



5.06 (42)

A

FOR THE PEOPLE  
FOR EDUCATION  
FOR SCIENCE

LIBRARY  
OF  
THE AMERICAN MUSEUM  
OF  
NATURAL HISTORY









Call at 10.1  
9/25/31 - m

# NATURE NOTES, THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE



EDITED BY  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.,  
OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

“ HE PRAYETH BEST WHO LOVETH BEST  
ALL THINGS BOTH GREAT AND SMALL ;  
FOR THE DEAR GOD WHO LOVETH US,  
HE MADE AND LOVETH ALL.”

London :  
JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.  
  
SELBORNE SOCIETY,  
9, ADAM STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.

Vol. IV. 1893.

G.S.H.



31-121764-Sept 26



## INDEX.

---

- Abomination, a New, 113.  
 Aconites, Winter, 51.  
 Advertising, Abuse of, 81, 177; Society for Checking, 237.  
 Allen, J., Brentford Aits saved, 113; a Gruesome Bargain, 170.  
 Allen's *Science in Arcady*, 52.  
 Almack, A. C., Kingfisher, 115.  
 Alpine Garden, Birds in, 3.  
 Anticipations, 66.  
 Aphides, 199.  
 Appleby, E. J., Lantern Slides, 114, 138.  
 Artificial Edelweiss, 155.  
 Ashley, F. W., Peter, a Goldfinch, 9; London Birds, 157; A Selbornian in the Dials, 181.  
 Atkins, E. F., Butterflies and Moths, 218.  
 Avadavats, 18.
- Baillie, E. J., Christmas Greeting, 221.  
 Baker, R., Swallows, 18.  
 Barbed Wire, 77.  
 Bargain, a Gruesome, 170.  
 Barker's, T., Note Book, 203.  
*Beautiful World, A*, 238.  
 Bees and Death's head, 7, 39; Nests, 158; Leafcutter, 198.  
 Bell, C. D., Hardiness of Canaries, 98; *Poems*, 195.  
 Benson, A. C., Gilbert White, 83; his *Poems*, 88, 231.  
 Biggs, M. A., Behaviour of Cats, 216.  
 Birchall, O., Landrail, 139.  
 Bird Catchers, 55; London, 182.  
 Birds: in Alpine Gardens, 3; in New Zealand, 25, 35, 55; Protection of, 33, 76, 162, 198; Battue of, 34, Feeding the, 35; at Lighthouse, 37, 58; and Squirrels, 19, 37, 38, 58; Memory in, 57; at Sevenoaks, 116; and Drought, 156; London, 157; at Window, 96, 117, 118, 198; Poisoning of, 199; Wild, at Shows, 215; Queries, 217, 243; With the, 222.  
 Birket's, P. B., *Commons and Spaces*, 90.  
 Blomefield, L., Death of, 193.  
 Books, Notices of, 11-18, 28-33, 51-54, 71-76, 86-92, 127-132, 137, 148, 153, 174-177, 188, 194, 209, 214, 231-240.  
 Borrer, M., Visit to Spoonbills, 123.  
 Bostall Wood opened, 154.  
 Botanists, Book for, 140.  
 Boyle, E. V., Insect Collecting, 67; Great Tit, 117; British Birds at Shows, 215.  
 Brain, J. L., Swallows in School, 145; Aphides, 199.  
 Brentford Aits, 34, 113.  
 Bridges, R., *Poems*, 41.  
 Brightwen, E., Flight of Rooks, 57; Visit to Selborne, 101; Starving Tortoises, 177; Squirrels won by kindness, 227; *Wild Nature*, 214; *More about Wild Nature*, 14.  
 Brinkley, J., Canaries and Cages, 215.  
 Britten, A. A., Friendly Landrail, 243.  
 Britten, J., Ways of Work, 1; Seedlings, 28; R. Bridges' *Poems*, 41; Abuse of Advertising, 71; Out of Doors, 127; G. White's Selborne Plants, 210.

- Broadwood, L. E., Folk Songs, 55, 234.  
 Browning, C., Cat Killing Squirrel, 217.  
 Buckhounds, Royal, 179.  
 Bull, H. E. U., Birds and Lighthouses, 58.  
 Butler's Broom, Extermination of, 178.  
 Butler's *Our Household Insects*, 239.  
 Butterflies in Danger, 35; Destruction of, 93; and Moths, 199, 218.  
 Buxton, D. W., Centenary of G. White, 21.  
 Byrne, J. T., Earwigs, 179.
- Canaries, Hardiness of, 98; Talking, 159, 174; and Cages, 173, 215, 240.  
 Capri, Eastern Custom at, 92.  
 Carrington, E., Canaries and Cages, 173, 240; her *Workers without Wage*, 154.  
 Cat, Friendly, 158; and Jackdaws, 158; Odd Behaviour of, 199, 216; and Squirrels, 217.  
 Caterpillar, Carnivorous, 119.  
 Centenary: see White, Gilbert.  
 Cheney's, S. P., *Wood Notes Wild*, 147.  
*Child-Life Almanack*, 18.  
 Christmas Greeting, 22.  
 Church Decorators, To, 92.  
 Clarke, A., Commons and Open Spaces, 90; Rescue of Open Spaces, 137; Opening of Hampton Court Park and Bostall Wood, 154.  
 Clifford, J. R. S., Death's Head Moth, 7; Cockchafers, 57; Rooks' Nests, 98; Plague of Earwigs, 157; Privet Hawk Moth, 157.  
 Climate and Trees, 244.  
 Cockchafers, 39, 57, 96.  
 Cocks, A., Cockchafers, 96.  
 Commons and Open Spaces, 90, 137.  
 Compton's, T., *Mendip Valley*, 15.  
 Cordon, J. F., Cockchafers, 57.  
 Corner, R., Toad infested with Larvæ, 96.  
 Cowl, M. E., Lantern Slides, 94.  
 Crofts, E. H., An Odd Cat, 199.  
 Cuckoo, 119, 156, 157.
- Darwin, J., Surrey Nightingales, 99.  
 De Tabley's *Poems*, 194.  
 Death's Head Moth, 7, 39.  
 Denne, W., Birds at Lighthouse, 37.  
 Dials, Selbornian in, 181.  
 Dillon, F., English Flowers in Japan, 216.
- Disfigurement, Age of*, 174.  
 Dixon, L. M., A Suggestion, 186.  
 Dog and Kittens, 198; Generosity in, 205; and Moorhen, 211; Communicating, 243.  
 Domestication of Woodpigeons, 38, 94.  
 Dove, A., Plea for Skylark, 56.  
 Dove, H. S., Wild Life in Tasmania, 22, 64, 106, 125, 164; Bird at Window, 198; Climate and Trees, 244.  
 Doveton's, F. B., *Songs*, 233.  
 Downing, B., Notes on a Nuthatch, 201.  
 Dunn's, S. F., *Flora of South-west Surrey*, 176.
- Earwigs, 157, 179, 242.  
 Easter Custom at Capri, 92.  
 Edelweiss, Artificial, 155.  
 Edwards, A., Orleton Swifts, 118.  
 Eggs, Protection of, 162.  
 Egrets, 93, 138, 212.  
 Eisdell, J. A., Natterjack, 78.  
 Elsdon, A. C., Butterflies in Danger, 35.  
 Evans, E., Nightingales, 19.  
 Evans, R., *Age of Disfigurement*, 174.
- Feathered Women, 212, 241; Lady, 225.  
 Feeding the Birds, 35.  
 Field Mice, 19; Paths, 51, 89, 114, 153; Philosophy, 52; Life in the, 74; Voles, Plague of, 134.  
*Field Club*, 241.  
 Fitzroy Pictures, 238.  
 Florida Notes, 228.  
 Flowers of Winter and Spring, 141; in New Zealand, 183; in Japan, 216; at Hindhead, 242.  
 Flower-show, A London, 121.  
 Folk Songs, 55, 234; Rhymes, 233.  
 Footpaths, Books on, 51.  
*Forest Tithes*, 130.  
 Fowler, W. M. E., Notes from a Florida Diary, 228.  
 Fowler, W. W., The Kingfisher, 139; Wood Notes Tamed, 147; Some Bird Books, 209.  
 Fullwood, M. G., Swallows, 139.  
 Fungi, British, 188.  
 Furneaux's *Outdoor World*, 237.
- Gale, Norman, *Country Muse*, 32; *Orchard Songs*, 231.

- Garden, Alpine, 3; Vicarage, 115.  
 Garlick, C., Harvest Mouse, 83, 144.  
 Gaye's, S., *Great World's Farm*, 17.  
 Gepp, A., Fieldpath Rambles, 89.  
 Gerard, J., Field Philology, 52; Work for the Naturalist, 86.  
 Goldfinch, "Peter," 9; Plea for, 178.  
 Grass, A Blade of, 221.  
 Great Orme's Head, 241.  
 Guish, W. B., Rare Migrants, 159.
- Hampton Court Park Opened, 154.  
 Hare, Plea for, 94.  
 Harte, A. W., Pet Lamb, 97.  
 Harvest Mouse, 85, 144.  
 Hawthorn, Early, 96, 119, 139.  
 Henslow, G., Generosity in a Dog, 205; Young Martins, 217; Ingenious Rabbit, 217.  
 Hickey, E. H., Mr. Roden Noel's Poetry, 61; A London Flower-show, 121.  
 Higham, E. J., Water-rats, 243.  
 "Hilly Fields," Secured, 216.  
 Holland, B., Horse-chestnut Buds, 46.  
 Hopkins, B. J., *Astronomy*, 53.  
 Horse Chestnut Buds, 46, 79; in September, 198.  
 Horse "Cortes," Account of, 47.  
 Hudson, W. H., Feathered Women, 212; His *Birds in a Village*, 209.  
 Hunter's, R., *Commons Preservation*, 137.
- India, Beast and Man in*, 71.  
 Ingersoll, E., Sport without a Gun, 69.  
 Insect Collecting, 67.  
 Irving, E. M. B., Early Hawthorn, 96.
- Jackdaws and Cat, 158.  
 Jameson's, H. G., *British Mosses*, 214.  
 Japan, Wild Flowers in, 216.  
 Japp's, A. H., *Circle of the Year*, 196; *Hours in My Garden*, 215.  
 Jaynes, A. M., Wren's Nest, 159.  
 Jefferies, R., *Life and Toilers of Fields*, 74; *Wood Magic*, 237.  
 Johnson, A. T., Kingfishers, 49.  
 Jones, A., Battue of Sea Birds, 34.  
 Jones, P., Horse-chestnut Buds, 79.
- Kappel, A. W., and W. E. Kirby, *Beetles, Butterflies, &c.*, 54.  
 Kelsall, J. E., Lantern Slides, 77.
- Kerr, J. A., Robin Query, 36; Squirrels and Birds, 37.  
 Kew Ait, 34, 113.  
 Kingfisher, 49, 115, 139, 157, 179; and Sparrow, 38.  
 Kipling's, J. L., *Beast and Man in India*, 71.  
 Kirkaldy, G. W., Sparrow, 78.  
 Kittens and Dog, 198.  
 Knocker, K. E., Feeding Birds, 35.  
 Kolbe, F. C., A Couple of Spiders, 206.
- Lady's Smock, 115.  
 Lamb, Pet, 97.  
 Landrail, 117, 139, 243.  
 Lantern Slides, 55, 77, 93, 114, 138.  
 Lark, Plea for, 56.  
 Lecky, R. J., Natterjack, 97.  
 Leonard's, R. M., *Dog in British Poetry*, 194.  
 Lewis, P., Friendly Robin, 218.  
 Liddell, E., Sycamore Leaves, 119.  
 Lighthouse, Birds and, 37, 58.  
 Lindsay, Lady, *String of Beads*, 31.  
 Love, J. W., Nightingale near London, 118.  
 Lowell, J. R., On Selborne, 197.  
 Lubbock's, Sir J., *Seedlings*, 28; *Beauties of Nature*, 131, 237.  
 Lyddeker's *Natural History*, 237.
- Macpherson, A. H., Sparrow and Kingfisher, 38.  
 Magpies Flocking, 39.  
 Malleson, F. A., In a Vicarage Garden, 115; his *Studies of Wordsworth*, 176.  
 Martelli, A., Lodgings at Selborne, 155.  
 Martins, 217, 219.  
 Martin's, E., *Nature's Secrets*, 17.  
 Masters, M. T., Queer Strawberries, 167.  
 Matcham, M. E., Capri Easter Custom, 92.  
 Mellis, J. C., Mountain Ash Berries, 19.  
 Mellor, L., Wasps' Nests, 156.  
 Memory in Birds, 57  
 Metapontum, Harvest Mouse at, 144.  
 Migrants at Weston, 119; at Yarmouth, 159.  
 Miles', W., *Field Path Rambles*, 153.  
 Millard, C. S., Birds and Lighthouses, 58.

