Wherever these birds are in evidence and there is any garbage about of a foul nature they are there to do their duty, and it only needs a very little observation at the sea-side or on any tidal rivers to see for oneself that it is not fish that these birds are after but all kinds of floating pieces of filth. The only conclusion I have ever come to regarding these charges of fish-destroying—and I say it from experience of the birds' habits—is that the charges have such a one-sided selfish motive that they will not bear the light of investigation.”

M. A. Chappellier, writing in the *Feville des Jeunes Naturalistes* (August, 1912), tells of a Blue Tit which was liberated after several months of captivity. Immediately setting forth to obtain food it went straight to the rolled-up leaves of a tree which contained roller caterpillars. Apparently the bird remembered experiences gained before he was caged, and the caterpillars, it would seem, in place of hiding, were advertising their presence. Incidentally, the story shows how little need there is to fear starvation for a liberated bird if its natural food is within reach.

The French Ministry of Agriculture has appointed a commission for the purpose of establishing “on a scientific basis for the whole of France, a complete classification of useful and harmful birds, with indications of the degree of their

utility or harmfulness, and with mention of those which present mixed characteristics according to the season or district." In England it is not so much a Commission of the kind that is needed, as the stores of trustworthy first-hand information which would make its reports valuable. The French Commission will probably have a like difficulty in deciding vexed questions. Previous to its appointment, M. Zavier Raspail, now one of its Members, published a pamphlet on the subject, which has evoked dissent from another accomplished ornithologist, M. Pierre-Amédée Pichot. Why, asks M. Pichot, should he class the Hobby as

destructive and the Kestrel as useful when both are equally destroyers of insects? Why condemn the Vulture, which does not attack living animals? Nor can he agree in the condemnation of the Brown Owl; nor in the assertion that Shrikes commit great destruction among small birds. Only a long series of observations and investigations can give authoritative decisions: and they will not be final ones. Possibly it might be wiser if the French Ministry were to enforce the Bird Protection law first, and decide as to the bird saints and sinners afterwards, lest neither saints nor sinners remain to adjudicate upon.

“Larks.”

INFLUENTIAL members of the R.S.P.B. might do much to advance the cause by writing letters of protest when firms with whom they deal advertise wares objectionable from the bird-lovers' point of view. Bird-lime and certain traps were removed from the catalogue of one of the biggest Stores in consequence of the action of a large shareholder. Those who have shares in drapery companies might well object to the perpetual pushing of “ospreys” and other plumes which goes on in advertisements. A Fellow of the Society permits the publication of the following protest addressed to a leading firm of Italian Warehousemen:—

“I am presuming on the fact that I have been on your books for a considerable time, to make a suggestion concerning an entry in the price-list you have been good enough to send me. The entry is a very short one—Larks.

“If you could see your way to stop the sale of these birds you would be doing much to discourage a form of cruelty which is deplorable. The birds are being killed in thousands, and surely the pleasure they give to all who live in the country and are bird or country lovers, deserves a better fate for them. It would be perhaps unreasonable to put this forward in their behalf if they could be seriously considered as an article of diet, but the infinitesimal fragment of food that a lark provides cannot be looked on as worth any consideration. Please think the matter over and see if you cannot do your part towards the discouragement of a practice that is regretted by thousands.”

In reply the manager wrote:—

“I think I may venture to promise that we will eliminate the word from our next price-list. I feel sure you will be gratified to learn that our sale for the article is steadily decreasing. . . . You may rest assured that in the future we will do nothing to stimulate the demand but will do all we can to discourage same.”

Revised Bird Protection Orders have been issued for Kent and for Westmeath; and Orders have been obtained for the County Boroughs of Northampton, Rochdale, Tyne-

mouth, and Walsall. The Order for any County or County Borough, with summary of the Acts, can be had from the R.S.P.B., price twopence.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

COUNCIL MEETING.

THE quarterly meeting of the Council of the Society was held on July 19th, 1912, at 23, Queen Anne's Gate. There were present: Mr. Montagu Sharpe (Chairman), Mr. Ernest Bell, Mr. Bonhote, Miss Clifton, the Hon. Mrs. Drewitt, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Hastings Lees, Miss Pollock, Captain Tailby, Mr. F. E. Lemon (Hon. Secretary), and Miss Gardiner (Secretary).

Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Hon. Secretary reported that four lectures had been given since April 19th, namely: Mr. Masefield, at Cheadle, Staffs; Mr. E. Purnell Jones, at Crewe; Mr. F. J. Hopkins, at Middleton; Rev. J. E. Kelsall, at Highcliffe, Hants. A letter had been received with reference to a request addressed to the East Suffolk County Council for the removal of protection from the eggs of the Tern on the ground of injury done by the birds to the fishing. Before protection was given last February, the eggs were collected for sale, and the Tern colony had seriously diminished. The Rev. Julian G. Tuck had written to the local papers pointing out the inadequacy of ground for the complaint; and it was agreed that the Society should continue its efforts for the preservation of the Terns. Attention was drawn to the fact that four County Bird-Protection Orders would expire in 1913, thus affording opportunity for any amendments which might be needed.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS WAS

submitted, and it was announced that a cheque for twenty guineas had been received from the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* on behalf of Mr. John Galsworthy, in connexion with the appearance in that paper of his articles "For Love of Beasts." A hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Galsworthy, both for his powerful appeal on behalf of birds and for his generosity to the Society. The appointments of Mr. W. Watson as Hon. Secretary for Ennerdale, Cumberland, and of Miss A. M. Bonus, for Croydon, were approved. The resignations were received with regret of Mrs. Wilson for Bournville, Mrs. Currey for Ewell, and Miss Bayes for Bedford. The following were elected Fellows:—

Miss A. Austen (Clifton), F. A. Bruton (West Didsbury), Mrs. Chichester (Arlington Court), Mrs. S. V. Coote (London, W.), Mrs. Leathes Culley (Belford), T. Hercy Denman (Retford), F. C. Gardiner (Glasgow), Lady Green (Hainault); Harold Messel (London, E.C.), Miss Maud Roscrow (Wolverhampton), Mrs. Wallis Toller (Weybridge), Miss E. M. Williams (Winchester).

The following were elected Members:—

J. R. Allen (Runcorn), Major A. W. Birch (London, S.W.), T. B. Bolitho (Penzance), Mrs. Henry Cadbury (London, N.W.), Frederick Carr (Wolverhampton), Hubert Chitty, M.S. (Clifton), Wilfred Chitty (Dover), H. Miller Cole (London, S.W.), Mrs. Lawrence Corban (Chagford), D. W. Douthwaite (London, W.C.), Vivian Locke Ellis (East Grinstead), P. Carew Essex (London, S.W.), Edwin Ffennell, M.D., Miss Mary Ffennell (Malvern), Colonel Godfrey (Cheltenham), Mrs. Hammond (London, N.W.), Reginald J. Hanbury (East Grinstead), Mrs. C. E. Hodgkin (Reading), Mrs. Jefferson (London, W.), Miss C. Jefferson (Grantham), Henry Johnstone (Edinburgh), Miss C. A. Kingdon (St. Leonards), Sydney H. Long,

M.D. (Norwich), Bernard Lonsdale (Weston-super-Mare), Miss G. K. Medlicott (Botley, Hants), Mrs. Middleton (Bournemouth), Miss Nevinson (Cobham), Henry C. Oberholser (Washington, U.S.A.), Mrs. Pearce (Whitebarn, Berks), Mrs. Radcliffe Platt (Barnstaple), Miss F. A. Prescott (Wigmere Hall, Herefordshire), Mrs. Ricardo (Christchurch), C. E. Scarisbrick, Mrs. Scarisbrick (London, S.W.), John Sewell (Frizington, Cumberland), E. P. Smith (Streatham, S.W.), Mrs. Strang (Henley-in-Arden), F. C. Verner (Oxford), Miss Olive Wade (Kingswinford), Geoffrey Whitworth (London, S.W.), P. D. Williams (St. Kewerne).

The question of Bird Protection in Egypt was again brought forward, and certain recommendations made. Reports from two of the Society's agents as to illegal catching and caging of birds were discussed. In two cases convictions had been obtained, with the help of the police; and it was agreed that investigations should be further pursued at the right season with a view to decisive action.

Publication Committee.

Attention was drawn to Mr. Galsworthy's articles "For Love of Beasts," which had appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* the previous week, and it was agreed to seek permission to have them reprinted and circulated; it was decided to issue a duodecimo edition of "The Story of the Egret," as it was thought that the small size would be convenient for enclosure in letters, for placing on drawing-room tables, and for other purposes for which the album and wall-sheet size are not suitable; the offer of a water-colour drawing of "Brean Down" as an illustration for *Bird Notes and News* was accepted; and it was agreed to ask Mr. C. Whympers to furnish a design for the Society's greeting-card, 1912-13.

Watchers Committee.

In addition to other matters, the agree-

ment by which the Society rents the shooting rights of Brean Down, Somerset, for the purpose of preserving and protecting all birds on that area, was reported and approved.

General Business.

Mr. Alden's Plumage Bill (No. 2) was considered, and it was resolved that the Council, while reserving its opinion as to details of the Bill, should support the Second Reading, and directions were given for copies of the resolution to be sent to the Members of Parliament introducing and backing the Bill. Correspondence on various subjects was laid before the Council.

The *Watchers Committee* met on July 26th, when reports on the season's work were presented and discussed.

Next Meeting of Council, October 18th.

THE TRAFFIC IN FEATHERS.

Dr. Hornaday, the able Director of the New York Zoological Gardens, writes to the *New York Times* (Sept. 9, 1912) with reference to the paper read at the recent meeting of the British Association by Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, Secretary of the London Zoological Society:—

"There is one cause right at the door of the Zoological Society of London which is in great need of the active and aggressive support of Dr. Mitchell and his society. For several years the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has waged gallant but ineffectual warfare against the appalling traffic in the plumage of wild birds for millinery purposes which has its headquarters in London. It would take considerable space to describe the full extent of that traffic, the deadliness of it, and the number of species of beautiful birds that it threatens to exterminate in the near future . . . Let us hope sincerely that the Zoological Society of London will take up its share of this particular burden and throw all the weight of its power and influence into the campaign that is being made by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds."

THE WATCHERS FUND.

Over twenty Watchers have been employed by the Society this year for safeguarding nesting-areas of birds; in addition several Inspectors have been engaged in following up bird-catchers and in investigation work generally.

The action of the Society in securing full protection for birds on Brean Down is referred to elsewhere (p. 33).

North Britain as usual had a large share in the work, the bird-life of the Orkneys and Shetlands in particular demanding protection from the ubiquitous collector. The interesting island of Mickery has also been "watched" again through the kind services of Mr. W. A. Nicholson; the "Dreadnought" caution boards remain sound, and are reported to have an excellent effect in deterring nest-robbing and bird-taking; Terns, Eiders, and other birds have nested in peace. Extended work has been carried out in other districts in Scotland.

In England, two Watchers with occasional help from a third, ensured a successful breeding season for the Kentish and Ringed Plover and Terns on the Dungeness area. Fieldfares were reported as seen on April 22nd and 23rd, a curiously late date for these winter migrants.

The newly-protected area round Rye in Sussex was also provided with a Watcher. Some difficulty was experienced here in following up a gunner on the wide open level; and the *Field* draws attention to the lamentable destruction of several rare visitants in this neighbourhood. Next season Watchers and police alike will have had more experience to guide their efforts.

Beachy Head, Cuckmere Cliff, and Seaford Head constitute another important district which requires, and

received, careful surveillance with good results.

The Watching at Fairlight was placed under the care of Inspector Montague, who did admirable work not only in guarding Peregrines and Kestrels, but in stopping the depredations of bird-catchers which had been carried on there for many years; they were a rough set, and there were one or two scrimmages before they were disposed of. The Watchers Committee have to regret the loss of this zealous and conscientious servant of the Society. Formerly in the Coldstream Guards, with whom he fought at Tel-el-Kebir, ex-Sergeant F. Montague served in the police for twenty-five years; he was a tall, fine-looking man, and his premature death in June at the age of 52, was wholly unexpected.

Encouraging results are reported from Cumberland, Cornwall, and the Isle of Wight. The Newtown marshes in the Island are all the safer for birds owing to the rifle ranges, which have made visitors afraid to cross the firing-line; but the proposed range right across the marsh would probably have a contrary effect, by bringing soldiers over the land.

Members of the Watchers Committee have visited the stations of the Watchers during the season. One or two extracts from their reports and from those of Watchers will convey some idea of the work done and of the necessity for it. For obvious reasons the localities are not named.

"We spent two days at — and — with our Watcher. Birds swarmed. The area is quite small, probably some 1,200 acres, consisting of marsh, moor, tussocky grass, and small marshy lochs. Although there are no houses on the area itself, it is very populous all around. On the first lake were Redshanks, Peewits, Dunlins, Ringed Plover, Snipe, Terns, Common and Blackheaded Gulls, Sheld-drakes, four Teal,

and a Pintail Duck who evidently had young. At —— we saw several Pintails with broods, one of seven; the old duck took hardly any notice of us, but just swam quietly away. An old Pintail drake in complete eclipse plumage (June 10th) and totally unable to fly, was running in the grass right away from the water and promptly went to ground in a rabbit burrow. . . . We also saw two Shoveler ducks and one drake, two pairs of Phalaropes, and an Oyster-catcher's nest with four eggs (very unusual). The Watcher has done his work well. He is a poor man, and has had much trouble with his neighbours over the protection, but it is quieting down now."

"A Red-throated Diver was very tame on her eggs; we walked past her at twenty yards. When she rose from her eggs, which she did like a Wild Duck, she flew right away but returned almost at once, jumped on to the bank and walked like a Penguin on to her eggs."

"The keeper at —— told us there were plenty of Short-eared Owls, but only one pair of Hen-Harriers here and two on the hills above. The eggs, he said, were regularly taken each year, and unless watched night and day it would be impossible to preserve them. He did not know of more than one young one having been reared for twenty years, and that was last year. They are taken by the crofters for a trading collector, who probably gives them next to nothing. The preservation of these Harriers is a problem."

"Boats round about the island are most difficult to deal with. On the 4th and again on the 7th May, a boat was going along the shore and its occupants shooting the birds. A great number must have been killed and wounded. We saw where the boat went to and informed the police. Last year we informed the Superintendent of Police about the same thing, but he took no action. I hope we shall be able to put down this horrible practice of shooting during the breeding season."

"I have had the 'Dreadnought' notice boards erected at —— and —— . . . The alleged destruction of geese by Bonxies was before the County Council at their last meeting, but those best qualified to know do not believe there is any truth in the

charge. No person has ever seen geese attacked by Bonxies."

"The Buzzards at the top end of the lake have two young this year; the Buzzards at the bottom end have young, but I cannot see into the nest without ropes. I frequently see and hear the Ravens; also quite a few Herons got safely away, but I don't think there are so many young this year, on account of the wet weather. I saw the Peregrine fly off its nest on the 16th June. I hope to obtain more authority from landowners and tenant-farmers as opportunity for talking to them occurs."

"While I was on the island a yacht headed for it. The men and boys of the party came ashore, and began immediately to search for eggs and picked up about twenty-five. I hurried over to them, and insisted upon every egg being restored to its nest. . . . The protection of the island is becoming more widely recognised, and many parties of visitors afford the eggs and young every consideration. It is encouraging to have such large numbers of nests (Arctic, Common, Sandwich, and Lesser Tern, and Sheld-drake and Eider Duck), and to know that the notice-boards are having such a powerful effect."

"The Watcher gave a good account of the birds. His chief news was that two Buzzards had this year a nest of full-grown young ones less than 400 yards from the hotel at ——, within a golf-club drive of a new golf-course . . . The landlord of the hotel agreed that it was an unusual attraction to an hotel that during breakfast there should be Buzzards in the air within sight of the coffee-room windows. The nest last year was close to a gull-covered rock, and the old birds were perpetually mobbed by an increasing crowd of Herring-Gulls. This must have made them prefer the dangerous company of human beings . . . At —— there are rugged black cliffs with green slopes, so wild and on so large a scale, and the Peregrine's nest on it so safely out of reach, that the old Peregrines took little notice of us. But a Buzzard floating up the face of the cliff was at once flown at by a Peregrine, which seemed to come out of space and vanish again as the Buzzard sailed away."

"The increase in Choughs at —— is confirmed by a gentleman staying there, who

says there have been three nests this year in that neighbourhood. Last year was a good one for both Choughs and Buzzards, but this is better, and the result is in great

measure due to our Watcher. I believe him incapable of taking the bribes that are offered him. He is fond of his watching and proud of it."

Notes.

THE position seems fast being taken up by a section of sportsmen that no bird has a right to live which kills for food anything which man wishes to kill either for food or sport. Especially sport. In addition to all the Hawks, Owls, birds of the Crow tribe, and everything strange and rare which come under the ban of a majority of gamekeepers, certain members of the Irish Game Protection Association are now objecting that the Gulls are becoming "a menace to game preservers." The anglers, not to be outdone, declare war on the Heron, Kingfisher, Dipper, and other species, and some of them are now urging death to the Mergansers. The Merganser, a species of Wild Duck little known in the south, has lately established itself in Kincardine, and it is at once suggested that since the bird lives chiefly on small fish it should be deprived of all protection under the Wild Birds Act. The Scottish Office demurred to the request, but the Kincardine Road Board insist that the new-comer must have the traditional half-brick.

* * *

The State of Washington has chosen for its seal the Downy Woodpecker in place of the old device of the Bald Eagle. The Eagle, selected symbol of so many lands, is of course typical of the kingship of the state, and has little to do with the Eagle of naturalists. But the Woodpecker has been chosen for his own good deeds. He is America's friend as the caretaker of the forests, which America is learning to value now that settlers, lumber-

men, and fire have destroyed so many a league of the ancient woodlands. Human agencies of destruction may be checked, fresh trees may be planted; but no State decree has any effect on the destruction wrought by insect-borers, except decrees for the protection of birds. It is the little Woodpecker's sharp ears and bright eyes that find out the borers and their eggs; and Washington shows her gratitude on her new seal.

* * *

The prosecution of a dealer for offering newly-taken Barn-Owls for sale in Kingston market (see "In the Courts"), though eminently unsatisfactory from the point of view of those who wish to see Orders made by County Councils enforced by police and magistrates, had a happy effect so far as the Owls themselves were concerned. The two birds were taken in exchange for her parrot by a young girl who, on seeing the report of the case in the *Surrey Comet*, wrote to the Society to ask what she ought to do with the birds, as she loved animals and would not on any account be guilty of cruelty. One night, not long afterwards, the birds were given their liberty in a suitable sanctuary. "I was very sorry to part with them," writes their young benefactress, "but it was lovely to see them fly away."

* * *

The tender mercies of the gamekeeper, to whom game are "birds" and all other

birds "vermin" to be destroyed with gun and trap, are exemplified in the following letter which appears in the *Gamekeeper* for August:—

"Back in the spring I found a Sparrow-hawk's nest with six eggs in it. The hen, which was sitting, I shot, and took away four eggs. I then set a 3-in. run trap in the nest. The next day I found the trap on the ground under the nest, with a bird's beak in it, cut off close to the feathers. On looking round I found a Brown Owl with its beak off and still alive. I thought this rather curious."

It might have been supposed that the editor of the journal would at least express some opinion on this piece of sheer barbarity, which may well make the ordinary man with a fist long to give the writer a "curious" experience of his own.

* * *

With the arrival of October the season is coming on apace for fixing up bird-houses, tables or trays for the birds' winter food, and bird-houses in the form of nesting-boxes to be ready for family life next spring. Mice and dormice occasionally make use of

nesting-boxes during the winter, without interfering with the legitimate summer tenants, and once in the way Tits themselves will roost in this safe shelter. It has also happened that battles have been fought for the comfortable nursery provided by an R.S.P.B. box. "Send a second box at once, Tits fighting for possession," ran an imperative message last spring. Another correspondent tells of a more curious fight:—

"I had a family of Tits in one nesting-box this year, but some humble-bees took possession of a second one. There was a great fight between a small Blue Tit and a bee, but finally the bee succeeded in settling in the box. I drove it out once or twice, but to no purpose, and the curious noise it made when buzzing inside the box was enough to frighten any little birds away; the hollow branch seemed to magnify the sound immensely."

The triumphant bee was no doubt a queen, anxiously seeking a home. Almost always the bee's nest is made underground, and it would be interesting to know if the box was duly colonised. Happily bees, like Tits, are useful friends of the garden.

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

CHALLENGE SHIELD COMPETITION, 1912.

THE Essays sent in by Elementary Schools for the Challenge Shield Competitions of 1912 are at present in the hands of the Society's judges, and results are therefore postponed for the Winter Number of *Bird Notes and News*. The reports will, however, be sent to the schools as soon as possible. No addition has been made this year to the Shields offered, the counties competing for these being again Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cumberland (with Westmorland),

Hampshire (with the Isle of Wight), Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Somerset, and Warwickshire. The principal competition in the Open Class comes from Derbyshire, Suffolk, and Berkshire. Norfolk again sends in the largest number of papers, and it is hoped that Suffolk may be stimulated to follow this excellent example. The greatest falling-off is in Somerset, a county which has sent in some charming work and held one year the Inter-County Shield.

The chief contributory to regular and successful work on the part of the Schools is local interest. Even the most enthusiastic of teachers (and happily there are many of these) flags somewhat when he finds local residents neither express pleasure in efforts thus made to afford the children the finest kind of Nature study; nor come forward with local prizes; nor give sympathetic help with the teaching of the children or in the happy celebration of Bird-and-Tree Day. To those who do so assist, especially the clergy, thanks are heartily accorded. Mrs. Suckling's pioneer work in Hampshire has been well known for many years, and in recent years ladies in other counties, such as the Duchess of Bedford in Bedfordshire, Mrs. Milner in Derbyshire, and Mrs. Acland in Suffolk, have given invaluable encouragement to young students; and it is to be hoped that as time goes on more and more help and interest of this character will be forthcoming.

There is an unfortunate tendency with some schools to refuse to send in their work unless they themselves think it likely to gain the Shield. This has very unhappy results. It is hard on the children, who lose all awards for and encouragement in their work; if persisted in, it would obviously kill the Competition altogether; and it forestalls somewhat ungraciously the decision of the Society, which might conceivably be entirely different from that of the modest teacher or the dissatisfied local committee. Encourage the children, by all means, to try, for the sake of the admirable effect of the study itself; but let them have a chance of winning tangible rewards.

The need for and value of the work is being ever increasingly felt, both in England and in other countries, and the acknowledgments of all friends of education, as well

as of the Society, are due to County Councils and teachers who forward the scheme.

BIRD-AND-TREE WORK IN AUSTRALIA.

Bird-and-Tree work is making rapid advance in South Australia. The *Education Gazette* (Adelaide), for June, 1912, says:—

“Although it is less than two years since the first celebration of Bird and Tree Day was held in South Australia, the formation of Bird Protection Clubs has progressed at a rate which is very gratifying. A year ago there were 179 clubs, with a membership of 5,150; to-day the number of clubs is 285, representing 8,250 members. Such vigorous growth is an indication that the interest of teachers and pupils has been aroused by the attempt we are making to foster a love for our birds. Many of them are so truly the friends of man that we should seek to protect them if for no higher reasons than purely selfish ones. Apart altogether from the service they render, they are a source of pleasure and delight. Woods where bird-notes are never heard, where the flutter of their wings is never seen, remind one of a graveyard with its gloomy silence, its solemnity, and its sadness. Let every teacher and every boy and girl become an enthusiastic bird-lover and bird-protector, and each of them will be adding to the wealth and simple joys of the country.”

It is further remarked that the appearance of many of the school grounds has been transformed by the provision of beautiful trees and shrubs, since the institution of Arbor Day, which preceded Bird-and-Tree Day by some years. “To arouse in the minds of our children a desire to beautify their country, and to create in their hearts a love for our native birds, is to sow the seeds of true love of country.” No less important is the same teaching in Great Britain. Here we have not to contend against the drought and aridity of much of Australia, but we have to fight the careless destruction wrought by children with whom

wild flowers are too "common" to be prized, and the pestilential theory that smashing of nests and purloining of eggs makes a boy a "naturalist."

CHILDREN AND CAGED BIRDS.

A schoolmaster in the west of England is very angry with the R.S.P.B. He is also local secretary for the Cage Birds League, and in his double capacity made an offer to the borough schools of prizes for essays on "feathered pets." The Secretary of the R.S.P.B. wrote to the local papers to point out that this League "was started in order to promote the caging of birds and to fight those individuals and societies who are endeavouring (by means of Bands of Mercy, Bird and Tree Competitions, etc.) to bring about a better understanding of birdlife and to check the business of birdcatching and birdcaging." In the League's own words, it aims at protecting the trade against "moneyed faddists and sentimentalists." Surprise might naturally be expressed (the

letter suggested) that "a public educational body should take the retrograde step of supporting the proposals of a League which exists for the purpose of increasing trade in caged birds, by encouraging and rewarding children who keep birds in captivity." The organ of the League objects that it was started not to promote bird-caging, but to band bird-keepers together in defence of their hobby; that it too is anxious to promote "a better understanding of bird-life," and that its opponents, could they be with a party of the members on their spring ramble among birds "would probably be astonished at the knowledge of wild life possessed." The advertisement pages of the organ certainly offer many helps towards obtaining understanding of a sort. "Catch your own"; "Bird-nets, all complete; hints on catching"; "Self-acting traps, take any kind of bird without attention"; "Bird-lime, hold any bird, Rook or Wren"; "Call cages"; "Best made trap obtainable, caught over thirty in two hours"; and so on. A complete guide to "knowledge"!

IN THE COURTS.

THE YOUNG "COLLECTOR."—At *Cheltenham*, on June 20th, Francis Bird, a pupil of Cheltenham College, was fined 19s. and 6s. costs for taking 37 Sand-Martin's eggs at Charlton Kings. For the defence it was urged that he was quite unaware he was doing wrong. (What are the authorities of the College about?)

TAKING SEA-BIRDS' EGGS.—At *Dover*, on June 19th, William Bishop and Douglas Fishenden were fined 15s. each for taking 13 Sea-Gulls' eggs at St. Margarets. The Chairman observed that people buying the eggs were also liable to a heavy penalty.

THE BIRD-CATCHER.—At *Norwood*, on August 28th, Thomas Winn was summoned

for using nets for taking birds, for having a Robin, a Redstart, a Linnet, and 11 Sparrows in his possession, and for cruelty to decoy Sparrows, at Sydenham. He denied the cruelty, and said the decoys had lasted well, as he had had them a week. Fined 20s. for cruelty, and 2s. costs, and 3s. on the other charges; the nets to be destroyed, and the birds released.—At *Reigate*, George Bushell, of Chaldon Common, was fined 1s. and 5s. costs for having a Linnet in his possession. He was found behind some bushes, watching a pond, around which the grass was coated with bird-lime to catch birds as they came to drink. There were five or six dead birds and a live Linnet with its feet covered with lime.—At *Rushall*, on September 2nd, four men were convicted for using nets and decoy birds. They had

12 birds in their possession, several of which were so coated with lime that they had to be destroyed. Only one man gave his correct name to the police; he was let off.—At *Romford*, on August 1st, Charles Griffiths was ordered to pay 5s. for taking Linnets. The birds were liberated.

CAGED OWLS AT KINGSTON MARKET.—At *Kingston*, on August 21st, Frederick Barnes, of *Surbiton*, was charged with having two recently taken Owls in his possession. The birds were seen on a stall at *Kingston* market by the Assistant Secretary of the R.S.P.B., one being apparently fresh from the nest. Barnes, on being spoken to, said first that Owls were not protected, and on this being controverted, that these two came from Germany. The Bench dismissed the case, but refused costs to defendant.—The *Surrey Comet* comments on the case (August 31st):—

“It has taken a long time to convince our legislators of the value of birds in keeping down insects and vermin, and now that at last some legal protection is afforded to our feathered friends, it is distressing to find anything in the nature of supineness on the part of magistrates in putting the law in force. The case seems to have been a very clear one. The Surrey County Council Order makes it illegal to possess, or to offer for sale at any time of the year, recently taken Owls. On a stall in *Kingston* market two Barn Owls were found exposed for sale, and one of them at any rate was this year's bird. The fact that the Owls were there, and that they were offered for sale, was not disputed, the excuse offered being that they were obtained from a lady in *Surbiton* who had brought them from Germany. Miss Gardiner points out that this defence is altogether beside the mark, ‘as possession and offering for sale are distinct offences, whether the Owls are taken from a nest at *Tolworth* or from a German middleman.’ We have no means of knowing what were the considerations which induced the justices to dismiss the summons, and we should be very sorry to think that it indicated any lack of sympathy with the purpose of the County Council Order . . . No encouragement should ever be given to those who seek to evade the provisions of the Orders made for the protection of bird life.”

ANOTHER KINGSTON CASE.—At *Kingston*, on September 12th, Henry Smith of *Fulham*, was fined for having 61 wild birds, mostly Goldfinches and Linnets, in his possession. The birds were liberated.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

“For Love of Beasts.”

No one interested in birds and animals should omit to read and to circulate the brilliant articles by Mr. John Galsworthy, reprinted with permission from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, by favour of the author.

“No nation approaches ourselves in ‘love of beasts’; by none is the ear inclined more readily to the appeal of dumb suffering. Mr. Galsworthy, whose interest in the Society for the Protection of Birds is so well known, has given that appeal the enhancement of all his dramatic subtlety.”

Observer, July 14th, 1912.

Price 2d., post-free.

“The Story of the Egret.”

Probably no set of photographs has ever done better work than “The Story of the Egret,” as photographed by Mr. Mattingley. A bijou edition, eight pages, duodecimo size, is now issued by the R.S.P.B., and is especially suitable for enclosing in letters, for placing on drawing-room tables, and for other purposes for which the larger albums and the wall-sheets are not convenient.

One copy 1d., by post 1½d.; one doz. 9d.

“The Swallows’ Winter Home.”

The Society's Greeting-card for 1912-13, will be ready November 1st. Design specially painted by Mr. Charles Whymper, the eminent artist, and reproduced in colour.

Price 3d., one doz., 2/6.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS,

23, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, S.W.

BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERBY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.



Charles Whymper, Pinx.

OUR SWALLOWS' WINTER HOME.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

DECEMBER, 1912.

[No. 4.]

The Plume Question in a Nut-shell.

1. Hundreds of thousands of Wild Birds, constituting the most beautiful of created beings, are destroyed wantonly every year to supply an article of trade which contributes nothing whatever to benefit human life, health, comfort, or happiness. There is no question as to the extent of the destruction. It is known to naturalists throughout the world and denounced by them as appalling and iniquitous. It is witnessed to in the records of every independent investigator, in the huddled remains bartered at the London Plume Sales, in the masses of feathers to be seen in shops.

2. The destruction is accompanied by cruelty which has made the trade a by-word in civilized countries. In England, fifty years ago, the barbarities perpetrated on sea-birds when their wings were wrenched off to supply the market, led an eminent man of science to declare that women wearing wings in their hats wore the murderer's brand on their foreheads; and the Sea-birds Preservation Act was passed to put a stop to the business. To-day hundreds of thousands of Terns and Gulls are slaughtered for the same purpose in countries and islands where there is no control over the deeds of the hunters.

3. The fate of the White Egret is a sample case because the "osprey" plume does not exist at any other time than the breeding season, and the birds have been brought to the verge of extermination in

breeding-grounds where they once existed in millions. But all plumage is most brilliant at the nesting time; it is then that the hunters seek out the birds and ravage nesting colonies.

4. The birds killed are not only a heritage of beauty, but are of inestimable importance to man by destroying pests which attack crops of every kind and pests which, like the tsetse fly, carry the germs of disease and death.

5. The firms involved respond with varying assertions as to "artificial" feathers, and "moulted" feathers, and "made-up" feathers, assertions which have again and again been proved untrue. If the use of poultry-wings and game-tails, and hog's-bristle ospreys suffices, importation of wild birds' plumage is unnecessary. But there is no cessation in the destruction of wild birds wherever they can be got at; no cessation in the importation of their plumage; no cessation in the desperate opposition offered by the dealers to prohibition of importation.

6. The trade which, in addition to butchering the birds, is threatening the food-crops and the lives of men, is controlled by a few firms mostly foreign in origin. It is profitable because the material is obtained without any price except the price of slaughter and of freightage, and because less is paid in wages than for other species of decoration. It necessarily employs a minimum of

workers, and is paralysing British looms and British factories which might employ thousands of hands in the production of beautiful and artistic adornments. As a skilled trade it is one of the worst-paid, the average earnings being about 10s. to 15s. a week for ten hours' work a day; and even at that it is only a seasonal trade giving little employment in winter. Nor can it be called a healthy one: poisonous preparations are used to preserve feathers, fluff and steam pervade workrooms. The trade has no place in the Enquiry into work and wages undertaken by the Government in 1906, either because it was considered negligible, or because employers did not choose to fill in the schedules. By far the greater portion of the industry is concerned with ostrich feathers; a few years ago a change of fashion threw the curlers out of work, but Fashion paid not the slightest heed to the fact, and the girls betook themselves to other branches of work, just as they would do if debarred from "osprey" mounting. At present the higher class of fancy work is done in France and Germany.

5. British Colonies have passed laws forbidding the exportation of bird skins,

but their efforts are balked by smuggling into the free market permitted in London. Much of the plumage imported, however, comes from lands and regions where there is no means of obtaining or enforcing laws and no possible protection for the birds.

6. Great Britain could support her colonies, and wash her hands wholly of this trade by prohibiting the importation of plumage into this country. The Boards of Trade and of Customs have stated that there would be no difficulty whatever in carrying out such a law. The House of Lords in 1908 declared in favour of it.

Why should a traffic, wholly destructive and wholly valueless, giving profits to the few at the cost of a gigantic sacrifice of life, of revolting cruelty, and of danger to human beings, be encouraged by the provision of an open market for its wares? It is defended by none but those directly or indirectly concerned in it. It is denounced by those who, as scientists and humanitarians, have nothing to gain through exposing the methods by which it is maintained.

For details and figures, readers are referred to "Feathers and Facts" (R.S.P.B., 1s.).

The Plume-Trade.