- Millard, F. M., Swallows and Martins, 219; Nuthatches, 242.  
 Milne's, G., *Country Pleasures*, 176.  
 Minnow, Monster, 218.  
 Mitford's *Our Village*, 236.  
 Mivart's *Types of Animal Life*, 86.  
 Moorhen and Dog, 211.  
 Moths, 199, 218.  
 Mountain Ash Berries, 19.  
 Murray, G. R. M., *Guide to British Fungi*, 188.  
 Murray, H. J., *British New Guinea*, 11.  
 Musgrave, G. A. and T., Miss North's *Further Recollections*, 148.
- National Trust, 241.  
 Natterjack, 58, 78, 97.  
 Naturalist, Work for the, 86.  
*Nature Lover*, 214, 241.  
 New Guinea, British, 11.  
 New Zealand Birds, 25, 35, 55; Flowers, 183.  
 Newton's *Dictionary of Birds*, 210.  
 Nightingales, 19, 99, 118; in Russia, 198.  
 Nisbet's *Forest Trees*, 153.  
 Noel's, R., Spring Poetry, 61.  
 North's, M., *Further Recollections*, 148.  
 Northall's G. F., *Folk Rhymes*, 233.  
 Notes and Queries, 18, 36, 57, 78, 95, 115, 139, 156, 179, 198, 216, 242.  
 Notices to Correspondents, 20, 40, 69, 80, 100, 120, 140, 200, 220, 244.  
 Nuthatch, 201, 242.
- Open Spaces, 90, 137.  
 Opening of Hampton Court Park, &c., 154.  
 Ormerod, H. J., With the Birds, 222.  
 Osborn, M., Memory in Birds, 57.  
 "Osprey," 93, 138, 212.  
 Out of Doors, 127.  
 Owen, M. A., *Old Rabbit*, 75.  
 Owen, Sir R., and his Birds, 24.  
 Owls and Rats, 156.
- Page, J. A., Magpies Flocking, 39; Cockchafers, 39.  
 Pear Blossoming in August, 179.  
 Pedder, C., Avadavats, 18.  
 Peyton, H., the Kingfisher, 139; late Cuckoo, 157.  
 Pickard's, J. H., *Sunbeams and Summer*, 76.
- Pictures for Schools, 238.  
 Pigeon, Stray, 116.  
 Plant Bug, 19.  
 Plant Names, Welsh, 36.  
 Platel, J. J., *Beast and Man in India*, 71.  
 Poems Reviewed, 31, 41, 61, 88, 194, 231.  
 Pole, T., Pear Blossoming in August, 179.  
 Ponsonby, E. T., Earwigs, 242.  
 Popular Science, 58.  
 Powell, M. S., Squirrel and Birds, 19.  
 Priestman's, J., *God's Birds*, 215.  
 Primrose, a Plea for, 77, 92.  
 Privet Hawk Moth, 157.  
 Protection of Birds, 33, 76, 198; of Eggs, 162.  
 Protest, A, 155.
- Rabbit, Ingenious, 217.  
 Rathmore, M., Late Swallows, 242.  
 Rats and Owls, 156.  
 Rawkins, F. L., Field Mice, 19.  
 Rawnsley, H. D., My Feathered Lady, 225; his *Notes for the Nile*, 54.  
 Read, A., A Suggestion, 114.  
 Reade's, E., *Voices from Flowerland*, 54.  
 Rebuke, A Merited, 93.  
 Rees, G., Welsh Plant Names, 36.  
 Richmond, Vandalism at, 170.  
 Rickards', M. S. C., *Lyrical Studies*, 89.  
 Robin, 36; Friendly, 218.  
 Robinson's *English Flower Garden*, 128.  
 Rooks, 56; London, 79, 95, 117, 118; their Nests, 19, 36, 98.  
 Rooper, G., Early Wood Pigeon, 78, 94.  
 Rope, G. T., Plague of Field Voles, 134.  
 Ross, L. E., September Horse Chestnuts, 198.  
 Royal Example, 240.  
 Rummens, E. F., Rooks' Nests, 36.
- Salt's, H. S., *Animals' Rights*, 18.  
 Sawyer, M., Plea for Goldfinch, 178.  
 Science, Popular, 58.  
 Seedlings, 28.  
 Selborne, 43, 187; J. R. Lowell on, 197; Excursion to, 21, 55, 112, 150; Visit to, 101; Lodgings at, 155; Column, 56; Water Supply at, 114.  
 Selborne Society, 100; Badge, 114; Official Notices, 20, 79, 99, 140,

- 159, 180, 200, 220, 244; Branches, 56, 60, 77, 115, 155, 178; Annual Meeting, 108; Report of, 110; Appeal to, 138.
- Selbornian in the Dials, 181; a Veteran, 193.
- Selborniana, 34, 55, 79, 92, 113, 138, 154, 177, 197, 215, 240.
- Shakespeare's Flowers, 34.
- Simpson, R., Stray Pigeon, 116; Dog and Kittens, 198; Tomtits, 219.
- Simpson, T., Monster Minnow, 218.
- Smith, H., Trees in Winter, 6.
- Smith, H. G., Bird Life in New Zealand, 25; British Wild Flowers in New Zealand, 183.
- Smith, T., Rooks' Nests, 19.
- Smith, W. L., Kingfisher, 179.
- Smith, Z. P., Dogs Communicating, 244.
- Sow, Sagacity of, 97.
- Sparrow, 78; and Kingfisher, 38; at Window, 117.
- Spiders, Two, 206; Fascination by, 205.
- Spoonbills, Visit to, 123.
- Sport without a Gun, 69.
- Spring Poetry, 41, 61; Flowers, 97, 141; Visitors, 118.
- Stamford, Earl of, G. White's Ancestors, 104; Relics of G. White, 133; Relics of White Family, 161.
- Startin, J., Sir R. Owen and his Birds, 24.
- Steele's, R., *Medieval Lore*, 234.
- Strawberries, Queer, 167.
- Suggestion, A, 186.
- Sussex Notes, 116.
- Swallows, 18, 139, 218, 219, 242; in School, 145.
- Swann's, H. K., *Birds of London*, 210.
- Swifts, Orleton, 118.
- Symonds, C. M., Birds in Alpine Garden, 3; Flowers of Winter and Spring, 141.
- Tasmania, Wild Life in, 22, 64, 106, 125, 164.
- Tennyson's Flowers, 34.
- Theobald's, F. V., *British Flies*, 75.
- Thomson's, J. A., *Study of Animal Life*, 86.
- Thomson's, J. P., *British New Guinea*, 11.
- Thoyts, E. E., Cuckoo's Song, 119; Carnivorous Caterpillar, 119.
- Thrushes and Drink, 78, 93.
- "Timothy," 197.
- Tit, Behaviour of, 96, 117.
- Toad infested with Larvæ, 96.
- Tomtits, 219.
- Tortoises, Starving, 177, 219.
- Town Flowers*, 153.
- Towndrow, R. F., Winter Aconites, 51; Cockchafers, 57.
- Trees in Winter, 6.
- Tuck, J. G., To Church Decorators, 92.
- Turkey Dance, 243.
- Urlin, H., West Sussex Notes, 116.
- Vachell, C. T., Protection of Wild Birds' Eggs, 162.
- Viper, 219.
- Voles, Plague of, 134.
- Warner, W. H., Mountain Ash Berries, 19; Cockchafers, 57; Squirrel and Birds, 58; Natterjack, 58; Land-rail, 117; Bird at Window, 118; Spring Visitors, 118; Leaf-cutter Bee, 198; Dogwood, 198; Bird Queries, 243.
- Wasps' Nest, 155, 219.
- Waste-paper Nuisance, 180.
- Water-rats, 243.
- Watney, H., Owls and Rats, 156; Gilbert White's House, 178; Tortoises, 219.
- Watson's, J., *Ornithology*, 209.
- Ways of Work, 1.
- Weir, H., Birds at Sevenoaks, 116.
- Wheatcroft, W. G., Bath Spring Flowers, 97; a Veteran Selbornian, 193.
- White, Gilbert, 43; his Plants, 210; Centenary, 21, 150; his Sermon, 133, 178; Sonnet on, 83; *Punch* on, 146; Lecture on, 93; his House, 154, 178, 197; Ancestors of, 104; Relics of, 133; Country of, 187; his Family, 161; Memorial to, 114, 172.

- White, G., A Friendly Cat, 158 ;  
 "Timothy," 197 ; Thomas Barker's  
 Note-books, 203.
- White, W., White Memorial, 172.
- Whiting, J. E., Rooks at Hampstead,  
 95 ; Cuckoo, 156.
- Whitwell, W., A Motto, 34.
- Wild Flower Classes, 56
- Wild Flowers in New Zealand, 183 ; in  
 Japan, 217.
- Williams, F. N., Artificial Edelweiss,  
 155.
- Wilson's, A., *Science Stories*, 52
- Window, Birds at, 96, 117, 118, 198.
- Winter, Trees in. 6 ; Flowers, 141.
- With the Woodlanders*, 237.
- Wood Notes Tamed, 147.
- Wood Pigeons, Domestication of, 38,  
 94 ; Early, 78.
- Wood's, T., *Field Naturalists' Hand-  
 book*, 153.
- Woodd, G. J., Cat and Jackdaws, 158.
- Work, Ways of, 1 ; for Naturalists, 86.
- Wren's Nest, 159.
- Yeld, G. M., Talking Canary, 159.
- Yonge's, C., *Hampshire Village*, 53.
- Young, J., Domestication of Wood  
 Pigeons, 38.
- Young, M. S., A Turkey Dance, 243.



# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

No. 37.

JANUARY, 1893.

Vol. IV.

---

### WAYS OF WORK.

BY THE EDITOR.



WE have been somewhat disappointed at the lack of response to our appeal for information as to the work undertaken by our Branches during 1892. From various sources, however, we have gleaned some knowledge of the work in progress, and we propose briefly to indicate a few of those which seem capable of extended adoption.

It seems to us that the third object on the Society's programme, "the promotion of the study of Natural History," is that which offers the widest field of operations, and also that which will, in the long run, produce most results. Protests from time to time against this or that form of cruelty or thoughtlessness, are of course needed, and we should fail in our duty if we did not make them ; but, in the words of the poet,

to the solid ground  
Of Nature trusts the mind that builds for aye.

The more we diffuse a love for the objects of Nature, especially among the young, the less frequent will become the manifestations of wantonness or cruelty.

Reference was made in our last issue to the Junior Branches of the Society, as well as (p. 236) to the means taken in at least one Sunday School to interest the scholars in our wild flowers. We note with pleasure that the Lower Thames Valley Branch, which is taking a very leading position in Selbornian work, has arranged an admirable series of evening meetings for the winter session, to be held at the Athenæum and High Schools, Richmond, at many of which lectures by competent and well-known naturalists are to be delivered. The first of these was held on November 9th, when Mr. W. D. Wickes delivered a lecture on "Spiders," illustrated by diagrams and microscopic

slides. On December 14th, Mr. R. T. Lewis gave a lecture, similarly illustrated, on "The Eyes of Insects." On January 9th, Mr. W. H. Harris will lecture on "Bees and their Ways," at the Athenæum, and on January 11th, Mr. R. C. Barrett addresses the meeting on "Fur, Feathers and Scales:" on this occasion there will be an exhibition of microscopes and objects of natural history. On January 25th and 26th, there will be an exhibition of photographs of places of interest—buildings, historical residences and scenery of the Thames Valley. Later in the year, Mr. C. H. Wright, of the Kew Herbarium, will give "A Talk on Mosses," and Professor F. W. Oliver will lecture on "Natural History Jottings in the Alps." It will be remembered that during the summer this Branch organised a successful series of excursions in which members and other branches took part.

Quite a different line of operations, equally excellent in its way, is that laid down by the Rev. Prebendary Gordon, who edits a "Selborne Column" in the *West Sussex Gazette*. This contains varied and interesting information on points connected with natural history, largely, of course, of a local character. We cannot help thinking that many editors would be glad to secure a column of this kind, and there must be many Selbornians in different parts of the country who would be capable of conducting such a column; and we cordially commend this example to the consideration of our members. Prebendary Gordon, we observe, has also given a lecture at Arundel on "Wild Bird Life," which was largely of a Selbornian character.

The distribution of suitable literature is another field of labour which has been comparatively little worked. The bound volumes of NATURE NOTES should be found in all our school libraries, clubs and free libraries; and, with suitable volumes of the same class, might be employed largely as prizes. We are extremely anxious to give a list of books suitable for a Selborne Library, which we should like to see part of the machinery of each branch; and we shall be grateful to any one who will undertake the formation of such a list. It should contain books which are fairly cheap, popular in style, and thoroughly accurate in every particular.

The Clapton Branch of the Society issues an excellent form for the registration of observations of natural phenomena, of which Mr. R. M. Wattson, 14, Narford Road, Upper Clapton, N.E., will, we doubt not, supply a specimen on application. The practice of recording year by year the arrival and departure of migratory birds, the leafing and flowering of trees and other plants, the appearance of insects, and the like, is an excellent one, admirably calculated to further the habit of observation which is so essential to the would-be naturalist. We learn that it is proposed to form a "Rambling Club," in connection with the Clapton and Northern Heights Branches, which will hold field meetings during the summer.



Those who want a new field for investigation will find it readily enough in the seedlings of common plants. Mrs. Brightwen told us something about seedling trees in NATURE NOTES for last August (pp. 143-145), and we hope next month to say something about the two large volumes which Sir John Lubbock has lately devoted to the subject. Seedlings are easy to collect; they dry well, and take up but little space; and the variety among them is remarkable. Many collections of dried plants would be the richer for the addition of a set of seedlings.

These are only some of the ways in which the objects of the Selborne Society may be carried out. The present year is the centenary of the death of Gilbert White: could Selbornians observe it more fittingly than by making a special effort to advance the principles which are associated with his name?

### BIRDS IN AN ALPINE GARDEN.

**T**HIS year the garden was unusually full of flowers. During the three summer months the sun was brilliant, and frosts kept away. Alpine poppies, larkspurs, pansies, made a brilliant show; tall blue mountain holly (*Eryngium alpinum*), saxifrages shining like stars, and gentians and tiny drabas mingling with St. Bruno's lily and veronica, sweet briar, thyme and delicate spiræa; these also lived in the walled garden, which is more than five thousand feet above sea level, and the air was luminous, sweet with the scent of hayfields which encircle it. The hues of flowers and butterflies are more brilliant in these high regions than in the lowlands. Crowds of red admirals, peacocks, and humming-bird moths floated in from the meadows, and were busy all day long among the pink saxifrages. The tiny stream went merrily among those most cherished primulas, which need to wet their roots in order to live. The fountain played strange melodies to the intoxicating sunlight, and dragon-flies would come occasionally to rest their shining wings upon its brink.

Autumn came with sudden frosts in the early weeks of October. Flowers were nipped ere they could burst the sheath, and butterflies retired to dark crevices disconsolate. On Sunday, the 9th, came snow. We awoke on Monday to find the mountain ashes bowed down to the ground. Flowers were sunk from sight. A bitter wind went screaming down the valley. Six days of snow, alternating with a dry chill wind, and the mountain-ash leaves are dead, and aspens shiver and fall. Yet, the birds somehow persuade themselves that life is worth living even up here. The redstart, who built his nest under the eaves, has left us long ago; his song was a joy to hear, so exquisitely tender. I heard a mysterious twittering among the elder bushes on Saturday, and beheld through the coral berries

a bird with ruddy breast and proud shy eyes. So the robin has not deserted us in evil days! A month ago, when butterflies were still dancing above the saxifrages and thyme, this robin came to sing; he looked extremely pert and happy then. His feathers were well groomed, his song was as sweet as his English brother's. To-day the earth was cold, and Cock Robin's feathers were ruffled; his voice was almost harsh in its clamour for food. Still, he is too proud to come indoors to warm his frozen claws on the green stove, though the windows are open for him. He had the old perky look in his eyes when I suggested that he might honour us with his presence. He is taking care of a tiny brown creature, a Jenny Wren. She flutters so lightly over the frozen snow that her feathers scarcely brush it. She also is extremely cold, and her note is plaintive, like a shabby-genteel lady's. Two chaffinches peck at the mountain-ash berries—acid food! There were twenty degrees of frost last night.

We saw a hawk fly across the valley yesterday; his breast shone like silver, and the span of his wings was noble. He floated up to the golden larches and away to the mountains deep in snow. There was a water ousel resting his white breast by the side of the lake.

Birds are not over plentiful in these high regions, yet there are rare and beautiful visitors who come to make the long winters bright. In October a large white bird may be seen passing low over the meadows in the valley—a grebe, who comes up from the lakes to fish along the river and over the surface of the Davosersee; a flight of goldfinches travelling southward; a rush from the wings of departing swallows, golden-crested wrens. Bullfinches visit us about Christmas time. They arrive in families of ten or twelve, and are beautiful and gay, greedily pecking at the berries, lively even in the zero days. They will spend a fortnight here, then disappear over the mountains. A bird who comes to stay all the winter is the alpine accentor. About the size of a small thrush, he is brown, with bluish bands upon the wings. His song is continuous and suppressed, rising and falling like the note of a lark. He comes in November usually, and takes up his abode under the eaves of this house. He disports himself upon the window ledges, singing from sunrise to setting. Hemp seeds and berries of all kinds await his coming; occasionally, when in good humour, he will walk in at the window, and strut upon the sill. As soon as spring is there he is off to the high mountains. A very dear friend is the alpine accentor; never a winter has he missed coming; we hail him as a cherished guest. His liquid note and domestic habits are extremely pleasant.

I must not forget to mention the ptarmigans, who descended upon the garden one snowy winter, and who took refuge under the eaves of this house. These birds are snowy white in winter, with red rings round the eyes, and lovely furry feet. No Paris dame could dress more daintily. The white hares alone equal

them for purity of attire. Snow-finches (*Montifringilla nivalis*) come down to us in January from the high snow pastures. Larger than chaffinches, and with very long tail feathers, and a flight most rapid, they shine like burnished silver in the sunlight. Snow-finches do not often visit the garden, preferring coachroads and the vulgar comradeship of yellowhammers and other wayside tramps.

One remarkable winter visitor is the mountain finch (*Fringilla montifringilla*). For beauty of colouring and for brilliancy of plumage, this bird might hold a candle to his cousin the chaffinch, whom he closely resembles.

Tomtits stay with us the whole year round. Fat adorns the garden for their delectation till it looks like a butcher's shop. Tomtits, with all the vivacity and none of the noisiness of mice, with merry chirp and lively habits, clinging with marvellous certainty to the frozen fat, head downwards, or turning somersaults in the air.

"And me, and me," says a grating voice, louder than all other voices in the alpine garden, a harsh and penetrating voice, an annoying, jarring, rasping voice—that of one who is always to the fore, who, unbeloved, will ever be the first to seek the prize. Can we forget the sparrow? Three years ago the Davos valley was comparatively free from the bird. Then, in an unlucky fit of generosity towards the feathered race at large, a bird lover introduced this graceless species of the finch tribe to our most select bird society. In the course of three years, how will not the sparrow tribe increase? He flocks to our garden and despoils us of our seed. In the early morning we wake to the knowledge of his presence, through the hectoring tones with which he upraids his numerous progeny. All seasons are rendered lively by his officious habits. He is indifferent to heat and cold alike, thriving as the wicked alone will thrive. One word in favour of this most persistent chatterbox. Bores are oftenest harmless, and the sparrow is the very impersonification of all bores. His chirp is worse than his peck. There is little, if any, malice in him, and he vastly enjoys life. Provided, then, that he will leave the other birds in peace, we will throw no more stones at him; we will submit to the noise and jabber of his morning awakening, and will allow him as much hemp and as many sun-flower seeds as he can swallow.