LAST year the United States Department of Agriculture, in conjunction with the University of Iowa, sent an Expedition to the Laysan Islands to report on the condition of the birds there and on the destruction wrought by plume-hunters. The report has now been published. These islands, now known as the Hawaiian Islands Reservation, form the largest of the United States' fifty Bird Reservations, and were set apart by President

Roosevelt in 1909. In the same year they were visited by a party of plume-hunters or poachers, but a Revenue cutter went in pursuit and succeeded in arresting twenty-three men, who were in possession of the plumage of more than a quarter of a million of birds. Professor Dill, one of the members of the expedition, writes:—

"Our first impression of Laysan was that the poachers had stripped the place of bird

life. An area of over 300 acres on each side of the buildings was apparently abandoned. . . . On every side are bones bleaching in the sun, showing where the poachers have piled the bodies of the birds as they stripped them of wings and feathers. In the old guano shed were the remains of hundreds and possibly thousands of wings which were placed there but never cured for shipping, as the marauders were interrupted in their work.

"An old cistern, back of one of the buildings tells a story of cruelty that surpasses anything else done by these heartless, sanguinary pirates, not excepting the practice of cutting the wings from living birds and leaving them to die of hæmorrhage. In this dry cistern the living birds were kept by hundreds to slowly starve to death. In this way the fatty tissue lying next to the skin was used up, and the skin was left free from grease, so that it required little or no cleaning during preparation.

"Many other revolting sights, such as the remains of young birds that had been left to starve and birds with broken legs and deformed beaks, were to be seen. Killing-clubs, nets and other implements were lying

all about. Hundreds of boxes to be used in shipping the skins were packed in an old building. It was very evident they intended to carry on their slaughter as long as the birds lasted."

Professor W. A. Bryan adds that fully one-half of the numbers of both species of Albatross that were so abundant in 1903 had been killed. Over a large part of the island, formerly thickly inhabited by albatrosses, not a bird remained, but heaps of the slain told of the slaughter; and though these birds were the main object the hunters had also killed anything in the bird line they came across. Happily operations were interrupted before any species had been completely exterminated.

This poaching, cruelty, and slaughter show what the plume-hunters will do while open markets remain for their wares and women will deck themselves with wings and quills.

Economic Ornithology.

THE Department of Agriculture of the Dominion of Canada has issued a valuable bulletin on "The Large Larch Sawfly," by Dr. Gordon Hewitt, the Dominion Entomologist. This pest, whose depredations are so serious in England, has destroyed from fifty to a hundred per cent. of the native larches of eastern Canada and the United States. In a preface, the Director of the Dominion Experimental Farm states that for various reasons it is quite impracticable to control the spread of the insect by artificial means, and therefore investigations have been made concerning its natural animal and bird enemies. Dr.

Hewitt details the successful experiments carried on by him at Thirlmere in England; the useful work done by Tits, Chaffinches, Starlings, Jackdaws, and Rooks, and the provision of Nesting-Boxes for the encouragement of insectivorous birds. In 1911, 347 boxes were provided, of which 229 were occupied, a percentage double that of the boxes occupied in 1909, when the experiment began with sixty boxes.

In the October number of the *Journal* of the Board of Agriculture (England) the value of the Starling in feeding on the destructive osier-beetle, is noted.

PERSECUTION OF THE HERON.

The Rev. E. T. Daubeny writes from Southacre, Swaffham :—

A newspaper cutting has been sent to me containing an account of a meeting of a Board of Conservators* which gives food for thought to those Nature lovers who strive, against fearful odds, to save our British fauna from ruthless persecution. Some wondrous questions were asked at this meeting; one conservator, who wanted to know the difference between the Black-headed Gull and Black-backed Gull, was told by the Chairman that he did not know, but thought they were "one and the same bird"!!! Another asked if the "Heron was the same as the Crane?" This is but a sample of the qualification of many similar boards throughout the country who pass judgment in such matters.

The Superintendent's report contained the gratifying statement that the fishing was "satisfactory," that there was a splendid run of salmon, and that the rivers are well supplied and good sport is now being enjoyed by anglers. In face of this one of the members of the board complained that herons were exterminating the trout in the streams, . . . and simply took all the fish." Which is to be believed? The Superintendent then stated that "Heron had increased tremendously during the last two years," and suggested that some reward might be offered for their "extermination." It is to be feared that the board will act upon his recommendation, for the "question was whether they were going to protect the fish for those who paid licences, or protect the herons for the members who liked to see beautiful birds flying about." It was also

* Carmarthen Board of Conservators.—ED.

asked "whether it was not a fact that the Heron when fishing always chose shallow water?" and the Superintendent's answer was, "very rapid flowing water," a query and reply devoid of ordinary observation. The Superintendent's statement that "the Herons had increased tremendously during the last two years" is open to serious question. It is contrary to general experience, and to my own lengthy and intimate acquaintance with these noble birds. For twenty years I lived close to a large and carefully preserved heronry (one hundred nests or so), whose numbers were practically stationary. The same was to be noted when I lived on the south coast. Here they are to be seen every day within a few hundred yards of my house; there are now about half as many as there were ten or twelve years ago. Herons are not given to sudden change of quarters; nor do they suddenly turn up by the dozen or hundred in places previously unfrequented by them.

Now supposing that the Board had merely given a quiet hint that the birds must not be allowed to increase too rapidly, bird-lovers might not have greatly heeded, but when a man evidently in authority recommends the offer of rewards for the purpose of "exterminating" them, it seems time to speak.

In pleading for mercy on the Heron, nothing is to be gained, and much may be lost, by attempting to deny that he is a fish eater, but his diet is by no means confined to fish. It extends to frogs, rats, mice, lizards, newts, and other small animals that come within his reach. When in search of food he is to be seen in the middle of a rapid stream, on the banks of a pond, or against the reeds in a stagnant ditch. He often wades in sea water, and allows the

tide to rise around him so as to almost lift him off his feet. On inland waters he takes heavy toll of fish inimical to the salmon and the trout. In our river, the Nar, shoals of dace are to be met at almost every turn; which not only enter into competition with the trout for their daily food, but actually "worry and annoy" them. To the fisherman they are most vexatious, rising round his fly, but rarely taking it; and when they do he hooks them with a growl. They rush upstream at his approach, scaring every fish within reach, and crying "cave" as they go. Dace, like most coarse fish, fall an easier prey to the Heron than the keen-sighted and more nimble trout. Then there is the "Miller's Thumb" which he takes as it lurks among the pebbles. Into the capacious maw of this little fish, ova and helpless newborn fry far too often go. What is to be said about eels, one of the Heron's most favourite and frequent quarries? Surely we know the eel to be an insatiable devourer of all fish it comes across, and is powerful enough to master. Then there is the pike, a veritable scourge in trout and salmon rivers, that lives from infancy on other fish. The toll the Heron takes, where permitted to exist, on the ranks of the pike that are ever on the prowl among the rushes and water weeds in stream, pond, or ditch, must be great indeed. Fortunate

are the owners of those streams, as in the case of our pretty trout stream here, that are free from this fresh-water shark.

Are fishermen to degenerate into mere pothunters, with but one idea, the weight and number of their captures? A fisherman, imbued with true sporting instinct, is sure to be more or less of a naturalist, and observer of the creatures round him. He knows what they are, and their habits too, whether they be bird, beast or creeping thing. To him the absence of such a feature in the landscape as the Heron is a matter of regret. He feels there is a gap, a something wanting in the scene of his day's sport, which he does not forget when over the evening calumet of peace he recounts the different incidents of the day.

When we hear of a Board of Conservators engaged in discussing the advisability of offering a reward for the extermination of such a grand bird as the Heron, are we not entitled to say that there are other rights besides those of Conservators and fishing syndicates? Has not the public a right in objecting to the destruction of our British fauna, amongst which the Heron holds a prominent and familiar place?

All true lovers of the beauties and attractions of the country should see to it that among rare and disappearing forms the Heron may not be permitted to hold a place.

A flock of between 200 and 300 Pallas's Sandgrouse has been seen in North Yorkshire, and Mr. Riley Fortune, in a timely letter to the papers (November 23rd), reminds the public that these birds are protected by a special Act of Parliament; also "the

Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Protection Committee will take immediate action against any infringement of the Act, as they are determined to do all in their power to prevent the killing of these or any other rare birds which visit the county."

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

COUNCIL MEETING.

MR. MONTAGU SHARPE (Chairman) presided at the quarterly meeting of the Council, held at 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W., on October 18th, when there were also present: Mr. Ernest Bell, Miss Clifton, Sir John Cockburn, the Hon. Mrs. Drewitt, Dr. Drewitt, Miss Hall, Mr. Hastings Lees, Mr. F. E. Lemon (Hon. Sec.), Mrs. Lemon, Mr. Meade-Waldo, Mr. Paynter, Captain Tailby, and the Secretary (Miss Gardiner).

The Report of the Hon. Secretary gave details of the Bird Protection Orders issued for Kent, Northampton, Rochdale, Tynemouth, Walsall, and Westmeath; a circular letter had been addressed to the County Council of Radnor, one of the two counties in England and Wales at present without an Order; and correspondence had taken place with reference to the Orders for Cheshire, the city of Liverpool, and Worcestershire. The adjudication of awards in the Bird and Tree Competitions was reported. The Public School Essays, which were more in number than last year, were in the hands of the judges.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The statement of accounts having been presented and passed, the following new Fellows and Members were elected.

Fellows: Mrs. Bogle (Petersfield), Miss Colton Fox (York), Mrs. Urban Smith (London, N.W.), Miss E. Spender (Bath), Sir Richard Sutton, Bart. (Avening, Glos.).

Members: Mrs. Acland (Felixstowe), Miss Beckett (Bromley), Mrs. Clarke (Bournemouth), F. Curtis, F.R.C.S. (Redhill), Philip Gilchrist (Lancaster), Norman Graham

(Godalming), J. S. Muspratt Hall, L.D.S., (Weston-super-Mare), Miss Hodges (Cranleigh), G. H. Horsfall (Shrewsbury), C. W. Pantin (Nettlestone, I.W.), Miss Constance Prater (Banbury), Dr. Muzio Williams (London, W.), Miss Dulcie Yorke (Chiswick).

The resignation of Miss Kearney, Hon. Secretary for Canterbury since 1892, was received with regret, and thanks were voted to her for her kind and long-continued help. The appointments of Mrs. Bevan for Canterbury, Mrs. Laurence Pike for Christchurch, and Mr. Martin Lewis for Cardiff, were approved. Reports on bird-shop inspection and prosecutions were received.

The Publication Committee.

The issue was reported of "For Love of Beasts," "Story of the Egret," additional copies of the autumn number of *Bird Notes and News*, etc.

General Business.

Considerable discussion took place with regard to the Plumage Bill, the Pole-trap Act, the proposed offer of prizes for an effectual bird-scarer, and the cage-bird question. The preparation of a special leaflet on the last-named subject was agreed to.

BREAN²DOWN.

The Order of the Somerset County Council constituting Brean Down a protected area for all Birds and all eggs, was gazetted on December 3rd. A description of the area, which has been protected at the instance of the R.S.P.B., appeared in the Autumn Number of *Bird Notes and News*. The area is thus officially defined:—

"An area comprising Brean Down, in the

parish of Brean, and such parts of that parish and the parishes of Weston-super-Mare and Uphill as are comprised within the following boundary line: A line commencing at a point at low-water mark 50 yards to the north of the mouth of the River Axe, proceeding in a south-easterly direction in a straight line to and including Black Rock, thence to a point 50 yards to the north-east of the ferry landing place in the parish of Uphill, thence across the river, proceeding in a north-westerly direction to Black Point, thence along the southern base of Brean Down to Howe Rock, and from Howe Rock along low-water mark to the point of commencement."

PUBLIC SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION.

Great difficulty was experienced in making the award this year on account of the closeness of the competition, especially in the half-dozen papers taking the lead in the work of the Seniors. Two alternative subjects were given: (1) The birds of a specific Area, with Sketch Map of the District; (2) Summer Migrants observed in 1912. The first was by far the more popular. Most of the papers sent show excellent knowledge of bird-life and patient observation; the maps are cleverly done, and in several cases admirable photographs were added. Ultimately it was decided to give a

Silver Medal for each subject, the winners being:—

E. N. Buxton, Harrow, "The Birds of Epping Forest"

C. J. Richards, Haileybury, "Summer Migrants of 1912"

and to award a Special Prize to G. C. Bull, Bedford School, whose observations are hardly less excellent, while his photographs are extraordinarily good.

The following Competitors are awarded Certificates and Book Prizes:—

H. M. Stanford, Rugby, "Birds of Aldringham"; C. D. B. Ellis, Bootham School, "Birds of York and District"; R. L. Bruce, Glenalmond, "Birds observed near Glenalmond"; T. W. Scott, Bancroft's School, "Birds of Epping Forest"; F. O. Killen, Bedford, "Birds on the Cornish Coast"; C. H. Andrewes, Highgate School, "Birds in a Highgate Garden"; R. E. R. Sanderson, Bedford, "Birds of N. Beds and part of Northants."

In the Junior Division the awards are as follows:—

Bronze Medal: H. F. B. Cooper, Bedford School, "Birds observed in Bedfordshire."

Second Prize: M. H. Rattray, Bootham School, "Birds of Carleton Fishery."

Certificates and Books: V. K. Maitland, St. Olave's School, S.E., "Birds in Peckham, Honor Oak, and Dulwich"; J. W. Snowdon, Rossall, "Birds at Embsey, near Skipton, Yorks."

Notes.

A SPORTING paper admits with relief that "no harm can result" from the reservation of Brean Down as a birdland home, under the protection of the R.S.P.B., because the area is in a remote corner where it will not interfere with the "sportsman." In certain other cases, it is further observed, things are otherwise—"a dear old lady's sanctuary" has made an adjoining shooting "almost worthless" because it swarms with

"vermin." "England," adds this one-eyed critic, "is too small for the gratification of such ideas." If England is indeed too small for the preservation both of beautiful and interesting wild life, and of the man who wishes it all destroyed on his own land and on everybody else's in order that he may kill, some doubt may exist as to which of the two England could the better spare!

An interesting article in the *Times* on "Waxing and Waning Species" happily indicates another, and it is to be hoped more healthy feature of modern game-preservation.

"Nowadays on many estates a greater interest in wild English life has led to more mercy being shown to birds of prey. The sparrow-hawk has happily re-appeared to nest in woods where he has long been unfamiliar; owls and kestrels—almost always harmless to game—are more often spared, and landlords who are anxious to exterminate the destructive crows and jays are fewer than those who wish to keep them within strict limits. There is no fear that a slight increase of birds of prey will seriously reduce the number of nightingales and other small birds."

Many little birds, the writer goes on, who formerly found a nesting-place in the trees of old-fashioned orchards, are homeless in those of the new and well-kept kind where there is hardly a crevice for the smallest and most enterprising Tits. Hole-building species generally, such as Nuthatches, Tits, Redstarts, Woodpeckers, and Wrynecks have fallen on evil days, and will "need for the future the artificial assistance of nesting-boxes, and all the encouragement that careful protection can give them, to compensate for the old wealth of nesting-places in rent and decayed forest-trunks which has vanished with increasing cultivation."

* * *

Mr. T. E. Burrows, of Dosthill, one of the keenest of several keen Nature-Study teachers in Warwickshire, sends an interesting note on a carving on a capital in Elford Church, representing a Swallow feeding its young. The story goes that the sculptor

was undecided in what manner to complete his work on this column, when a Swallow found its way into the church, built a nest among the unfinished masonry. He accepted the incident as a heaven-sent inspiration, and when the birds were flown the capital was beautifully completed with a representation of the "temple-haunting" bird and its nest and young. Possibly other readers of *Bird Notes and News* have come across sculptured birds in various churches which might be recorded? There is, for instance, the Oldham chantry at Exeter Cathedral with its array of Little Owls—intended only as a pun on "Owl-dom," but charming all the same.

* * *

Now that bird-lovers are thinking of bird-tables and provender for their little friends, "A Hampshire Bird-Lover" points out how rapidly of late man has reduced the supply of the birds' natural winter food. Since the coming of the motor especially, hedges have been thinned and cut back ruthlessly, with consequent wholesale destruction of hips, haws, and other hedge-row berries; while holly is early cut and carted up to town for "decorations." It is a little hard, after singing lustily at the harvest festival "By Him the birds are fed," to do our best to deprive them of that food right and left; and it is suggested that friends of birds should allow no hedge-cutting on their property, no trimming of ivy or other berried creepers, until the hard weather is over, and should persuade landowning neighbours to do the same. It is even possible to plant berry-bearing trees with a view to the bird's winter: they are all ornamental.

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

CHALLENGE SHIELD COMPETITION, 1912.

THIS year is the year of the Villages. In 1911 some of the principal winners were from towns; this time the town schools have mainly to take a second place. It may be said, indeed, that the chances are evidently fairly equal for the large school, with its greater choice of competitors, and the country school, with its pastoral environment. Nor can it be urged that the town competitors necessarily evince greater quickness, nor that the country competitors take advantage of a greater choice of Birds and Trees to study. The alertness of mind evidenced by children in some of the most out-of-the-way villages is exhilarating to come across; some of the town children have gone forth and studied the least common of Birds and Trees. It is regrettable that the familiar Thrush, Blackbird, Starling, Robin, and Skylark still occur with monotonous frequency; and that the Swallow, Martin, and Cuckoo might be supposed almost the only summer migrants. Wren, Wagtail, Lapwing, Moor-hen, Tit, and Hedge-Sparrow are also favourites. There is perhaps one Jackdaw to twenty Rooks, and one Greenfinch to ten Linnets and twenty Chaffinches. Snipe, Great-crested Grebe, Heron, Kestrel, Corncrake, Barn and Tawny Owls, and Chiffchaff are some of the less-known species represented. Among Trees, Horse-Chestnut, Ash, and Oak still lead the way; but the choice is wider than might have been expected. Wild shrubs like the Spindle-tree, Wayfaring-tree, Dogwood and Blackthorn are, however, neglected for those like Pear and Plum, Lilac and Laburnum, which are at hand in the garden.

The judges were: Mr. Montagu Sharpe (Chairman of Council), Rev. Julian Tuck, Mr. G. A. Freeman, B.Sc., Mr. W. H. Hudson, Mr. T. Hastings Lees, Mr. J. R. B. Masefield, Mrs. Fuller Maitland, Miss Clifton, and Miss Gardiner.

A short account of some of the Festivals will, it is hoped, appear in the next number of *Bird Notes and News*.

INTER-COUNTY COMPETITION.

Ten sets of Essays were entered for the Inter-County, comprising the winners of the County Shield, the Hampshire Champion Team (Sholing Girls), and the Bucks Champion Team (Stony Stratford). The Shield is well and deservedly won by the Woburn Boys Council School Team, who must be congratulated on the manner in which they have come so conspicuously to the fore. The second place is taken by Stony Stratford National School. Here all the work is full of quick-eyed observation; two essays, on Rook (the best paper sent in on that bird) and Wagtail, are exceptionally well-written, while the seasonal changes of the Trees are not only faithfully recorded but evidence considerable sense of beauty.

The Sholing Girls Council School takes third place. The Sholing papers are all interesting and pleasant to read, for the girls have watched their Birds and Trees with keen and loving eyes; they give a good description of the songs, write well, and show artistic appreciation of natural beauty. Their work, excellent as it is, is close-pressed by Mancetter (Warwickshire) and Coltishall (Norfolk).

BEDFORDSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—WOBURN BOYS'
COUNCIL SCHOOL.

The Woburn Boys' School Team have for some time applied themselves to the study of Birds and Trees with much zeal and assiduity, and their papers this year are really interesting monographs on the subjects dealt with. The subjects themselves are exceptional, including among the Birds, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Little Owl, Pochard, and Woodpeckers. The boys have an advantage in point of age over other Teams from the county, and they have used to the fullest the opportunities afforded them in those extra years; their long essays, written without notes, being remarkable performances for lads of thirteen and fourteen of any class or any district. Eggington takes Second Prize with a particularly good set of papers, distinguished by many bright and intelligent touches that show the genuine knowledge of the writers. Mogerhanger, which took the Shield last year, sends again work that is pleasant and sincere and shows considerable observation, but it is a little too perfunctory to gain full marks. Genuine outdoor study has also inspired the papers from Clophill, those on Trees being especially excellent; and one nine-year-old student promises to take front rank in a year or two. It is in writing on Trees that Thurleigh and Lidlington likewise shine. Though not profound, the Lidlington papers express the alert individuality of the children; and this personal note gives a charm to all the Bedfordshire essays this year. When the Thurleigh girls know their Birds as well as their Trees, they will take some beating; why do not the Thurleigh boys distinguish themselves on this side of the Competition?

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—COLESHILL C.E.
SCHOOL.

Last year the contest for second place was keen between Coleshill, Princes Risborough, and Ellesborough. This year it is equally strong in competition for the Shield. Coleshill is successful because the general level of the papers is highest, those on Trees particularly showing that genius for taking pains which goes far in the making of a naturalist. The majority of schools entered a good many more Cadets than the Team of nine, and Princes Risborough takes the lead in this respect in the county, mustering no fewer than forty young nature-students, though the village is by no means in the best part of the county for bird-study. The essays are all well and naturally written, showing that the young people have learned to look appreciatively at the things about them. The Ellesborough papers are attractive as usual and that on the Moor-hen is one of the best Bird-papers sent in from the county; they are illustrated by admirable coloured sketches. Two new competitors come well to the fore: Penn should certainly win the Shield before one of its present Team (a girl of ten) leaves, for her two papers are astonishingly good for her age and all the essays have an exceptionally nice tone; Lacey Green does very creditably, but disregards the rule as to selection of Birds. There is always freshness and intelligence about the Bucks essays, which makes them agreeable to read; thoroughness of observation must also be aimed at by all who look to winning the Shield.

CUMBERLAND.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—GREYSTOKE SCHOOL.

Cumberland is remarkable, not only for distinct progress in direct nature study, but as furnishing the youngest competitor, and the smallest and most plucky of Schools. Wasdale Head School has only seven scholars ; yet it sends up six essays, and essays that are good and genuine, and imbued with a spirit of sympathy and love which has been kindled, it is clear, by an enthusiastic teacher worthy of Wordsworth's native county. A general high level of work, with well-worded and intelligent papers on Dipper, Pied Wag-tail, and Corncrake, determines the success of Greystoke ; the writers have keenly noted the characteristics of these interesting birds. The girls of St. John's, Keswick (no Keswick boys have ever been heard of in this connexion) turn out more than usually good work, with admirable and delicately illustrated papers on the selected Trees. Cargo makes a still more notable step forward, and though a small country school may invite comparison with any ; a capital paper on the Magpie is one of the very few written on that delightful bird. Kirkoswald has to support the reputation of a School whose name has three times been inscribed on the Shield, and maintains its character for solid and painstaking work ; the Birds as good as, and the Trees better than usual. Melmerby deserves special credit for a paper on another species little chosen, the Heron, and for close and observant studies of Trees. The Team won the Shield last year, and competition is so close among these five schools that it is impossible to predict the winner of 1913. With work of this calibre turned out by a limited number of Teams, it can only be because schools are small and scattered that competition is not stronger in point of quantity.

HAMPSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—RIDGE C.E. SCHOOL.

The lead in Hampshire is still taken by the Sholing Girls' School, whose papers are especially noteworthy for grace of feeling and composition ; but having won the Shield in two successive Competitions, Sholing is this year a Champion Team, eligible for the Inter-County contest only. The County honours go to Ridge, and all the essays here again denote real sympathy and a genuine and delightful love of nature. The Bird subjects are Long-tailed Tit, Golderest, and Wagtail. These Ridge essayists are boys. The Team taking Second Prize is composed exclusively of girls ; and the girls of St. Peter's, Bournemouth, have studied an admirable variety of Birds, while their Tree papers are full of information and are prettily illustrated. It is certainly the only Team which suffers through choosing too rare a species, the Waxwing, if seen for a minute, obviously not lending itself to any considerable amount of direct observation. Next in order of merit come the Holme School, Headley, with well-written essays and the best paper Hants has sent in on the Lapwing ; Romsey Girls' School, represented by a good all-round Team, zealous and careful in their study and including that neglected species the Mistle-Thrush in their subjects ; St. Joseph's R.C. School, Christchurch, whose boys and girls write in a fresh and pleasing way, showing some graceful fancy and considerable appreciation ; and Awbridge, notable for much information, both acquired and first-hand, intelligently set forth. A number of other Schools merit special commendation, for Hampshire is a county which has been strong in Bird and Tree work ever since the scheme was launched, and though several old competitors who were wont to take high places

have disappeared for the present, fresh Teams of good promise have come forward. The Sandown Boys do not send in such satisfactory essays as is expected from them, much success having possibly induced carelessness, but they still have the knack of utilising their material to advantage. Two new comers from the Isle of Wight, Thorley and Brighstone, make a capital beginning, the former having some good personal notes, and the latter two excellent Tree papers. Hayling contributes a useful study of the Kestrel, and all its papers are neat, intelligent, and well put together. Congratulations on considerable achievement must also be given to Barton Stacey, Bramshaw, Copythorne, Hinton Ampner, and Wickham.

NORFOLK.

CHALLENGE SHIELD. — COLTISHALL SCHOOL.

It is unfortunate that the School which would otherwise almost certainly have won the Shield, loses it through the mistake of selecting two domestic birds, Peacock and Turkey, instead of wild species. Obviously these cannot be accepted for the purpose of the present Competition, however well described. This mistake is the more to be regretted since they are very good, and the third Bird essay, on the Snipe, is the best Bird paper sent in from the county, and certainly one of the best from any county. It is an admirable first-hand study, and there is a capital drawing of a young bird. The Tree papers also have unusual merit. As things are, the Shield goes to Coltishall, and these children's papers are written in a charming style and show a very pleasant enthusiasm. The intimate studies of Blue Tit and Wren are true and entertaining. From the Fakenham Boys comes an excellent essay on the Lapwing,

and from the Fakenham Girls a very pretty one on the Greenfinch; the Tree papers in both cases show studious observation. Observation and also an exceptional appreciation of colour and beauty mark the Tree Essays by the Hingham Boys, and the Snipe again figures among the Birds. Wroxham, Bracon Ash, Lyng, Wickmere and Wolferton are other Schools gaining the "excellent" award. Good work is likewise submitted by Horning, Pulham Magdalene, East Ruston, Saham Girls, Sprowston, Tittleshall, and Weedon Girls. A large number of other Schools are Highly Commended or Commended, the total number competing being fifty-four. There is a much greater disparity in the achievements of the various Teams than is the case in most counties, to be accounted for probably by the fact that so many bravely resolve to do their best whatever that best may be.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—BADBY C.E. SCHOOL.

Competition is very strong in this county. Badby gains the Shield by virtue of the neatness and general intelligence of all the papers, though there are better single essays from several other schools. The subjects are simple, but they have been carefully and sympathetically studied. Wellingborough (Victoria Council School), holder of the Shield for 1911, and Rushden (Northend) are an excellent Second and Third. In both cases there is a tendency to overload the Tree papers with small details, zealously and conscientiously noted, at the expense of characteristic features and general description; but the work is wonderfully painstaking and the knowledge of entomology notable. Exceptionally good

papers are sent from Badby on the Blackbird, Wellingborough on the Kestrel, and Rushden on Blackbird and Hedge-Sparrow. Four other Teams come into the first class: Badby (II.), Victoria School (II.), Cold Higham, and Irthlingborough. All these Schools send admirable drawings, and essays showing close observation. Excellent work is also produced by Blatherwycke, Braunston, Pytchley (Endowed), Sywell, Middleton Cheney, Long Buckby, Gretton, Clopton, Croughton, Weedon Girls, Earls Barton, Dallington, Great Creaton, and Yelvertoft; while some dozen other Teams gain the commendation of the Judges. It is observable that very few of our rarer birds appear in the Northants lists, but a good deal more freshness and originality than is usually displayed in writing on such familiar birds is conspicuous in several charming papers on Wren, Blackbird, Robin, and Thrush. Three or four of the best dozen Tree papers have the Sycamore for subject.

SOMERSETSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—CLEEVE SCHOOL.

The results in Somerset are something of a surprise this year. The competition is not so strong as usual, several leading Schools being absent, and a Team which had not before been highly placed leaps to the front rank. Cleeve takes the Shield, not only, or so much, for the amount of actual information contained in the Essays as for the enthusiastic spirit displayed by the young writers, the absolute freshness and originality of their work, and the thoughtfulness that lies at the back of it. In composition and handwriting, and above all in drawing, they are behind the clever boys of Frome, who take the Second Prize.

There is real artistic talent at Frome. The Wembdon essays are mainly a recapitulation of notes taken in spring and summer. Everything the children say they seem to have found out for themselves, and there is a nice spirit in all; the important point of not disturbing or frightening sitting birds has been carefully observed; more general description is wanted, however, to render the accounts of both Birds and Trees fully satisfactory. Wookey Hole is one of the new Competitors of the year, and is perhaps the best among them. The Essays are short and simple, but they give evidence of observation and supply one of the few papers on the Goldfinch. Speaking generally, the choice of Birds is better in Somerset than in most counties, more effort being made to improve the acquaintance of less common species. The Barn Owl has a place among the Chillington essays, which also are promising, especially in the Tree work, and as both Chillington and Wookey Hole are young Teams they are likely to do well in the future.

WARWICKSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD.—MANCETTER.

The Warwickshire essays bring with them a pleasant Bird and Tree atmosphere, an atmosphere of open fields and sunny days away from desks and books. Mancetter justifies the expectation of previous years; the enthusiasm for nature-study, appreciation of beauty, and last not least, humane feeling, are alike admirable and point to uncommonly good influence and teaching. Middleton School (Tamworth) which wins the Second Prize, has a particularly strong list of subjects, including the Chiffchaff and Garden Warbler. The essays sent are all nicely written and prompted by careful

observation. The growth of a young Cuckoo in a Robins nest is well observed, and an excellent paper on the Wren must be specially commended for its accurate note of the song. St. Andrew's Murray School, Rugby, would probably have been a prize-winner but that only four species of Birds are chosen as subjects by nine essayists. The papers sent are distinctly good; they are written in a clear straightforward way, and the comments show observation and quick intelligence. Dosthill, a new competitor, furnishes two Teams, both of which must have worked zealously to achieve so great a measure of success, especially when it is remembered that this is a colliery district, where, as one of the essayists writes, Trees are poisoned by smoke. Papers on the Robin and Oak, by a boy of twelve, show the keen observation of a born nature-student, and all the work is of a most promising character. The Haselor Team have kept careful observation diaries, which are prettily illustrated; the Judges would have liked to find in the references to frost and snow some indication of the birds being fed. Entries from note-books also form a part of the Minworth papers, and are prefaced by a neat and concise general description. The work at Stratford-on-Avon is slight, and the rules are again not kept, but there is improvement on previous years, the Tree papers are nicely written and the writer on the Blackbird shows good knowledge of its beautiful song. Harbury is another school of promise; considerable appreciation is indicated in the Tree papers.

OPEN CLASS.

With a good beginning already made, there should be a fairly full competition from Derbyshire and Suffolk next year. The latter county ought to be inspired by the example of its neighbour, Norfolk. Two Schools which competed last year very naturally head this class in 1912; Hinton Waldrist is, moreover, a young team, and two very good essays come from competitors of ten summers; so that this Berkshire Team seems likely to maintain its lead and perhaps to win a resuscitated Berkshire Shield some day. The drawings from nature are good. The Totley (Derby) children write with much care, evidently resolved to do their school credit, and succeeding. Next come Felixstowe Ferry, with bright intelligent papers that have a very genuine ring about them; and Homesfield (Derby), with less outdoor observation, but essays that are neat and well-expressed. Some score of essayists indicate that a capital beginning has been made at Heage Central School (Derby); the papers are simple and short, but have very nice touches. Two essays on Yellow Hammer and Hawthorn are conspicuous in the Nedging and Naughton (Suffolk) Team, as showing bright original observation, and further work from this young student and her fellows will be looked for with interest next year. In all these Schools the teaching is clearly such as to guarantee progress on the right lines.

In connexion with the Competition in Norfolk prizes were given by Mr. Lee Warner for imitations of bird-notes. The first prize was gained by a Bracon Ash boy, who essayed to reproduce the notes of twenty-one

species, and in all a list of thirty-eight birds was handed in. As bird-music is so greatly neglected the example might be followed elsewhere.

* * *

IN THE COURTS.

THE BIRD SHOP.—At *Bow Street*, on October 8th, Cecil Isaacs, carrying on business in Shaftesbury Avenue and Little St. Andrew's Street, was convicted of cruelty to a Thrush, two Linnets, and a Goldfinch, and fined 20s. and £2 5s. costs. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds prosecuted, represented by Mr. Harry Wilson, solicitor. The Society's inspector found the Goldfinches and Linnets in a very wild and frightened condition, in filthy little cages, with no water and very little food. There were also six Hedge-Sparrows in a larger cage, some with wings broken, tail feathers out, and head feathers rubbed off. In the second shop he found the Thrush in a still worse state, in a very old and disgustingly dirty wooden cage on a top shelf, with putrid and sodden food. Defendant said the birds were moulting and were fed and watered daily; he kept them in small cages to prevent them from knocking themselves about. Any birds caught and caged would appear frightened. As a matter of fact, every bird in captivity broke its feathers. A bird-fancier named Lewer said he found nothing to which anyone could take exception, "but of course in a bird-shop you could always find something if you wanted to." Sir Albert de Rutzen said he had never had a case of exactly the same sort before him, and he would therefore take a very lenient course, but he hoped it would serve as a lesson to others; it was a very cruel thing to catch these wild birds and put them in cages hardly big enough to hold them, in which they knocked themselves about. Defendant said the result of the case would be that hundreds and thousands of birds would be killed because dealers would not feel it safe to keep them unless they were in show form. Mr. Wilson: That will save a lot of suffering.

The case, being the first one of the kind brought under the Protection of Animals Act of 1911, received considerable attention in the Press. The *Daily Express* commented (Oct. 9): "The piteous sight of dogs in cages, of cats drugged into a comatose quiet, of song birds beating their wings against bars, is common in every city—common and, to the humane, hideous.