C. M. SYMONDS.

Davos Platz, November, 1892.

---

## TREES IN WINTER.



HERE are two conditions under which trees in winter can be studied with the greatest advantage, and where their individual peculiarities can be more readily appreciated. If the observer is fortunate enough to be in the neighbourhood of a mass of woodland trees on a surface more or less flat, and bounded by an open country, such as a common, he will be able to take accurate note of the separate trees; and this he can do more easily if the undergrowth has been cut away, because they will stand out more clearly and distinctly, and their outlines can be more accurately gauged.

Again, if a mass of woodland trees is placed in such a position that the ground, instead of being flat, is irregular, with here a hill and there a depression, slope or valley, the observer has an opportunity not only of studying individuals, but of noting the effect of masses of unclothed trees when grouped together under such conditions.

It is difficult for those who are in the habit of associating trees with their spring, summer, and autumnal dress, to take much notice of them when they are deprived of their foliage, and to be able to see how much beauty they possess during the drear and cheerless season of winter. A careful observation, however, of trees deprived of their summer foliage, either arranged together in masses of lesser or greater extent, or growing singly, will soon convince us that the interest and beauty connected with their naked architecture is as striking as when they are clothed in their summer apparel. At no other time is it so possible to study the various ramifications of trees as when they are perfectly naked, and so allow us to bring into view every branch and every twig, and take cognisance of the extraordinary and striking variations in the features of our trees during the period of winter.

In illustration of this let me refer to a few of the trees most familiar to us, and then we shall see how much there is to attract our attention.

That grandest of all our trees, the oak, with its naked branches presents the most striking appearance: this is especially noticeable when they are seen together or mingled with other trees, for although in a measure they resemble each other so much, yet by the eccentric diversity of the limbs and their ramifications it is almost impossible to find two of them exactly alike, and thus it is that the observation of these naked trees is a source of so much interest.

Beautiful as is the beech in summer and in autumn, it presents in winter a most striking appearance, when fully grown. Its stem, covered with its smooth shining bark, and consisting of two or three main trunks, and dividing into numerous pendent branches, affords great beauty to the landscape, although there is not such a variety in the divisions and subdivisions of its boughs as exists in the oak.

A full-grown lime is another tree which in its unclothed state presents a grand sight, with its lower branches gracefully pendent, and the upper ones springing from the trunk at an acute angle and arranged in a most picturesque manner. An avenue of well-grown limes in winter is a thing of beauty.

Graceful as is the birch in summer foliage, its appearance when denuded of leaves in winter affords a beautiful sight, in consequence of the pendent form of its branches. The white colour of the bark, in some of the larger trees especially, adds very much to their beauty.

I need hardly refer to the fine appearance of other trees familiar to us in winter, such as the elm, ash, chestnut, sycamore, and plane, but I should like to draw attention to one tree, viz., the larch, which attracts so much interest in the early spring, when it sends forth its beautiful greenery. In winter, however, a well-grown larch presents a beautiful appearance; its branches spring from its straight and towering stem, bending downwards in a uniform manner at first, and then curving upwards: as the successive branches proceed from the trunk to its extremity they become shorter and shorter, so that the tree forms a beautiful cone, which is very pleasing to the eye.

Of course the various kinds of fir trees, either grouped together or growing singly, add much to the picturesqueness of the landscape, but the appearance of these is obvious to all, and does not afford the changes that obtain in deciduous trees, to the characteristics of which I wish more particularly to draw attention.

HENRY SMITH.

## THE DEATH'S HEAD MOTH AND BEES.

**A** FRIEND of mine, who is living in one of the suburban roads of Gravesend, Kent, and who is a beekeeper, had his attention drawn to the hives one July evening, by a curious sound which seemed to come from their vicinity, and which was not like the humming or murmuring of the bees. On near approach he discovered the cause of the sound: it arose from the presence of a specimen of the huge moth called the Death's-head. This insect had evidently been drawn to the spot by the odour of the honey, and it was endeavouring to gain access to a hive in order to regale itself with the sweet treasure stored therein. The insect has not occurred lately in Gravesend, though it has been taken here before, and also the caterpillar of the species, feeding in potato fields, where, by the labourers, it is oddly named the "lokus" (locust).

The fact is interesting, because, in this investigating, sceptical age, people have pooh-poohed or doubted the statements made

by some of the older entomologists and beekeepers, that this moth was in the habit of resorting to, and entering hives when it had the opportunity. In those countries where it is commoner than with us, and where hives are numerous of the old-fashioned sort, it has long been the object of superstitious dread, and its honey-hunting peculiarity is an added reason for dislike. To the credulous it has for centuries been a "king of terrors." The Death's-head Moth bears upon its thorax a mark which does somewhat resemble a skull and cross bones; it has, besides, the power of making a plaintive cry—quite an unusual thing with insects of this kind—and it glides about mysteriously in the twilight, not only out-of-doors, but occasionally entering houses. Some people believed the moth was actually gifted with the power, when it came into a house, of whispering the name of the person next to die there.


But as regards the bees—there is one evident reason why such a moth should be attracted to their hives; it has a short tongue which prevents it from drawing the nectar from many flowers that furnish food to its long-tongued relatives. Evidently the construction of modern hives does not give the moth any chance of getting in; it may smell the honey, but it cannot obtain it. Where old-style hives are used, the moth can and does enter, and occasionally one has been found dead within a hive, the bees, being unable to remove so bulky an insect, having taken the precaution to embalm its body with what is called *propolis*. Some have supposed that the peculiar noise made by the Death's-head alarms or paralyzes the bees, thus rendering them unable to attack it, but there is no proof of this. The courage of bees is remarkable, and the Death's-head would be treated just as some other intruder might be, if the bees were able to sting it to death. But, as a skilled entomologist has pointed out, this moth is well protected by its fur and skin, so that it is doubtful whether a bee could harm it, unless it dexterously selected a vulnerable part. A dead specimen in a hive can be accounted for by the fact that the moth may get in, but find it not at all easy to turn round and get out again. The moth does not appear to be afraid of the bees; like several others of the same tribe, it has a way of striking out with the fore-legs if annoyed, but has no means of defence.

Some of the continental beekeepers have discovered that the bees are aware they are liable to the intrusions of this big moth, and when they are located in the old-fashioned hive the insects erect a kind of fortification at the portal. This is constructed with a narrow passage and a bend, past which the Death's-head could not possibly make its way, and which it has no jaws to bite through; the bees would scarcely attempt to erect this if they could settle the would-be thief outside with their own weapons.

J. R. S. CLIFFORD.

---

## PETER: A GOLDFINCH.

“ARDUELIS ELEGANS” is his full name, though the dealer of whom I bought him called him a “grey pate.” He was not much to look at then—hardly a bright feather on him: just a splash of yellow in his wings, and all the rest a mottled brown. And he was so wild! I thought he would crush his little head in trying to force it between the bars of his cage. It made me sad to see him, and had it not been severe weather I should have given him the liberty he wanted so much. But to liberate him then was to send him to a lingering death from starvation, so I kept him.

In a week or two he became more reconciled to confinement, and after a lot of coaxing ventured to take a hempseed from off my finger. It was most interesting to watch the struggle between his timidity and his love of hemp. When the tip of the finger with the seed was introduced between the wires, he would slowly sidle along the perch with a most unconcerned air, looking at anything but the tiny seed; but just as he got within reach his courage would fail him, and off he would go with a little shrill chirp, only to commence the operation again. The hemp was an attraction he could not resist. He was soon back on the perch, working his way slowly along towards the coveted morsel. And when at last, by stretching his neck to its utmost length, he managed to capture the solitary seed, so jubilant was he, that he had to make several circuits of the cage before he could settle down to eat his prize.

It was thought now that he might be allowed—as his predecessors had been—the freedom of the breakfast room, but though his cage door was left open for some days, Peter’s timidity would not permit him to venture outside. So hempseed was again resorted to. A few seeds were spread just outside the open door, and after he had tried every method his little brain could suggest, and stretched his limbs into every conceivable attitude in the endeavour to reach them from off his cage, he ventured out, and after one or two experiments he became as much at home outside as in. He was now as courageous as he had before been timid. He became a fierce “autocrat of the breakfast-table.” Buttered toast was his delight. He would settle on the edge of the plate, and if one attempted to drive him away before he had finished his repast he would resist by force. Up would come his feathers; with wings and beak open he would peck furiously at the presented finger, chattering all the while a defiance which I presume he thought effective, for he was always allowed to remain. Then he would take up a position on my shoulder, and reprove me with a sharp dig in the neck if I dared to eat without first letting him have a peck. When he had had his fill he would creep round my coat collar until he could nestle in my beard. He seemed to find this a cosy spot, for he would

remain there quite quiet until driven away. After he had moulted and assumed his full plumage he commenced to sing, the edge of the sugar basin or the back of a chair being his favourite perch, and he would sit and sing until one had serious fears that he would injure his little throat.

Pitying his lonely condition I thought I would provide him with a mate, so I procured a little cheverel—whom we named “Sally”—the smallest goldfinch I had ever seen. At first she was put into another cage, and hung some distance away from Peter, but he soon discovered her and at once commenced a spirited flirtation. He quite forsook me. He now spent all his time on Sally’s cage, feeding and caressing her through the wires. After a few days she was put into his cage, and consequently had the same liberty as he did, the door being nearly always open. I never succeeded in gaining Sally’s confidence as I had gained Peter’s, and though she would fearlessly hop about the table and pick up crumbs, I could never induce her to come on my hand or shoulder. But never did wife idolise a husband as Sally did Peter. When he was singing she would sit quietly by him, with her head turned a little aside, as if listening intently, and when his song was finished she would wag her little body from side to side, and chirrup out her own little song—she had a pretty one of her own—as if to say “Isn’t my husband a fine fellow!” When spring-time came I supplied them with nesting materials, and had dreams of home-bred goldfinches, but in that I was disappointed. Beyond carrying some of the material from place to place they never exhibited any sign of nesting, and though they would often sit feeding and caressing each other they never made a serious attempt to set up house-keeping on their own account.

Like many other couples they had their little quarrels. Sometimes there would be a terrific chase round and round the room, and a chattering that would have done credit to a family of jays. They always roosted as far from each other as the cage would permit—one at each end of the perch. Peter believed in the early-to-bed proverb, but Sally was of a more dissipated disposition, and preferred later hours. But when she did retire she always wanted the corner Peter had chosen, and in spite of Peter’s protest she would evict him without compunction. Sometimes after he had comfortably resettled himself she would assert her sex’s prerogative of changing her mind, and deem his place the best, and proceed to evict him again.

Poor Sally, her fate was a sad one! One morning this autumn we found her dead. She had somehow managed during the night to squeeze herself through the hole in her cage in to the water trough, and, unable to get back, had died—probably as much from fright as drowning, for we found her little body quite out of the water, and dry. I thought the loss would be a heavy one to Peter, but—I almost hesitate to tell it, for it may be quoted as an example of the callousness of the masculine gender



—on the very day she died he commenced to sing, and continued in full song, almost putting to shame the mocking-bird which lives on the opposite side of the room. He has now resumed his old familiarity with me. He greets me in the morning by flying around my head, and gives me no peace until I have placed half-a-dozen hempseeds in my hand, on to which he will fly from across the room. During breakfast he sits either on my shoulder or close by me on the table, and has his peck at nearly every mouthful I eat. When watercresses are on the table he will sometimes insist upon bathing in the water which has drained from them—an inconvenient habit which I have tried in vain to break. But this is one of the few blemishes in Peter's character, and as long as he is happy I tolerate it.

It may be questionable if it is right to deprive any bird of its liberty in order to make a pet of it. But if we do keep pets it is clearly our duty to make them as happy as possible. I do not think Peter has had one unhappy day—excepting the first few—since I have owned him, and kindness, a little patience, and forbearance will, I believe, make any bird as happy and as tame as mine. The pleasure of possessing a pet which has confidence in you is a thousand times greater than owning one which is frightened every time you approach it.

FRED. W. ASHLEY.

---

## BRITISH NEW GUINEA.\*

It is a remarkable reflection that, though the shores of New Guinea were first sighted only some twenty years later than the discovery of America by Columbus, this land still remains in greater part as little known to us as the planet Mars, though for many years its savage shores have been constantly passed by Australian mail steamers with all the resources of civilisation aboard. It has been partitioned into British, Dutch, and German territories without the happy possessors knowing much of their bargains. The exploration of British New Guinea is so recent (and in part only complete) that it is a matter more of newspaper chronicle than of history. In the German portion (Emperor William's Land) only a few river courses and mountains appear on the map, while the Dutch part (quite half of the whole island) is a blank of the kind that charms the youthful cartographer who has to "draw a map" to satisfy the claims of pedagogic justice. In fact there is probably not even in Africa so great a land untrod by the foot of the explorer as exists in New Guinea. A book on this country might therefore be expected to rival in brevity the celebrated account of the Icelandic reptiles, and it only adds to our interest in New Guinea to find that the small portion of it already explored has yielded materials for a handsome volume, full of the narratives of travellers, and a statistical account of their natural history and ethnographical results. Mr. Thomson, as Hon. Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society of Australia, has had admirable facilities for acquiring the facts made known since Australian exploration has done so much towards the investigation of New Guinea. A dramatic incident in connection with the preparation of his book was the loss of his MSS. and illustrations in the wreck of the *Quetta*.

---

\* *British New Guinea*, by J. P. Thomson. Small 4to, pp. xviii., 336, with map and numerous illustrations. (London: Philip & Son, 1892. Price £1 1s.)

Apart from the visits paid by the naturalists of early surveying ships, the first who gave us a glimpse into this land of many other marvels than the bird of paradise was Mr. Wallace. After him came D'Albertis, Beccari, Mr. H. O. Forbes and others, but there is still a wide field for the research of the enterprising. It is an interesting fact, and may not be widely known, that the first eye to sight the great Mount Owen Stanley range was that of Mr. Huxley, then surgeon of H.M.S. *Rattlesnake*, who named the mountains after the captain of that vessel.

Mr. Thomson has taken the country in sections according as they have been explored by different travellers. First in place and in honour is Sir W. Macgregor, the indefatigable administrator of British New Guinea, who made explorations along the coast in his yacht the *Hygeia* and also in the interior. The author gives an interesting and instructive sketch of these explorations, and the numerous illustrations add greatly to the value of the book.



The natives of New Guinea are Papuans, not belonging to large tribes, each governed by a chief, but dwelling in scattered communities, speaking different dialects, and having little intercourse beyond that of murder and rapine. They are mostly savages of almost the lowest scale, though their architecture, weapons and ornaments seem superior to those of many other races of similar manners and customs. Not even in the days of the justly celebrated MacPherson of Mr. Aytoun's ballad could the highlands of Scotland have furnished a parallel for blood-thirstiness to the present so-called social state of New Guinea.

Each Papuan's first sentiment as regards a casual stranger from a neighbouring village seems to be that of the Duchess whose customary remark on similar occasions was "Off with his head." Head-hunting is the relaxation, and cannibalism the business of some communities, and they take their pleasure first, though not with frugal minds. As the redskin counts his scalps, the muscular native of New Guinea preserves the more substantial skull of his victim, and in one house in the cannibal village of Maipua "no fewer than two hundred and fifty human skulls were seen, all arranged tastefully along the dividing partitions of the house," not counting the skulls of alligators, pigs, dogs, &c. One may perhaps discover in such an exhibition the germ from which our Natural History Museum has been evolved, since we are told on high authority that "from preserving a specimen to studying it is but a step." So soon as a community begins to go under its doom is probably sealed, and the inhabitants have to revert to such arboreal habits as the accompanying illustration of a tree-house shows. In some villages such dwellings are used as sentinel houses, and it is easy to imagine the same building figuring both as watch-house and place of refuge at different stages of the misfortunes of a community. It is scarcely possible to imagine a more terrible state of society or more perfect picture of anarchy than is described as existing over large areas of this land. Even a socialist transported thither would prefer a bloated monarchy.



It is some comfort to reflect that the energy and courage of Sir W. Macgregor is reducing in British New Guinea such lawlessness as is described above. His manner of dealing with the murderers of Captain Ansell of the *Star of Peace* is well calculated to inspire a knowledge of, and respect for justice very different from the useless shelling and burning of villages, of which one reads in other lands.

Our other illustration is of virtual "lake dwellings," or marine residences on stilts—the village of Kapakapa—the inhabitants of which no doubt find it combines utility and safety with salubrity. Among the singular burial customs is that of exposing dead bodies on elevated platforms such as Mr. Forbes describes in his *Wanderings* as being in vogue in the neighbouring island of Timor Laut.

The valuable appendices on the zoology of British New Guinea, with a sketch of the botany by Baron von Mueller, and the lists of words in the different dialects are all valuable features of this beautiful book, which is a most useful and complete summary of our knowledge of an interesting land.

HELEN J. MURRAY.

## MORE ABOUT WILD NATURE.\*



THE many readers of *Wild Nature won by Kindness* will hail with delight this second volume prepared for them by Mrs. Brightwen. When we say that it is a worthy companion of its predecessor, we have given it very high praise. We cannot have too many books of this kind—records of observations of living creatures, told in a simple, unaffected, straightforward way which charms us by the very absence of any effort to do so.

To the many delightful personalities of the former book (of which, we are glad to learn, a German translation with specially prepared illustrations is in preparation), we must now add "Katie, the Shrew," "Impey, the Bat," "Ivey, the Kestrel," Sylvia, the Woodmouse," and many more, among them a Mongoose, "Mungo," who must have severely tried the patience of his mistress and of every one else with whom he came in contact. A pet who can slip his collar at any moment, who makes equal havoc in a drawing-room or in a flowerbed, who gnaws his way out of his cage, and intimidates the poultry yard, needs a considerable number of compensating qualities; and these Mrs. Brightwen managed to discover. "Such an absolutely good-tempered little animal I never met with before," she says; and we can well imagine that Mungo must often have attributed the same amiable quality to his indulgent mistress.

We should like to extract some passages from the delightful account of "Ivey, the Kestrel," but to do so would be to spoil a charming narrative. Moreover, Selbornians will for the most part obtain the volume for themselves, or for the school or free library in their neighbourhood. We do not doubt that many a Christmas has been made happier by the presence of Mrs. Brightwen's delightful reminiscences.

Besides these biographical sketches, the volume contains other papers—one on "Footprints in the Snow," with many illustrations, is especially suggestive and interesting. "Why simple things give pleasure," a tiny essay of barely five pages, is an excellent example of Mrs. Brightwen's style. The subject matter is simple enough, and in many hands its treatment would be didactic and commonplace; but the author invests the most ordinary material in a charm which is all her own.

The papers on "Home Museums," and "Books of Feathers," will be familiar to the readers of these pages, and we are a little disappointed that Mrs. Brightwen has not mentioned that they originally appeared therein, mainly because we are sure that any reference to NATURE NOTES in a book of this kind must tend to the benefit of the Selborne Society and its Magazine.

A word must be said in praise of the illustrations, reproduced

---

\**More about Wild Nature*, by Mrs. Brightwen. London: T. Fisher Unwin, Svo, pp. xvi., 261. Price 3s. 6d.

from what Mrs. Brightwen modestly calls her "rough sketches," by Mr. Theo. Carreras. They appear to us more pleasing than those in the earlier volume; we regret that our space does not allow us to avail ourselves of the kind permission to give one or two of them here, and that the author demurs to the reproduction of the portrait which most fittingly faces the title page.

We hope it will not be long before *More about Wild Nature* appears in as cheap a form as its predecessor. No better shilling book exists for distribution in schools of all kinds; and if it were possible to produce an edition at a slightly higher cost bound in cloth, we think its circulation would be even more extensive.

---

### A MENDIP VALLEY.\*

SUCH is the title of a book which has been on our table for nearly six months, and which it has been a source of regret to us that we have not been able to notice earlier. Our regret, however, has been somewhat tempered by the fact that Mr. Theodore Compton's work has deservedly attracted the notice of the press generally, and indeed by this time there are probably few Selbornians who have not at least heard of it.

It is the story of a residence of more than thirty years duration in a quiet little village hidden away in a valley among the Mendip Hills. It is "purely rural"—"we can boast of no forest scenery," says Mr. Compton; no ancient trees save the churchyard yew link together the various ages through which it has passed. There are hundreds of places, we do not doubt, which present to the seeing eye fully as much interest as Winscombe, just as there were Selbornians before Gilbert White immortalised the Hampshire village of that name. Just a year ago, indeed, we reviewed in these pages the forty years' history of another parish; and if Mr. Compton has not produced a book quite as fascinating as Dr. Atkinson's *Moorland Village*, it must be admitted that his subject, charming as it is, is not as rich in historical associations as Danby-in-Cleveland.