There is no good reason or excuse for the captivity of song birds at all events. The perverted sense which can enjoy the notes of Thrush or Blackbird singing a threnody of captive bars finds its only parallel in the perverted palate which longs for a lark on toast."

The *Manchester Guardian*: "The defendant's evidence showed clearly the need for the Act. Newly-caught birds were regularly put in small cages 'to keep them from knocking themselves about,' he said, and 'every bird in captivity broke its feathers.' He justified the Act even more fully when he added, 'When this case is reported hundreds of birds will be killed because it is not safe to keep them.' Animal lovers will agree that they are better dead than captive under conditions which the Act penalises."

The *Star*: "We hope the case marks the beginning of a serious attempt to stop the traffic in wild birds altogether, and there is reason to believe it will, at any rate, do much to check it. The stocks in the bird-shops are only the survivals of thousands of which the countryside near London is robbed. It is a trade that we should be well quit of."

Dundee Evening Telegraph: "The irony of it is that many people buy these miserable captives, and thus connive at the cruelty of the business through a genuine but ignorant love of living things. They like to have a 'pet,' and birds are cheap."

THE BIRD-CATCHER.—At *West Ham*, on November 18, George Cooper was charged with torturing a Sparrow. He was out bird-catching on waste ground at Prince Regent's Lane, Custom House, and for decoy, said the police, had a Sparrow braced with steel wire that lacerated its body wherever it touched, so that the bird was almost dead. He had also four tightly pinioned Linnets beneath his nets and five birds in cages. Two other bird-catchers near ran away when the detective appeared. Committed for trial at the Sessions.—At *Bristol*, on October 11, George Elliott, bird-catcher, was fined £1 for being in possession of twenty-five Goldfinches, and £1 for cruelty. The police came upon him on Portbury Moor. The birds were in a cage 16 inch by 6 inch, by 4½ inch.; twenty

had their wings tied by thin thread, and five were braced, and all suffered from suffocation as well as from being tied; six died the same night. Defendant pulled another decoy bird out of a bag in his pocket. The police stated that a number of bird-catching gangs came down from Bristol, and when challenged one would escape with the birds and another with the nets. Defendant admitted that he had been feeding the birds for a week at the spot so as to entice them there.—At *St. Columb Minor*, William Wilson was fined 18s. 6d. for taking Goldfinches with lime. He had decoy birds and limed twigs, and had caught five birds, which the police liberated.—At *Manchester*, on November 12, George Saunders and Abraham Etchells were convicted for cruelty to a decoy Redpoll. Braced with string and made to flutter to attract other birds, its wing was injured and bleeding.—At *Merthyr*, on November 5, Andrew Lochlin was fined 10s. and costs for having a wild bird in a cage 5 inches square. He was out bird-catching on the Aberdare mountain.

A CHAFFINCH IN COURT.—At *Woolwich*, on November 17, Albert Mainwaring was fined 2s. 6d. for possession of a newly-caught Chaffinch. In explaining to the magistrate how defendant's trap worked, the constable opened one of the doors and the Chaffinch flew out and up to the roof of the Court. The skylight was opened to release it, and the destruction of the trap ordered.

SHOOTING AN OWL.—At *Grantham*, on October 5, James Whittle, a farmer's son, was fined 1s. and costs for shooting a Barn-Owl. He said he did not know it was a scheduled bird. (He ought to have known that it was a useful one.)

SHOOTING A KESTREL. — At *Feltham*, on November 15th, George Bryant, of Hope Farm, Charlton, was fined 10s. for shooting a Kestrel on Sunday, October 20th. Defendant stood up in a trap in the road to shoot the bird, and said in defence that he and other farmers regarded the Kestrel as a pest. A second summons for firing a gun on the highway, and without a license, was dismissed, on the ground that no one was endangered and that the renewal of the license had been forgotten.

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BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERBY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.



Photo. Elliott & Fry.

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THE RIGHT HON. EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON,
Vice-President Royal Society for the Protection of Birds,
Chairman of the Annual Meeting, 1913.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

MARCH, 1913.

[No. 5.]

Birds at the Lighthouse.

“One of the greatest of all dangers [to migrating birds] is the numerous lighthouses and light-vessels on and off our own and other coasts. These, under certain conditions of weather are veritable shambles. Those who have not witnessed a ‘bird-night’ at a light-station cannot form any conception of the appalling loss of life that takes place.” *Studies in Bird Migration* (W. Eagle Clarke).

For years this great and grievous destruction of bird life has been noted and deplored. Mr. Eagle Clarke estimates it at hundreds of thousands in a season at the British stations alone, and he describes how he has watched through a whole night the oncoming streams of birds flying at and around the lantern and falling thickly, to perish miserably in the sea beneath.

Few people are insensible to the mystery and pathos that surround the migratory birds, especially the small frail creatures that cross land and sea in the springtime, from the country of the Pharoahs or of Omar Khayyam it may be, to flood our land with the sense and the songs of summer. Few people do not heed the first call of the Chiffchaff, the first sight of the Swallow’s glancing wings, the first soft cadence of the Willow-Wren. And of all the perils and sorrows of bird-life (apart from those occasioned by man’s cruelty), it has seemed the saddest and most pitiful that these great companies of feathered travellers, weary and hungry after their long flight—often

on the very edge of their native land, to which imperious instinct has bid them return to build their nests and rear their young—should be caught and dazed and destroyed by the radiance of lights set up for the saving of human life. With the advance of science and the vastly-increased power and brilliance of the great lanterns, man has been the better safeguarded; but the peril to the bird has become greater and greater.

It has been supposed that the fate of the migrants, though deplorable, was unavoidable, that it was caused almost entirely by the birds directly striking the lantern and being maimed or stunned by the impact. A different view has, however, been taken by the distinguished Dutch naturalist, Professor Jac. P. Thijssse, who holds that by far the greater number are only attracted to the light, and that they circle about it for hours until, exhausted, they fall and perish. Possibly it is not merely the compelling power of the light that draws them; it may confuse and trouble their sense of direction; it may even imaginably delude them into some belief that morning has arrived and with it the end of their journey, and that they fly round seeking the expected alighting-place. Heer Thijssse accordingly devised a series of resting-places to be fitted on the lantern itself, without interfering with its illuminating power, where the baffled and

wearily travellers may settle. All around the platform and on the roof he fixed ladder-like perches of wood or of iron covered with cloth, as much as possible within view of the light; the birds, he found, not liking to be in the dark. His experiments have been on trial for three years at one of the principal lighthouses of Holland. He writes—

“At the Terschelling Lighthouse on the Frisian Islands things were very bad indeed some years ago. Terschelling is a very important locality in the biggest migration route of the continent, which splits up there, one branch crossing to the English coast, the other keeping along the North Sea towards the South. The light is very strong—thirty million candle-power. On migration nights numbers of birds circled round the revolving light, till they fell exhausted and dying, thousands perishing in a single night. *At present the mortality does not exceed a hundred during the whole migration time.*”

On a dark night every perch is occupied, the birds clinging to them in clusters to the number of ten thousand. When dawn arrives the whole company, including even the latest comers and the most tired, rise up and pursue their journey.

The experiment having proved so successful, the Prussian Government has sent a commission to inspect Heer Thijsse's contrivances; they are also being studied by the French Commission de la Chasse and the St. Hubert Club. Great Britain, lying in the great migration routes, and owing what she does to immigrant birds, could hardly remain indifferent. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds obtained full particulars of the scheme from Heer Thijsse and other correspondents, and a Deputation representing its Council waited on the Elder Brethren of Trinity House on January 29th. The deputation consisted of Mr. W. Eagle Clarke, Keeper of the Natural History Department, Royal

Scottish Museum; Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, of the Zoological Department, British Museum (Natural History), and Captain T. M. J. Tailby, Members of Council of the R.S.P.B.; and Mr. F. E. Lemon, Member of Council and Hon. Sec. They were courteously and sympathetically received; and in the result, after consultation with the Chief Engineer, the Board have consented to erect and test the contrivance at two English Lighthouses, St. Catherine's on the coast of the Isle of Wight, and the Caskets in the English Channel; both of these are on main migration lines and both account for the loss of great numbers of migrants.

It remains for the Society to raise the funds, the expenditure being obviously outside the direct purposes of the Trinity House. The Council of the Society for the Protection of Birds has guaranteed the money for the initial experiment, in order that the work may be done in time for the migrations of this spring. The cost is not great, and a comparatively small sum will enable thorough trial to be made at the two lighthouses selected and, it is believed, will save thousands of birds. It is hoped, however, that the response to the appeal will be prompt and generous in order that the Society may proceed, as soon as success is assured, to equip other British lighthouses in a similar manner.

At the Society's annual meeting, on March 6th, 1913, Lord Curzon of Kedleston headed the Special Fund with a donation of £25, and other sums were promised. Amounts large or small will be gladly received, and a list of subscriptions will be published in the Summer Number of *Bird Notes and News*.

It has to be remembered that the loss of most of these migratory birds is not only a loss of summer song, a lessening of country delight, but is a serious

question in the interests of agriculture, as they are almost wholly insectivorous species. They include the Swallow and Martins, Nightingale, Blackcap, White-throats, Chiffchaff, Willow and Wood Warblers, Flycatchers, Wheatear and Whinchat, Tree Pipit, Yellow and White Wagtails, Swift, Nightjar, Wryneck, and Cuckoo, Corncrake and Turtledove. In addition to birds such as these which are

entirely absent from Britain in winter, great numbers of Lapwings, Skylarks, Thrushes, and Starlings arrive and depart. In the autumn migration come the Woodcock, Fieldfare, Redwing, Curlew, and Wild Fowl. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's recent work on Game Birds gives some interesting figures showing the destruction of Woodcock, 1,800 of which have been killed at one lighthouse in four nights.

The Plume-Trade.

SMUGGLING continues to be practised by the plume-traders in order to evade the laws of India and the Colonies, which prohibit the export of plumage. A Poona correspondent informs the Society of the seizure by the Inspector of Customs, Bombay, of fourteen cases of Peacock feathers intended for export. The cases were labelled "haberdashery."

The German Colonial Secretary, Dr. Solf, has addressed a public appeal to the women of Germany to give up wearing Bird-of-Paradise feathers in their millinery. The Colonial Office, he says is doing all in its power to save the birds by raising the export duty on birds killed in German colonies, and he hopes that a further law will entirely prohibit the killing of birds.

The statement having been made that Earl Roberts's daughter wore an "osprey" plume as part of her going-away costume on the occasion of her recent marriage, members of the R.S.P.B. will be glad to learn that the ornament worn by Lady Edwina was Major Lewin's Horse Artillery plume, a memento of his service in that regiment. Neither Countess Roberts nor her daughters wear ospreys or any

feathers of birds killed for decorative purposes.

A member of the R.S.P.B. recently wrote to a west-end firm protesting against the pictured advertisement of an "osprey" on the cover of their catalogue, and trying to dissuade them from selling this species of feather. In reply the managing-director writes:—

"I duly respect your feelings in the matter of the sale of Aigrettes, and I assure you that as individuals we should be only too pleased to see this particular traffic stamped out. You must, I am sure, appreciate that in these competitive times, when expenses and taxes, etc., of all descriptions are being raised, one cannot afford to risk losing any business by allowing one's personal feelings to overcome one's business necessities. If the public at large could be induced to give up the purchase of Aigrettes we should be only too pleased, but whilst our competitors offer these articles for sale, we cannot afford to stand out and refuse to sell them ourselves.

"As a matter of fact I should like to point out that the particular sketch to which you have taken exception, does not illustrate a hat in our stock. The sketch, as you will see by reading the descriptive matter, is for the purpose of showing the coat. The hat is purely and simply the artist's idea."

This letter is worth consideration. In it the director of a firm of English tradesmen frankly admits (1) that in view of

the notorious cruelty and the thousand and one lies associated with the trade in "osprey" plumes, his firm would be only too glad to see the traffic stamped out. (2) but, on the other hand, money-making must come before conscience with tradesmen; (3) and, finally, the picture did not advertise (directly) the firm's wares—the business "necessities"—but was a purely gratuitous advertisement of the particular article they would be only too pleased to see the public refrain from buying!

The recipient of the reply, however, refused to accept this evasive slur on the British tradesman, and wrote again to refute the argument and to suggest a conference of leading drapers and milliners with a view to joint action in the matter.

THE HERON AND THE PLUME-TRADE:

The Society has received the following letter from Mr. James Henry Rice, field-agent of the National Association of Audubon Societies for South Carolina:—

"In the remarks of the Rev. E. T. Daubeny on the 'Persecution of the Heron,' in the winter number of 'Bird Notes and News,' omission is made of what is, at least in North and in South America, one of the most striking features of the feeding habits of the Heron.

"My work takes me annually over the range of the Egret and of the Snowy Heron, along the South Atlantic coast of the United States from North Carolina to Florida. Their bill of fare is similar in the main, and resembles that of the British heron as described in 'Bird Notes and News.' But with the coming of an insect invasion, such as a flight of grasshoppers (locusts), or a swarm of army-worms (*heliophilæ unipunctæ*), or grass-worms (*laphygma frugiperdæ*), herons begin at once feeding on these pests. } }

"This was noted by all observers during the locust plague in Kansas and adjoining States

(1874 to 1877); has been repeatedly remarked in Argentina, was noted during the cricket invasion of Utah (1848), when Herons along with gulls stopped the outbreak.

"Five years ago, on the plantation of Mr. John Poppenheim on Cooper River, some 20 miles north of Charleston, Egrets devoured the army-worms on 80 acres of rice in a single day. When it is remembered that these worms (caterpillars) devour all the grain in such a field in from 24 to 48 hours, the work of the herons becomes impressive.

"This year (1912) I saw Herons eating caterpillars (grass-worms), in a field of maize, in such quantities that the outbreak was checked before noon of the second day.

"One of the most destructive insects with which farmers have to contend in the South Atlantic States is the mole cricket. I have known a half-dozen instances where outbreaks of this insect were stayed by Herons.

"Will you permit me to draw attention to another phase of this same question?

"We have a campaign—almost a war—each year with agents of the big millinery houses, who hire outlaws from coast cities and set them to slaughter Herons for their feathers. Prescribed penalties are not severe enough; fines are far too small, and our means of carrying on the fight are altogether inadequate. The number and extent of refuges for the preservation of the vanishing birds are miserably insufficient. South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida on the Atlantic Coast, and Louisiana at the mouth of the Mississippi River, are the last refuges of the Snowy Heron and the American Egret. As the result of seven hard years of protection both species show a slight increase in South Carolina and Georgia, but they had reached the verge of extinction. Even as late as 1890 Snowy Herons could be seen in millions extending along the Cooper River for 40 miles above Charleston. There are about 1,000 birds (close estimate) in the whole State now. There are about 700, or 800 Egrets.

"A resident in one of our South Carolina towns told me that in London he had seen women of fashion wearing aigrettes. It might surely be taken for granted that few ladies of rank or position would be guilty of wearing Heron plumes if they were aware that thousands of farmers in distant lands had to suffer through their act loss of crops

with attendant hardships. Women of the best families of South Carolina make it a point of honour not to wear any feathers other than those of the ostrich and of domestic poultry. I have not seen an Egret plume on a Charleston woman's head in six or seven years.

"It would strengthen our hands in this great hard fight if English women would uniformly set their faces against such a practice. I have long hoped to be able to bring to the people of England the facts fresh from the field, and to tell them what is going on.

"Statements emanating from millinery houses are always unreliable."

To this need only be added the fact that at the December (1912) feather sale in London there were offered more than

12,400 ounces of "osprey" (Heron and Egret) feathers, in addition to 525 skins. The breeding plumes of six birds are needed to provide one ounce (the trade admit the truth of this estimate, so that it is certainly not an over-estimate); therefore the quantity on sale represented 75,000 Herons and Egrets, and to this total must be added the young birds left to die of starvation. Thus, by the wanton destruction of the farmers' allies in North America, and in South America where the great grain-producing country of the future should lie, is one useless trade permitted to devastate the harvest-fields, present and future, of the world.

"Our Vanishing Wild Life."

It is difficult to over-estimate the value of such a work as that which has been written by Dr. W. T. Hornaday, Director of the New York Zoological Park, and published in New York; and it is to be hoped that an English publisher may speedily be allowed to place "Our Vanishing Wild Life" before the British public. Dr. Hornaday deals, it is true, with the condition of things in the United States first and foremost; but in more than one matter Britain also is implicated deeply, and the lesson of the book is one needed by our own Colonies of Canada and Australia and Africa as much as by the States of Northern America, by the Old World as well as by the New World. It is a lesson to be taken to heart by every thinking man and woman, and to be enforced by stringent laws and penalties on all who will not think. The wasteful colonist, the heedless sportsman, the crafty trader, with the collector stalking on the trail of death left by all three: these are daily and everywhere

impoverishing the world; and self-interest and stupidity blink contentedly at the brigandage.

Dr. Hornaday has marshalled for review a striking array of facts; and he does not mince matters. The destruction of Bird-life occupies a prominent place as perhaps the most shocking part in the whole discreditable story. The researches of Mr. C. W. Beebe bring to light details of the plume-trade which might well rouse even Government departments to prompt action; and evidence is presented which should destroy for ever even the hydra-heads of the lie that the "osprey" plumes of commerce are or can be supplied by moulted feathers or egret "farms." Every word spoken by Lord Curzon and Sir Harry Johnston at the Annual Meeting of the R.S.P.B. is well substantiated by Dr. Hornaday's book. Other phases of the question have no less vigorous treatment. That they too have their moral for English readers is clear to all who have read Mr. W. H.

Hudson's pamphlet on "Lost British Birds," published years ago by the Society. As frontispiece stands the Passenger Pigeon, existing in uncountable millions in the States fifty years ago and now represented by one individual in a zoological garden.

Dr. Hornaday devotes the second part of

his book to the remedial measures necessary to check the wanton waste of animal life. Throughout he writes with the vigour of conviction, and with the strenuous force of a man still appalled by the facts with which his investigations have brought him face to face.

Notes.

WHILE the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is seeking by a special effort to provide protection for migrating birds at lighthouses, Sir Herbert Maxwell is driven to condemn the ways of certain other naturalists who find in the birds' extremity science's opportunity. He writes (*Pall Mall Gazette*, February 6, 1913), that Mr. Eagle Clarke sets a good example in being content to register the arrivals of certain birds at the lights without finding it necessary to put them to death and produce their corpses as proof of his word. Professor Patten, on the other hand, treating of the migrations of the Robin in the January number of the *Zoologist*, appears to conclude that nobody will credit his ability to recognise the species unless he "collects" it.

"A robin came slowly up to the lantern and as it fluttered I collected it. . . . I observed a robin on the rock. It was tame, rather fatigued, and easily collected. . . . Two nights later I collected a robin, which came in quietly and fluttered down the lantern."

And so on. This sort of thing, Sir Herbert Maxwell truly says, is bringing discredit upon science. "Heaven knows that our birds have to encounter enough perils on migration without the additional one of a deliberate assassin lurking behind the glass of the delusive lantern."

"Nobody, one should think, can have witnessed the daylight migration of small

birds across the ocean without some promptings of compassion. Their weary little wings just serve to carry them clear of the waves; how touching it is when they take passage on a passing ship; instantly bury their heads in their scapular feathers and going fast asleep!"

A Somersetshire correspondent writes:—

"May I urge the case of the beautiful little foreign finches and waxbills as claimants on our humanity as well as British birds? The common (though equally beautiful) sorts are so cheap that their sufferings and death by the thousand from disease, misery, and cold, are of comparatively little consequence to the dealers. The importation of these wee creatures packed closely, almost as sardines, entails so great an amount of suffering that of those which survive the voyage the greater number perish in a few weeks as the result of the ordeal they have gone through. I believe the exportation from Australia is now prohibited. Would that this were the case from other countries or that a deterrent tax might be placed upon them!

"I acknowledge, to my shame, that I possess an aviary of these lovely and intelligent little birds, but although with me they live under the best conditions and return with delight to their aviary after frequent outings, I should never have started such a thing had I known as much as I do now of the cruelty of the trade.

"I have had birds sent me from a well-known dealer in the north, packed in a small box without food or water. They arrived dead, of course, and on my indignant remonstrance I was informed that the money should be entered to my credit, as if the trifling pecuniary loss and not the

cruelty were the important thing. Although this is an extreme case, birds are almost always sent without water, or at most a tiny piece of sponge which soon goes dry."

Every bird-lover will echo this pathetic plea for the foreign bird. But England can hardly press for prohibition of export from other countries before she obtains it for her own birds. In the United States, for instance, where no native birds may be caged, and in Canada, it is the English bird which is the foreigner, and the European Larks and Linnets and Goldfinches and Thrushes which are "the unhappy captives in our midst." Miss Marshall Saunders (Halifax, N.S.) says on this subject:—

"Of all the foreign birds held in captivity, it has seemed to me that the European Skylark suffers most. I have watched them stage by stage through a long agony till the subject is so painful to me that I cannot bear to think of it . . . It seems to me that if I were a humanitarian in Europe I should strain every nerve to have a law passed, prohibiting the capture of this exquisite, trembling bird for cage purposes."

Two pleasant pictures of bird-watching come, the one from a Sussex village, the other from Tampa, in Florida. Mr. James Shaw, an octogenarian correspondent, writes (in a handwriting of microscopic delicacy):—

"I have many friends among the birds, principally Blue Jays, Mocking-birds, a small bird I call a Wren, several kinds of Woodpeckers, Mourning Doves, Humming birds, and occasionally Butcher-birds. Opposite my house a small stream, known as Spanish Town Creek, flows down to the bay, and is a favorite resort for my feathered friends . . . I am principally attracted by the Mocking-bird—such a cheerful, happy, companionable bird—a live oak close to our porch is a favourite spot; no false modesty about him! Many times he will come down where I can almost touch him, and thrill me with his matchless song. His dropping

song when approaching his mate is wonderful. He sings the first stanza in a low dreamy voice, and then as if the sweetness of his love exalted him, he lifts his voice higher and higher until the air rings with its melody. His mate twitters an answer. His response comes like the notes of a silver trumpet. He springs up into the air and slowly drops singing, alighting on a twig above his mate, and beginning to fall from branch to branch, but singing more softly and sweetly as he approaches her.

"I have seen this many times as I sit in my porch."

The other story is of a Nuthatch and a Great Tit:—

"For the last few years we have had a most delightful pair of Nuthatches as friends, who have been kind enough to nest in the garden two or three times. They have been most exacting in their demands and the temper and impatience shown by the cock bird over a moment's delay in opening the window were extraordinary. We never got them to eat out of our hands, but they would come within a foot or two, and it almost seemed as if they caught the nuts before they reached the ground.

"We were much amused by a Great Tit who also wished to join the family circle and feared nothing but the Nuthatches. He carefully observed them from a respectful distance and decided to take to nut-eating himself. Cracking nuts on an acacia branch seemed very simple to him as a looker-on, but he had to practise a great deal before he could even pick one up. At last he managed to fly with a nut in his beak, but could only carry it up into a lime-tree by the window. His surprise and exasperation at finding it rolled off branches were most amusing. After trying for days to learn to balance them, he took to holding one in a claw, standing on one leg and tapping the nut with his beak. His dejection at his want of success was so piteous that some nuts were cracked for him, after which he became a harder taskmaster than the Nuthatches."

Possibly Nuthatches and Tits are now fighting for Nesting-boxes, unless plenty are provided for both!

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting was held on March 6th, 1913, at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and was largely attended. Earl Curzon of Kedleston presided, and was supported by Sir William Portal, Bart., Sir Henry Seton-Karr, Bart., Sir Harry Johnston, G.C.M.G., Mr. Montagu Sharpe (Chairman of Council), Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, Captain Tailby, Mr. E. G. B. Meade-Waldo, Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, and Mr. John Hanbury. A report of the proceedings is appended to the Society's Annual Report.

COUNCIL MEETINGS.

The Council of the Society met at the Offices, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W., on December 6th, 1912, and January 24th, 1913.

Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Reports of the Hon. Secretary stated that eighteen lectures had been given; that a large number of Bird-and-Tree Festivals had been held; and that invitations to compete, with the ultimate object of establishing an annual Challenge Shield Competition, had been sent out to the Elementary Schools of Derbyshire and Lancashire by the Directors of Education for those counties. The work of the Society's Inspector had been carried on energetically; bird-shops and markets had been visited, cautions given in many instances, and efforts made to interest the police more actively in enforcing the law. In numerous cases the warnings given had effect in inducing greater cleanliness, better attention to birds, and the use of larger cages; in several others birds were freed from trap-cages; three

successful prosecutions had been instituted, and convictions obtained; another case, a charge against a bird-catcher, was dismissed with a warning to the defendant. The supply and sale of Nesting-boxes and Food-tables for birds were reported on. Two Bird Protection Orders had been issued, and the need for amendments in certain districts was discussed.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The following Fellows and Members were elected:—

FELLOWS: Miss M. J. S. Best (Westport, Wareham), R. Oswald Blyth (Stanmore), Mrs. H. Brenchley (Dover), Mrs. Christie (Frome), Mrs. W. H. Eyre (London, W.), Miss Ferguson (Liverpool), Miss Hodge (London, N.), Mrs. W. A. Milner (Totley Hall), Mrs. J. R. Paton (Liverpool), C. S. Prichard (58th Regiment), Miss C. Waltham (Uppingham).

MEMBERS: Miss Clemence Acland (Banstead), A. E. Beardmore (Wolverhampton), Miss Bourke (Weston-super-Mare), G. R. Brace, Mrs. G. R. Brace (Liverpool), Miss E. M. Browne (Newcastle-on-Tyne), Rev. Percival Nepean Carleton (Camelford), E. Carlile (Croydon), Miss Kate Cording (London, N.), William Cottam (Wolverhampton), J. Coventry (Liverpool), Miss S. M. Cobb (Parkstone), G. Daybell (London, S.E.), Mrs. Gordon Dill (Woodbury), Lady Digby (Colchester), Miss N. L. Emmet (Sheffield), Mrs. Ffennell (Bristol), Miss Sarah Fraser (Wolverhampton), Norman G. Hadden (Malvern), Miss Winifred Higgins (London, W.), Mrs. Hubert (London, S.W.), Miss Amy Hughes (London, S.W.), J. S. C. Johnson (Driffeld), Sir Charles King-Harman, K.C.M.G. (London, S.W.), Coryndon Matthews (Plymstock), Mrs. Byres Moir (London, W.), Mrs. Rayner (Purley), Mrs. E. Saunders (Reigate), J. Beddall Smith (Marks Tey), Miss S. H. Smith (Charlton Kings), Mrs. Storer (London, N.W.), Mrs. John Still (Axminster),

H. Theakston (Liverpool), Miss Thornhill (Hamble), Miss Thruston (London, S.W.), R. V. Turnham (Haslemere), Mrs. Vaudrey (Derby), Arthur T. Wallis (Birmingham), Mrs. E. Williams (London, N.), John Williams (Scorrier, Cornwall), Robert Williams (Gorran), Mrs. Wood (Rochester), Noel Wood (Weybridge).

The Hon. Thomas Mackenzie, High Commissioner for New Zealand, was elected an Honorary Fellow, in acknowledgment of the interest he has taken in the protection of birds in that Colony. Mr. Jesse Hawkings, of Brean Down, was elected an Honorary Member. The appointments of Mr. Robert Williams, Caerhays Castle, Gorran, as Hon. Secretary for Cornwall, and of Miss Ruth Bevan as Hon. Secretary for Bude, were approved. The accounts for the year, subject to audit, were presented and passed, and the report on the Public School Essay Competition was received.

General Business.

Replies were read from Professor Thijssse and Mr. van Vollenhoven (Holland), and Dr. Heuss (Germany) with reference to means adopted in Holland for preventing birds on migration from perishing at lighthouses. After consideration it was resolved to ask the Elder Brethren of Trinity House to receive a deputation from the Society. Other subjects discussed included the care of birds on board ship; a proposed exhibition of featherless millinery; competitions for 1913; birdcatching; and the Annual Report and arrangements for the Annual Meeting.

A meeting of the Watchers' Committee was held on February 14th, when the work for the coming season was considered, the employment of some twenty-four Watchers at special stations was agreed to, and a large amount of cor-

respondence was read, pointing out the need of Watching in other localities.

Next Meeting of Council, April 18th.

THE COLLECTOR

The Rev. Canon Rawnsley writes in regretting his inability to attend the Society's Annual Meeting:—

"If I had been able to come I should have urged that more stringent measures were necessary than now exist for dealing with the professional egg-stealer. Here in the Lake district, notwithstanding all our efforts by means of a friendly police and paid watchers, we cannot prevent two or three quite well-known egg-stealers coming into the country and going off with their ill-gotten gains. These gentlemen know quite well that there is some working-man in the locality who has made it his hobby to know where the Ravens, Buzzards, and Peregrines nest. They tempt him by a day's outing in their motor car and by large pay, to come with them and rob the nests. They are off and away before dawn and probably out of the county by motor the same night.

"It is a great scandal for they are robbing the whole country-side of one of its peculiar charms of bird life. The raven builds again, and again its second nest is robbed. It generally has a third nesting-place, and again for the third time lays its eggs. But these are hatched out so late that they really have no chance of growing into strong birds, and the result is that in time the raven, one of the strongest and longest-lived birds we have, will die out by reason of an enforced degeneracy for which the cowardly and selfish egg-stealer is to blame."

"The best informed shepherds assert that it is not the raven that worries the lambs but the carrion crow, and the buzzard is, as all game preservers might know, a real help in the way of ridding the moor of vermin and diseased grouse."

Canon Rawnsley adds that a debt of gratitude for friendly interest in the bird-life of the district, is due to Lord Lonsdale, Lord Muncaster, Canon Hazell, and Mr. Henry Howard; and also to the Rev.

P. W. Parminter and the Rev. D. A. Scott for their constant vigilance on behalf of the wild birds.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS ESSAY COMPETITION.

The Society again invite Essays from boys at the Public Schools of Great Britain in competition for Silver and Bronze Medals, certificates, and books. The subjects this year are as follows:—

Senior Division (over 16).—Notes on the Legs and Feet of Birds and the various uses to which they are specially adapted, such as walking, hopping, perching, climbing, wading, swimming, etc., with observations from life on one or more species exemplifying each type.

Junior Division (under 16).—Notes on Birds observed (a) during a holiday at the seaside; or (b) a holiday in any inland district. A sketch map of the neighbourhood to be given.

Essays to be handed in to a representative of the Society at the School, or forwarded to the Society, not later than September 30th, 1913. Particulars and entry-forms may be obtained from the Society.

AILSA CRAIG.

Reports having been received of the destruction of wild birds' eggs by quarrymen and others on this great breeding-place of wild fowl, the Society approached the owner of the rock, the Marquess of Ailsa, and has received the following satisfactory reply from his factor.

"Before nesting operations began on Ailsa Craig last year, notices were erected on prominent points on the Island prohibiting the lifting of eggs by persons visiting it, and notice was sent to the Quarry Company requesting them to intimate to their workmen that any one reported lifting eggs would be instantly dismissed.

"On my visiting the Island later in the year, I made special enquiry as to the effect

of these notices, and was glad to learn that very few, if any eggs, had been removed during last nesting season, and so far as I could judge the birds seemed to be as numerous as on any of my previous visits.

"Looking to the very large number of sea-birds of all kinds which annually resort to the Craig, and the inaccessibility of the greater number of the nests (which can only be reached by special appliances not available either to the casual visitors, fishermen or quarrymen), it would seem that only a small proportion of the more readily accessible ones could have been raided, and that the danger of extinction of any of the species was remote.

"His Lordship, however, is anxious that any traffic in eggs should be put a stop to, and attention will be again called this season to the prohibition."

THE LATE DR. E. A. WILSON.

Bird-Protectors have special cause to lament the tragic fate of Dr. E. A. Wilson, zoologist and artist of Captain Scott's expedition to the South Pole. Tender in heart as he was adventurous of spirit, he was deeply interested in birds and their preservation, and his work in former journeys has added much to the world's knowledge of birds in the Antarctic Region. He spoke on his favourite subject at one of the Annual Meetings of the Society (of which he was a member), and contributed an article on Penguins, illustrated by himself, to an early number of "Bird Notes and News," pointing out that, far as certain birds might appear to be removed from danger through man, "it is certainly unwise and untrue to say that the antarctic Penguins can never need protection." So long as there is money in penguin oil, trade will follow them far into the land of ice. It is a coincidence that the news of Dr. Wilson's death came close upon the news that the Government of Australia have at length agreed to protect the Penguins of the Macquarie Islands.

BIRD-PROTECTION IN AUSTRALIA.

Although the R.S.P.B. much regret to chronicle the dissolution of the South Australian Branch of the Society, it is pleasant to realise how much has been done in the cause of the Birds in Australia since the Bird Protection flag was planted there in 1894. Those who gathered round the first Hon. Secretary of the Branch (Mrs. John Playford) and were fired by her ardour, did well their part in bringing about a better state of things; and they had the help of supporters like Sir Samuel Way, Mr. le Hunte, Bishop and Mrs. Harmer, Sir John Cockburn, and Lady Victoria Buxton. Since that time Australia has enacted laws for the protection of native birds; laws prohibiting the exportation of skins and plumage of native birds; laws prohibiting the importation of skins or plumage (in the raw state or made up) of Egrets, Birds-of-paradise, and other persecuted species. Bird and Arbor Day has been instituted in association with School Bird-Protection

Clubs. No doubt the laws are defeated to some extent by unworthy sportsmen on one hand and by smuggling on the other; but on the plume-question at least Australia is ahead of the old country. The growth of naturalists' societies and animal-protection societies, and the work of education authorities, has made the need less urgent for specific work on behalf of the birds.

BIRD-PROTECTION IN EGYPT.

The Chairman of the Society (Mr. Montagu Sharpe) has lately interviewed the authorities in Egypt on the protection of Quail, Egrets, and other birds, and is able to report that the laws of 1912 are being well published in English, French, and Arabic. One of these laws prohibits the killing, taking, sale, or possession (alive or dead) of certain named birds, and the use of lime. The birds include the Lark, Wagtail, Warblers, Wheatear, Flycatcher, Pipit, Bee-eater, Hoopoe, Curlew, and Egret. The second enactment institutes a £10 gun-licence, non-transferable.

Economic Ornithology.