Such a volume could only be written by one who, in addition to the advantage of long residence in one locality, is possessed of a heart in sympathy with place and people, with the birds that fly and the flowers that blow. The note of sympathy, indeed, is heard in every page of Mr. Compton's book. He is perhaps most at home with the birds. "I have been a lover of birds all my life," he tells us, "and from my youth till now have delighted in painting their beautiful forms and feathers, and have vainly tried to sketch the inimitable grace of their movements; but I never desired to end their happy lives." Not among those to whom the shooting of a rare bird is the natural sequence of its appearance shall we find the gentle dweller in the Mendip Valley. Our readers will remember the appreciative "Note on Thomas Bewick" from his pen which appeared in *NATURE NOTES* this time last year, and how the master artist of birds "said he loved birds too well to kill them; he had only shot one in all his life, and of that shot he had often repented." Sketches of bird-life such as the following (which in the volume is accompanied by an admirable illustration) abound:—"The Grey Flycatcher is a familiar garden acquaintance, building in the trellis over the window; the male perching on the back of a garden chair, while the other is sitting. Wishing to take his likeness, I stuck a walking-stick into the ground a few yards from the window; an arrangement that seemed to please him very well. There he perched all day, and every day, watching for insects; every now

---

\* *A Mendip Valley, its Inhabitants and Surroundings*, being an enlarged and illustrated edition of Winscombe Sketches, by Theodore Compton. London: Stanford. Demy 8vo pp. 288. Price 10s. 6d.

and then darting after a butterfly or other winged prey, which he sometimes carried to the nest and sometimes devoured himself. It was amusing to watch the movements of his head, and his bright eyes ever on the watch for game. There seemed also to be a good understanding between him and the cat; for it was nothing unusual on a sunny day to see him at the top of the stick wide awake, while the cat slept at the bottom."

But if, as we incline to believe, birds are Mr. Compton's favourites, other created things cannot complain of neglect. The flowers and butterflies, the reptiles and wild animals, are all sympathetically treated; and the sketches of local history and local celebrities are admirably done. A word, too, must be said for the beautiful illustrations, an example of which we are enabled to give.



THE GALLINULE'S HAUNT.

These are the work of the author's son, Mr. E. T. Compton, who is evidently a practised hand, and to whom the book owes some of its charms.

On one small point we venture to differ from Mr. Compton. The spelling "Yellow *Ammer*," although sanctioned by the Natural History Museum, is not the correct one. This was pointed out by a correspondent in *NATURE NOTES* for 1890, p. 28, and we are not aware that any evidence for the omission of the aspirate has since been adduced.

Those who do not possess Mr. Compton's volume had better lose no time in doing so. It is emphatically a book to buy as well as to read, and to none should it be more acceptable than to those "in populous city pent," who may, by means of its pages, transport themselves in fancy to this valley

Embosomed in the silent hills,  
Where quiet sleeps, and care is calm,  
And all the air is breathing balm.

---

## SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*The Great World's Farm*: some account of Nature's Crops and how they are grown, by Selina Gaye, with a preface by G. S. Boulger, F.L.S., &c. (London: Seeley & Co., 8vo, pp. 365. Price 5s.) *Glimpses into Nature's Secrets*; or, *Strolls over Beach and Down*, by Edward Alfred Martin. (8vo, pp. 131.) *Amidst Nature's Realms*: a series of Zoological, Botanical, and Geological Essays, by the same. (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 8vo, pp. 157. Price 2s. 6d. each.)

Our readers expect an honest estimate of the books noticed in these pages. Perhaps they never thought of the pain that such notices often bring to the reviewer. It is hard to tell a well-meaning author, who does not apprehend his own ignorance or his unfitness for the task he has undertaken, that his work is worthless. On the other hand it is a real pleasure to the reviewer to introduce and commend a thoroughly good book to his readers. Such a pleasure we enjoy in calling attention to Miss Gaye's work on *The Great World's Farm*. It was a happy thought that led her to look at the world as a great farm, and she has ably developed her idea in her story of Nature's crops and how they are grown. The early history of our globe, and the work of the physical agents which modified the surface so as to fit it for the support of life, are clearly explained. Thereafter the plants which hold and bind the soil are described, as well as the vertebrate and invertebrate workers which are ever moving and rearranging it. The relation of water and climate to plant life are dealt with; the structure of the plant, and the functions of its various organs, the mysteries of cross fertilisation and the assistance of animal agents, in the work are all clearly expounded. The appliances for seed distribution, the dangers that beset the living organism from physical agencies, and from the attacks of enemies belonging to both the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and the influence of man's operations are all fully investigated and clearly recorded. The authoress has a thorough apprehension of her subject, and having a lucid style she has produced an admirable introduction for students of Nature, and an interesting and instructive volume for the general reader. The illustrations are original and very good.

Mr. Martin's two little volumes are very different. He has a facile pen, and to a careless or ignorant reader the perusal of the works may afford some entertainment, but it is scarcely possible that they can give much instruction. The author is no doubt fond of nature, but he begins too soon to teach—words and phrases are used by him to cover want of knowledge; when a teacher has nothing to say he had better not say it. Take a specimen from his chat on the cod-fish. "In both fishes [the cod and the herring] we find numerous loose bones piercing the flesh which do not seem to have any connection with the backbone at all, but which give us considerable trouble in dissecting the flesh for consumption. Many people have almost abandoned fish food because of the trouble the numerous bones give. If they knew the positions of the bones and their uses, and were able to take an intelligent interest in the creatures set before them, they would have little difficulty in separating them from the flesh, and would then succeed in adopting a semi-scientific methodical manner of doing so. These seemingly useless bones are really the supports to which the fins are fastened as to an anchor, and sometimes they are as long as those of the fins themselves. Now, in the cod, there are no less than ten fins, and, of these, three on the back and two beneath the body require support from these inter-spinous bones as they are called." The structure of the internal organs of the cod is thus expounded: "Who has ever noticed the heart of a fish, and how many know where it is situated? Its flesh is so valuable to us for food that we neglect all knowledge concerning its vital organs. Its heart is situated just beneath its head, and consists of little more than a double enlargement of the most important artery. It consists of only two chambers, that of the human species consisting of four. Yet there is one organ which the cod possesses of which all have heard, and it is that from which we obtain the celebrated cod-liver oil." The "glimpses into Nature's secrets" proceed thus throughout the two volumes. Everything is freely dealt with, but no information worth acquiring is supplied, and there are not a few positive blunders which the author appears to be unable to detect, as, for instance, that *Limnoria terebrans* is an acephalous mollusc, and that *Elephas primigenius* is the mastodon.

W. C.

In *Animals' Rights considered in Relation to Social Progress* (Bell & Sons, 8vo, pp. x., 162) Mr. H. S. Salt makes out a strong case for "the beasts, whose pains are scarcely less than ours." With much—very much—that he writes we find ourselves in entire accord. The book is a scholarly production, and the "bibliographical appendix" is especially valuable; the celebrated sermon of John Wesley on the future life of animals should be referred to in the next edition. It seems to us, however, that the assertion that "during the churchdom of the middle ages, from the fourth century to the sixteenth, little or no attention was paid to the question of the rights and wrongs of the lower races" is too sweeping. The practice and teaching of St. Francis of Assisi regarding animals must have influenced many thousands in mediæval times—a period, by the way, which is not usually considered to begin so early as "the fourth century." Certain chapters, such as that on "Murderous Millinery," are so Selbornian in tone and teaching that one wonders why Mr. Salt does not refer to the Selborne Society. Such sentences as "it is not the man who kills the bird, but the lady who wears the feathers in her hat, who is the true offender" convey important truths in few words. If we cannot adopt all Mr. Salt's views, or follow him in all his details, we can promise Selbornians that they will find much that is excellent in this attractive little book.

The *Child-Life Almanac* for 1893 (G. Philip & Sons, 1s.), aims at providing teachers with suggestions both for lessons to be prepared and observations to be made. The Almanac is intended to hang up, and for each month a separate table, containing general information and "phenological observations," is provided. The idea is better than the execution, and we think those who have supplied the compiler with hints will hardly feel that their suggestions have been carried out. There are misprints in the popular and scientific names, as well as elsewhere—e.g., "Shillingfleet" for "Stillingfleet." We should like to know on what authority it is said that May has been in flower at Bradford on the 1st of the month of that name for twenty years.

---

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Avadavats.**—I should be very glad if any of the readers of *NATURE NOTES* can give me information about the habits of avadavats. I have had three of them since May, and in that time they have twice moulted; one always remains the same colour—a dull brown with a little red above the tail—but the other two alter each time. When first I had them, one had a brown back with white spots and red breast with spots, and the other had the same coloured back, but a beautiful smooth lemon-coloured breast. In July they moulted rapidly, and became exactly like each other, so much so that it was all but impossible to know them apart. Their heads and backs were brown, shot plentifully with red, while their breasts became brilliantly red with many more white spots than before. Now they have just finished their second moult, and the one which had a lemon-coloured breast has donned the same garb, while the other has also gone back much the same as he was at first. I should like to know if this is the difference between the cock and the hen, and also if it is summer and winter plumage. I should also be glad to be told from what country these little birds have been brought.

*Bath.*

CATHERINE PEDDER.

**Swallows.**—Shortly after the arrival of swallows at Claverton Manor a pair entered the room in which I was standing by an open window and flew leisurely round, making a double circuit near the walls and ceiling, exchanging lively felicitations upon the safe completion of their long journey, or babbling a gusto of delight at the actual recognition of familiar surroundings. On the 26th of October I was again standing by the window, a pair of swallows were wheeling about excitedly outside; I whistled to them and one immediately flew into the room, made one hurried circuit, twittered an earnest business-like farewell, and departed. Next day not a swallow was to be seen.

*Claverton.*

R. BAKER.



**A Plant Bug.**—During the past season I have been much concerned with the depredations of a plant bug, known to scientists under the name of *Lygus campestris*. He is a bright, lively, pale-green-coloured little insect, remarkably agile, with a formidable-looking snout or proboscis, and is much given to roving about the buds of certain of our favourite flowers. These buds being punctured by him—probably in the performance of his duty—become, as the flowers develop, disfigured and useless. As so little seems to be known by gardeners concerning his life history and habits, except the fact that he is distinctly destructive, especially to the buds of chrysanthemums, I am desirous of eliciting something further respecting his functions in life, or the economic part he plays in nature.

Acton.

C. B. G.

**Nightingales.**—Can you kindly tell me what sort of box nightingales like to build in, and in what position in a garden the box should be placed? A nightingale used to sing every season near the bottom of our garden until a new road was made there a year or two ago, and I should like to try if a suitable box for building would induce it to return. A pair built and hatched their eggs in the ivy on a wall adjoining the house of the Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford, which shows that they are not very shy birds. I believe in Germany their numbers were greatly increased by suitable boxes being put about in the parks and public gardens.

Oxford.

EDITH EVANS.

**Disappearance of Rooks' Nests.**—For several years the rooks have built their nests in an elm tree which stands close to the house, and this year there were more nests than usual. All went well with the rooks, and their young were not shot at. But during the last few weeks the nests have all disappeared, and the gardener assures me that they were not blown down. I may add that in trees distant about thirty yards, where the rooks have built their nests, everything remains as usual.

Whitchurch, Salop.

THOMAS SMITH.

**Mountain Ash Berries** (NATURE NOTES, 1892, p. 218).—I should think that the mysterious disappearance of the berries might be attributed to the depredations of a party of missel thrushes, which I have often seen regaling themselves on berries in the autumn season. At the time referred to (August), the missel thrushes collect into small flocks, and are, no doubt, often mistaken for fieldfares and redwings, which, however, do not arrive in this country till October or November.

Fyfield, Abingdon.

W. H. WARNER.

**Mountain Ash Berries** (p. 218).—Some years ago, when residing at Kenilworth, in my garden there was a mountain ash tree loaded with rich-coloured ripe berries. The entire crop disappeared in one day. In this instance the robbers were starlings.

J. C. MELLISS.

**Field Mice.**—During the winter and before and after they lay up, I have only seen single mice, and the nest only looks as if it would hold one. Do they winter alone, and mate again in the spring?

Rhyl.

F. L. RAWLINS.

**Squirrel and Birds.**—On the 5th December there was a great commotion amongst the birds in our garden, and on looking to see what was the matter, a squirrel was discovered running across the snow-covered lawn. As soon as the squirrel reached a tree the birds made such a noise in the branches that it seemed afraid and ran on to another, when the same thing was repeated; at last it left our garden in despair. The birds were mostly sparrows, a few blackbirds, thrushes, robins and two rooks. They flew quite close to the squirrel when it was on open ground. Can any one tell me if birds dislike squirrels as a rule?

Reigate.

MARY S. POWELL

**Book on Spiders.**—Can you recommend me a good book on Spiders?

M. S. P.

W. B. P.—The occurrence is not very unusual.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES.

At the meeting of the Council on Wednesday, December 7th, the resignation of the Misses Fry (who are leaving London for Bristol), as members of the Council, was accepted with great regret. As a result of this, the few Members of the Society living in Bayswater have been transferred to the Kensington Branch, and the Bayswater Branch will cease to exist. A new Branch, however, of which Miss Agnes Fry will act for the present as Hon. Sec. and Treasurer, will be formed at Bristol under the name of the North Somerset Branch. Miss Fry's address is Failand House, Failand, near Bristol.

Mr. Prince, of Windsor, Melbourne, was appointed a Corresponding Secretary of the Society. It is hoped that he may be able to establish a Branch in Melbourne.

We are sorry to record the death of Miss Isabel de Michele, Hon. Sec. of the Weybridge Branch. Miss de Michele was a very ardent Selbornian, and took a great interest in the New Forest Bill.

By an unfortunate oversight the December number of NATURE NOTES was insufficiently stamped. The Council regrets the inconvenience thereby occasioned to Members.

## OUR VOLUMES.

We desire to call the special attention of our readers to the volumes of NATURE NOTES of 1890, 1891, and 1892, which may be obtained at the offices of the Society, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C., at the cost of three shillings each, or by post, three shillings and fivepence. By the variety and interest of their contents these volumes are admirably adapted for the school or parish library, and we would urge upon our readers not to neglect so excellent a means for advancing the interests which they have at heart. Cases for binding the numbers for 1890, 1891 and 1892 may be obtained from the Secretary at the above address, price 1s. each; or the numbers will be bound and the case supplied by Messrs. Bale & Sons, 87, Great Titchfield Street, W., at the cost of 1s. 3d., or with gilt edges, 1s. 10d. The name and address of the sender, with stamps to the above amount, should be forwarded with the magazines in order to prevent mistakes or delay.

## NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., not later than the 15th of the month.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. Short notes on Natural History or Selbornian subjects will be especially welcome. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

Queries on any points connected with Botany, Zoology, or other branches of Natural History, will be answered if possible, and advice will be given as to the best books for students in any department of Natural Science; but all questions must be accompanied by the names and addresses of the writers, not for publication, if this is not desired.

Specimens sent for identification will be named, if sent carefully packed and in good condition, and if sent to the Editor, but we cannot undertake to return any specimens. Not more than six specimens will be named at one time, and, in the case of common plants, it is suggested that correspondents will find it far more useful to work them out for themselves than to send them to us for naming; we shall always be willing to confirm or correct such determinations.

We shall be glad to notice any books bearing upon Natural History in any of its branches, and to direct attention to magazine articles of the same kind, if these are sent to us. Publishers will confer a favour upon our readers if they will always state the price of any volumes they may send, in order that it may be quoted in the notice. This addition is much appreciated by our readers, and is desirable in the interest of the volumes themselves.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business should not be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITEN, as above.

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

No. 38.

FEBRUARY, 1893.

VOL. IV.

### THE CENTENARY OF GILBERT WHITE.



GILBERT WHITE died June 26th, 1793, so that the present year is the hundredth anniversary of his passing hence. To those who have learned to know Gilbert White, to ramble with him in woodland glade, in forest and fen, to watch Nature's many shifting scenes and hear Nature's many voices, the present has appeared as a fitting occasion to do honour to his name. To know Gilbert White is to love him ; and we who love him would, as devout votaries, pilgrimage to the scenes of his mature life, and grow more familiar with the actual physical environment of the house of one to whom it was given to make for an obscure hamlet an undying name.

Selborne, then, is the goal, and it is proposed, since June 26th in this year falls upon a Monday—a rather inconvenient day for many of us—to adopt Midsummer Day, June 24th, a Saturday, as the occasion for our visit to Selborne. It is hoped that a very large contingent of Selbornians will keep the day free, and will join in an expedition to White's Selborne. A provisional Committee has been formed and sanctioned by the Council of the Society, with power to add to its numbers. We hope that at least one member of every branch will join it, and whip up recruits for this great occasion. It would be premature to formulate any definite program, but it may be said that there is little doubt that a most delightful day in a most charming part of Hampshire will be spent, and the more who can come the greater will be the success. We shall arrange for special tickets, trains, carriages, and so on, when we can estimate the number of persons who will come, and we hope every member will write at as early a date as possible to our Secretary, Mr. Western, and tell him whether they can take part in the expedition. It is proposed to make the actual expenses as light as possible, and this will be best achieved by obtaining the promise of a large number of members to attend.

It must be added that through the influence of Mrs. Myles—that good friend of the Selborne Society—Mr. F. W. Read, the present tenant of Gilbert White's house (a picture of which will be found in NATURE NOTES for October last), has most kindly extended hospitality to belated Selbornians, and will facilitate inspection of what remains of the old house and landmarks.

Further particulars will appear in NATURE NOTES for March, so in conclusion I will only urge the importance of *early* help being given to the Committee in the ways I have above indicated.

DUDLEY WILMOT BUXTON.

## WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA.

### I.



FOR two days past the wind has been blowing strongly from the east, laden with moisture from the sea, which lies in that direction, only three miles distant as the crow flies. The sky has been overcast, and at intervals a drizzly rain has fallen upon the already sodden earth. This afternoon the clouds begin slowly and unwillingly to break, and the sun peeps slowly out, as if half afraid to show his face after so unusual an absence. Immediately, animal life begins to awaken from the drowsy state which the lately heavy atmosphere induced.

I am seated upon a log at the back of a little clearing; behind me is a little grove of gum saplings; in front and to the left is grassland, dotted with stumps of the musk and dogwood trees which formerly grew there; to the right, the almost trackless bush. By my side is a gun, brought in the hope that some of the *fera natura* in the shape of kangaroo or wallaby may venture out to the grass paddock for a feed. But my attention is absorbed by the birds which the sun glimpses have called forth.

Most energetic of these is the little flycatcher, black and grey, with small streaks of white about the wings and tail. Perched upon a dogwood stump, he preens his feathers with his tiny bill; suddenly he darts upward, almost perpendicularly, alighting again with quite a little flap, then off again horizontally, turning and twisting with marvellous rapidity after his insect prey, then downwards and up again, sometimes bringing up on his old stump, sometimes choosing another. Most impudent is he too, as well as energetic, sometimes alighting on the log close beside me, and sitting there for half a minute or so (which is his utmost limit for keeping still) with as much confidence as need be, as if quite assured of the benevolence of my intentions

towards him. He is dubbed "fantail" by the bush-folk, from his habit of spreading out his tail during his aerial manœuvres.

Perched upon a stump near is a native sparrow, much resembling the British hedge sparrow, but of a somewhat thicker build; very grave and judge-like is he, with his head-feathers ruffled up, and a generally thoughtful appearance as if revolving some important scheme. Self-contained as he appears, however, his weather-eye has been wide open; with a sudden dart he is on the ground, tugging away at a huge worm, the other end of which is still fast in the earth. A few vigorous jerks loosen the anchored portion considerably, and he is now three-quarters out. Letting go for a moment, the sparrow seems to draw a deep breath for the supreme effort; it is made, and triumphantly he flies off to the bush to devour the dainty and perhaps share it with his mate, who is probably nest-building.

Hopping about among the bracken are the beautiful little wrens, tiny things with short, straight tails, compared with whom their more numerous brethren with the long stick-up tails are giants. It is a curious thing about these latter that each gentleman, known by his bright blue head and wings with black stripes, seems to be accompanied by quite a harem of soberly-attired ladies. But to return to the tiny ones whose plumage in the shade seems merely light grey underneath, and dull brown on the back: seen in the sun this dull brown becomes a beautiful gold-bronze, throwing back the light like a polished shield. They clamber about among the tall ferns and dead thistle-stalks, each of which is quite a tree in their small estimation, and a happy hunting-ground too, to judge by the way their little beaks are kept going.

But soft! what is this? A new bird, new at least to me, suddenly emerges from the thicket and squats upon the fence, where he immediately proceeds to open his mouth in a way which would delight a singing master, and gives out four loud clear notes; we have just time to notice that his breast and back are mottled very much after the style of the bush thrush, and that he is only about half the size of that bird, when he plunges back into the thicket, and is seen no more.

Overhead, among the boughs of the big eucalypti, the green parrots are whistling, and far away back in the gully among the myrtles and sassafras sounds the strident note of the black jay, warning us of sunset; so, shouldering arms, we pick our way among the logs and stumps and over the hill to the hut where we are camped. But what is this delicate little bird picking about among the billets of firewood which lie strewn before the door? Another stranger! This is indeed a day of surprises ornithological. It is the graceful emu wren, or some closely allied species; very much the same cut as the long-tailed wren, previously noticed, but a great deal smaller, and having the light grey breast marked with long black splashes.

How mild it is this evening! The strong sea-breeze has died

away until there is not a breath of air, and the sky is still covered with a thin grey cloud. Nature's spring has already commenced in this month of August, although almanack spring will not begin until the 22nd of September. The birds are mating, the grass and herbs are growing, and the fruit trees budding, while insect life is also to the fore. We notice, as we sit down to our frugal supper, that a long-bodied, long-legged, and long-horned beetle is sprawling about on the window pane, which is further adorned with a little broad-winged brown moth, and divers specimens of the gnat tribe—a tribe which, alas for human comfort! will soon display itself in overwhelming profusion.