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE HERON.

At the meeting of the Carmarthen Fishery Board on January 31st, considerable discussion took place with regard to the Heron, reference being made to the article which appeared in the Winter Number of *Bird Notes and News*. One speaker proposed that 2s. a head be given for a certain time in order to reduce the number of birds. Mr. Mervyn Peel urged that there was not sufficient evidence on which to start a campaign of exter-

mination; that the Heron was in many ways the friend of the fisherman; that the rivers were full of fish; and that the birds added beauty to the landscape and interest to a day's fishing. It was decided to defer the matter for six months.

A letter on this subject from South Carolina appears in another column. In further reference to it, Mr. E. J. Brook writes from Hoddam Castle, Ecclefechan:—

“I wonder whether it is generally known that our own native Herons devour large

numbers of voles, which at times become such a plague on the sheep grazings?

"In the park round my house there is a good deal of coarse grass that at times harbours a considerable quantity of these mice, and in such seasons I have often watched Herons destroying them."

THE CASE FOR THE GULL.

The inclination displayed by certain County Councils to remove protection from the Gull on evidence that is at least doubtful, has elicited a useful pronouncement from Professor Landsborough Thomson (*Aberdeen Free Press*, January 25th, 1913) which forms an interesting sequel to the letters which have appeared in *Bird Notes and News* (pp. 19, 38).

"In the first place, two main points of criticism appear to be applicable to the information on which the case against certain birds is founded. It is, for one thing, derived from the observations of persons vitally interested in angling and fishing, and therefore prone to condemn on suspicion. But we would point out that birds which haunt rivers and estuaries may feed on many other things than fish, and that even when a bird is proved to eat fish the case is not complete until the rest of its diet has been considered; it may then be found that it eats many thousands of insects very harmful to agriculture for every time it touches fish. Secondly, we complain that the demand for war on 'all gulls' is altogether unreasonable, because by its very wording it ignores the great differences in feeding habits that exist between the various species."

For "angling and fishing" read "farming and gardening" and for "rivers and estuaries" and "fish," read "fields and gardens" and "grain" or "fruit," and Professor Thomson's argument is equally applicable to a score of persecuted land birds. He continues:—

"It is now generally recognised that it was ignorance and folly which led to the

war by game-preservers on the vermin-eating kestrel and owl on a strength of resemblance to other really harmful species and of possible occasional 'lapses from virtue' on the part of the useful birds in question."

Passing on to consider the several Gulls separately, Professor Thomson comes to the conclusion reached years ago by the late Mr. Howard Saunders in his leaflet on "Gulls," written for the R.S.P.B.; that Herring Gull and Common Gull are omnivorous, and require no special protection, at any rate in Aberdeenshire; that the Black-backed, though destructive, are not numerous; and that the most common species, the familiar Black-headed, "deserves protection owing to the immense number of agricultural pests which it has been proved to eat. It does a little harm to fisheries and will sometimes eat uncovered grain. There seems no ground for the fear of an undue increase or a change of habits." With reference to the enquiry instituted by the Cumberland County Council in 1907, and the examinations conducted by Mr. Newstead and Miss Florence, all of which show this bird's value to agriculturists, Professor Thomson says:—

"It is unfortunate that so much misunderstanding has been caused by the Cumberland Council acting on a recommendation contrary to the facts of the report and removing protection from the species lest it should become commoner and change its habits! This ridiculous decision has, in spite of almost universal condemnation, had an influence on other county authorities. We might also point out the absolute worthlessness of such arguments as that a Black-headed Gull in captivity will live wholly on fish or will eat so many at a meal; the fact that matters is that the wild birds live mainly on insects and worms. A small loch in a neighbouring county is well stocked with fish; on it nest some thousands of these gulls, and the proprietor is satisfied that they have no harmful effect on the value of his fishing."

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

CHALLENGE SHIELD COMPETITIONS.

CHALLENGE Shield Competitions are again being organised in the Elementary Schools of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cumberland, Hampshire, and Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Somerset, and Warwickshire. There is also an Open Class for all comers, and a special invitation is being given to the Schools of Derbyshire and Lancashire, through the Directors of Education for those counties, with a view to the establishment of a full Challenge Shield contest if (or when) a sufficient number of Schools compete. Pleasant testimony continues to reach the Society of useful knowledge gained and even of unexpected discoveries made by young students; of the interest and pleasure given to the children; and of the consequent evolution of eager young Bird Protectors.

One Headmistress writes :—

"I cannot tell you how much good this kind of Nature Study does the girls. Some old scholars are in Canada and Australia. Their letters are full of the birds they see there. They still watch and describe them for their own pleasure and have gained such a love for living things that life is full of interest and pleasure to them."

It would be difficult to find a better testimonial to Bird-and-Tree work; but similar tributes to the value of the scheme and the knowledge it imparts are constantly received.

BIRD-AND-TREE FESTIVALS.

Of the large number of Festivals for 1912-13 it is possible to mention only a very few. The WOBURN BOYS' SCHOOL, winners of the Bedfordshire and of the Inter-County Shields,

was on January 11th, generously fêted by the Duchess of Bedford, who presented the trophies and prize-books, and also gave handsome additional awards; thus crowning the help she has afforded the team in allowing them access to Woburn Park and woods, and also to a library of natural history works, and in frequently accompanying them on their rambles. Her Grace, who was accompanied by the Duke and the Marquess of Tavistock, thanked Mr. Studman, headmaster, for his indefatigable interest in the work, and said she was very proud of the school for having brought the Inter-County Shield for the first time to Bedfordshire.

Buckinghamshire's successful team, that of COLESHILL SCHOOL, gave a musical entertainment on November 15th. The awards were presented by Mrs. Dendy, and Mrs. Dixon Davies gave an interesting address. There was a full room, the rector, Rev. C. E. Briggs, presiding. The headmaster, Mr. Stubbings, referred to the special prizes given by Mrs. Dixon Davies in 1911 for "Bird Observations in Winter" as equally beneficial to the children and the birds, some hundreds of birds having been fed. The success of the team was due to continuous systematic work; a sound education to be of use in after life included the development and training of the child's mental powers of observation, judgment, and reasoning, and he was convinced that more could be educed from the children in one lesson out-of-doors than in two or three in the schoolroom. Two trees were subsequently planted in the playground.

In spite of a raging blizzard, few of the invited children of GREYSTOKE SCHOOL (winners of the Cumberland Shield) failed to reach Greystoke Castle on January 7th, where a delightful afternoon was provided for them by Mr. and Lady Mabel Howard. The house party and the workmen on the estate were also present, the former including Mr. Christopher Lowther, who presented the Shield and prizes, Lady Evelyn McDonnell, the Ladies Ankaret and Elizabeth Howard, Mrs. Leyborne Popham, and Sir Everard Doyle. After recitations and songs

by the children, and tea, an admirable address, with lantern slides, was given by the Rev. D. A. Scott; and finally there was a grand Christmas tree in the library, from which each child received a present.

No county had a more enthusiastic and stimulating Festival than that which celebrated the winning by RIDGE of the Hampshire Shield, thanks to the unfailing and untiring kindness of Mrs. Suckling, who not only gave extra prizes, but undertook the whole arrangements and expenses. A crowded and influential gathering in Romsey Town Hall on November 20th included members of some half-dozen teams from the neighbourhood, and was throughout of a most enthusiastic character. The Vicar (Rev. H. Martin Tapper) presided, the Shield and other awards were presented by Mrs. Chichester, essays were read, and addresses were given by the Mayor of Romsey, the Director of Education (Mr. Cowan), Admiral Sir John Hopkins, Mr. Keith Henderson (representing the R.S.P.B.), and the Rev. J. E. Kelsall. Mr. Cowan said the victory of a small country school must be a glorious encouragement to others. The greatest protection birds could have, greater than any official Order, was to get children to study them, and the value of the essays lay in their direct observation of nature. Nature study in various forms had been introduced into schools, but no form of it surpassed or even approached the standard attained in the Bird-and-Tree Essays. The teams were entertained to tea at the Temperance Hall by Mrs. Suckling, and next day the Ridge cadets had a festival and tree-planting at their own school.

Hampshire's Champion Team, the SHOLING GIRLS' SCHOOL, winners of the Shield 1909-11 and again heading the list this year, also had a very successful Festival, organised by Miss Minns. The prizes were presented by Mrs. J. N. Campbell, and the Director of Education presided. Tribute was paid to the training given by the headmistress, and by Miss Hinder, who was formerly teacher at Long Ashton, when that school carried off the Somerset honours. Six trees, presented by friendly donors, were planted.

The Somerset Shield-winners, CLEEVE SCHOOL (headmistress, Miss Hockey), had a pleasant time on December 20th. A flower-

ing acacia was formally planted in the churchyard and the planting hymn sung, after which the Vicar entertained the members of the Team, parents, and teachers to tea at the Vicarage. A crowded meeting in the schoolroom followed, when Mrs. Gibson presented the awards, essays were read, and songs and recitations given. The Vicar, who presided, urged the duty of kindness to animals, and protested especially against the use of the bearing-rein.

Arbor Day at MANCETTER also passed off in a happy and successful manner. The Warwickshire Shield was handed over to the School's care by the Vicar (Rev. T. H. Evans), Miss Heming gave the Team prizes, and a number of local residents attended and took great interest in the proceedings. Colonel Heming (who has a bird sanctuary among the osiers on his estate) entertained the young folk with fascinating stories of birds and trees of other lands, and in congratulating the Team and the headmistress, Mrs. Ingram, said that the greatest honour lay, not in the prizes, but in the kind, humane and sympathetic feeling which he hoped would adorn the character of each child through life. The programmes were prettily painted with pictures of birds by the children, and the items rendered included country and morris dances.

At PRINCES RISBOROUGH (Bucks.) C.E. School two trees were planted, and the feature of the indoor meeting was an interesting lecture "Eyes and no eyes," by the headmaster, Mr. S. H. Dyer, with lantern illustrations.

At St. Peter's Girls School, BOURNEMOUTH (Second Prize, Hampshire), the Festival was one of the most successful and largely attended yet held. After a tea, a long programme of plays, songs, and lantern lecture (by Mr. A. W. Willis) delighted the numerous audience. There were also animated waxworks, including the story of a nest-robbing boy stopped in his career by cadets of the R.S.P.B. Mrs. Ibbett, wife of the Director of Education for the Borough, presented the prizes, and special prizes were given by the school managers and by the headmistress, Miss Firbank. The Rev. Edgecombe Leachman presided.

At CARGO (Cumberland) Miss Donald gave an interesting lantern lecture on Bird-Life,

and presented a special prize for the best kept note-book. There were songs and recitations, and the whole function was an object lesson on Bird-Protection.

At HINTON WALDRIST (Berkshire), Captain Loder-Symonds, who gave away the prizes, expressed a hope that other schools in the county would take up the work, so that the Silver Challenge Shield might come back to Berkshire.

At WEMBDON (Somerset) the Rev. E. de St. Croix, in the course of an inspiring address, said he first came in contact with these excellent Bird-and-Tree Competitions in Norfolk, where he acted as supervisor in the examinations. Many people had

asked him what were the objects of the Competition, and when he explained, they agreed that it was a splendid work, well worthy of all the support that could be given it. It meant extra work for the headmaster, Mr. Wadmore, for which they should be grateful, and he hoped another year some friend would present a tree for planting.

An appropriate memorial to the late Colonel Arthur Collins, C.B., has been the purchase of land for a school garden at HAYLING, where it is hoped that trees will be planted every "Arbor Day" in order to associate his memory with the Competition in which he took so much interest.

The Press and Bird Protection.

SOME COMMENTS ON THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MEETING, 1913.

"London is unhappily the central mart to which hundreds of thousands of skins of rare and rapidly decreasing species are despatched from every continent for distribution in this savage and despicable trade. So long as this is the case, our nation is robbed of much moral authority in appealing to the Governments and peoples of other European countries to spare our Swallows and other summer migrants. An Italian peasant has much more excuse for killing a nightingale or a garden warbler to eat than an English woman of fashion has for buying a dead egret's feathers for the decoration of her head."—*Times*, March 8.

"We thoroughly endorse everything said by Lord Curzon."—*Globe*, March 7.

"Lord Curzon's speech on the preserving—or rather on the destroying—and on the imprisoning of wild birds was full of a noble impatience. The robbers and assassins of wild birds all over the world are active as ever."—*Saturday Review*, March 8.

"It is a little startling to hear from Sir Harry Johnston, but is none the less true, that Lord Kitchener has done a distinct service to Lancashire working-men by prohibiting the slaughter of insect-eating birds that haunt Egyptian cotton fields. The tsetse fly, again, which causes such infinite

loss to cattle owners in Africa, is the natural food of the beautiful egret."—*Evening Standard*, March 7.

"Lord Curzon, in making an eloquent appeal against the destruction of bird life caused by the demands of millinery, instanced some facts and figures which give one 'furiously to think'."—*Queen*, March 15.

"Lord Curzon's indictment of the traffic in bird life will surely not fall on deaf ears."—*Leicester Mail*, March 7.

"Lord Curzon's vigorous indictment of the trade in birds' feathers and skins will be warmly endorsed by all humane people."—*Nottingham Evening Post*, March 7.

"If hard words could put an end to a scandalous trade, we should hear little more of the cruelties involved in obtaining plumage for woman's hats after the scathing speech which Lord Curzon made. His Lordship described the traffic as wanton, nefarious, wicked, abominable, appalling, and inhuman. Not one of these epithets is too strong. . . . There seems to be nothing for it but to resort to legislative measures against the importation of plumage."—*Dur-dee Advertiser*, March 7.

It is proposed to print Lord Curzon's speech as a leaflet.

IN THE COURTS.

THE BIRDCATCHER'S DECOY.—At *Bury St. Edmunds*, on February 13, Frederick Snell and William Polley were charged with cruelty to a decoy Goldfinch. The men were birdcatching, with the decoy braced to a stick. On the evidence of the police and an R.S.P.C.A. inspector the string cut into its flesh, and defendant admitted he knew "there was a little bit off under the wing." The Bench dismissed the case on the ground that there was no "intentional" cruelty. (West Suffolk is one of the few county areas in which the catching of Goldfinches is allowed; and the County Council has now agreed to apply for an Order to protect them all the year.)

THE BIRD-DEALER.—At *Acton*, on February 3rd, Edward Stanley was fined 40s. for cruelty to wild birds. The R.S.P.B. prosecuted. Defendant had five birds in a cage 11 in. by 4 in. by 7½ in., two Linnets in a cage 5 in. by 4½ in., and two Thrushes in linen bags in his pocket. The magistrate remarked that fortunately the law protected birds from brutes like defendant, and at once granted the request for an order for their release.—At *Pluistow*, on January 13th, Elizabeth Smith was fined 40s. for cruelty to ten Greenfinches. Inspector Moxey, of the R.S.P.B., found the birds in small and dirty cages (8 in. square for two birds), four without water. One bird was unable to rise from the cage floor.

CLUB-ROW MARKET.—At *Old Street* (London), on December 30th, Thomas Painter was fined 20s. and costs for cruelty to four Thrushes. Mr. Wilson, for the R.S.P.B., stated that the birds, evidently newly caught and greatly terrified, were being hawked in the Bethnal Green Sunday market. There was neither food nor water in the cage, and one bird was on its back with another on top of it; defendant put a bird in a cloth bag and handed it to a purchaser, who placed it in his pocket.—At *Marylebone*, on February 20th, Alfred Jenkins was charged with cruelty at the Club-row Market. The R.S.P.B. Inspector said that defendant and two other men were selling birds from a stall, each bird being handed over in a paper bag; eighteen Linnets and a Goldfinch were in one cage, without food or water, and twenty-four Larks in another very dirty cage

underneath the stall; he called in a policeman to see the state of the birds. The constable, however, gave contradictory evidence, saying that the birds were only "just a little huddled up" and had food and water. Mr. Plowden thereupon dismissed the case.

DIFFERING MAGISTRATES.—At *West Ham* on December 19th, Ernest Frederick Wells was fined 40s. for cruelty to a decoy Greenfinch. He was bird-catching in Stratford Marshes and the decoy bird was found with a wire round its body, nearly dead. At *Grays*, Edwin and Henry Glibbery were summoned for cruelty to a decoy Greenfinch. They were birdcatching at Tilbury; the decoy was tied by its legs, and round the body was a piece of thin string which cut into its flesh, and must have caused great pain. The magistrates dismissed the case on payment of 4s. costs.

BIRDCATCHING AT MAIDENHEAD.—At *Maidenhead*, on January 28th, Alexander Paget, birdcatcher, was summoned by the R.S.P.B. for cruelty to five Linnets and seven Bullfinches. The birds were used as decoys, and were found in filthy cages, without food and water, two of the cages measuring only 6 in. by 6 in. Police evidence corroborated that of the inspector. The Bench dismissed the case with a warning to defendant.

"The Plume Question in a Nutshell."

Reprinted from the Winter Number of *Bird Notes and News*, with a note on the London Feather Sales from—

"Our Vanishing Wild Life"
(Dr. Hornaday).

Price 3d. per doz., 1/9 per 100.

BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERBY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.



ST. CATHERINE'S
LIGHTHOUSE

(fitted with racks and perches
for Migrating Birds).

See p. 89.



VISITORS TO THE LIGHTHOUSE, April 26th, 1913: with dead Warblers at foot
(Mr. Lee, Supt. of South Coast Lighthouses: Mr. Eagle Clarke: Heer Adolphe Burdet;
a keeper: Mr. Meade-Waldo: Captain Tailby).

Photos from "The Car," by permission.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

JUNE, 1913.

[No. 6.]

Man's Account with the Plume-Trade.

IN much that has been written and said on the subject of the trade in birds' feathers, stress has been laid on the huge and reckless obliteration of exceptionally beautiful birds, and on the cruelty involved in destroying them in the breeding-time. But comparatively little attention has been given to the human side of the account. This is well worth considering. Not indeed the profits of importers and dealers, for these, though of course at the back of the whole matter, concern an exceedingly small body of the community; but certain bye-results of the trade which have a far-reaching and incalculable influence not only in the lands where the feathers are obtained, but also in those which receive and prepare and sell them.

In the first place, the countries of production may be considered. Twenty years ago, British India was a favourite land of the plume-hunter, and hardly a year went by without reports reaching the local governments of the price that India was paying for him. Complaints were made of insect-attacks on all kinds of crops, attacks by locusts, attacks by the borer-fly on coffee plantations, attacks by caterpillars on the cinchona, attacks by other insects on rice and cotton fields. Such insect pests could be dealt with only by birds, and the birds were being swept away for the plume-markets. The passion and, for the time being, the pay for killing became a better trade than food-

growing; small agriculturists sold their ploughs to secure money wherewith to buy guns. Moreover the game-birds, Jungle-Cock, Peafowl, and Imperial Pigeon, were being exterminated by destruction in the breeding-time. India, as one of the Indian newspapers pointed out at the time, was paying for women's feathers by a sacrifice of human food, the material of human raiment, loss to the State, and penury to the individual. For this expenditure the Plume Trade was responsible. India had a strong Government, and the question was dealt with firmly and simply by prohibition.

The greatest of all hunting-grounds for the White Egret, to furnish the "osprey" of commerce, was formerly Florida. The birds existed in millions; they were practically extirpated by the plume-hunters, who in spite of prohibition and of Wardens are still ready to pounce upon any insufficiently protected colony and to destroy it. At the present time the food-crops of Florida and Georgia, Carolina and Louisiana, and other States, are suffering every year for want of the insect-eating herons.

In other countries the effect of killing the birds is similar; in those at present uncultivated a harvest of plagues is being provided for the cultivator of the future, a harvest of pests and disease-carriers for the colonist. Sir Harry Johnston has given his warning with regard to insect

hosts of Uganda and elsewhere ; the President of the French Congo foresees the reign of the insect over the whole Dark Continent.

Coming next to the actual hunters and natives, further fruits of the trade are met with. The white hunter has to face the miasma of the swamp, the danger from hostile natives, the bites and stings of poisonous creatures. There is no need to quote ghastly instances of such things. The natives employed are commonly men of the lowest caste or class, and Mr. Walter Goodfellow has recounted how the plume-merchant's representatives have paid them in drink and opium and disease.

Nearer home the result or profit to man is the most striking, the most deadly of all. It is a blight of another kind than that of the worm or the locust. Smuggling is one expression of it; smuggling of contraband plumage as "cowhair" or "slippers" or "curios," or what you will. The amazing device of the "artificial osprey" is another phase. During twenty years this stratagem was employed to dispose of Egret plumes to women who did not wish to wear them. It was blazoned abroad in face of repeated exposure from scientific men; and hundreds of young women in stores and shops were bidden to utter the falsehood and keep up the fraud. All manner of materials were deliberately cited as composing these indubitable feathers; they were flatly affirmed to be made in factories that were never located, by workers who never existed. The deception was such as to discredit fatally any honest imitation which might be put on the market.

A further illustration of the same phase is furnished by the story of imaginary egret "farms," where birds were said to be bred for plumage; of "moulted plumes" which whitened imaginary plains and were avowed to supply the sale-room;

of imaginary egret nests woven with feathers which the hunters were able to extract for the market. Throughout the literature of the trade-defence, statements of this nature abound. Its readers are informed that there were never many Egrets in Florida (where one heronry alone was estimated to contain three million birds); that birds are killed for food and their plumage merely utilized as a bye-product (birds such as Terns and Kingfishers and Parrots, and the Herons whose bodies have been found in festering heaps!); that the trade does not want rare birds: when Trogons, disguised as "trojans," Rhea disguised as "vulture," Rollers disguised as "jays," Quetzals and Lyre-birds, and Birds-of-paradise of the most limited range are included in its spoils; that Humming-birds are "not wanted": when 40,000 were sold at the London auctions in 1911; that the Egrets of "South America" are protected, when no such thing as protection does or can exist in the vast countries of that continent (even if a landowner here and there tries to stop the killing by roaming plume-hunters of birds on his land); that the trade was "not responsible" for the slaughter for millinery purposes of three hundred thousand Albatrosses, Gulls, and Terns on Laysan Island in 1909; that it is civilization, rubber, growth of cities, anything but the desire of commercial gain, which brings birds' feathers into the sale-room; that the most superb plumes can be imitated in poultry-feathers, and that infinitely more material is obtained from the poulterer than from foreign lands: and yet, that to stop the import of foreign birds' plumage, will throw thousands of persons out of work. Finally comes the claim that a trade which has dealt in destruction all its days—content to think that when

one land was pillaged another could be exploited, and when one specimen of bird was made scarce another could be declared "fashionable"—is to be thanked for the establishment of ostrich farms and has "protected" the Egret and the Rhea and the Bird-of-paradise!

These paradoxes are cited here, not as

arguments on the scientific or humanitarian side of the question, but as examples of the curious moral obliquity which appears to beset the whole business, and which is probably without a parallel in the history of commerce. It is one of the items to be set down in man's account with the trade.

The Plume-Trade.

THE attention of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has been called to a letter, enclosing certain "Objects" and "Resolutions" issued in the name of a newly-constituted body calling itself "The Committee for the Economic Preservation of Birds." At first glance these "objects" may appear to consist merely of extremely vague and sketchy ideas as to the protection and domestication of wild birds; but little penetration is needed to discover that the vague verbiage covers a new effort of the feather-trade to postpone or block legislation.

The committee is said to be composed of naturalists and representatives of the trade. The objects are to "unite for practical purposes all those interested in the world's avifauna;" to "obtain reliable evidence" as to existing conditions of bird-life; to consider and suggest "to those interested" the best means of protecting and maintaining "all useful species, including those used in the feather-trade" (no reference being made to the trade's previous unpleasant history in this connexion). These objects are further explained by one of the secretaries of the Committee, Mr. S. L. Bensusan, in a newspaper article, where he argues that "to turn birds to economic use" is justifiable, while to "preserve all species against

extinction or reduction to danger point is the duty of our legislators." This division of duty is one usually advocated by the trade, the while they use their utmost endeavours to prevent legislation. "To accomplish both ends" he advocates establishment of reservations, and commends the Audubon Societies for their work in this direction—work necessitated by the raids of the plume-hunter, against whom, armed wardens have still to contend. He dwells on the scientific value of experiments in domestication, with the inference that what the Audubon reserves have done to preserve Herons alive, trade reserves might do to provide Herons for "economic use;" and with an easy assurance that the species wanted by the trade might be reared in Britain, or at any rate in France, if only legislation against the destruction and use of the wild birds is deferred until these interesting experiments provide a few hundred thousand birds a year for the saleroom. Mr. Bensusan omits to say why his scientific friends have delayed this scheme until his commercial friends have rendered Parliamentary interference imperative, or why it should be suffered to impede legislation.

Following the "objects" of the committee come certain conditions to which all members must agree. They

must promise to raise no objection to the use of any plumage unless the species is "in danger of extermination or serious reduction;" to support, directly or indirectly, no Bill unless it legislates for the whole continent as well as for that part of Europe controlled by the British Parliament; to discourage "irresponsible attacks" on the trade (irresponsible persons being no doubt all those not engaged in or allied with the trade); to deny in the Press any charges which this committee may find to be untrue or unfounded (this committee, it will be remembered, consisting of all who choose to accept these conditions); and to refrain from "all attacks on the trade during the accumulation of evidence." In plain words, they are to deliver themselves, bound and gagged, to the feather merchants.

What the Secretary of the Selborne Society is doing in this *milieu* as co-secretary with Mr. Bensusan, and how the committee comes to send out its circulars from the Selborne Society's office, is a problem to be considered by members of that society.

The one clear and plain fact, which stands out more strongly than ever, is that legislation to protect birds against the trade which has for thirty years been decimating them, is the essential thing to-day. The flotation of schemes or dreams of "economic preservation" must be pushed aside by every one interested in the slightest degree in the real preservation of birds.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *North China Herald*, writing from Yunnan, in March last, says:—

"A disastrous crusade is being made against the beautiful Golden Pheasants which are so well known in West China. The word has gone forth that their skins

are sought after by foreigners, and at the present rate of slaughter this bird is on the way to rapid extinction. It is a blot on western civilisation that artificial beauty should be purchased by the final destruction of so much natural beauty."

A large quantity of Golden Pheasants, and also of Lady Amherst Pheasants, another Chinese species, were offered at the London feather-sale in the present month, together with Silver, Numidian, and Japanese Pheasants, and the Impeyan and Argus Pheasants of India. These, it will be observed, are wild birds, not feathers from poulterers' shops. Having decimated the wild birds so that they no longer pay for the hunting, the trade might possibly regard the formation of private breeding preserves for trade purposes as ample atonement for the sacking of nature.

THE U.S.A. TARIFF BILL.

A striking feature of the new Tariff Bill of the United States is the provision, drafted by the New York Zoological Society, absolutely prohibiting importation of the plumage of wild birds into the States. After long and careful deliberation, and hearing of evidence, the following clause has been accepted, without alteration, by the Ways and Means Committee of Congress:—

"Provided that the importation of aigrettes, egret plumes, or 'osprey' plumes, and the feathers, quills, heads, wings, tails, skins, or parts of skins, of wild birds, either raw or manufactured, and not for scientific or educational purposes, is hereby prohibited; but this provision shall not apply to the feathers or plumes of ostriches, or to the feathers of domestic fowls of any kind."

The traffic has few friends in America and no advocates except those engaged in it. In supporting the clause before the committee, the Director of the New York Zoological Park, Dr. Hornaday,

laid down the axiom, "No nation has a right to promote unjustifiable slaughter by maintaining the market for its products," and he added:—

"The new and alarming slaughter conditions of to-day demand new and drastic measures for their suppression. No half-way measures will serve. The only argument that can be advanced by the trade is—the trade want business, the merchants and

employees want the money. The same plea is made by every producer of opium and counterfeit money, but opium selling and counterfeiting are sternly forbidden by the laws of the United States. It is safe to say that an entire discontinuance of the importation of the plumage of wild birds would not actually throw out of employment a single industrial worker. If feathers cannot be used on women's hats, the labour of women's hands will produce other ornaments to take their place."

Economic Ornithology.

WOODPECKERS AND FORESTRY.

THE value of Woodpeckers to the forester is the subject of an article on "Woodpeckers in South Hampshire," in the *Field* of April 19th, 1913. The writer observes:—

"All Crown woods, King's liberties, the New Forest, and other well-drained and over-cleared woodlands offer few attractions to these knights of the chisel. There gnarled and disreputable old age makes room for youth and respectability, and the natural nesting-sites and favourite feeding-grounds are persistently done away with, to the detriment and eventual exclusion of these protective guardians.

"No birds, save Owls, in any civilised country deserve State protection more than these hole borers, and those who are practically connected with the business of forestry worked to pay, are keenly aware of the great good to arboriculture done by the Woodpeckers. As the Rook and Starling are the recognised guardians of all pasturage and cattle lands, destroying the vermin which infest them, so Woodpeckers are the custodians and caretakers of forest growth, and feed on the beetles, grubs, cockchafers, and ants therein from dewy morn to dusky eve.

"Throughout Germany it has long been recognised that the protection of these birds is sound political economy. Laws have been passed in Saxony not only to protect their nests, but to preserve any decayed trees likely to be of use to the Woodpecker family. 'Birds animate and ornament the country

they visit or occupy, and are absolute and necessary aids to agriculture.'"

Besides leaving some old trees for the Woodpeckers, the advisability suggests itself of providing nesting-boxes of the Berlepsch make, constructed in exact imitation of the bird's natural hole. These are supplied by the R.S.P.B., and it is especially interesting to know that a Great Spotted Woodpecker (a much rarer species than the Yaffle) has taken possession of one of them in Richmond Park this spring.

THE "SPARROW" CLUB.

The *Fruit, Flower, and Vegetable Trades' Journal* comments as follows on the delusive "Sparrow Club," usually the product of some Boeotian village of the wilds, which gives awards for the destruction of miscellaneous small birds:—

"It is passing strange that with increased public funds available for the furtherance of agricultural study and a general movement towards the education of the masses, little or nothing is being done to bring the residents of the country side into closer communion with the workings of Nature. This fact is impressed upon our mind when reading of the records made by the so-called rat and sparrow clubs throughout the country. . . . War against vermin may have much to commend it, but it will be a sorry day for the countryside when a campaign of extermination is allowed to be carried out against

the feathered tribe. Some birds undoubtedly work considerable harm to fruit crops, but all birds, without exception, do some measure of good, either directly or indirectly. The harm done by some birds may possibly outweigh the amount of good they do, though authoritative opinion differs on this point, and for that reason their restriction may be called for. Environment, experience, and, above all, a sense of responsibility, must be the guiding principles when seeking to interfere with Nature's ordinances. It is

almost incredible in these days of enlightenment that such deliberate slaughter as these 'clubs' boast of should be tolerated. . . .

"We write in no sentimental strain, though common decency must revolt against the youth of the villages being encouraged in such battues, but in the firm belief that greater trouble than any wrought even by bullfinches or blackbirds awaits the industry of fruit-growing if such excesses are not put a stop to, and these so-called rat and sparrow clubs brought under proper supervision."

Notes.

A BILL, known, from the name of the originator, as the Weeks-McLean Bill, has passed through the United States Congress for giving Federal protection to migratory birds. Birds which pass from State to State in their northern and southern migrations will now be under the guardianship of the Biological Survey of the agricultural department, which has given earnest attention and careful investigation to the habits of birds and to their work in the destruction of weed-seeds and insect-pests. It is believed that this will help to preserve many useful species which State laws have failed to protect efficiently. The edible or "game" birds have suffered especially, those of economic value as breeding species being killed in their migrations across other States. It is a similar loss to that which European countries owe to the hecatombs of small birds in Italy. Needless to say, the Bill means a vast amount of labour to the Biological Survey, who are preparing maps to show the breeding and winter quarters, time and line of migration, and present protection of some 150 species.

* * *

The collecting curse unfortunately has roots in America as well as in Britain.

A British bird-lover writes from Palestine :

"Jericho is a fascinating place for bird-life, and I was indignant to hear that a gang of Americans from Harvard has been working havoc there. They brought away, among other booty, eighty eggs of *Cinnyris osea* !"

Cinnyris osea is a beautiful little Sun-bird, of which Canon Tristram says, in his "Fauna of Palestine": "To the naturalist this is the most interesting species of the whole Palestine avifauna. In the first place it belongs to a truly tropical family. In the second place it is absolutely peculiar to the Holy Land, and within its limits is confined to a very narrow strip of territory." So disgraceful a theft cannot be visited too severely by the social leaders of Harvard.

* * *

An unusual number of lectures in connexion with the Society have been successfully organised of late by Hon. Secretaries, to whom many thanks are due. In addition to those named at the Council meeting, may be mentioned a capital meeting held at Winchester on June 4th, when Mr. Kearton gave one of his delightful talks on birds. Canon Vaughan, in whom the Winchester Chapter have so devoted a student of botany and ornithology, presided, and Miss Williams was rewarded by a large audience for the

heavy trouble and expense devolving on her, the total receipts being sent to the Society.

* * *

The Duchess of Portland, presiding at the Serlby Hall meeting, called attention to many activities of the Society, notably the Brean Down Reserve and the Lighthouse fund; and Viscountess Galway must have touched many hearts by her appeal to her hearers to look after the safety and welfare of the little everyday birds familiar to all of them. Let them, she urged, regard themselves as trustees of the birds, responsible for the wellbeing of those in their own vicinity, and make it part of their ordinary country life to care for them, particularly in wintry weather.

* * *

The imperative need for such schemes as the R.S.P.B. Bird-and-Tree Competitions is shown by complaints raised in more quarters than one of the destruction of plants, insects, and birds' eggs promoted by certain forms of so-called "nature-study" in schools. Some of the public schools permit, or encourage, boys to collect rare eggs and rare butterflies, an "oologist" or "entomologist" among the masters leading the way. Now the elementary scholars are, it is alleged, being taken for nature-rambles, in which the predatory instincts of the child are nurtured under the name of science; and the destructive young savage is merely transformed into the destructive young prig. "Keep the children ignorant; keep their eyes closed and their ears stopped, for if they once know and recognize beauty and rarity they will of course destroy it!" is the anxious cry. It is not an unnatural one, in view of the haste with which the vandal-public rush in to ruin for ever the charm of a beauty-spot to which train or tramcar conducts

them. But there is surely another remedy than ignorance; and the sooner county education authorities wake to the fact the better. The tree of knowledge is not of necessity a upas-tree blasting the life and beauty beneath its shade.

* * *

A correspondent sends a photograph-illustration from one of the dailies, showing a group of men of what is called the "working class" loitering by an aviary in one of the London parks; to the aviary railings are fastened a number of small cages tied up in the familiar black cloth, wherein are prisoned captive birds. The letterpress explains that the east-end working-men being "very fond" of song-birds, take their "pets" to receive lessons from those in the aviary. "I always failed to see before," says the Society's correspondent, "why these aviaries of little English birds were needed, as proper provision for nesting-places and food in the parks would do much more to provide attractive bird-life. The working-man's 'fondness' is for the money the birds win at the public-house, and I still fail to see why our parks should act as feeders for this business."

* * *

The majority of people nowadays have some foreign correspondence, consigning the envelopes to the waste-paper basket, and many will be glad to hear how they may turn this wasted material to account for the benefit of the Birds. A Member of the Society kindly undertakes to dispose of all foreign stamps, common or rare, and thereby raise a small special fund; "the results may not be great, but every little helps." Any such stamps sent to the Secretary of the R.S.P.B., at 23, Queen Anne's Gate, will accordingly be forwarded to Miss Wiltshire.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

COUNCIL MEETING.

THE Society's quarterly meeting was held at the Offices, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W., on April 18th, 1913, when there were present: Mr. Montagu Sharpe (Chairman), Mr. Bell, Dr. Drewitt, Miss Hall, Mr. F. E. Lemon (Hon. Sec.), Mrs. Lemon, Mr. Meade-Waldo, Mr. Ogilvie-Grant, Miss Pollock, and Captain Tailby, and Miss Gardiner (Secretary).

Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Hon. Secretary reported the issue of the Annual Report, with Proceedings at the Annual Meeting, and it was agreed to issue also separate copies of the Proceedings in order to give wider circulation to the speeches of Lord Curzon and Sir Harry Johnston. The deputation to Trinity House and subsequent arrangements with regard to Bird Protection at the Lighthouses, and the legal work of the Society in the matter of prosecutions were likewise reported and discussed. Twenty lectures had been given, illustrated by the Society's slides; and thanks were accorded to Mr. Masefield for his lectures on behalf of the Society, to the Viscountess Galway, who lent the theatre at Serlby Hall for a drawing-room meeting, and to Mrs. Bradshaw, of Retford, Mrs. Gerard Dowson, of Radcliffe-on-Trent, and Miss Denton, of Rugby, for organising most successful meetings. Bird Protection Orders had been issued for two English, one Scotch, and one Irish county, and for three county boroughs.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The accounts for the quarter were received and passed. Mrs. H. S. Tunnard

was appointed Hon. Sec. for Denmark Hill and Dulwich. The undermentioned were elected Fellows and Members of the Society:—

FELLOWS.—C. S. Ascherson and Mrs. Ascherson (London, S.W.), Miss M. Bradish (London, W.), Earl Curzon of Kedleston, H. J. Hill (Woking), Mrs. Lloyd-Theakston (Barmouth), His Honour Judge Coleridge Mackarness (London, S.W.), Miss Urith Shore (London, S.W.), Miss M. J. Stevens (Liverpool), Miss A. Townshend (London, W.), Mrs. Desborough Walford (London, S.W.).

LIFE FELLOW.—J. M. Hanbury (London, E.C.).

MEMBERS.—Mrs. August (Penarth), Mrs. S. A. Barr (St. Leonards), R. M. Barrington (Bray), Oscar R. Baynard (Florida, U.S.A.), J. Beetham (Doncaster), W. A. Bilney (Weybridge), W. F. Biscoe (Tewkesbury), Miss Bromwich (Rugby), W. Burke (London, W.), Ernest W. Clarke (Musselburgh), Miss S. Clements (Cootehill, co. Cavan), H. Ashmore Davidson (Penrith), Edward B. Dawson (Lancaster), Miss Eleanor Elias (Niton, I.W.), Mrs. J. Elson (Aberdovey), Miss Embleton (London, S.W.), Mrs. Ferraby (Leeds), Miss Gaskell (Midhurst), Hon. Mrs. Grant-Suttie (North Berwick), Miss M. B. Hall (Brooklime, Mass.), Mrs. Travers Hawes (Chislehurst), J. Haslam (Radcliffe-on-Trent), Miss Herchmer (London, S.E.), Rev. G. M. A. Hewett (Winchester), E. Houldgate, T. Hughes (Radcliffe-on-Trent), Miss E. M. Irvine (Liverpool), Miss Laura Kay (Harrogate), Mrs. Mayer (Birmingham), J. Monteath (Kippen, N.B.), Mrs. W. H. Newton (Cheltenham), Miss Grace Palethorpe (London, N.W.), Gordon Piper (Epsom), Mrs. J. S. Preston (Marlborough), Miss Selina Quin (Wallingford), Mrs. W. J. Rawson (Radcliffe-on-Trent), Mrs. H. N. Sporberg (Rugby), Mrs. Turner (Bridlington), J. H. Vickers (Newport, Salop), Mrs. Verner (Kenley), Alfred White, Mrs. White (Bramhall), Mrs. Yates (Radcliffe-on-Trent).

Watchers Committee.

The Watchers Committee detailed the arrangements made at their meetings

on February 14th and April 18th for Watchers for the season of 1913, and submitted reports from them, and also on the destruction of birds by pole-traps in Norway; on the exportation of birds to British Columbia; on the birds of Ailsa Craig and Achill, etc. Various communications were read and instructions given for action where necessary, and the reports of several local Bird Protection associations were received and considered.

General Business.

The Standing Committees were appointed. Legislation in regard to the trade in plumage was discussed, and it was decided to send certain communications to the Members of the House of Commons and to other persons and corporations concerned. Action to be taken with respect to the use of pole-traps in Norway (as recounted to the Annual Meeting of the Society by Mr. Hanbury) was agreed to, and other subjects were considered.

The Watchers Committee met again on June 2nd, and the Publication and General Purposes Committees on June 20th.

Next Meeting of the Council, July 18th.

PROTECTION OF MIGRATING BIRDS.

A good start has been made with the experiment at British lighthouses, designed to test the efficacy of the apparatus invented by Professor Thijsse for saving migratory birds. As explained in the Spring Number of *Bird Notes and News*, Professor Thijsse contends that a large proportion of the vast number of birds which perish at lighthouses do so, not through flying directly at the lantern, but by circling about it until they become exhausted; and his provision of racks and perches for them to alight and rest

upon, has proved highly successful at the great Terschelling Lighthouse of the Frisian Islands. Heer Thijsse's device had to be altered largely in order to adapt it to the different shape and construction of St. Catherine's, the English lighthouse selected for the initial experiment; many thanks are due to the Board of Trinity House and the principal engineer, Sir Thomas Matthews, for the care and attention which have been given to the work. Owing to the many details and difficulties to be met with in making and fixing an extended series of rests on and about the great lantern, it was unfortunately found impossible to have the apparatus satisfactorily accomplished in time for the great spring migrations; but in some respects the delay was fortunate as it enabled inspection to be made and suggestions and improvements carried out before the whole work was executed.

On April 26th, Mr. Meade-Waldo, Chairman of the Watchers Committee, visited the Lighthouse in company with Heer Adolphe Burdet, of Overveen, Holland, Heer Thijsse's co-adjutor, who came to England for the express purpose, and Mr. Eagle Clarke, of the Royal Scottish Museum, one of the greatest authorities on Bird Migration. They were met by the Superintendent of South-coast Lighthouses, and by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, Colonel and Mrs. Seely, Dr. F. D. Drewitt, and Captain Tailby. Mr. Montagu Sharpe was unable to be present, being detained in London. Lord Montagu has published a very interesting account of the visit in *The Car* of May, and kindly allows some of his photographs taken on the occasion to appear in the present number of *Bird Notes and News*. A careful inspection was made of the racks erected and of the plans prepared for the remainder. The test had already been sufficient to show that the birds would not settle

on perches in the dark, and those placed above the light have therefore to be removed as useless, and a larger number constructed to project over the eaves. A further inspection was made on the 27th, and on the 28th, and an interview at Trinity House resulted in courteous consent from the authorities to have the proposed improvements carried out.

The urgent need for efforts to meet this great and growing danger to our migrating birds, together with the difficulty of doing so without interfering in any way with the light itself, presents a problem which bird-lovers are facing none too soon. The pitiful waste of bird-life was instanced at St. Catherine's two nights before the visit of the Society's representatives. On the night of the 24th there had been an immense arrival of spring migrants, and some 450 were picked up dead in the Lighthouse gallery, while others of both killed and wounded were carried over and must have perished. The majority were Whitethroats and Willow-Wrens, while the remainder belonged to the following species:—

Swallow, House-Martin, Sand-Martin, Wheatear, Lesser Whitethroat, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Sedge-Warbler, Grasshopper Warbler, Nightingale, Pied Flycatcher, Redstart, Whinchat, Wryneck, Water-Rail.

It will be seen, as Lord Montagu comments, "that only insect-eaters are included, and it is wonderful that many of these small and fragile creatures, some of them hardly bigger than large butterflies, should be able to perform journeys across the Channel, a distance varying from 150 miles to 21 miles, often in the face of strong contrary winds." Most of these little birds winter in Africa. Lord Montagu adds:—

"From St. Catherine's Lighthouse the French coast is about 80 to 90 miles away. When these 450 birds were killed on the night of April 24th, there happened to be a light

southerly wind, with some intermittent mist and rain, the very conditions that are most dangerous from a bird point of view. Allowing for a certain amount of assistance from a wind of about 20 miles an hour velocity, these little birds must have taken between two and three hours to cross, flying at 30 miles an hour. It is interesting also to note that the first migrants do not appear to reach the lighthouse as a rule before from 9 to 10 p.m., when it is quite dark, while the greatest slaughter occurs from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., which seems to indicate that the birds must have left the French coast at any time between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m.

"No one can tell exactly why birds should be attracted by a bright light. In the daytime, when the sun is shining ever so brightly, they do not fly upward out of sight in an endeavour to reach the source of our light and heat beyond our atmosphere. But a bright light at night attracts all wild animals, and it is interesting to know that migrating birds only seem to be attracted by bright lights on nights when there is no moon and when the stars are also invisible. On even the darkest nights, if there are only a few stars visible, the birds do not fly to the lighthouse in anything but insignificant numbers, and it has often been observed that, after a storm has passed, when the sky begins to clear and one or two stars reappear, away go the whole crowd of birds which have till then been flying round the light. Almost one might imagine that birds could take their bearings from the stars."

The following is a list of subscriptions received for the R.S.P.B. Fund for Protection of Migrating Birds, to May 30th, 1913; and the sincere thanks of the Council are due for the generous help which has made it possible to give Professor Thijssse's methods a thorough trial without trenching on funds so greatly needed for other branches of the work:—

£200:—Mrs. Grove Grady.

£50:—William B. Gibbins, Esq.

£25:—Earl Curzon of Kedleston.

£20:—Rev. A. L. Hussey.

£10 10s.:—Miss Ellen Gilmour.

£10:—The Misses E. and R. Good; Mrs. Greene; Rt. Hon. Lord Lilford; Royal

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

£5 5s. :—Hon. Charles Rothschild.

£5 :—Anonymous ; Thos. Baring, Esq. ; Lord Boston ; Miss Chichester ; Sir Wm. Portal, Bt.

£3 3s. :—E. L. Holland, Esq. ; Mrs. Fuller Maitland ; Mrs. E. Phillips.

£3 :—Mrs. Johnston ; Miss A. M. Jeafreson ; Miss E. Shadwell.

£2 10s. :—Miss F. Cochrane.

£2 2s. :—C. S. Cockburn, Esq. ; Mrs. Coppinger ; Mrs. Melvill ; Miss E. H. Melvill ; Albert Pam, Esq. ; Montagu Sharpe, Esq. ; Her Grace the Duchess of Somerset ; E. J. Stephens, Esq. ; Mrs. R. W. Williamson.

£2 :—H. F. Buxton, Esq. ; Miss Mortimore ; Laurence Page, Esq. ; J. E. Pearson, Esq. ; Mrs. E. Urban Smith ; Lady Laura Ridding.

£1 10s. :—Miss A. E. Sellon ; Mrs. Smith Wright.

£1 1s. :—Mrs. Arthur Allen ; Mrs. F. W. Ashley ; Frank C. H. Borrett, Esq. ; Mrs. Stratton Boulnois ; Miss Byas ; Mrs. Close ; Russell Coombe, Esq. ; D. Davidson, Esq. ; Mrs. F. Dawson ; F. D. Drewitt, Esq. ; The Viscountess Galway ; Miss M. B. Gamlin ; H. J. Hill, Esq. ; T. B. Jeffreys, Esq. ; Miss Kemplay ; A. Holte Macpherson, Esq. ; Mrs. Edward Maitland ; Mrs. Massey ; Miss M. Molesworth ; Rt. Hon. Lord Moulton ; Norfolk and Norwich Branch R.S.P.C.A. ; Christopher Nugent, Esq. ; The Misses Sibly ; Miss Helen Stewart ; Miss Underwood ; Miss E. M. Williams ; Mrs. J. B. Williams.

£1 :—H. E. Addison, Esq. ; J. A. Barlow, Esq. ; J. E. Bellows, Esq. ; Dr. W. A. Carline ; J. F. Carnell, Esq. ; Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Chitty ; The Misses Christian ; F. H. Duffield, Esq. ; Miss Ferguson ; Lady Fullerton ; Sir Wm. Graham Greene ; Miss E. A. Harwood ; Mrs. Horsfall ; Sir H. Seton Kerr ; Miss V. E. Oates ; Mrs. M. E. Sadler ; Mrs. Summers ; Miss H. E. Whitaker.

14s. :—Miss M. Kleinward.

10s. 6d. :—Rev. James Cross ; T. R. Gleghorn, Esq. ; Philip Gosse, Esq. ; Professor G. T. H. Lloyd.

10s. :—Lady Allchin ; Anon (Twickenham) ; Chas. A. Keith Falconer, Esq. ; Miss Eva Freshfield ; Miss M. B. Greenwood ; Mrs. Gregory ; W. A. Harford, Esq. ; Miss L. E. Lambart ; Mrs. Blundell Martino ; Mrs.

Mozley ; Mrs. Parson ; W. Stanley Peach, Esq. ; Miss E. Roscrow ; Mrs. Sellon ; Mrs. F. S. Stevenson ; Mrs. Sturge ; Mrs. H. S. Tunnard.

5s. 6d. :—Bernard N. Temperley, Esq.

5s. :—A Friend at Brighton ; C. M. Armstrong, Esq. ; Miss E. Evelyn Armstrong ; Mrs. Cecil Bagshaw ; Miss V. M. Bagshaw ; Mrs. Beadnell ; Miss E. M. Browne ; Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Cash ; A. Craig, Esq. ; George Cope, Esq. ; Miss Cox ; Miss Mabel Dawney ; Lt.-Col. Duthie ; Lawrence B. Faraday, Esq. ; G. K. ; B. S. Hawkins, Esq. ; Mrs. Holmes ; H. G. ; Miss D. F. Jackson ; Mrs. Leggett ; The Misses Lock ; Mrs. Meynell ; J. W. McLellan, Esq. ; Mrs. E. Millward ; Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson ; Capt. and Mrs. Palliser ; Miss Palliser ; Miss Octavia Paterson ; Miss Preston ; W. R. Reynolds, Esq. ; C. B. Rickett, Esq. ; Miss M. A. Sheffield ; Miss Helen Smith ; Miss Snow ; Col. C. Spottiswoode ; Capt. E. A. Thomas ; Mrs. Vaudrey ; Alfred White, Esq. ; Mrs. Woolner ; Miss Edith Williamson.

4s. :—The Misses Churton ; Miss Douglas Douglas ; Mr. and Miss Roscoe.

3s. :—A. Friend ; Karin de Beaufort ; The Misses Coleridge.

2s 6d. :—Miss Chute ; The Misses Cobb ; Arthur S. Cutbill, Esq. ; Miss E. M. Elias ; Miss H. M. England ; Mrs. Forster ; Lady Jenkyns ; R. Jones, Esq. ; Mrs. Manders ; A. McAnally, Esq. ; Miss K. Patten ; Mrs. A. W. Rickman ; Miss Russ ; Miss A. M. Smallpeice ; Miss H. Melville Smith ; E. M. Brooke Taylor, Esq. ; E. A. Weaver, Esq. ; Owen Wynn, Esq.

Amounts under 2s. 6d. :—£1 0s. 6d.

OBITUARY.

By the death of the Poet Laureate, Mr. Alfred Austin, which occurred on June 2nd, the Society has lost a Vice-President whose feeling for birds seemed a natural outcome, and part of, his love of nature and his poetic instincts. Speaking at the Society's annual meeting in 1905, he alluded to the birds as "their own advocates," whose musical arguments scarce anyone could resist, and made a special plea for efforts to win the British boy from nest-robbing. In the following verses, written for one of the Society's

Christmas cards, "Peace and goodwill to the Birds," he appealed to women on behalf of the murdered plumage-birds:

I heard the Skylark's heavenward note,
 The Thristle greet the day,
 And watched the white Gulls wheel and
 About the glittering bay; [float
 The Kinglet flicker round the rose,
 The Woodpecker alight
 A moment where the woodbine blows,
 Then ripple out of sight.

And then another scene I saw,
 Crushed plumage, crimson streak,
 The shattered wing, the crippled claw,
 Mute breast and drooping beak;
 And, round the havoc, creatures fair,
 Not sad, but eager now
 With the dead spoil to crown their hair,
 And decorate their brow.

Dear English maiden, English wife,
 Nurtured in bliss and ease,
 The selfsame heaven that lent you life
 Gave life no less to these.
 O let the Tern still guard the nest
 By tenderness begun,
 And Egret plume and Goura crest
 Gleam, sacred, in the sun!

Lord Avebury, though not officially connected with the Society, will be held in grateful remembrance by its members for his pilotage of the Importation of Plumage Bill in 1908. The Bill, it may be remembered resulted from a conference of representatives of the Royal Society, Linnean Society, Zoological Society, Selborne Society, and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, was framed by the last-named, and passed through the House of Lords, considerably strengthened by amendments introduced after the sitting of a Select Committee which heard evidence on both sides. *Punch's* cartoon portraying Lord Avebury as "A Modern St. Francis," was reproduced, by permission, in *Bird Notes and News*, Summer Number, 1908.

The Society has also to regret the loss of Mr. R. H. Watt, for many years Hon. Local Secretary for Knutsford. A keen lover of birds, Mr. Watt was the guardian of a "sanctuary moor" of four or five acres which he kept entirely secluded from all enemies; and he also devised a delightful idea of adapting the scaffolding holes of houses he built in Knutsford, as nesting-places for birds.

Dr. Robert Hawthorne, of Poona, a valued Life Member of the Society, did especially good work in aiding the detection of smuggling carried on in the interests of the plume-trade, after the enactment of the Indian law of 1902.

BIRD PROTECTION AND THE COLLECTOR.

THE injury inflicted on the rarer bird-life of Britain by the collector has recently claimed attention in the *Times*, *Nature*, and the *Spectator*. The Secretary of the R.S.P.B. writes in the *Times* (May 3rd):

The problem lies in this, that the offenders are largely men of wealth and position, officers in the Army, clergymen, 'ornithologists' popularly known for their interest in bird life and even for their pronouncements in print on bird-protection, and that these collectors not only snap their fingers at the law and take pride in evading and transgressing its provisions, but employ trade agents and dealers to work for them and give heavy bribes to poorer men—men in the responsible position of keepers and coastguards, and also fishermen, shepherds, and others whose ignorance and poverty render them ready catspaws.

"It is, as 'Nemo' says, useless to suppose that the creation of reserves will in itself check unscrupulous collecting. For some years this society has, with the best results, employed watchers to guard certain breeding-places of rare birds. Some score of these are scattered over Great Britain, from the Shetlands and Orkneys to Sussex and Cornwall, and more will be employed as funds permit: but the utmost care has to be exercised in their appointment; they

must have fair pay in order to protect them to some extent from the temptation of bribes, and members of our Watchers Committee visit their stations from time to time to inspect and judge actual results. . . .

"Clearly, simple prohibition on paper by county council orders is useful only as affording possibility of conviction where offenders are caught in the act. As deterrents they avail nothing for persons of this class, and unless carefully worded may indeed serve to advertise the presence of rare species. A law to deal with possession

and the possessor is necessary, as well as a strong public opinion which shall cause these collectors to be held in the contempt they deserve. One proposal as to the kind of law needed has been made by Mr. W. H. Hudson in "Birds and Man":!

"There is really only one way out of the difficulty—one remedy for an evil which grows in spite of penalties and public opinion—namely, a law to forbid the making of collections of British birds by private persons. . . . Without such a law it has now become impossible to save the best of our wild bird life.'"

Books Received.

ADVENTURES AMONG BIRDS. By W. H. Hudson (Hutchinson and Co., 10/6). Every bird-lover, no less than every lover of literature, rejoices to hear of a new book by Mr. Hudson. In days when so much is written on birds, birds from the zoologist's point of view, from the collector's, the photographer's, the fruit-grower's—the reader comes with gladness and refreshment to the writer who writes as no one else can do about birds themselves, and who moves confidently, as a reviewer puts it, in "that realm which is extraordinarily little known to us, that of the bright, elusive, intelligent mind of birds." Members of the R.S.P.B. know not only the witchery of Mr. Hudson's style, and the interest of the things he has to tell, but that every chapter in which he treats of bird-life, directly or indirectly advances the cause of Bird Protection. It is not necessary, nor perhaps fitting in this place, to say more. The book is prefaced by a recent portrait of the Author.

THE FOOD OF SOME BRITISH WILD BIRDS. By Walter E. Collinge, M.Sc., etc. (Dulau and Co.). Though some of Mr. Collinge's observations are distinctly good, as for example the stress he lays in an introductory chapter on the importance of careful and

accurate field observation—it cannot be said that his book greatly advances knowledge on this debated subject. Numerous other writers are quoted, and the crops of 3,312 birds have been examined. It is obvious, however, that books without end might be compiled, and wholly different conclusions arrived at, by quoting extracts even from the same writers, not to mention solutions culled from general newspaper and private correspondence; while the laboratory method needs extensive and systematic and impartial investigation before it can yield anything approaching positive proof. Mr. Collinge is doubtless anxious to be both impartial and scientific in his records, but he is apt to make too sweeping generalizations, and sometimes writes as though the whole of Britain was a soft-fruit orchard. "The Columbidae are all injurious and should be destroyed" requires some modification; and the comment on the Blackcap Warbler "In small numbers it probably does more good than harm, but any attempt at protection will justify fruit-growers in taking vigorous measures for extermination" is a rather loose style of logic for a professedly scientific manual. The statements referring to the Jackdaw on pages 54 and 88 are contradictory; and many country residents will find it hard to reconcile lanes strewn with wrecked nests and eggs with the assertion that "village boys no longer dare go on bird-nesting expeditions," and will wonder if there is no other method than destruction for combating "the consequent ignorance concerning birds amongst the rising genera-

tion of country boys." If Mr. Collinge's book had been confined to his own direct observations in field and laboratory respecting the 35 species selected, with dates and circumstances clearly stated, and all extracts from named and unnamed sources omitted, the value of his contribution to actual knowledge would have been more easily estimated.

THE HOME-LIFE OF THE TERNS. By W. Bickerton (Witherby and Co., 6/-). This is perhaps the most charming of the "Home-Life" series, and is altogether a delightful account of the five British Sea-Swallows. Mr. Bickerton had exceptional opportunities, and letterpress and photographs alike show the good use he made of them. Bird Protectors will be thankful to him for not revealing the nesting-ground of the Roseate Terns, one of the birds protected by R.S.P.B. Watchers; and also for his sympathetic and often humorous delineation of Tern character and individuality.

THE REVOLT OF THE BIRDS: A song-drama for Children, in two Acts. By the Rev. G. Edward Young (Charles Kelly, 2/6). So many vapid and aimless plays for children are put forward that it is a relief to come across one which they may learn with both amusement and profit. Mr. Young tells in rhyme the story of the birds' revolt from the cruel persecution of their race by men,

women and children, and the characteristic proposals of various members of the bird-world for taking revenge for their injuries. The Sparrow would starve man by a general refusal to eat caterpillars and the like; the Swallow would have all birds migrate from the land; the Starling would stop all bird-music, while the Owl commends a stern "eye for an eye" attack on humankind. How it all ends need not be disclosed, but an effective finale closes a pretty and useful story. The rhymes are such as children can readily commit to memory, the parts are well divided among numerous speakers, and staging would be simple. It is understood that special music is also to be provided for the songs. The little book is very attractively presented and illustrated in colour, and should be equally popular as gift-book and playbook. Mr. Young does the Society the honour of dedicating it to them, and a copy has been accepted by Her Majesty the Queen.

THE PEOPLE OF THE WILD. By F. St. Mars (Werner Laurie, 3/6.). Mr. St. Mars' dramas of animal and bird-life are manifestly of the American school, and convey in their breathless excitement the false notion that wild life is a nightmare of hunger and terror. The cover, with its frantic rabbits fleeing before a Magpie, gives the keynote of the book.

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

THOUSANDS of boys and girls, it is to be hoped, have been appreciating the delights of watching wild nature's ways during the past months, in preparing for the Society's Bird-and-Tree Challenge Shield Competitions. Birds have been fed in cold weather, with the additional reason that their feeding-habits and their traits of character might be watched; their nests have been guarded with jealous care in order that eggs might successfully blossom out into tiny birds, and that nestlings might safely develop into sturdy

birdlings, and all be duly described in future essays; water has been provided in dry weather, and all the old tearing down of nests and smashing of eggs has been fiercely opposed, not merely because of Bird-and-Tree rules, but because interest in the shy wild things has sprung up, and intelligent observation has been discovered to be much more "worth while" than stupid destruction. Birds hitherto unknown must also have been identified with triumph; and a little more learned of bird language and song.

This year a relaxation in rules has been made so as to suit all arrangements for school holidays. Essays may be sent in either before or after the summer holidays; but if it is desired that they should be written later than August 1st, it is asked that notice to this effect be sent to the Secretary of the Society. Forms for the Essay writing will be forwarded in July to schools that have entered; and schools which omitted to enter but would like to compete are invited to apply for the forms.

Mr. Mattingley, of the Australasian Ornithological Society, sends a specimen of a ribbon badge which was issued to 300,000 people in one State alone of Australia on Bird Day, 1912. The vast majority of these were schoolchildren, and a larger number will be required this year. Until last January, he writes, each State had its "Gould League of Bird Lovers," and conducted the management in its own way. Their success was very great. "Now the different Leagues have federated, and we have a huge body of persons, composed mainly of the younger generation of Australasia, working to protect our birds. The sentiment engendered is worth many Acts of Parliament, judging by the effect on our bird-life, which is now protected out of pure love and not for fear of the law."

The distribution of some thousand nesting-boxes, and of 1,500 cherry and mulberry trees (to be planted as food for birds), to the schools of a Pennsylvanian town, by the State Game Commissioner, has been alluded to in a previous number of *Bird Notes and News*. The *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston, Mass.) for April 25th, 1913, has a picture of 218 children of Lincoln, Nebraska, each with a bird-box. They are members of a Bird-Lovers' Club, and make or help in

making their own nesting-boxes for their own gardens, and cultivate a proportion of plants and grasses which provide bird-food.

Bird Day is now legally established in California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin, and is also more or less regularly observed in New York, Indiana, Colorado, Alabama, and Pennsylvania.

CHILDREN AND BIRDS.

In his new work "Adventures among Birds," Mr. W. H. Hudson comments on the relations between children and birds produced and indicated by the R.S.P.B. Bird and Tree Competitions. After alluding to various humanizing influences of the day, he writes:

"I have another and better reason than the fact of the existence of all these activities for my belief that a change is taking place in the country boy's mind, that his interest and pleasure in the wild bird is growing, and that as it grows he becomes less destructive. A good deal of my time is passed in the villages in different parts of the country; I make the acquaintance of the children and get into the confidence of many small boys and find out what they do and think and feel about birds, and it is my experience that in recent years something new has come into their minds—a sweeter, humaner feeling about their feathered fellow-creatures. I also take into account the spirit which is revealed in the village school children's essays written for the Bird and Tree Competitions established by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. During the last four or five years I have had to read many hundreds of these essays, each dealing with one species from the child's own personal observation, and it has proved a very pleasing task to me because so many of the young essayists had put their whole heart into theirs. Their enthusiasm shines, even in the weakest of these compositions, considered merely as essays, and we may imagine that the country boy or

girl of ten or twelve or thirteen finds the task assigned him not a very simple one, to be placed at a table with sheets of foolscap paper before him and given an hour in which to compose an essay on the bird selected—the gist of his observations; to be reminded at the same time that he is one of the team of nine chosen for the work, that the eyes of the village are on him, that he must do his best to win the county shield for the school. Nevertheless the children are doing remarkably well, because, as I have said, their heart is in it, and one is delighted to find that this study of a bird has not only quickened the child's interest in nature but has taught him to think of the bird in a new way, with the feeling which seeks to protect. We may safely say that these children will not forget this new lesson they are being taught, whatever else may drop out of their memories when they leave school; that in coming time, when they are fathers and mothers themselves, they will instil the same feeling into their own children."

IN THE COURTS.

THE POLE-TRAP.—At *Bromley*, G. Law, head gamekeeper, and J. Malsbury, assistant, were summoned for using, on April 15th, a steel trap affixed to a tree in a larch wood on Hengrave Hill, Cudham. Law said his employer, Mr. Maconachie, had trouble with Jays, and gentlemen hunting objected to ground traps. The solicitor for the defence urged that the trap was used legitimately to protect the birds [the Pheasants, not the Jays, it is presumed], and it was a serious thing that private land should be tramped over by people for the purpose of getting up a charge of this kind. Law was fined 5s. and 11s. costs, Malsbury 11s. costs.

THE BIRD-CATCHER.—At *Epsom*, James Williams, of Bermondsey, was fined 10s. and 4s. 6d. costs for cruelty to two Chaffinches of which he was in illegal possession. He was riding a bicycle through Ewell on Easter Monday, and had a basket in which were the two newly-caught birds; the wings and tail of one were tied together

so that the wing was broken, and it must have suffered great pain. Defendant said his family had no dinner.

CRUELTY TO A CROW.—At *Nottingham*, on March 22nd, John Trickett, farmer, was convicted of cruelty to a Rook which he caught in a steel trap and tethered to a peg to frighten other birds from his field. Its leg was broken and it was crying out with pain. Defendant said he was "very sorry," and was let off on payment of costs.

"The Plume Question in a Nutshell."

Leaflet No. 70., summarising the facts as to this trade. Reprinted, with additions, from "Bird Notes and News." 3d. per doz.

Price One Shilling, post free.

FARM, GARDEN, and BIRDS:

How to protect Corn, Fruit, and Vegetable Crops without destruction of Bird-life.

Prize-winning Essays, by E. Purnell Jones and E. J. Platt, with extracts from papers by twenty-six other Competitors.

The subjects dealt with include: Scares and Scare-crows; Guns; the Rook-boy; Windmills and Kites; Nets and Netting; Protection of Fruit and Fruit-Buds; Protection of Seeds and Seedlings; etc.

"Every farmer, market gardener, or indeed grower of any crops, should read the pamphlet before he complains about there being too many birds. He will see that if he is suffering from birds it is because he fails to employ simple safeguards during a short season, for at times the birds are invaluable to him."—*Manchester Guardian*.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR
THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS,
23, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, S.W.

BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERBY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and Published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, 32, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.



“WHERE ARE MY COMPANIONS? SAVE ME!”

The Senate of the U.S.A. has prohibited importation into the States of the plumage of the Heron (“ospreys”) and of all other Wild Birds. Mr. Hobhouse’s Bill proposes to enact a similar measure for Great Britain.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS ::

Vol. V.]

SEPTEMBER, 1913.

[No. 7.]

Government Bill to Prohibit Importation of Plumage.

ALMOST at the end of the session of 1913, Mr. Hobhouse, on August 4th, on the part of the Government, introduced a Bill into the House of Commons prohibiting the importation of plumage into Great Britain. The Bill is backed by Mr. E. S. Montagu (Under-Secretary for India) and Mr. Sydney Buxton (President of the Board of Trade).

It has been known for some time that a Cabinet Committee had been appointed to consider the subject and to obtain and examine evidence from all quarters, including that elicited by the Colonial Office Committee. The result is a Bill practically identical with that which was drafted by the R.S.P.B. and passed by the House of Lords in 1908, and which has been steadily kept in view by the Society since that time.

The principal clauses of the Bill are as follows:—

1.—(1) Subject to the exceptions in this Act contained, a person shall not import into the United Kingdom the plumage of any wild bird, and accordingly section forty-two of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, shall be read as if there were included in the table of prohibitions and restrictions therein—

“The plumage of wild birds as defined by the Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Act, 1913, subject to the exceptions contained in that Act.”

(2) A person shall not have in his possession or be concerned in selling the plumage of

any wild bird which has been imported in contravention of this Act, or which, having been allowed to be imported on the ground that it is being put to a certain use or intended to be put to a certain use, is being put to some other use; and if any person has in his possession or is concerned in selling any such plumage, he shall be liable on conviction under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts to a fine not exceeding five pounds in respect of the first offence and twenty-five pounds in respect of the second or any subsequent offence, and the court before whom he is convicted may order the forfeiture or destruction of any plumage in respect of which the offence has been committed.

2.—(1) The following plumage is excepted from the prohibition on importation under this Act:—

(a) The plumage of birds for the time being included in the Schedule to this Act:

(b) The plumage of birds imported alive:

(c) The plumage of birds imported under a licence granted under this Act for the purpose of supplying specimens for any natural history or other museum, or for the purpose of scientific research:

(d) Plumage forming part of wearing apparel being *bonâ fide* the property of, and actually in the personal use of, or intended for the personal use of, any person entering the United Kingdom:

(e) The plumage of wild birds ordinarily used as articles of diet and imported for that purpose.

(2) His Majesty may by Order in Council from time to time add the name of any bird to the Schedule to this Act or remove the name of any bird from that Schedule.

(3) The Board of Trade may grant a licence under such conditions and regulations as they think fit to any person to import specimens of birds for any natural history or other museum, or for the purpose of scientific research.

(4) Any importer claiming an exemption under this section for any plumage on the ground that it is to be put to a certain use shall deliver to an officer of Customs and Excise, if required by any such officer, on importation a written declaration of the purpose for which it is imported.

3. Where the court is satisfied, in any proceedings under this Act, that any plumage is the plumage of a bird which is never or rarely found alive in a wild state in the United Kingdom, the plumage shall be deemed to be imported in contravention of this Act unless the contrary is proved.

“Plumage” includes the skin or body of a bird with plumage on it; and “sell” includes exchange or letting out

on hire. The birds scheduled by the Bill are Ostriches and Eider Ducks.

The Bill will probably be re-introduced early in the session of 1914; and bird-lovers will do well to remember that it is not passed yet. Although an immense majority of members of both Houses are known to be in favour of such legislation, its opponents will strive to influence their votes by every species of argument, and will naturally do their utmost to hinder, impede, or weaken legislation against that which is to them a lucrative business. All Bird Protectors therefore should be equipped with the facts of the case and should beg their representatives in Parliament to support the Bill. Information and literature can always be had from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Bird Protectors v. Plume Traders.

At this juncture a brief chronological outline of the case may be of use. It indicates to some extent how the evidence of naturalists and others, gradually accumulating, and the opinion of the public gradually developing, have been expressed in appeal, in protest, and—as these things remained unheeded or derided—in more and more stringent laws.

1868. Professor Newton's protest at the British Association meeting, against the slaughter of Gulls off the British Coast. “Fair and innocent as the snowy plumes may appear in a lady's hat, I must tell the wearer the truth—she bears the murderer's brand on her forehead.”

1869. Sea-Birds Preservation Act passed.

1876. Professor Newton's protest in *The Times* against the destruction of

Egrets and other exotic birds, as demonstrated by the catalogues of the London feather-sales.

1885. “Plumage League” formed by Lady Mount-Temple.

1886. American Ornithologists' Union Bird Protection Committee organised (New York).

First Audubon Society formed (Massachusetts).

1887. Reports published in the *Auk* (American Ornithologists' Union) of the wholesale slaughter of Herons, Ibis, Spoonbills, and other birds, by plume-hunters in Florida.

1889. The Society (now Royal Society) for the Protection of Birds founded, primarily as an Anti-plumage-wearing League.

1893. Letter in *Times* from Mr. W. H. Hudson, denouncing the murderous millinery of the day, and *Times* leader: "How long will women tolerate a fashion which involves such wholesale, wanton, and hideous cruelty as this?"
1894. Branch of the S.P.B. founded in South Australia.
Jules Forest protests, as a friend of, and in the interest of, the trade, against the massacre of Egrets in Indo-China and the East, as this must lead to the extinction of the birds (*Revue des Sciences Naturelles appliquées*).
1896. Sir William Flower, Director of the British Museum (Natural History), draws attention to the fraud by which the nuptial-feathers of Egret and Heron are being sold as "artificial" ospreys. "Thus one of the most beautiful of birds is being swept off the earth, under circumstances of peculiar cruelty, to minister to a passing fashion, bolstered up by a glaring falsehood."
1899. Order issued for the discontinuance of the wearing of "osprey" plumes by officers in the British Army, after consideration of statement furnished to Lord Wolseley by the R.S.P.B.
Stories of "Egret farms" and "shed plumes" circulated by the trade. "The various reports of Egret farms located in such improbable places as Arizona, New Mexico, Venezuela, etc., have in each case proved upon investigation to be wholly mythical" (*The Auk*, Jan., 1900).
German Bund für Vogelschutz (Stuttgart) founded.
1900. Indian Branch of the Society for the Protection of Birds inaugurated. Circular issued by Indian Government to local Administrations asking for details as to the killing of birds and exportation of plumage.
Clause prohibiting the possession or sale of plumage of birds protected in the State, added to the New York game laws.
1902. Exportation prohibited from British India of all skins and feathers, except Ostrich feathers.
1903. The "artificial osprey" lie at its height. Purchase of specimens of these in London shops, by the R.S.P.B., at prices from a guinea to 3½d., and examination by British Museum experts, showed that one and all were made from the breeding-plumage of Egrets and Herons.
1906. Mr. H. K. Job describes in "Wild Wings" (New York) the surviving, and protected, Egret colonies of Florida. "This traffic has almost exterminated the two plume-bearing species of White Heron found in the United States. . . . The origin of the trade is ignorance on one side and greed for money on the other, and there is not one true word which can be said in its defence."—Guy Bradley, warden of one of the colonies, murdered.
Queen Alexandra authorizes the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds to use her name in any way most conducive to the protection of birds, and to make known that H.M. never wore "ospreys" and would do all in her power to discourage the cruelty inseparable from this fashion.

1906. Efforts made by the trade, without success, to obtain the rescinding of the Indian Order.
1907. Mr. Walter Goodfellow calls attention, at the British Ornithologists' Club, to the practical extermination by plume-hunters of species of the Bird-of-paradise.
1908. Bill to prohibit the Importation of the Plumage of Wild Birds into Great Britain drafted by the R.S.P.B., with the support of representatives of the British Museum (Natural History), Royal Society, Linnean Society, Zoological Society, Selborne Society, and Mr. James Buckland. Introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Avebury. Considered by a Select Committee, which heard evidence from twenty-one witnesses for and against; and passed (July 21st) with strengthening amendments. Introduced into the House of Commons by Lord Robert Cecil, but end of the Session prevented a second reading. Story of "moulted plumes" revived by the trade, in a letter signed "Leon Laglaize," purporting to give an account of the protection of Egrets in Venezuela by "a sort of armed police composed by natives," and the collection of shed plumes and also of a "valuable amount of feathers of the best kind" said to be worked into the nests and obtained at the end of the nesting-season. Refutation from naturalists published by the R.S.P.B., "Feathers are never used for lining the nest" (Mr. G. T. Pearson and others). "The letter of Mr. Leon Laglaize gives a completely erroneous impression of the conditions under which the collecting of plumes is conducted in Venezuela" (Sir Vincent Corbett, H.B.M. Minister at Caracas). Exportation from British New Guinea of skins and feathers of Birds-of-paradise and Goura Pigeons prohibited.
1909. Bills to prohibit the importation of the feathers of certain birds into Great Britain introduced by Sir William Anson and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. Blocked. Pictures of "The Story of the Egret" published and exhibited in shop windows and elsewhere by the R.S.P.B. Anti-plumage League started in Sydney (N.S.W.).
1910. International Ornithological Congress, held at Berlin, passes a resolution affirming the necessity for laws prohibiting the Importation of Plumage into European countries: ("The demand made on behalf of the bird-world is this: that henceforth no country shall be permitted to deal in the sale, import, or export, of birds' feathers. By this means alone can we ensure the preservation of our birds."—Professor C. G. Schillings). Appointment by the Colonial Secretary (the Earl of Crewe) of a committee to consider the best means of preventing the slaughter of birds by plume-hunters throughout the British Empire. Editions of "The Story of the Egret" published in France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, and Italy. Bill to prohibit the sale of the plumage of certain birds brought in by Mr. Percy Alden. Blocked.

1911. Proclamation Prohibiting the Importation of the skins and plumage, raw or manufactured, of scheduled birds into the Commonwealth of Australia. (The schedule includes the chief birds used by the plume-trade). Exportation of skins and plumage of scheduled birds also prohibited.

"Feathers and Facts," published by the R.S.P.B. for the purpose of refuting trade statements by a recapitulation of proved facts.

New York State law comes into force prohibiting the sale of birds protected in the State or those of the same families wherever killed. (Similar laws have since been adopted by twelve other States.)

Anti-Plumage League started in Germany by Professor Schillings.

Announcement made on the eve of Queen Mary's visit to India that Her Majesty "who has never worn a real aigrette, has read letters referring to the subject of the protection of the bird from which this is obtained, and has given special instructions that nothing of the kind must be employed in her millinery."

Mr. Alden again introduces his Bill in the House of Commons. First reading carried by 326 to 48. Blocked.

1912. Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux started by the Société d'Acclimatation de France.

Sir Harry Johnston urges in *The Times* the extreme importance to man of the protection of insect-eating birds now destroyed by the plume-trade.

Mr. Alden's Bill reintroduced. Withdrawn.

Bill introduced by Mr. Alden to prohibit the sale of the plumage of any species of wild bird, individuals of which have their habitat in any part of Greater Britain. Blocked.

1913. Earl Curzon of Kedleston and Sir Harry Johnston speak on the feather-trade and its ravages at the annual meeting of the R.S.P.B. ("It is an appalling traffic, and I am not aware of a good word to be said for it." —Lord Curzon.)

Bill introduced by Mr. Page Croft, of same purport as Mr. Alden's second Bill of 1912.

Cabinet Committee formed to consider legislation on the plumage question.

"Committee for the Economic Preservation of Birds" formed for the purpose of delaying and impeding legislation dealing with the plume-trade.

Government Bill introduced by Mr. Hobhouse (Duchy of Cornwall) prohibiting the importation into Great Britain of the plumage of all wild birds except those scheduled (Ostriches and Eider-ducks), natural history and educational specimens, plumage forming part of the wearing apparel of persons entering the United Kingdom, and plumage of birds imported as articles of diet; also prohibiting the sale of plumage unlawfully imported.

Clause in the Tariff Bill of the United States adopted by the Senate totally prohibiting the importation of all skins and plumage of wild birds, either raw or manufactured, into the United States.

PROHIBITION OF IMPORTATION INTO UNITED STATES.

The plumage clause in the Tariff Bill of the United States has been adopted. This prohibits all importation of the feathers of wild birds into the United States, and practically renders the trade illegal throughout the States. The only exception is in favour of Ostrich feathers and those of domestic fowls.

This clause was framed by the New York Zoological Society, and supported by Dr. Hornaday of the Zoological Park, and by the National Association of Audubon Societies. It is a signal triumph for Bird Protectors, and the greatest blow yet given to the traffic in birdskins and plumage. The people of the States are nearer the scene of action of the plume-hunters than are the English, and they know for themselves what the traffic has meant in the southern States, and how much credit is to be given to the evasive stories set afloat by the dealers. They therefore appropriately lead the way in complete prohibition.

Needless to say, the feather-merchants fought the clause tooth and nail. An effort was made at the last moment to exempt the "feathers of birds commonly regarded as edible or pestiferous"; but it was easily seen that this loose definition was intended to destroy the effect of the measure. Press and public united in protest, and the Senate restored the original clause untouched.

Among the supporters of the clause was the American Flower and Feather Company. They wrote to the *New York Times* :—

"We never were and never will be in favour of this kind of business, which at the best is controlled by very few houses here, and which the millinery business can well afford to do without. We are under the firm belief that the proposed new law will be a positive benefit to the millinery business in general, as it will make flowers, etc., a staple line of goods, which at the present time they are not."

The *New York Times* itself commented (June 2nd) :—

"Presumably it is the enormous difference between the wholesale and the retail prices of feathers used for decorative purposes that explains the persistence and energy with which 'the trade,' through its carefully selected spokesmen, fights every effort to save the birds threatened with extermination by this wretched business. It also accounts, perhaps, for the desperation which so often leads said spokesmen to make the most dangerous kind of arguments—arguments, that is, which have plausibility only for the thoughtless and the uninformed.

"The 'dropped plume' myth, formerly presented with moving gravity, has been contradicted so often that it has had to be abandoned, and even the pathetic tale of innumerable poor but honest girls who would starve if the Egrets and the Paradise birds were protected has lost its force because of the frequency with which folks have been reminded that even when feathers are not in style the trimming of hats continues."

No American paper spoke out more strongly than the Jewish *Warheit* :—

"There are two groups of men struggling now at Washington before Congress.

"One group is the old organisation of importers and traders of feathers and plumes, who have made millions from the destruction and the slaughter of the birds of the country. . . . There is another group of men, scientists, explorers, naturalists,

humanitarians, and patriots who are struggling for a law to protect the birds.

"The first group, struggling against the birds, against nature, against humanity, against the people, are a few Jewish tradesmen and their hired Jewish lawyers.

"The other group who form a voluntary avant-guard of the people, have no personal interest or designs or motives.

"And we, from the 'Warheit,' as citizens of America and children of the Jewish race, again declare and protest that the Jewish people is heart and soul in this struggle, not with the Jewish tradesmen and importers, but against them, and with the men and for the men who are struggling to preserve and perpetuate the birds of the woods everywhere and forever."

The fight for the Plumage clause in the United States Tariff Bill has been on much the same lines as the fight for the Plumage Bill in Great Britain. The trade have put forward the same arguments and worked on much the same plan. A letter addressed by their lawyers, Messrs. Leaventritt, Cook, and Nathan, to Dr. Hornaday of the New York Zoological Society, might indeed have been the production of the "Committee for the Economic Preservation of Birds." "The reputable interests that we have the honour to represent," blandly wrote these legal luminaries, "are prepared to join in any movement that will protect birds of song or birds of beautiful plumage, or any species of wild-life whatever that has its proper place in the economy of nature"! This from the trade responsible for the slaughter of millions of birds in the States—Egrets, Herons, Grebes, Terns, Spoonbills, Waterfowl—must have entertained Dr. Hornaday. The species of wild-life required by the "reputable trade" have presumably their proper place only in the economy of the trade pocket; and the zoologists of the

United States showed no interest in "Economic" bird-protection.

Two extracts from the debate in the Senate on the Plumage clause (August 16, 1913) express in plain language the opinions of our American cousins. The first is from the comprehensive and powerful speech in which Senator McLean supported the clause.

"The trade now suggests that a commission be appointed to take this whole matter into consideration in order that some wise compromise and concert of action may be reached. For 30 years this shameful and cruel traffic has perpetuated itself by fraud and subterfuge and crime in the guise of compromise, always asking for more time, always keeping its neck out of the halter by playing the caprice and greed of one nation against the caprice and greed of other nations, always protesting its innocence and always found guilty when tried. It always asks for more time—it has already had too much time."

The second comment is made by one of the opponents of Senator McLean and of the clause. He argued that Herons were ungainly birds which serve no useful purpose except by providing aigrette plumes; but as to trade deceptions, he added—

"It is hardly worth while to take the time of the Senate to demonstrate that the man milliner has very little regard for truth and veracity. I think that might be conceded."

In England the plume-dealers are working the word "compromise" for all it is worth, and under its guise are asking, by the mouth of the "Economic" Committee, for confidence in the trade and for liberty to perpetuate all that for which it stands condemned in the States. But requests for "confidence" are somewhat notorious, and the end will be gained, as in the States, not by compromising with evil, but by straight legislative veto upon it.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

COUNCIL MEETING.

THE Council of the Society held its quarterly meeting at 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W., on July 18th, when there were present: Mr. Ernest Bell (in the chair), Mr. J. L. Bonhote, Dr. Drewitt, Miss Hall, the Hon. Mrs. Henniker, Mr. W. H. Hudson, Mr. Hastings Lees, Mr. F. E. Lemon (Hon. Sec.), Mrs. Lemon, Miss Pollock, Captain Tailby, Miss E. L. Turner, and Miss Gardiner (Secretary).

Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Hon. Secretary reported that Bird Protection Orders had been issued for the Isle of Wight, scheduling the Wild Swan and its eggs for protection; West Suffolk, protecting the Goldfinch all the year; Aberdeenshire and Stirlingshire, exempting certain birds from protection. Considerable discussion followed as to the two latter Orders, and it was agreed that a protest should be made to the Scottish Office against the removal of any birds, and especially of harmless species like the Kittiwake and interesting ones like the Goosander, from close-time protection; it was considered that such withdrawal of protection in nesting-time was not only an act of cruelty seldom if ever necessary to keep down the numbers of any bird, but also vitiated the principle of the Act of 1880 which was so strongly contended for by all naturalists at that time; reports from other counties in which like experiments has been made, proved (if proof were needed) that it would be impossible to get the public to obey or the police to enforce the Act if once the use of guns and nets is allowed the public during

the close-season. The close-time destruction of Gulls in Kirkcudbrightshire was also considered. It appeared that the manager of a trout fishery had, in June, offered payment through a local newspaper to all persons alleging any complaint against the Black-headed Gull who would send him the dead birds; the public were therefore invited to break the existing law for the purpose of supplying one-sided evidence by which it was hoped to have the Gull exempted from protection. Arrangements with regard to the coming lecture season were reported.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The quarterly accounts were examined and passed. Mr W. S. Mainprice, of Orchard House, Knutsford, was appointed Local Hon. Secretary in succession to the late Mr. R. H. Watt. The resignation of Mr. Cardew Bedwell as Hon. Sec. for Thetford was received with regret. The following Fellows and Members were elected:—

FELLOWS.—R. W. Allars (Loughton); Mrs. Badham (Weston-super-Mare); Sir John E. Bingham, Bart. (Sheffield); Edward C. Booth (Seaton, Yorks.); the Hon. G. B. Brooks (Rawtenstall); Miss Enderby (Eastbourne); Miss B. Jeffery (Edinburgh); G. W. Jevons (St. Martin's); Howard Kingham (Reading); J. Morley (Exeter); Arthur Norris (Romford); R. O. P. Paddison (Stroud); Miss Raine (Staindrop); Lady Robinson (Worksop); Mrs. Savory (Taunton); Rev. C. Warren (Lincoln); Miss G. Whibley (Twyford, Hants); Major Dalrymple White, M.P. (London, S.W.).

MEMBERS.—W. J. Adye (Bradford-on-Avon); W. Arbury (Stoke Rochford); N. H. Arnison (Penrith); Miss Beard (Withington); E. C. Beaven (Holt); Mrs.

Arthur Bellin (Woking); J. E. Bellows (Edgbaston); H. Seymour Branfoot (Frant); Miss Kathleen Bull (Newcastle); Mrs. Dickson (Trowbridge); George Dixon (Chalford); John Dyson (Crewkerne); C. Eastwick Field, M.R.C.S. (Midhurst); Miss Fletcher (London, W.); Hon. Mrs. Franklin (London, W.); Lady Fry (Bristol); Miss Winifred Gaskell (London, N.); Captain W. A. Gordon (Wickwar); Sir Thomas Leigh Hare, Bart. (Norfolk); Miss Jessie M. Hall (Wark-on-Tyne); Arthur Head (Stockton-on-Tees); Spencer Holland (Berkhamsted); Mrs. L. Holmes (Alderley Edge); Rev. J. Clare Hudson (Thornton, Lines.); W. H. Ingram (Shrewsbury); Miss Gwendolen Jefferson (London, W.); Miss E. Lecky (London, W.); Miss C. Marriott (Hyson Green); H. V. Masfield (Oxted); Hon. Mrs. Meade (Bradford-on-Avon); Mrs. McGill (London, W.); Miss Osborne (Herne Bay); Herbert W. Page (Hinton Bluett); Miss Olive Parker (Broseley); Mrs. H. S. Phillips-Hoare (Godstone); Mrs. Preston (London, W.); Miss Rawstorne (Fareham); William T. Ritchie (Edinburgh); Herbert D. Robertson (Redhill); Miss M. G. Roberts (Hobart, Tasmania); Guy H. Guillum Scott (London, S.W.); Mrs. F. W. Sherwood (London, S.W.); Miss A. B. Sibly (Taunton); Miss G. Summerfield (London, S.E.); Mrs. Arthur Tilney (Sialkote, India); Miss Trotter (Stockton-on-Tees); Miss Vaux (Salisbury); John Watson (Ranskill); Colonel Wardlaw-Ramsay (Rosehill, N.B.); Rev. Canon Wyld (Melksham); W. Eaton Young, J.P. (Bath).

LIFE MEMBERS.—Gerald Lloyd (Edgbaston); Captain Lynes, R.N.

Sir Harry Johnston, C.C.M.G., D.Sc., was elected an Hon. Fellow of the Society, and Mr. W. P. Pycraft, F.Z.S., A.L.S., was elected an Hon. Member. It was reported that the Society had an exhibit of Nesting-boxes in the Forestry Section of the Royal Agricultural Show at Bristol, in June; great interest was taken in the stand by the visitors, many of whom had not seen anything of the kind before, and a large number of copies of the Society's leaflet "Forester's Friends" were distributed.

Publication Committee.

The publication was reported of "The Plume Question in a Nutshell" (reprinted with additions from *Bird Notes and News*); of an illustrated booklet on Brean Down, the Society's Somerset Bird sanctuary; and the leaflet "Foresters' Friends"; the Christmas card for 1913-14 was considered.

Watchers Committee.

Captain Tailby reported on the efforts made to bring about the disuse of pole-traps in Norway. An account of the visit paid to St. Catherine's Lighthouse (reported in the Summer Number of *Bird Notes and News*) was presented by Mr. Meade-Waldo. Detailed reports from eleven watching stations were presented and approved.

General Business.

Extensive correspondence upon the Plumage question was reported, and it was stated that the Zoological Society, the British Ornithologists' Union, the R.S.P.C.A., and the Authorities of the British Museum had co-operated with the Society in expressing to the Prime Minister their satisfaction on hearing of his intention to give facilities for discussion in Parliament with a view to legislation on the importation of the plumage of wild birds. The decrease in the number of Swallows nesting in Great Britain was discussed, and letters from M. Baudouy and others were read showing the destruction of these birds which takes place in the south of France. It was hoped that communications addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs might bear fruit.

Next meeting of the Council, October 17th.

OBITUARY.

DR. PHILIP LUTLEY SCLATER, D.Sc., F.R.S., who died on June 27th, aged 83, was one of the first supporters of the R.S.P.B., and the last surviving of the distinguished group of ornithologists—including Lord Lilford, Professor Newton, Dr. Bowdler Sharpe, Canon Tristram, and the Rev. F. O. Morris—who are named in the Society's first report as its sympathisers and friends in the fight against the feather-trade. He became a Life Associate in 1896 and a Vice-President in 1898. Dr. Sclater, who was Secretary of the Zoological Society from 1859 to 1902, and one of the founders of the British Ornithologists' Union, was an authority on the geographical distribution of birds and on the bird-life of Central and South America.

Mr. William Comyns Clifton, of Romford, a Fellow of the Society and helper in many a good work, died on September 10th. He was descended from an ancient and honoured Essex family, whose only representative now is his sister, Miss M. F. Clifton, a member of the Council of the R.S.P.B.

PROTECTION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS.

IN addition to the Bird Protection measures at St. Catherine's Lighthouse, perches have been erected at the Caskets Light as rests for birds migrating by this route. Mr. Burdet, who came over from Holland to inspect the work at Catherine's, sent an account of his visit to the Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux, and this was read at a meeting of that society. He remarks that as the installations were not complete it was difficult to judge of their efficacy, and that various modifications had to be

made in consequence of the construction of the lighthouse and its position—two factors which would always have to be taken into account in the application of the Thijsse system. But, he adds, "the English are ready to carry out the projects of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and the Government has accorded them facilities. It is to be hoped that other countries will not delay to follow the example of England. I understand that Denmark intends to adopt the Thijsse method and that Germany has sought information by a special deputation. On all sides, it seems to me that the question is being seriously considered; interest in the protection of birds increases, and that is a happy sign of the times."

Throughout the spring migrations the loss of bird-life at the great Terschelling Lighthouse, which is fitted with Professor Thijsse's apparatus, was extremely small. From December 1st, 1912, to June 1st, 1913, the total number of birds found dead was only 91, and this although as many as 400 sometimes rested on the perches in a single night. It will be remembered that about 100 Warblers were killed at St. Catherine's in the night of April 25th last. The 91 killed at the Terschelling in six months included 38 Larks, 12 Starlings, 7 Blackbirds, 3 Pewits, and in all 27 different species.

NESTING-BOXES.

There are few better ways of preserving, and of increasing interest in, wild birds, than feeding in winter and the provision of nesting-boxes in spring. The R.S.P.B. continues to supply a variety of Boxes, British and Berlepsch, and of Food-tables, stands, trays, and bells. It is advisable to have these fixed in place in the autumn:

Notes.

THERE is good reason to believe that the French Government are about to take practical measures for the protection of the Swallow, through the initiative, says the *Daily Telegraph*, of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and a friendly exchange of opinions between the Governments of the two countries." Facts collected by the R.S.P.B. have been laid before the Foreign Office, and Sir Edward Grey has put the case sympathetically to our cross-Channel neighbours. French correspondents of the R.S.P.B. confirm reports made of the enormous destruction of Swallows for the plume market in past years—destruction of a character "veritablement alarmant," says Dr. Siepi, of Marseilles. For this, England is now paying a heavy price in the loss of invaluable insectivorous allies of man.

* * *

One section of Mr. Hobhouse's Bill bears no relation to the plume-trade. This is a short clause proposing to give the Home Secretary power to make Orders for the protection of Birds in Great Britain without any application or representation from a County or Borough Council. The provision does not, of course, interfere with the power of Councils to make such applications.

* * *

"The coming of the 1st of August means the letting loose of the professional bird-catcher; it means also the utter destruction of the pleasure and peace of mind of every tender-hearted, every observant and moderately sensitive, individual who is in the habit of walking on the downs and through the country fields and lanes. Limed twigs and plantain stalks are laid down all round the edges of the upland ponds where birds are forced to alight and drink if they are

not to go waterless, and twigs and nets both claim their captives by the hundred. When night falls, the living palpitating bodies that in the morning were flitting over the down-flowers and breaking out into happy song, are shut up in dark airless cells, sentenced to perpetual imprisonment unless kind death releases them."

Thus the writer of the "Out-of-Doors" column in the *Hampshire Chronicle*. It may be added that to the town-dweller this same season brings the misery of seeing the panting, terrified wild birds in their frantic misery in 5 in. cages, in the close bird-shop and on the wall of the public-house and the tenement, and on the barrows of the coster's cart in Whitechapel. What is the bird-lover of town or country to do? Keep the question to the fore, push it on public opinion; destroy the limed twigs; find out from the local Protection Order what birds are protected at this season and see to it that these are not caught or found, newly-caught, in cages; worry the County Council into getting an amended Order if needed, remind the police what the Bird Protection laws are, and that it is their duty to carry them out. The police may say that it is R.S.P.C.A. work; but the work of the R.S.P.C.A. does not lift a jot of responsibility off the police.

* * *

Two further suggestions come from correspondents of the R.S.P.B. :—

"Near the house of a friend, who is president of the Croydon Natural History Society, a man took up a position on the green and spread nets, etc., to catch the birds. My friend simply walked on to the green and paced that piece of ground for an hour or so. The birdcatcher, after vainly protesting, gathered up his nets and left, giving vent to the usual adjectives."

The second writer, a lady, wrote to a local ironmongery firm whose catalogue advertised bird-lime. The firm replied :—

“We are pleased to be able to tell you that we do not stock same and have had no enquiries for it. The catalogues we circulate are not compiled solely for us but for the trade in general. We must admit the advertisement is therefore misleading and will cross same with blue pencil in all further copies issued.”

Sufficient protests might lead to the removal of the item from the trade catalogue.

The *Shooting Times* remarks : “The Wild Birds Protection Act is absolutely a dead letter in most parts of the country. The Government should appoint inspectors whose duty it should be to be continually travelling through the country waking up the sleepy constables.” Much of the “deadness,” however, may be referred to the magistrates, whose leniency to offenders of this class is too often calculated to bring the law into contempt and to discourage the police.

Economic Ornithology.

IS THE DIPPER AN ENEMY OF TROUT ?

THE Rev. E. T. Daubeney, whose articles on the Gull and the Heron (*Bird Notes and News*, Summer and Winter numbers, 1912) have attracted much attention, writes :—

“I have been so situated in life as to have had unusual opportunities of studying the ways and habits of trout, as well as those of their friends and also of their foes. For nearly 20 years I kept a pet troutery in my garden ; which consisted of two moats fed by a clear chalk stream. There I learned more about trout than even here, where I reside within 200 yards of the river Nar, which provides many a splendid basket of speckled beauties. Of all pets I have ever had none were so attractive, and full of interest, as the denizens of my troutery. In the garden I set up a hatching apparatus, and spawned my own fish. It was in looking after the newly born fry that I learned more of the enemies of trout than in any other way. The conviction has established itself in my mind that small enemies are far more

formidable than large ones : and that the smaller they are the more damage they do. The trout has many kinds of mischievous and intangible enemies which are to be met with in countless numbers in every piece of water the country through.

“‘Whirligig’ beetles, which amuse us with their antics in some quiet corner of a pond or stream, are not only savage in their attacks, but their larvæ also are carnivorous. The same may be said of ‘Water-boatmen’ and of Water-scorpions,’ which as larvæ and perfect insects lurk in ambush, ‘seeking whom they may devour.’ Water-beetles are ubiquitous and numerous ; their larvæ, like the perfect insect, are in almost all cases carnivorous, ‘feeding upon flesh either alive or dead,’ and are provided with terrible weapons to secure their prey. Of them it is said that their ‘jaws are formed after a curious fashion, being perforated throughout their length, as the poison fangs of a serpent, so as to capture and retain their prey : but also as a medium through which the juices can be sucked into the mouth. No sooner does an insect or small creature appear in the neighbourhood of its hiding

place than the larva slowly moves forth, glides beneath the body of its intended victim and seldom fails to make a fatal stroke.' To the list of insect foes may be added the armies of dragon flies, whose savage larvæ are to be found everywhere. The weapons of these larvæ are, if possible, more formidable than those of water-beetles; and their powers of locomotion are greater; for they dart rapidly from place to place, and are strong enough to attack not only the delicate and helpless new-born fry, but even fish much more advanced in power and size.

"A recent number of *Bird Notes and News* draws attention to the fact that 'anglers are declaring war' on the Dipper. They say that it consumes large quantities of salmon and trout ova.

"I do not propose to enter into the habits of this fascinating bird, for they are already well known; but would ask for a careful consideration of the opinions of the following authorities respecting the Dipper's food.

"In his 'British Birds,' A. G. Butler remarks:—

"The food of the Dipper consists largely of insects and their larvæ; many of which such as caddis worms, larvæ of dragon flies, and water-beetles, it seeks at the bottom of the water, thus proving itself the greatest friend of the pisciculturist by devouring the insects which prey upon fish spawn and young fry: it also eats spiders, small mollusca, worms and seeds of grasses. Of course the ignorant fish preserver, seeing the Dipper diving under water among his young fry, comes to the conclusion that this watch dog is a wolf and shoots it."

"Morris says ditto.

"In Dresser we find this:—

"Mr. R. E. Alston, who has carefully examined the stomachs of specimens shot by him in Scotland, informs me that they invariably contained aquatic insects and

their larvæ; and sometimes freshwater shrimps: and Mr. Robert Gray says that instead of doing harm by destroying the spawn of fish, they act as the angler's best friend by devouring immense quantities of the larvæ of dragon flies and water-beetles, creatures which are known to live to a great extent on spawn and even newly-hatched fry of both trout and salmon.'

"Yarrell tells us that—

"Mr. Macgillivray, who has examined the contents of the birds on various occasions, has found only beetles and the animals of freshwater shells belonging to the genera *Lymnæa* and *Ancylus*: the larvæ of various *Ephemera* and *Phryganea* have also been mentioned and those of other aquatic insects. In some parts of Scotland this bird is destroyed by every device from an idea that it feeds on salmon spawn: but this has not been established."

"Even were salmon or trout ova occasionally found in the stomach of the Dipper, the enormous amount of good it does in destroying the insects I have just denounced vastly outweighs its supposed sins.

"It is sometimes said that this bird eats fish. Have any of your readers seen one emerge from a stream with a fish in its mouth? I certainly never have. But I have often examined its droppings on a mid-stream stone. They invariably consisted of the remains of water insects: and there were no scales of fish. It is however on record that an individual has been found choked by a miller's-thumb, a sluggish fish which trusts for safety to lying motionless among weeds and pebbles in the water. Fish-eating is a rare experience with the Dipper; far too rare to admit of its condemnation. If fish were its usual food it must disgorge the bones like the kingfisher; this it does not do.

"The policy of persecuting the Dipper out of love for the trout is a mistaken one."

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

THE option given this year to Elementary Schools to send in Bird-and-Tree Essays either before or after the holidays, has necessarily somewhat delayed the judging, as it is impossible finally to place any Team until the last of the papers has come in and has been read and considered in relation to the rest. The alternative has, however, enabled at least a score of schools to compete who would otherwise have found themselves out of the running through one cause or another, and has given all who wished it, the advantage of pursuing their open-air studies through the holidays and following up their own particular birds and trees to the verge of autumn. Reports will as usual be sent to every competing school, as soon as the Examiners have made their awards; a limited number of copies will also be available for friends of education who like to know what is being done in their respective counties. An abridged report will be published in the Winter Number of *Bird Notes and News*.

The Council of the R.S.P.B. make a special appeal to bird-lovers and to all interested in education and in children, to give encouragement and help in the festivities of "Arbor Day." The verdict of Teachers and Inspectors and (it must not be forgotten) of the children, has made it plain that in devising and developing the Bird-and-Tree scheme, the Society has done something that was well worth the doing from a dozen different points of view, something of benefit at once to the mind, the body, and the character of boys and girls. Full success is however impossible without local stimulus;

and it was never intended that the awards given by the Society should be the only recognition of the work of the Teams. It is in villages and parishes where influential residents interest themselves in the efforts of the children, in the prize-giving, and in the festivities, that the competition flourishes, and it cannot be supposed that the schools of Hampshire and Northants and Norfolk, for instance, would ever have shown the keenness that characterises their work, but for the splendid support given by the County authorities and by private individuals in arranging for public celebrations of well-earned successes.

A collection of songs, plays, and recitations suitable for festivals is being formed at the R.S.P.B. office; these, and also lantern slides, will be gladly lent to teachers and others, and additions to the list will be welcomed. Three musical plays are especially appropriate for the more ambitious schools: "Bird and Tree Pageant" and "Midsummer Eve," both by Mrs. Suckling, and "The Revolt of the Birds," by the Rev. G. Edward Young. Words and music of these can be had on loan, on application.

CHILDREN AND BIRDS.

The following letter to the R.S.P.B. may suggest to bird-lovers what can be done to set children on the right track, and advantage might well be taken of the Bird-and-Tree competitions in combination with such excellent personal work:

"We have many nests on our ground, and we have been distressed at finding them disturbed, in many cases completely destroyed or, as was the case with a Goldcrest's nest, taken away from the branch

that held them. After careful thought I decided to have fortnightly meetings at our house, and to *show the children* any nests I had found. About eight or ten came every time. Each one had a note-book in which were recorded nest, eggs, songs of birds heard, and dates of all events. The entries in each book were read out and compared with those of all the others. Each child was encouraged to bring any item of news that would interest us all. After the first time the talk was eager and considerable knowledge shown. I found that the nests I knew of were nearly all known to some of the group, and as the most interesting ones had been built year after year in the same place, I was convinced of the good faith of many at least of the children. One day a beautiful little nest was destroyed which I had shown to all my friends a day or two before. I told them I was certain they had not destroyed it. They knew (I think), and I suspected, who had, but we did not speak of that. One mother told me her boy had been most indignant when she asked him if he had taken the nest. 'As if I should, as if any of us would, when Mrs. M. had asked us there and shown it us!' They all want to come next year and promise that much extra knowledge will be forthcoming. It is a very small experiment, but it is pleasant to report that I believe it to have been successful."

THE BIRD AND THE TREE.

The Bulletin of the Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux for August reports that at the International Forestry Congress organised by the Touring Club of France, a paper on the protection of Birds useful in the woodland was read by M. Michaud, delegate from the League, and resolutions were adopted: (1) That the teaching of forestry should include lessons on the reciprocal relations of forest and Bird, the Bird protecting the forest against insects, and the forest forming a refuge for the Bird; (2) that in forestry reserves and national parks, measures should be taken

for the multiplication of useful Birds and the preservation of rare or decreasing species.

"ARBOR DAY" IN PORTUGAL.

Great efforts are being made to increase the forest area of Portugal, and one result has been the yearly re-forestation by the State of nearly 1,750 acres of waste land situated on the mountains and on the shifting sands of the coast. The Forest and Waters Department grants prizes to teachers of elementary schools who have distinguished themselves in teaching forestry or in organising school associations; and this year, for the first time, Arbor Day was enthusiastically celebrated by the municipalities and schools, on March 9th. The instruction of the children in the value of trees is regarded as a very important part of the movement, which will have solid commercial results to the nation. One of the principal trees grown is the maritime pine, the timber of which is exported chiefly to England, largely for the making of mine-props.

It may be hoped that before long Portugal will see the wisdom of combining Bird with Arbor Day, since Birds are of the utmost value to the forester.

IN THE COURTS.

CATCHING GOLDFINCHES.—At *Lindsey* Petty Sessions on September 5th, Arthur Sargent was summoned for taking Goldfinches at Broxbourne. Decoy birds, thistles and net were being used. Defendant said that the birds were "proudtails," which were very like Goldfinches. (It is a local name merely). Fined 5s. 6d.—At *Kesteven* Sessions, on September 5th, Alfred East was fined 6s. for the same offence and for giving a false name and address. He told the plain-clothes policeman that he could make 1s. 6d. each for Goldfinches, but only 6d. apiece for Linnets.

SHOOTING IN CLOSE-TIME.—At *Belford*, on August 27th, George Watson and Robert Thompson were fined 17s. 6d. and 12s. 6d. respectively for shooting a Curlew, a Shelduck and a Golden Plover at Waren, near Bamburgh, on August 4th. The close-time is extended to August 12th, and there had been several complaints of shooting before that date.

CAGED LARKS.—At *Belfast*, on July 7th, Patrick Maguire was fined 10s. and 15s. costs for having four young Larks in a cage in the close-time. They were supplied with potato for food, which they could not eat, and with no water.

THE BIRDSHOP.—At *Leyton*, on August 11th, Alfred Wood, of High-road, Leyton, was fined £5 for cruelty to birds in his shop, 5, The Portway, West Ham.

TAKING A GOLDEN EAGLE.—At *Inverary*, on August 11th, Angus Cameron, a head gamekeeper, was charged with taking a Golden Eagle, a scheduled bird, during the close-season. It appeared that Mr. Tom Speedy, an Edinburgh naturalist, asked Cameron to get him specimens of the birds in order that he might present them to the Scottish Zoological Gardens, and Cameron pleaded ignorance of the law. Much was made of the point that there was no "selfish motive" in taking the bird, and that there was no fear of Golden Eagles becoming extinct. Sheriff Penney said "it did seem strange that a Golden Eagle could not be obtained without a criminal breach of the law," but dismissed the case with an admonition. [He might well have had something to say of a naturalist who asks for birds to be obtained for him in the middle of close-time, and a head keeper who pleads ignorance of the Bird Protection Laws in his own county.] "Meantime," asks the *Saturday Review*, "what has become of the Eagle? Has it been released, or is the Edinburgh Zoo still unlawfully keeping it?"

THE BIRD-CATCHER'S DECOY.—At *Eastbourne*, on September 1st, George Bradford and Charles Sherwood, youths, were fined 10s. each for cruelty to a decoy bird. They had nets set on the Crumbles, with a tethered decoy Wheatear, and on catching sight of the police snatched at the bird so that its leg was pulled off and left fastened to the

net. The Chairman said the offence was a serious one and they were "liable" to go to gaol for three months.

Greeting Cards for 1913-14.

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"The Plume Question in a Nutshell."

Leaflet No. 70, summarising the facts as to this trade. Reprinted, with additions, from "Bird Notes and News." 3d. per doz.

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THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS,
23, QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, S.W.

BIRD NOTES AND NEWS (issued quarterly) will be sent post free to any address for 1s. per annum, payable in advance; single numbers, 3d.

To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERBY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and Published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.



Chestnut and Blue Kingfisher.
Halcyon smeynensis.



Lesser Bird-of-Paradise.
Paradisaea minor.



Scarlet Tanager.
Pyranga rubra.



Queen Victoria's Crowned Pigeon.
Goura victoria.



Little White Egret.
Garzetta garzetta.

SOME VICTIMS OF THE PLUME-TRADE.

To Fellows, Members, and Associates
of the
ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

Please call the attention of the
Member of Parliament for the con-
stituency in which you live to the

Importation of Plumage
(Prohibition) Bill, No. 301,

and by letter ask him to **support it** when
re-introduced by the Right Hon. HENRY
HOBHOUSE, M.P. (Chancellor of the Duchy).

Copies of "VICTIMS OF THE PLUME-TRADE," on
card, with printed Appeal on the reverse side, can be
obtained of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds,
23, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.

Bird Notes & News

ISSUED QUARTERLY BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY
:: :: FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS :: ::

Vol. V.]

DECEMBER, 1913.

[No. 8.]

Some Victims of the Plume-Trade.

THE birds depicted by Mr. Lodge are but a representative few of the countless species killed solely for the plumage market.

The gorgeous Birds-of-Paradise are all in imminent danger. Mr. Walter Goodfellow has borne testimony to their alarmingly rapid decrease, a decrease which can excite little surprise when it is known that for some years 12,000 skins, chiefly of the Lesser Bird-of-Paradise, were being exported every three months from Humboldt's Bay alone. The rarest species, such as Prince Rudolph's, Helen's Six-wired, and *P. novæ-guinææ*, are found in the market. The Bird-of-Paradise is peculiar to the Papuan region, and though efforts have been made to introduce it into the West Indies there is no evidence that it has bred outside its natural habitat. Protection, more or less, is attempted by the Governments of British, German, and Dutch New Guinea, but this is ineffectual so long as a high market price encourages smuggling. Skins of *raggiana* are catalogued regularly for the London sales, though the species does not exist outside British Papua, whence its export is forbidden. Over 4,000 skins were marketed last June, another 4,000 in the preceding February.

The Goura Pigeons, largest of the pigeon tribe, are also inhabitants of New Guinea, and are likewise being exterminated: 6,338 heads and crests were catalogued in the June sale, 1913; 8,000 in December, 1912. Six sales are held in the year.

Little need be said of the White Heron. It is a notorious fact that the "osprey" is the nuptial-plume obtained by killing

Hérons and Egrets at the breeding-season; that no egret "farm" does or ever did exist; and that any feathers "picked up" are poor and brittle and of little commercial value. One sale last year testified to the slaughter of some 70,000 Herons.

The Smyrnian Kingfisher is an insect-eating species, as are many of the Kingfisher family. Recently its haunts have been raided to an almost incredible extent, and no fewer than 162,750 skins were offered at the June sale 1913.

The Scarlet Tanager represents the tribe of South American and West Indian birds destroyed for their feathers. The scarlet plumage is its breeding-dress. Though not in such heavy demand as was the case a few years ago, they are to be found in the Houndsditch rooms in company with Trogons, Toucans, Quetzal, Scarlet Ibis, Woodpeckers, Orioles, Hoopoes, Bee-eaters, Woodpeckers, Flycatchers, Humming-birds, etc. (Humming birds are said to be "not wanted," but over 20,000 were offered for sale in February, 1911). With them are Lyre-bird tails and skins of the Regent Bowerbird, smuggled from Australia; great numbers of the Himalayan, Numidian, Lady Amherst, and Scintillated Pheasants; Marabou tails; Rhea and Cassowary plumes; enormous quantities of Teal wings, and innumerable wing-quills of Condor, Albatros, Flamingo, White Crane, Bustard, Pelican, Falcon, etc.; of the White Tern or Sea-Swallow (*Gygis*) of the Pacific over 6,000 and of the Sooty Tern 18,000 pairs of wings have been offered at single sales.

The Traffic in Birds' Plumage.

OPINION ON THE CONTINENT.

NUMEROUS letters received during the last three months of 1913 from foreign correspondents, and from articles which have appeared in Continental newspapers, are strong evidence of the feeling which is quickly growing in civilized lands with regard to the traffic in birds' skins and feathers.

GERMANY.

Professor C. G. Schillings, the distinguished naturalist, author of "With Flashlight and Rifle" and "In Darkest Africa," says :

"The United States has found the only satisfactory solution of this question. Only direct prohibition will reach the core of the matter; all other measures would be an ineffective compromise. . . . We German friends of nature and of the birds, convinced too of the great economic importance of the latter, only wait anxiously that England, too, may get its Feather Importation law. *We certainly will follow.* If Australia, North America, England, and Germany close the market, the trade will die out. The movement is quite a young one in Germany. England has had it for years and years; so you understand we cannot lead. You cannot expect this. Please publish that Germany follows. England! Then comes Germany! My new little book dealing strongly with the question is coming out in a few weeks."

Professor Schillings is not without high authority in thus speaking.

From the German Bund für Vogel-schutz, Baroness Rotberg writes :—

"We are much in favour of your Bill; it is more than probable that if it pass we shall secure prohibition in Germany. We are not going to make any concession to the trade, thinking it better to have no law at all than an insufficient one allowing

the sale of many kinds of plumage to proceed as before. . . . Prohibition in England will most assuredly *not* spread the trade to the Continent. The fashion is sure to change, because France simply cannot do without the American and English markets."

At the annual meeting of the Society for Medical and Scientific Research (*Ver-sammlung Deutscher Aerzte und Natur-forscher*), the most important scientific society of Germany, a resolution was passed asking the government to bring in a bill prohibiting the importation of feathers of wild birds.

More significant still, perhaps, is the voice of the German trade papers. The *Kolnische Zeitung* (Nov. 5) says :

"We surmise that the fashion for aigrettes has reached its end. Paris cannot hold its own unaided by the American and English markets. A change in the fashion is therefore imminent. France has already a new hat ready for the window, trimmed with flowers or ostrich feathers only. The wholesale hat and feather trade in Germany is doing its level best to continue the fashion for the Egret and is paying large sums for these plumes. But if Paris decrees their abolition, the feathers are bound to go down in value, and a catastrophe is inevitable."

German Fashion (Oct. 26) says :

"Thanks to the prohibition of import into America and the coming Plumage Bill in England, the end is at hand of the use of the Egret in fashionable millinery. The trade has taken notice of the change in a remarkably rapid way. Prices for Egrets and Birds-of-paradise, which a few weeks ago were extraordinarily high, have sunk as much as 25 per cent."

Attention is also drawn by the German papers to the fact that ostrich feathers are not debarred by either the American law or

the British Plumage Bill, and that consequently they will take the place of the prohibited plumes.

FRANCE.

The Société Protectrice des Animaux de Paris, at its meeting on Sept. 18th, sent its heartfelt congratulations to those who have conducted the energetic and successful campaign in the United States, adding :—

“The meeting hears the call made upon France by Dr. Hornaday for similar action, and relies upon the Société Protectrice des Animaux de Paris to begin at once a campaign to secure in France the same victory.”

In a discussion at the Academy of Sciences, Paris, the principal argument put forward for the trade was that of the number of women said to be employed in France who, it was argued, would be thrown out of work. M. Perrier, Director of the Natural History Museum, protested strongly against the destruction of birds. As for the workpeople, 30,000 women employed in the artificial flower trade had been months out of work owing to the aigrette craze. He begged the Academy to decline the trade offer of £400 for the best method of domesticating egrets in farms. It was a mere blind to gain time; everyone knew that these birds could not be domesticated.

In an article in *Le Chenil* (Nov. 13), the organ of the Jardin Zoologique d'Acclimatation, on the new American law, M. Pichot says :

“In view of the introduction of the British Bill, the feather-trade fire their last shot by organising a Committee, calling itself independent, for the Economic Protection of Birds. The word *Exploitation* would, perhaps, better define the object of this new association, which, patronised by the London Chamber of Commerce, begins again an enquiry already made a thousand times into the status of the Avifauna of different

countries, and proposes to encourage the domestication of wild species. In France the trade, feeling the coming storm, seeks to organise a league for which it solicits the patronage of certain scientific notabilities. There is no objection to that provided it is not made to cover the traffic. But that is the nice point, because the traders have sought so much to mislead public opinion by inaccurate assertions, that one must mistrust so sudden a conversion to the idea of protection.”

The trade are working hard to form a similar Committee for Scientific “Exploitation” in France. M. Edmond Perrier, Director of the Natural History Museum and President of the Acclimatization Society, M. Debreuil, Secretary of the Society, Dr. Geoffrey Saint Hilaire, and many other eminent men of science, have, however, refused to allow their names to be used for such a purpose.

HOLLAND.

Professor Swaen, President of the Amsterdam section of the Netherlands Bird Protection Society, writes :

“As regards the importation of feathers we are very active, and have been preparing the public for a favourable reception of a Bill to prohibit importation. I am quite convinced that if your Bill is passed we shall have a similar Bill introduced, with your example to point to; and I can give you the assurance that our Society will do its utmost to promote action in this direction.”

Dr. Kerbert, Director of the Royal Zoological Society of Amsterdam, writes to Dr. Hornaday (Nov. 14) :

“We have received your letter about the destruction of valuable and beautiful wild birds for the millinery trade, and take pleasure in informing you that we fully agree with you on this point. . . . As we read in the foreword of your interesting book on ‘Our Vanishing Wild Life,’ this great battle for preservation and conservation cannot be won by gentle tones, nor by appeals to the æsthetic instincts, but it is necessary to establish the law.”

AUSTRIA.

The President of the Austrian Bird Protection Society writes :—

“ We understand that a Bill is shortly to be brought before the English Houses of Parliament to prevent the importation of feathers of wild birds. The *Oesterreicher Bund der Vogelfreunde* hails the advent of this Bill with the greatest pleasure, and is of opinion that the fight against the Feather Trade ought to be carried on in every European country with all possible vigour. In Austria the idea is gaining ground in our Parliament that the importation of wild-bird feathers ought to be put an end to. . . . It ought to be made impossible to wear birds or their plumage as hat ornaments, and thus a lasting stimulus would be given to the trade in artificial flowers, lace, and other trimmings.”

DENMARK.

Lieut.-Colonel Mehrn, writing for the President of the Danish Society “ Svalen ” (of which Queen Alexandra is Patroness), says :

“ There is at this moment in our Parliament a proposition, in the Law on the Protection of Animals, sec. 16, as follows : It is forbidden to Import into the kingdom Bird-skins, feathers, or the dead bodies or part of the bodies, of Birds not named in the list of exceptions appended to this law. This is not to apply to birds imported for instruction or for science and museums, for which, however, the permission of the Ministry of Agriculture is required ; nor to feathers forming part of the dress of a person travelling to Denmark, provided

that these feathers are not used for sale or exchange. The birds excepted are Ostriches, Eider-ducks and domestic fowls.”

Colonel Mehrn adds : We are sure that this proposition will be received well in our Parliament. I think it would be well if (as in New York) the words as to “ feathers which form part of the dress,” etc., were struck out, otherwise a person could have a “ magasin ” of feathers on her hat.

SWITZERLAND.

Dr. Paul Sarasin, President of the Central Schweizerische Naturschutzkommission, writes :

“ In case that a request on the part of the Government of Great Britain should be made to the Bundsrat to join in the prohibition of the import of skins and feathers of rare and beautiful exotic birds, I should think that the request would be answered in a satisfactory sense.

“ I personally shall do all that is in my power to support the noble intention of your Society as far as it concerns our country.”

In his plea for international and national societies for preservation of Nature round the world, Dr. Sarasin made a vigorous protest against the trade, adding :—

“ It has been estimated that fashion kills some 2-300 millions of birds every year—a gigantic sacrifice which is made only to satisfy the vanity and heartlessness of the European lady.”

SIR HARRY JOHNSTON, speaking at a meeting held at the Whitehall Rooms on Nov. 17th, 1913, to support the Government Plumage Bill, said the birds it was sought to protect from the ravages of the plume-hunter were either birds of great rarity or great beauty or birds of economic importance to man in the war against insects, molluscs, ticks, and worms, many of which carried disease germs from plant to plant and from the blood of one animal to that of another. It might be thought that the great

beauty and complete harmlessness of most of the birds was a sufficient reason for stopping their destruction, but it so happened that the great majority of them were insect eaters, so that in this crusade they were attending to practical issues as well as to sentimental considerations. The traffic of the plumage hunters who worked for the large trade houses in England, Holland, Belgium, France, Japan, and formerly in the United States, was a wholly inexcusable traffic and had already wrought irreparable harm.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

COUNCIL MEETINGS.

THE Council of the Society met at 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W., on October 17th and December 5th, 1913, and a special meeting was held on November 7th to consider the steps to be taken in connection with the Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Bill.

Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Hon. Secretary reported the issue of Bird Protection Orders for Devonshire, Dorset, Glamorgan, Hampshire, Westmoreland, Kerry, and the County Borough of Barnsley. The results of the Public School Essay Competition and of the Bird-and-Tree Challenge Shield Competitions, also the celebration of Bird-and-Tree Day at a large number of schools, were reported. It was agreed that the bird-saving apparatus at the lighthouses should be now taken down, to be re-erected in the early spring. The following lectures had been given:—

October 29th, Mr. H. C. Playne, Woodford; November 3rd, Rev. J. E. Kelsall, Benson, Oxon (to Scouts); November 5th, Mr. Bryant, Haselor; Rev. J. E. Kelsall, New Hilton; November 15th, Mr. J. R. B. Masefield, Hanley; November 18th, Miss E. Williams, Winchester (C.E.M.S.); November 29th, Mr. Masefield, Cheadle; November 27th, Miss Williams, Romsey; December 2nd, Miss Rintoul, Dundee.

Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The accounts were examined and passed for the third quarter of 1913, and for October and November. The appointment of the following Hon. Local Secretaries was confirmed:—

Derbyshire.—Miss B. M. Gray.

Derby.—Miss Veronica Vaudrey.

Brighton and Hove.—Lt.-Col. Williams-Freeman.

Helensburgh.—Mrs. Allan.

Lincolnshire (Lindsay).—Rev. J. Clare-Hudson.

Liverpool (Wavertree).—Mrs. Hughes.

Niton.—Miss Helen Lock.

Thetford.—Miss Sowels.

The resignation of Capt. Chippindall-Healey, H.L.S. for the Society, first for Havant and later for Brighton and Hove, since 1896, was received with regret, and thanks were voted to him for his past services. The following Fellows and Members were elected:—

FELLOWS.—Mrs. Clarke (Bournemouth); Edward Hudson (London, W.C.); Colonel H. LeRoy Lewis, C.B., D.S.O. (Petersfield); Mrs. Gerald Peel (Bournemouth); Major H. Beresford Peirse, D.S.O. (Bickley).

MEMBERS.—Miss Bennett (Titchfield); A. B. Burch-Michell (Welshpool); Miss Dunbar-Masson (Forres); Joseph Greenup (Minworth); Miss Irvine (Holt); Lady Jennings (Reigate); Mrs. Langford (Holt); Miss Heloise Meyer (Mass., U.S.A.); Miss Emily Moyers (Lyndhurst); Miss Peirse-Duncombe (London, S.W.); Miss E. Peirse-Duncombe (St. Leonards); G. A. Puckering (Manchester); Miss M. Ethel Richardson (Wellington, N.Z.); Miss Sikes (Melton-Mowbray); Mrs. M. Speakman (Knutsford); Mrs. Edgar Syers (Stanwell); Miss B. K. Taylor (London, S.W.); Herbert Vincent, Mrs. Herbert Vincent (London, N.); E. W. Wade (North Ferriby); Mrs. Waterlow (London, S.W.); Dr. Whitfield (Beaconsfield); Mrs. H. J. Wilson (London, S.W.); H. Libby (Redhill).

The Inspector's report on the bird shops and markets of the East-end was received, and the printing of notices of warning under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1911, authorized.

Watchers Committee.

Reports were received from Mr. Meade-Waldo and Mr. Ogilvie-Grant on their visit to the Orkneys and Shetlands, from Dr. Drewitt and Mr. P. D. Williams on their visits to Cornwall; and from twenty Watchers at various stations in England, Wales, and Scotland. It was agreed that a summary of these reports be prepared for private circulation. It was stated that negotiations were in progress for the acquiring by the Society of a Scottish headland, which is interesting and important on account of certain birds breeding there, and on which it is essential that a Watcher should be maintained.

General Business.

The methods to be adopted in support of the Government's Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Bill were discussed, and various proposals were agreed to. It was decided to form a special Parliamentary Plumage Committee of the Council, with power to co-opt additional members.

A resolution was unanimously adopted that the heartiest congratulations of the Council be accorded Dr. Hornaday and the New York Zoological Society and the National Association of Audubon Societies, on the passing of the clause in the United States Tariff Bill prohibiting the importation, sale or possession of wild birds' plumage throughout the States. Further discussion took place with regard to the destruction of Swallows in southern Europe, and it was agreed that the Bird Protection Societies of France and Italy be asked to give the matter their serious consideration. It would appear from communications received that in France the destruction is forbidden by law, but that in

some districts at least the law is not observed. The appointment of a Departmental Committee to consider the Bird Protection Laws had been notified to the Society by the Home Office, with a request that the Society should nominate a representative, and Mr. Meade-Waldo agreed to serve. Dates and hours for the Council meetings in 1914 were fixed, and letters on bird-shops and other subjects were considered.

Next meeting of the Council, January 23rd.

BIRD-PROTECTION AT LIGHT-HOUSES.

THE apparatus installed at the Caskets Lighthouse and at St. Catherine's, on the plan of that at the Terschelling Light, with the object of affording protection to migrating birds, has been taken down for the winter and will be re-erected in early spring. Although no great amount of evidence was looked for as the result of the autumn migrations, there is yet sufficient to give good ground for hope that such apparatus will do much to lessen the vast destruction of bird-life which now takes place at the lighthouses. The Head Keeper at the Caskets reports:

"During the last few days of August large flights of birds were passing the Station, and during the night a large number of small birds settled on the perches. . . . On most nights in October a few birds settled, and on the night of October 25th the perches were completely covered with Starlings."

From St. Catherine's the Engineer-in-charge writes:

"It is the general opinion of myself and assistants that the perches are undoubtedly of value in saving the lives of a considerable number of birds. They do not appear to save birds who fly fast and direct to the light, as they strike the glass and are instantly killed, but many birds flutter

round and round till they see the perches and then make use of them, remaining either until clouds disappear or until day-break. . . . The perches on the roof of the lantern do not seem to be made use of at all by birds during migration, which seems to bear out the opinion of the Dutch ornithologists that perches are only of value when in the full light of the lantern.

"It is during the spring migrations that the perches will be likely to be most useful, as the birds after their long sea flight are tired and are glad of the rest, but in the autumn they can rest on land before starting on their sea flight. We had not full opportunity of judging the effect during the spring migration, as the roof perches only were fixed last spring, the gallery perches not having been erected till the spring migration was nearly over."

PUBLIC SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION.

Two subjects were given for the Public School Essays this year. That for the Senior Division (competitors over 16) was a difficult one :—

Notes on the Legs and Feet of Birds and the various uses to which they are especially adapted, such as, walking, hopping, perching, climbing, wading, swimming, etc., with observations from life on one or more species exemplifying each type.

For the Junior Division a more popular topic was set, viz. :—

Notes on Birds observed during (a) a holiday at the seaside, or (b) a holiday in any inland district. A sketch map of the neighbourhood to be given.

The competition was stronger among the juniors this year, no doubt in consequence of the more attractive subject. In former years the larger number of papers have always been in the Senior Division.

The Silver Medal (Seniors) is awarded to Christopher Andrewes (Highgate School), whose essay is by far the best sent in, and is an admirable paper,

showing good knowledge, careful study, and intelligent personal observation. It is well illustrated. The Second Prize goes to P. A. Chubb (Bradfield College), whose essay is also extremely good, but less original in its observations and not illustrated. The papers written by Douglas J. B. Wilson (Glasgow High School), R. E. R. Sanderson (Bedford School), J. W. Snowdon (Rossall), and R. Burnier (Bradfield), are all good and are awarded Certificates and books.

In the Junior Division there is a tie, the judges being unable to decide between the work of E. E. Searight (Cheltenham College) and that of C. C. Baring (Haileybury). Both are capital essays, full of good and correct observation, and a Bronze Medal is accordingly awarded to each. C. Baring's remarks on the Migrants observed by him and E. Searight's account of the Waders seen in the neighbourhood of Aldeburgh, are really excellent. The Second Prize is well earned by an interesting paper on Birds observed during a holiday in the Lake District, by Michael Graham (Bootham School). Certificates are awarded to :—

R. T. Bannister (Epsom College), who writes well of the birds of the Isle of Man; A. F. Bell (Berkhamstead School), though the subject of this essay is not in accordance with the conditions; E. C. Keeble (Denstone College); L. J. Mothersill (Bedford School), with admirable observations on the young Cuckoo; C. W. Somerville (Manchester Grammar School); C. P. Staples (Christ's Hospital), a good account of the birds near Bournemouth.

The judges were Mr. E. G. B. Meade-Waldo, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.; Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.; and Dr. F. Dawtrey Drewitt, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

The subjects for the 1914 Competition will be announced shortly. A Special Prize, the "Owl Prize," will be offered annually by a member of the Council

of the R.S.P.B. for the best Essay on "The British Owls: the necessity for their better protection and the means to be adopted for preserving Owls, Kestrels, Buzzards, Harriers, and other useful Birds of Prey."

THE WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS.

THE Home Secretary has appointed a committee to inquire into what action has been taken under the Wild Birds Protection Acts, and to consider whether any amendments of the law or improvements in its administration are required. The members of the committee are:—

The Hon. E. S. Montagu, M.P., Under-Secretary of State for India (chairman).

Lord Lucas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. Frank Elliott, of the Home Office.

Mr. E. G. B. Meade-Waldo, member of the Council, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant, British Museum (Natural History).

Mr. Hugh S. Gladstone, F.Z.S., F.R.S.E.

Mr. W. Eagle Clarke, F.R.S.E., Royal Scottish Museum.

The secretary is Mr. Harold R. Scott, of the Home Office.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SWALLOWS IN FRANCE.

M. CLEMENTEL, the French Minister of Agriculture, has addressed the following circular letter to the prefects:

"My attention has been called to the systematic destruction of Swallows which goes on in certain districts of the south of France.

"I shall be grateful to you if you will let me know, as soon as possible, if such destruction is practised in your department and, if so, what measures you have taken to put an end to it."

The Minister has also issued a circular to the "Directeurs des services agricoles"

(instructors and lecturers on agriculture) requesting them to call attention to the damage done to crops by insects and the consequent necessity for protecting birds.

BIRD PROTECTION IN ITALY.

ALTHOUGH the new Italian Bird Protection Bill does not propose to do all that Bird Protectors could desire, it marks a great advance. Some of its provisions are distinctly interesting, and go a step further than does the present British law. Among its propositions are:—a close season from January 1st to September 30th; prohibition of the use of automatic guns, explosives, poisoned food, and electrical devices for bird-destruction, also of nets spread by streams, of the catching or chasing of birds during heavy snowfalls, and the use of blinded decoys. The use of the roccolo, ordinary nets, and limed twigs is still allowed. During the close season all traffic in game is to be prohibited, whether kept in ice or not. On petition of Provincial Councils, the destruction of birds injurious to agriculture, breeding preserves, or fisheries, may be authorised in the close time, and the taking of birds and nests at that time may also be permitted for scientific purposes; but in neither of these cases may the birds be sold. The catching of Swallows, Swifts, and Nightingales is absolutely forbidden; but a very weak point in the Bill is the proposal to allow special permits for the killing of migratory birds on payment of a special tax. It is to be hoped that this clause will be dropped. The power is vested in the Minister of Agriculture, assisted by a representative Council, and the Provincial Committees are similarly constituted. The progress of the measure will be watched with great interest.

Bird-and-Tree (Arbor) Day.

YEAR by year the quality of the Essays on Birds and Trees sent in from the Elementary Schools in competition for the County Challenge Shields and other awards has improved and has far exceeded the expectations with which the scheme was started. It is, however, somewhat disappointing to find that the number of competing Schools increases but slowly, and in one or two instances has even diminished. The crowded state of the official time-table is no doubt chiefly accountable, and it is much to be regretted that this should close rural schools to a subject of serious importance to country dwellers, and of benefit to the intelligence, character, and happiness of the children.

The most general defect in the papers on Birds is concentration of attention on nests and broods and want of knowledge of the habits, food, and notes of the birds themselves. In the Trees there is a tendency to too much minute detail, with neglect of distinguishing characteristics. But these are failings natural to the youthfulness of the writers; and the patience, alertness, care, and zeal displayed, together with the excellence of writing and composition, are sterling evidence of the natural capacity of the children and of the skill of many teachers in educating it. The ages of the competitors range from fifteen down to seven (in one Northants Team), the average being about twelve.

The Judges were: Mr. Montagu Sharpe (Chairman of Council), Rev. Julian Tuck, Rev. J. Clare Hudson, Mr. G. A. Freeman, B.Sc., Mr. W. H. Hudson, Mr. Hastings

Lees, Mr. J. R. B. Masefield, Mrs. Fuller Maitland, Miss Clifton, Miss M. Rowe, B.Sc., and Miss Gardiner.

Short reports of some of the Bird and Tree Festivals will, it is hoped, appear in the next number of BIRD NOTES AND NEWS.

INTER-COUNTY COMPETITION.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: Woburn Boys' Council School (Beds.); East Carleton School (Norfolk), tie.

SECOND PRIZE: Wolverton St. Mary Girls' School (Bucks).

The Competition among the leading Schools of each County for the Inter-County Shield results, for the first time, in a tie. The trophy must spend half the year with the Woburn Boys' School (Beds.) and half at East Carleton (Norfolk). Woburn's Essays are all remarkably good, showing not only accurate observation but judgment and skill in selecting the salient facts and arranging them in the best order. The same School won the Shield last year, and has evidently worked hard to keep it. East Carleton, however, is little if at all behind, and is a much younger Team. These children's Essays are well worth printing, being full of fresh observation and nicely written; they would show to admiration what village boys and girls can do, and should inspire and stimulate other schools. The second prize goes to the Wolverton St. Mary Girls (Bucks), who, if somewhat inferior to the other two Teams in exact knowledge, exceeds both in charm of style.

COUNTY CHALLENGE SHIELDS.

BEDFORDSHIRE.

Accidents and mischances have had their part in keeping various old competitors from entering this year; but the fact remains that only three Schools from Bedfordshire are represented, and the Challenge Shield must accordingly be withheld. The work from Woburn Boys' School has been already referred to. The subjects of the papers are the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Little Owl, and Crossbill; Elm, Lime, and Silver Birch. They are well illustrated. The two other Teams are those of Mogerhanger and Tempsford. The Mogerhanger papers are on their usual lines: a general description of Bird or Tree, followed by extracts from note-books. It is a young Team, and the Bird Essays are not quite so good as usual, but the Trees are nicely done, and there is a pleasing sincerity in all. It is noteworthy that this Team has selected hedgerow trees and shrubs exclusively, such as Spindle and Blackthorn, which are too generally neglected. The Tempsford Essays are very well written: short, but greatly to the point, neatly put together, sympathetic, and intelligent. Those on Blackbird, Elm, and Holly deserve special commendation.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: Wolverton St. Mary Girls' School.

THE competition in Bucks is this year even keener than usual from the fact that the old Stony Stratford National School, which carried off the trophy for several years, is now divided into the Stony Stratford Boys and the Wolverton St. Mary Girls, and these two consequently enter the ranks separately.

The Wolverton Girls thoroughly earn their proud position as winners of the Shield, for their essays are astonishingly good, showing keen study, freshness of observation and a delightful sympathy with nature, together with a charming style of writing. The Birds are Whitethroat, Skylark, and Linnet; the Trees, Alder, Pseudo-Acacia, and Rowan. The Stony Stratford Boys, though they have to yield first place to their former companions in success, are represented by work which does them great credit; they are, it may be remarked, a younger Team than the girls. Their work evidences close and accurate outdoor study, and they write in a straightforward and workmanlike way. The Birds here are Reed-Warbler, Skylark, and Moorhen; the Trees, Tulip-tree, Walnut, and Sweet Chestnut. Princes Risborough, with especially excellent papers on Hornbeam, Box, and Beech, and good drawings; Ellesborough, notable for enthusiastic and intimate observation and for the clever drawings of two of the Team; and Coleshill, with admirable first-hand work to which the composition of the essays hardly does justice, and with, again, sketches of exceptional merit, follow closely. It is pleasant to find conspicuously staunch Bird Protectors at the historic village of Penn and to read their interesting papers. From Lacey Green comes work whose engaging freshness and sincerity give it a distinct charm; and Tyringham-cum-Filgrave is a newcomer of much promise, all the papers indicating individual work and thought.

CUMBERLAND.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: St. John's Girls' School, Keswick.

The competition from Cumberland continues to be disappointing as to quantity,

but it is a pleasure to note the high quality of the work sent in from four of the Schools, and especially the steady improvement in the essays by the girls of St. John's School, Keswick, who are this year awarded the County Shield. These papers are all well done and are marked by a very considerable amount of first-hand observation, general accuracy, and neatness of style. The Birds are Starling, Wren, and Wagtail, not novel subjects, but treated with much freshness; and the Trees, Bird-Cherry, Elm, and Rhododendron, are excellently described; the last-named exotic, with others of its kind, would be better replaced on the lists by British hedgerow shrubs. Kirkoswald takes second place by right of the artistic feeling and careful attention which characterize the pleasant papers on Trees. The essays, too, were written without notes. The Birds here are a notably good selection—Grey Wagtail, Heron, and Peewit. The Greystoke set is remarkable for a prettily and brightly-written account of the Redstart and excellent essays on the Walnut and Wellingtonia. This School also leaves the commoner and oft-described kinds of birds and studies, among others, Willow-Wren, Greenfinch, Treecreeper, and Grey and Pied-Wagtails. Cargo, the youngest of the Cumberland Teams, turns out work that can only be regarded as admirable, seeing that it is work from a little School with only some forty scholars. The fact that fifteen of these wrote essays, including two little people of only eight, and that the papers all show genuine observation and record a good array of facts recalled without aid from notes, make it evident that Cargo has a great deal to teach many bigger Schools, and offers an encouraging lead to the small ones.

HAMPSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: Ridge School.

SECOND PRIZE: Sholing Girls' School.

THIRD PRIZE: The Holme School, Headley.

The papers sent in by Hampshire are, as usual, so good that it has been difficult to place them in order of merit and to select the prize-winners. It is therefore no small triumph for a village school like Ridge to be for a second time awarded the Challenge Shield. The Team's work is genuine and enthusiastic, and the Birds chosen, Nightingale, Lapwing, and Great Spotted Woodpecker, are species requiring more patient watching than do the familiar birds commonly selected. The Second Prize goes to the Sholing Girls, whose essays are marked by the fullness, perseverance, and accuracy which gave the School the position of Champion last year. In the essays on Trees especially, the observation is extraordinarily close and good. The papers from the Holme School, Headley, taking Third Prize, are particularly neat and are also interesting owing to the quickness of the writers in noting things worth recounting. These three schools, however, are hard-pressed by St. Peter's Girls' School, Bournemouth, with charmingly and sympathetically written Bird and Tree studies that would do credit to any High School in the country; the Birds being the Stonechat, Green Woodpecker, and Pied Wagtail. Not far behind come Privett, whence the youngest Team in the county sends in work worthy of past records, including an excellent essay on the Sparrow-hawk; Romsey C.E. Girls, with bright and pleasant essays based almost entirely on good observation; and St. Joseph's R.C., Christchurch, conspicuous for freshness and briskness of style. There is also much good Nature Study in the essays from Awbridge, Bramshaw

Girls', and Thorley (I.W.); and sound and promising work from Barton Stacey, Brighstone (I.W.), Ashmansworth and Botley (the two last-named newcomers, who need only be advised to go on as they have begun), Hinton Ampner, and Wickham. The popular birds in the county are Starling and Thrush: one Bird paper in every seven is on the Starling.

NORFOLK.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: East Carleton School.

SECOND PRIZE: Tittleshall.

THIRD PRIZE: Postwick.

One notably admirable point about the Norfolk essays is that nearly all, even the most elementary, consist of personal observations. In the case of East Carleton this has been developed to a high degree and is combined with good and delightfully spontaneous composition, nice feeling, and neat little sketches. Moreover, the essays were written without notes, and the subjects are well chosen—Meadow Pipit, Pied Wagtail and Willow-Warbler for Birds; Whitebeam, Hornbeam, and Acacia for Trees. All the papers receive full marks, and it is a pleasure to award the Shield to the School. At Tittleshall, and Postwick again, the papers are not only close and exact but thoughtful; those on Trees in particular are excellently done. After these three leading Teams come East Tuddenham, Lyng, Coltishall, Yaxham, Feltwell Fen, Sprowston, Stoke Ferry, and Pulham St. Mary Magdalene. There is good observation in all these papers, and many of the young writers have clothed their matter in pleasing and sympathetic language. There are specially good essays on the Jackdaw from Sprowston, Robin from Yaxham, Woodpecker from Pulham, and Owl and Wren from both East Tudden-

ham and Lyng. Yaxham, Pulham, and Lyng are notable for picturesqueness and originality of style; Coltishall for zealous study; all show first-hand knowledge, a good deal of enthusiasm and more or less power of expression. In the Second Class are grouped Tacolnstone (good account of House-Martins' nest); Wickmere, with careful papers on American Horse-Chestnut and American Maple; East Ruston (Long-tailed Tit excellent); Attleborough Boys; Ketteringham, where the girls seem to possess an exceptional faculty for making friends with their birds, and write brightly about them; Long Stratton; East Lexham; Thompson (very genuine work); Ashwellthorpe (industrious notes); Little Cressingham (for Trees, Birds indifferent); Wolferton (another good paper on the Long-tailed Tit); Winfarthing; Stoke Ferry (2nd Team, and like the first team strong in illustrations); Wiggshall St. German; Boughton; and, again for Trees only, St. Faith's School. Special mention must also be made of Aldeby, Brockdish, Hempnall, Horstead, Moulton St. Mary, Swanton Morley, and Terrington St. Clement's. In all thirty-two species of Birds and thirty-two Trees are represented; but the Thrush occurs sixteen times, Blackbird thirteen, Horse Chestnut and Oak fourteen each.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: Long Buckby School.

SECOND PRIZE: Victoria Council School, Wellingborough.

THIRD PRIZE: North-end School, Rushden.

As was the case last year, the Judges had some trouble in grouping the numerous competing Schools in this county and in awarding the Shield. Long Buckby receives it by reason of painstaking personal observa-

tion and in spite of some obvious faults. The work is both genuine and zealous, the Tree papers (notably that on the Laburnum) especially so, and the drawings are well done. The Victoria Council School, Wellingborough, which takes Second Prize, has a remarkably good list of Birds; Whinchat, Whitethroat, and Skylark are described in a pleasant natural style and with admirable observation; and those on Hornbeam, Birch, and Scots Pine are astonishingly close and full of accurate detail. Long and full too are the essays from North-end, Rushden; they are also noteworthy for intelligence and nice feeling, and are gracefully written. Pytchley (C.E.), with remarkably well thought-out and cleverly done papers (including an excellent one on the Kestrel); Cold Higham, where the girls have made the running and do great credit to their school; Braunston C.E., notable for careful studies of Trees and good water-colour drawings; Rushden (Newton Road), and Rushden (Alfred Street) again specially strong on Trees and in drawings; Badby, graced with that touch of enthusiasm and personal delight which gives the greatest charm to nature-work; Irthlingborough, displaying genuine artistic ability as well as direct outdoor observation; and Gretton, with very pleasant and brightly-written essays; all reach the "Excellent" standard. Some of the Teams in the next class are but a point or two below; they comprise Braunston (2nd Team), Croughton, which sends in three teams, Aynho, Irthlingborough (2nd Team), two Teams from Middleton Cheney, Welton C.E., Mears Ashby (two Teams), Woodford-cum-Menebris (capital essay on the Yellowhammer), Wootton C.E., Rushden C.E., and Great Addington. A dozen other Schools are represented by promising and sometimes excellent work.

Polebrook sends the youngest Team in the competition, the average age being nine and one competitor only *seven*. A greater variety of Birds might be selected; there are thirteen essays each on Thrush and Robin.

SOMERSET.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: Frome C.E. Boys' School.

SECOND PRIZE: Exford.

The competition in Somerset is stronger than last year and introduces an unusual number of new competitors, several of whom at once take high places, but the absence of several older Teams indicates some lack of staying power; more fresh schools come in and drop out than in any other county. Cleeve, last year's Shield-winner, is absent; so too, are Yatton and Long Ashton, which formerly sent in some of the best essays in the whole competition. The Judges are glad, however, to find in all the Schools represented increased outdoor observation, a point in which Somerset has always been strong. Frome Boys' School wins the Shield once again with studies clever and accurate, though perhaps not quite so interesting as their work has sometimes been. The subjects are Goldfinch, Yellowhammer, and Skylark; Maple, Hornbeam, and Beech. The drawings are admirable, one really beautiful little painting of a Beech twig being the best sent in from the county, and hardly surpassed by any in the competition. The second place is taken by Exford, another School that invariably produces capital work. The essays are bright, intelligent, and interesting, and are really remarkable as coming from a Team with an average of only eleven years. Frome Girls' Council School promises extremely well, having had three teams at work from which

to select final competitors; and there is some charmingly fresh and sincere work from North Perrott (another newcomer), and Wembdon, two Schools that are bound to come to the front if they persevere. Chillington, the youngest and one of the most promising teams in the county; Winsham; Fivehead; Wookey Hole; and Weston Zoyland secure well-merited awards.

WARWICKSHIRE.

CHALLENGE SHIELD: Mancetter C.E. School.

There is a great variety in the work from Warwickshire, and as a whole it is of excellent quality. Seeing that the county is an ideal one for such studies, there should be a larger number of entrants, though no doubt present educational methods militate against the taking up of such eminently suitable subjects in country schools. The two Schools which led the way last year, Mancetter and Middleton (Tamworth) hold the same proud position this time, and have many of the same children in the Teams. Their work shows much painstaking observation and they have selected a capital variety of subjects; the papers from Mancetter are nicely illustrated, and Middleton competitors display the artistic faculty no less in appreciative descriptions of Trees and Birds, the latter including Whitethroat and Garden-Warbler. Three other schools are scarcely behind these two. Dosthill, especially remarkable for closeness and thoroughness of work, demonstrates a rapid advance that does great credit to Team and Teacher. This School sends in two Teams, in itself a sign of strength. The Murray Boys' School, Rugby, who always turn out good Nature studies, are better than usual this time. With Haselor, Trees are the specially strong subject, and drawings a strong feature

in the Tree study. Here again there are two Teams, one of boys and one of girls, and both do good and pleasant work. The Stratford-on-Avon papers are very short and seem to lack personal enthusiasm, but there are some nice touches in the Trees. Minworth's essays are also brief but are pleasingly written. Among new competitors, Bedworth (Leicester Road) Team are highly commended for the brightness and intelligence of their lively compositions; here birds are regarded not as "objects" but as individuals with a life and character of their own, and this is as it should be.

OPEN CLASS.

The entries in this class are far more numerous than in previous years, coming from Derbyshire, Lancashire, Berkshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, and Devon. The work, as might be expected, is unequal, but much is highly promising. The two principal prizes go to Felixstowe Ferry (Suffolk), and Newburgh C.E. (Lancashire). The former follows up a successful first appearance last year, but Newburgh is a newcomer and must be congratulated on the genuine observation and artistic feeling evinced in half-a-dozen excellent essays. Both these sets are prettily illustrated with sketches. Next come Hinton Waldrist, with fresh and sincere papers, agreeably written on well-chosen subjects; Cartmel Fell, whose essays are indicative of outdoor study, recounted in a nice, natural way; Wimbledon (Dun-donald Road Boys) with interesting papers which, however, do less justice to the keenness and originality of the writers than do the admirable notebooks; and Totley, evidencing much painstaking work on the right lines. The careful and conscientious essays from Heage (Central School) reach

a high general level, and are accompanied by excellent drawings; Sheldon (C.E.) is a young team of distinct promise, the papers being simple, bright, and genuine; Slindon, too, makes a most creditable first appearance, some prettily recorded incidents showing that the children are interested in their study; and Withnell (United Methodist) is another newcomer that does well and will do still better. It is pleasant to come across such champions of the Birds as the young people of Diptford; they make a capital start, and what they lack as yet in learning they make up for in nice feeling. Mawdesley (St. Peter's R.C.) cadets need further training

in this direction, but some of the papers are very fairly done. Greenhill should take a first-rate place when more outdoor observation succeeds diligent book-learning. Charlesworth, though working in the right way, neglects the rules of the Competition.

Schools wishing to compete in 1914 are reminded that Entry-forms should be sent in, if possible, by February 14th. A Special Prize is offered by a Member of the Council of the R.S.P.B. for the best Essay on any one of the British Owls, with special reference to its utility.

Full particulars of the Competition can be had from the Secretary, R.S.P.B.

IN THE COURTS.

SHOOTING A BITTERN.—At *Hythe* (Hants), on November 28th, Captain Wright, of Beaulieu, was fined £1 and 11s. costs for shooting a Bittern. The bird was formerly in the aviary of Mr. Turner-Turner, but had long enjoyed its liberty; it found its way into adjoining grounds, and was shot by defendant, who explained that he would not have done so had he known it was a tame bird. The Bittern being protected throughout the year in Hants, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds prosecuted, in order to make the fact known that the wild birds might not be destroyed with impunity.

PRESERVATION OF OWLS.—At *Bedale*, on September 30th, Harry Kirk, a farmer, was ordered to pay costs for offering two Owls for sale.—At *Marlborough*, on November 8th, Edward Whitlock was ordered to pay 11s. 6d. costs for shooting an Owl.

YORKSHIRE PEREGRINES.—At *Sedburgh*, on September 24th, Joseph Sanderson, farmer, was fined the nominal sum of 5s. and 6s. 6d. costs, for having two Peregrine Falcons in his possession. Defendant said he bought them from a man who took them at Cautley Crag, as he was interested in birds and thought that those of the hawk or evil nature were not protected; they cost a good

deal in keep, and he advertised them for sale. They had now been set free. The Yorkshire Naturalists Union inspired the prosecution.

THE BIRD-DEALER.—At *Liverpool*, on October 30th, William Cookson and William Wright, bird-dealers, were fined £1 and costs each for cruelty to Larks. About a hundred birds were in a four-decker cage at the back of St. John's-market, with not even standing room, and without food or water; some were sold at a penny each.

CRUELTY TO DECOYS.—At *Bristol*, on October 29th, George Packer was fined 10s. and costs for ill-treating a captive Goldfinch. The bird was braced to a stick so that feathers and skin of breast and wings were badly chafed; when taken by the police it was too exhausted to stand and died next day.—At *Westbury*, on November 10th, John Sly, of Warminster, was fined 10s. for taking Goldfinches, and 10s. for cruelty to two Linnet decoys. When found on the downs with his nets set, he crammed one of the birds into his pocket; it was fastened with string and wire, and was bleeding and exhausted. The other bird was similarly braced and cut. Defendant said he had been at it seventeen years without being copped, and would go at it again; it was his living. He used hen-birds because he got 2s. 6d. a dozen for cocks, but hens were

only worth a halfpenny.—It was said that defendant's employer did a big business in birds. The apparatus was confiscated.

BIRD-CATCHING.—At *Reading*, on November 15th, John Iles, professional bird-catcher, was fined £2 and costs for taking two Linnets, birds scheduled under the Reading Order; defendant said he knew nothing of the bye-law, but the bench declined to believe his evidence.—At *Kingston*, Henry Heath, of Fulham, was convicted of catching Chaffinches at Esher. Decoys and apparatus confiscated.

CATCHING GOLDFINCHES.—At *Nottingham*, on October 18th, William Bonnett and Horace Read were fined 10s. each for using nets to catch Goldfinches. A braced Goldfinch was the decoy, and several Linnets and Goldfinches were in cages. Birds and nets were confiscated.—At *Exmouth*, Thomas Maunder was fined 5s. for catching Goldfinches with lime and call-birds at Littleham, on October 19th. The birds were liberated and cages and gear forfeited.—At *Dorchester*, on November 22nd, Charles Brown, of Slater-street, Bethnal Green, was fined £1 and 13s. costs for taking two Goldfinches. He was found with nets and five decoy birds—Goldfinch, Lark, and three Linnets—and in his cages were the two Goldfinches and a number of Linnets and Chaffinches, all very wild. The man had been in Dorset for about seven weeks in company with a man named Matthews, and had been sending off birds to London three or four times a week, doing a huge business.—At *Uxbridge*, on October 6, George Mattingley was fined 6s. for taking a Goldfinch and four Linnets, and 20s. for cruelty to a decoy Linnet. Nets destroyed and birds liberated.—At *Finchley*, James Hayes got off with payment of costs, 7s. 6d., for use of nets and decoy birds. He had in his possession a sack, nine cages, nets, pegs, etc., Linnets, Redpolls, Goldfinch, Siskin, and Bullfinch. Birds liberated and tackle forfeited.

A pair of Ruddy Sheld-drakes, belonging to Lord Newton, at Lyme Park, Disley, but left—as all naturalists would wish them left—unpinioned, have been shot on the Stretford sewage-farm. It is much to be desired that public authorities would totally prohibit shooting of birds on public property.

Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Bill.

CARD

With Coloured Illustration,

“Some Victims of the Plume-Trade.”

Specially designed by Mr. G. E. LODGE. For circulation by Post. All persons interested in the Protection of rare, useful, and beautiful Wild Birds are asked to help in circulating this Card.

R.S.P.B. Leaflet No. 70.

The Plume Question in a Nutshell.

Reprinted, with additions, from BIRD NOTES AND NEWS.

R.S.P.B. Leaflet No. 71.

The Government Plumage Bill.

With text of the Bill and Chronology of the campaign against Bird-destruction by plume-hunters.

Reprinted, with additions, from BIRD NOTES AND NEWS.

Feathers and Facts.

The Story of the Plume-trade, with facts relative to the traffic and a reply to the Trade defence. Price 6d.

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To Members of the Society subscribing 5s. and upwards per annum it is forwarded gratis and post free.

Printed by WITHERBY & Co., 326, High Holborn, W.C., and published by the ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.

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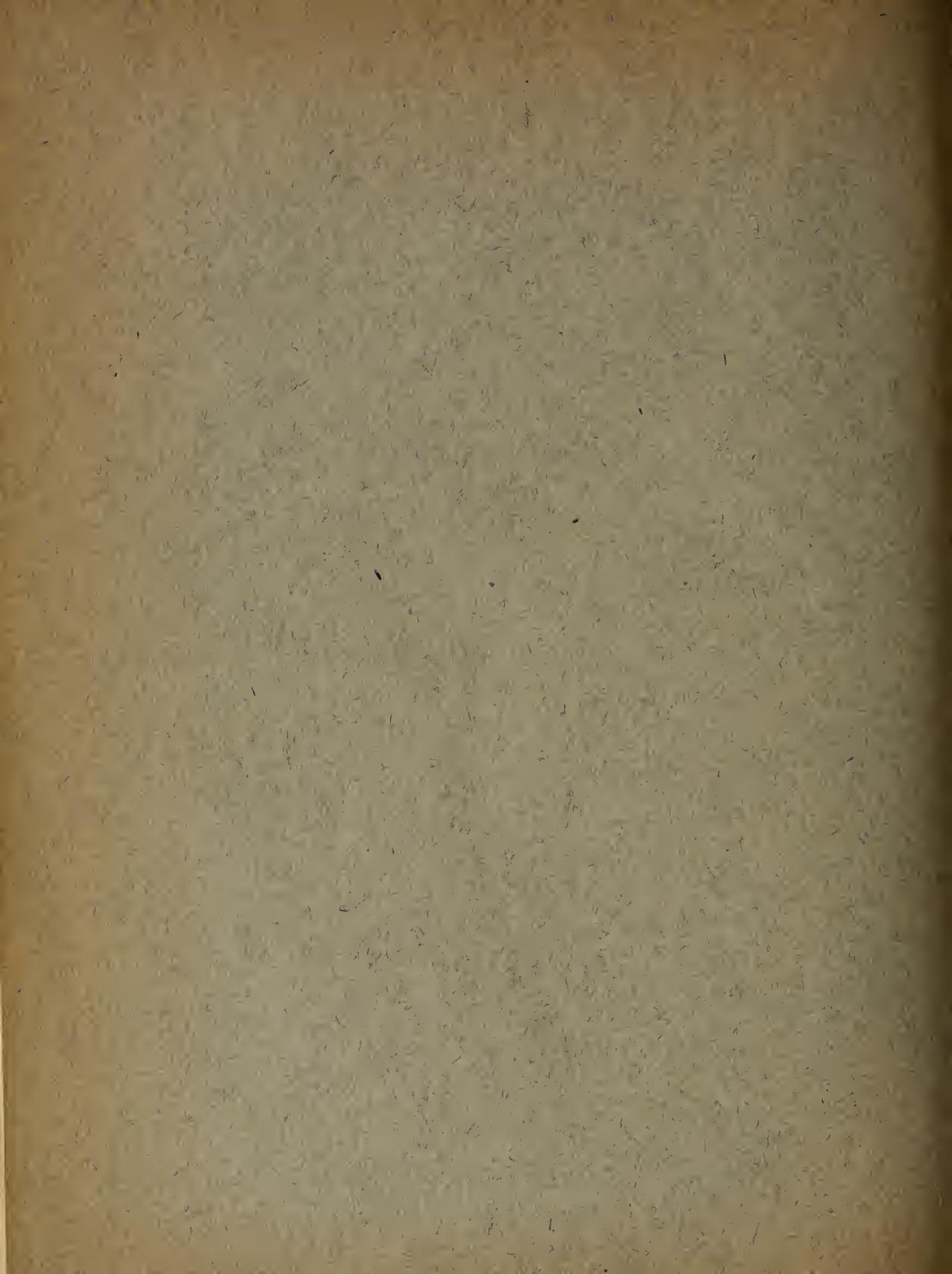
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Colley Hill Preservation.

An opportunity of securing an important part of the North Downs, viz., Colley Hill, near Reigate, Surrey, as an open space free from building or other disfigurement, has occurred, and the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty have obtained the option to purchase some 60 acres, at a cost of £5,700, of which nearly £2,000 remains to be raised by the 15th April, 1912, and to assist them a Shilling Fund has been arranged, of which Mr. Arthur Trower is acting as Hon. Treasurer.

Surely bird-lovers will welcome any scheme which will provide a sanctuary for such interesting species as the Cirl Bunting, Grasshopper-Warbler, Nightingale, etc., and perhaps even the Dartford Warbler.

The Committee sincerely hope that all those who are interested in this scheme will forward a small donation.

Cheques and Postal Orders, crossed "Shilling Fund," should be made payable to the Hon. Treasurer, and forwarded to him at Wiggie, Redhill; or may be sent to the London County and Westminster Bank, Redhill Branch.

Further information on the subject will be gladly supplied by :

THOS. H. L. GROSVENOR, }
HARRY BUDGEN, } *Hon. Secretaries.*

WIGGIE, REDHILL.

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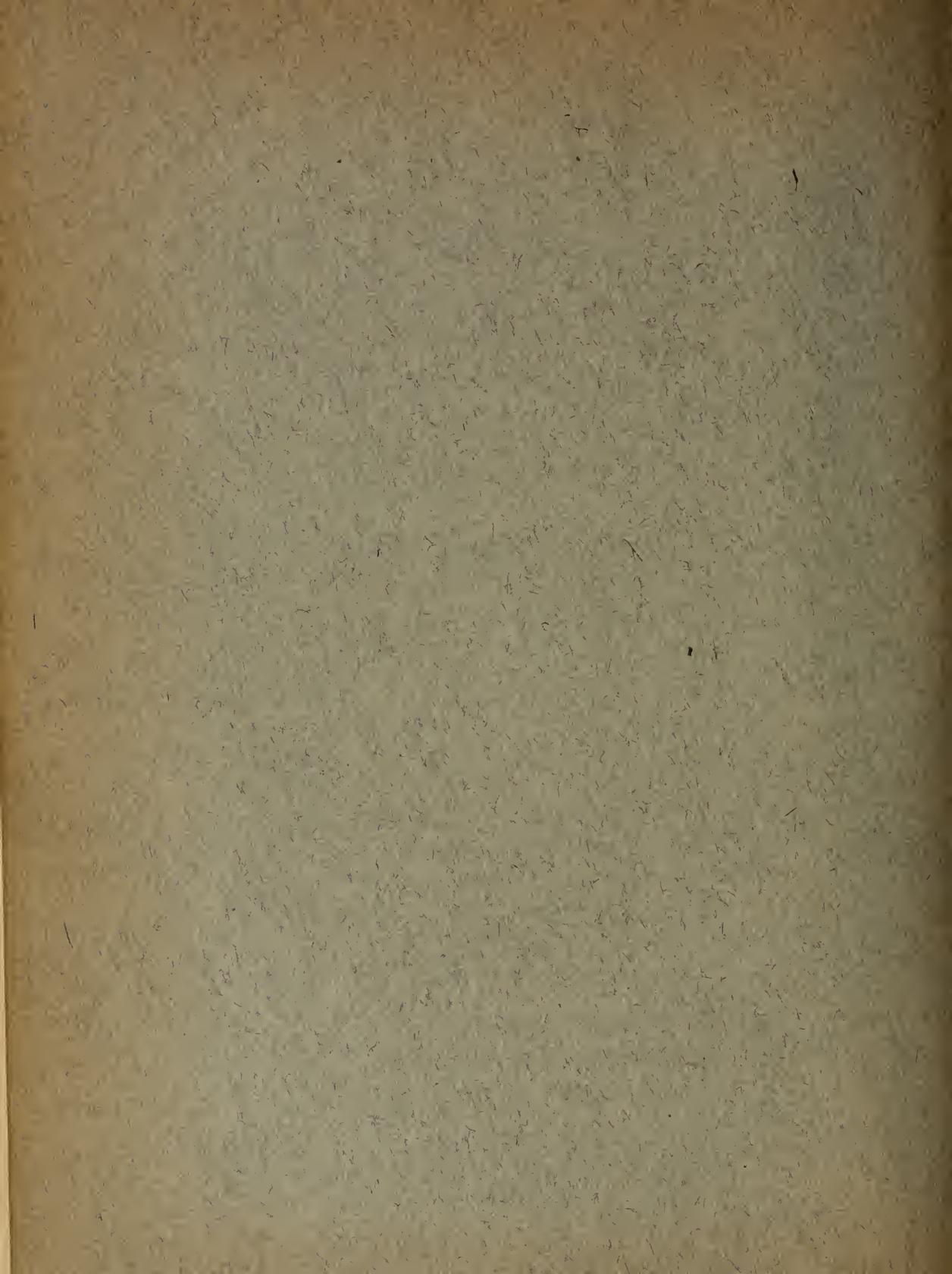
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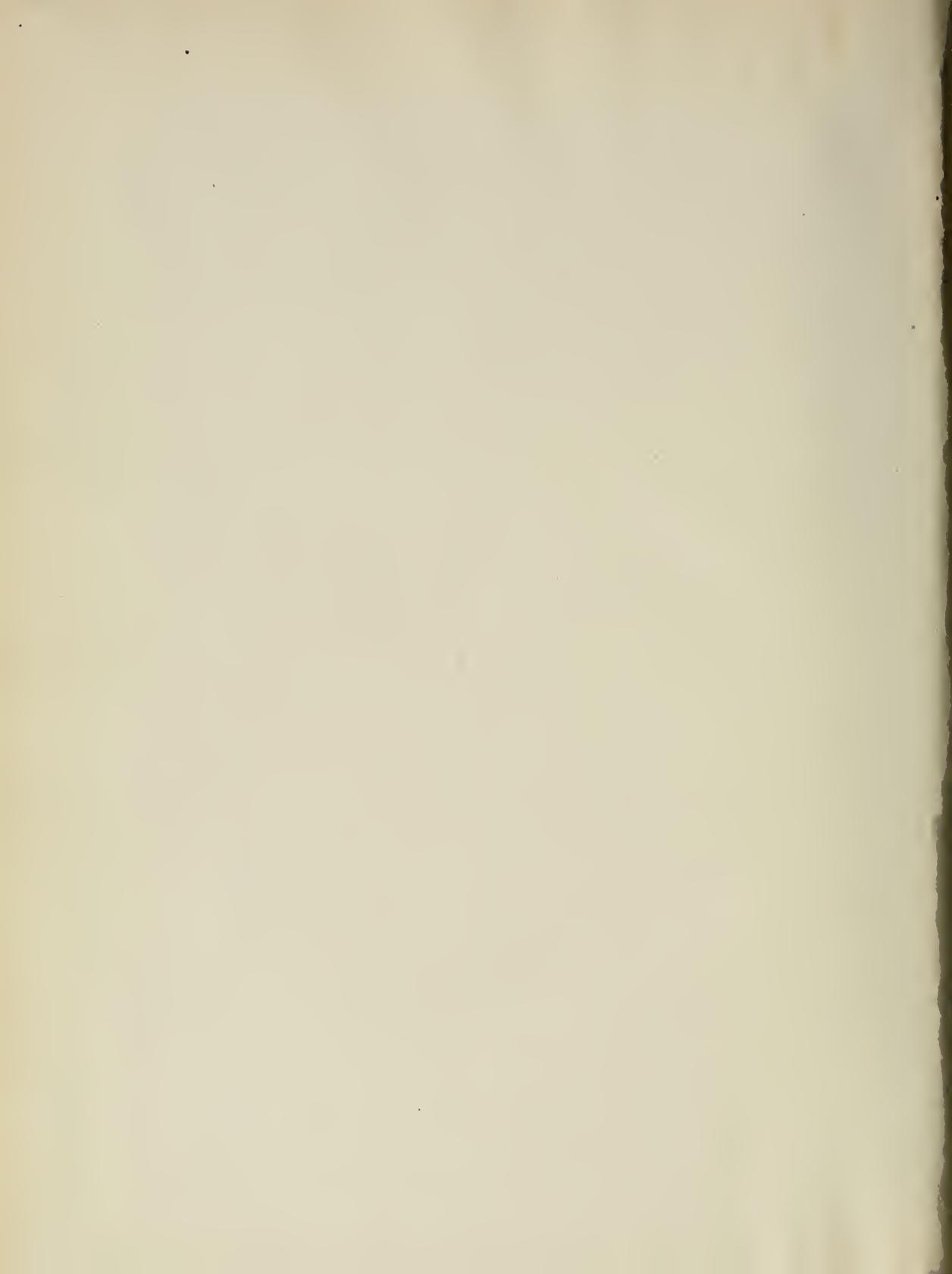
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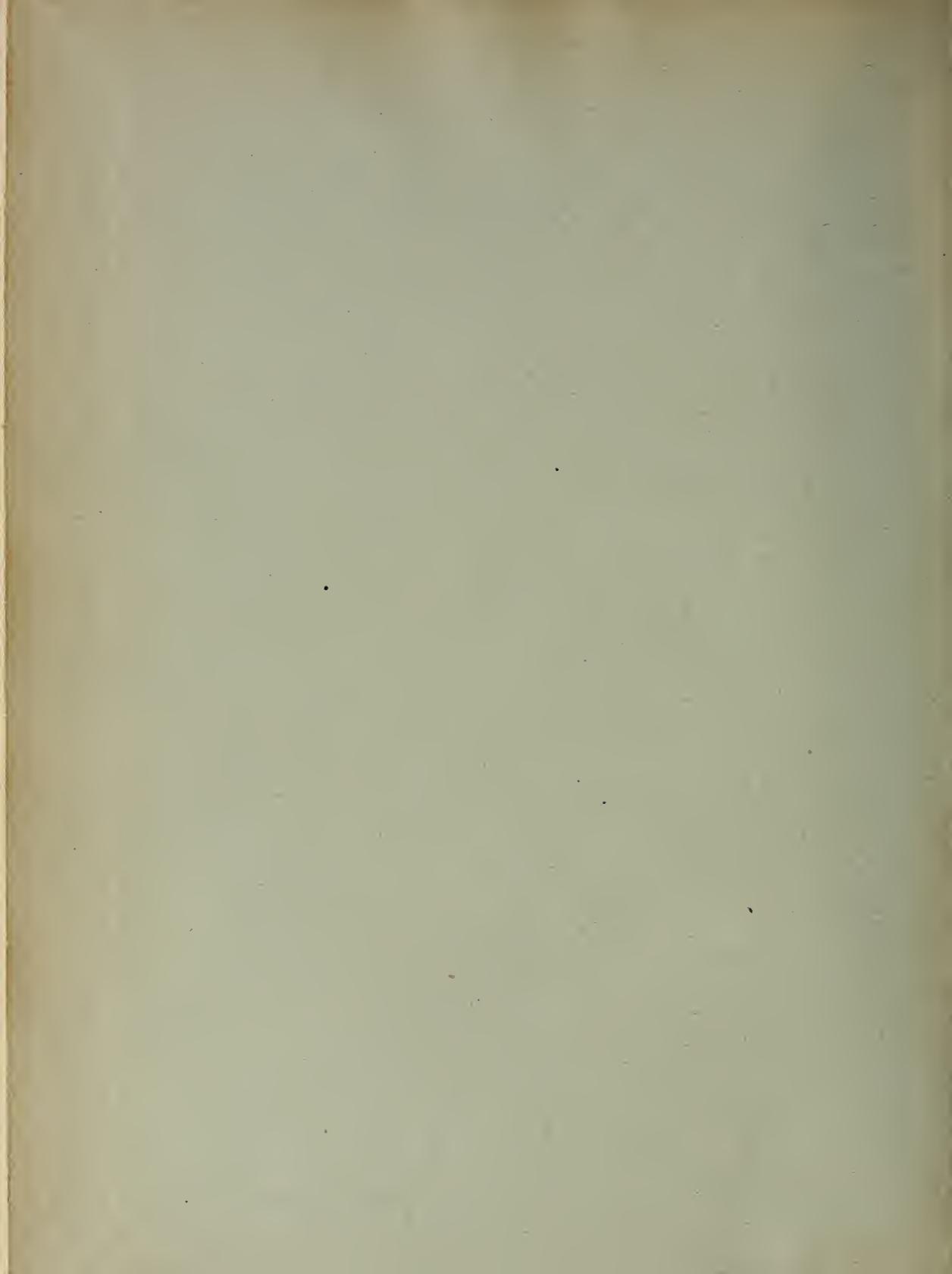
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