HAMILTON STUART DOVE.

*Table Cape, Tasmania, August 25th, 1892.*

### SIR RICHARD OWEN AND HIS BIRDS.



AN intense affection for animals and birds was a leading characteristic of the great naturalist who was taken from us at a ripe old age shortly before Christmas. He had, indeed, a love for Nature in all her aspects, and almost to the last was able to enjoy his daily walk in his old-fashioned garden at Sheen Lodge, on the borders of Richmond Park, planted with trees and shrubs from all parts of the world, many of them by his own hands.

Several times in the course of my visits, during the last ten years, I had the privilege of being invited by him into his garden, to see his "feathered friends." And what a sight it was! never to be forgotten by those who *love* our birds. Sir Richard delighted to make them his companions. There the blackbirds, thrushes, tits, sparrows, pigeons, &c., would hover about the kind old gentleman, perch on his hat and shoulders when he called, and feed from his hand and lips. What a lesson was there to those who so ruthlessly destroy thousands of our small birds to afford gratification to the milliner or the dress-maker's fair customers; or to the "sportsmen," who kill the poor pigeon ere he can rise from his miserable "trap."

I am a sportsman myself, but I do not regard this and many so-called sports of the present day as sportsmanlike. Why have we left the good old times of walking after our game with gun and dog in both turnip and cover, and giving them a chance for life, instead of slaying them in battues of thousands, as is the fashion of the day? Who would not prefer the kindness and beauty of spirit of this old philosopher, round whom the birds clustered in his Richmond garden, to the materialistic natures, whose love of animal destruction is raised to the doubtful dignity of a fine art? What a delightful and idealic picture was

this of the grand old gentleman in his sylvan retreat, with all kinds of garden songsters answering his call, confiding with that "trust that only those who love can know," and feeding from a loving, merciful hand. It was a picture of religion, poetry and music, all combined; seldom seen now-a-days, but read of in the delightful tales of a far-off Arcadia.

JAMES STARTIN.

---

## BIRD LIFE ON A NEW ZEALAND RUN.



OUR natural history in New Zealand is at present in a transition stage. The balance of the old order of things has been overthrown by the importation of new animals, the wide distribution of fire-arms, a foreign vegetation, and consequent on that, to some extent even by a new climate.

Speaking broadly, forty years ago the North Island was densely clothed in fern. In the colder and damper glens that faced the south, bush grew, and in some parts great forests extended for miles. The undrained swamps were covered with flags and flax (*Phormium tenax*), and the only considerable tract of land in grass was the sterile country about the volcanic region of Taupo and Ohenemutu. This alone remains as it was. Hundreds of thousands of acres of fern land have been burnt, stocked, and sown down with rye grass and cocksfoot; forests have been felled and swamps drained and ploughed.

The descendants of imported dogs, weasels, ferrets, and cats roam the remaining wooded ranges, and prey upon our strange and curious ground birds—the kiwi, the kakapo, the blue mountain duck and the weka. So rapid is the disappearance of the two former that steps are being taken to preserve them, and on several small islands they have been successfully established.

The natives, too, are all armed with breech-loaders, and they pay little or no attention to the close season, so that through them, also, many of the native birds are in danger. English bees, too—there are thousands of wild swarms in the bush—gathering the honey lessen the ancient food supply of the nectar-loving birds. They also usurp, or at any rate occupy, the holes in trees where kaka parrots or paroquets have built or would have built, and I have twice taken out egg shells in obtaining the honey from a wild bush hive. While some species of native birds increase in spite of these changes, to many more they are fatal, and only those survive who can adapt themselves to their novel environments.

On the run where there is still cover, and weasels have not yet appeared, the weka holds his own, having taken kindly to his novel diet of English mice and rats, young larks, and

pheasants' eggs. Fortunately for themselves, too, these birds are of no use for human food. The tame and confiding blue ducks, that love mountain tarns and creeks half blind with vegetation, are rapidly disappearing. With the stocking of country and more frequent fires, the native quail has vanished; its extinction has reacted on the quail hawk, which is a rare bird now. In like manner, the disappearance of the native rat that fed on the most of our forest trees has caused the whekan or laughing owl to become very scarce.

Still, many rare and interesting birds remain with us, and perhaps the most beautiful of these is the pure white kotuku or heron. It is so seldom seen in the North Island that among the natives "rare as the kotuku" has passed into a proverb. Though it is described in the history of New Zealand birds as very shy and timid, upon the two occasions on which it has visited our lake I have been able to approach to within a few yards. The natives frequently follow this bird, as they know from experience that if disturbed from one lagoon or lake, the kotuku will take a route that never varies. In the old days the bird was eagerly sought by the natives, its long white filamentous dorsal plumes being used for the head ornamentation of chiefs.

The swamp hen or pukako, though by no means rare, is another very handsome bird—the abdomen and back deep black, breast indigo blue, legs and bill red, and under tail coverts white. It becomes very tame if let alone, flirting its tail and showing the white feathers beneath as it walks daintily, with feet raised high at every step. Its food is chiefly the tender stems of the succulent raupo reed, and while eating, the morsel is held in one claw after the manner of the parrot. It may be seen devouring the standing corn too, and some years ago the swamp hens made the discovery that food was to be obtained from our oat stacks. With their powerful bills they used to pull straw after straw very carefully straight out, without breaking them, so as to obtain the grain at the inner end.

The kingfisher is another common and beautiful bird, and in spring-time we are visited by two kinds of cuckoo, hailing, the one from Australia, and the other from the South Pacific Islands. Like their relative of Britain, they entrust the hatching of their eggs and the rearing of their young to a stranger—the little grey warbler. Both seem to be endowed with a natural ventriloquism, their notes sounding "at once far off and near," and when their cries are first heard we know that once more spring has arrived.

The history of the little wax-eye, now very common with us, is rather remarkable. These birds appeared in the North Island, says Buller, for the first time within the memory of the oldest natives in 1856. They stayed for three months, and proved of great service in preying on the aphids called the "American blight." During the next two years they were not



heard of in any part of the North Island, but in 1858 they again crossed the strait dividing the two islands, and in much larger numbers. For the next four years they wintered with us, re-crossing the strait upon the approach of spring. Since then they have become permanent residents, and their ceaseless twitter is everywhere to be heard.

Many English and a few Australian birds have been imported and most successfully acclimatised; from the former country, grouse, robins, nightingales, blackbirds, starlings, thrushes, larks, sparrows, goldfinches and others, while from Australia have been obtained the magpie, minah, and black swan. With this last bird, which is no good for shooting, and very numerous, the experiment is being tried of taking away its own eggs and substituting those of the common tame goose. It is hoped in this way that we shall obtain a wild goose!

Several of these acclimatised English and Australian birds have already made their appearance on the run. Sixteen years ago, when first it was taken up, larks and black swans had preceded us. I remember, however, the advent of the first brace of sparrows, and how pleased we were to hear their homely chattering. The earliest improvements on the run were done by white labour, and while a number of men were resident on one spot our sparrows increased and multiplied. Later on our work was chiefly done by native contract, the Maories camping out in various parts of the run, and then the sparrows almost entirely disappeared. They increased again when we took to growing oats, but the establishment of the frozen meat trade was another serious blow to them, for we found then that turnips year after year were the best paying crop, and our oats were bought off the run. Now only five or six couple reside at the homestead.

Birds do not, however, always come in pairs. For two successive years an Australian minah appeared on the run. It arrived in spring each time, and used to sit rather disconsolately outside the fowl yard, seeking to chum up with the fowls, who scornfully rejected its advances. Each time it stayed for about three days and then disappeared. This present spring (August) of 1892, seven years later, a brace have appeared, and I have no doubt they will stay, and that in a few years we shall see their descendants sitting on the lazy longwool's backs and diligently searching for ticks. Once I noticed one of these Australian starlings dead, tangled in the wool of a living sheep. About six years ago in early summer a cock goldfinch appeared on the run; I used to see it day after day as I went over to the wool shed at shearing time; it was always alone, and I do not think the female was sitting, as no one ever observed young birds later in the season; next year, however, it reappeared in the same spot, this time with a wife, and now there are many scores of these birds in different parts of the run. In 1888 two Australian magpies took up their abode in a patch of native bush close to the homestead; unfortunately they were shot, and none others

have taken their place. In 1889 the first thrush was heard. It sang for two mornings and then we heard and saw no more of it. About a week ago from the time I write, another of these English songsters was heard close to the house.

The exceedingly rapid increase at first of imported creatures is very remarkable; climatic conditions are favourable, food abundant, there is no disease, and at first no natural enemies, indeed, some time appears to elapse before it dawns on the more predaceous creatures to make experiments. I know that at first pheasants did well in New Zealand, partridges increased too, for a few seasons, then came a check; in the minds of wekas and hawks no doubt familiarity had bred contempt. The former sucked the eggs and devoured the chicks, while the latter preyed on the older birds. Flock owners who have turned sheep for the first time on to country infested by wild dogs, have told me that it was weeks and even months before these pests left the wild pigs they had been accustomed to prey upon, and took to worrying the new animal. I think it is not unlikely, therefore, that the first rapid spread and subsequent decline in several species may in this manner be accounted for. But although our partridges are extinct, and our pheasants and Californian quail stationary in numbers, yet year by year new birds arrive; and before very long we shall hear the robin whistling from our garden crofts, and the nightingale of Shakespere, Milton, and Keats "singing of summer in full-throated ease."

H. GUTHRIE SMITH.

*Tutira Lake, Hawkes Bay,  
New Zealand.*

---

### SEEDLINGS.\*

IF these two large and handsome volumes did nothing else, they would bear ample testimony to the inexhaustibility of the material for observation and research which is spread around us on all sides in such lavish profusion. Folk sometimes talk as if there were a danger of the subjects for our study coming to an end, just as we are from time to time alarmed by prognostications of the failure of our coal supply. But such fears, at any rate in the former case, are happily groundless. It is true that if we could understand all about the "flower in the crannied wall"—what it is, "root and all, and all in all"—our knowledge of things would extend far beyond those of this earthy sphere; but of such knowledge we may say with certainty that it is "too wonderful and excellent" for us—we "cannot attain unto it."

Everyone, however, who is not a mere collector but a true naturalist, knows well enough that the field before him is inexhaustible. This lesson was taught by Gilbert White to his own and to succeeding generations; and in later days it has been presented to us in new aspects by Charles Darwin on one hand, and Richard Jefferies on the other. The former of these showed us the interest and

---

\* A Contribution to our Knowledge of Seedlings, by Sir John Lubbock, Bart., M.P., &c. London, 1892: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. 8vo, vol. 1, pp. viii., 6c8; vol. ii., pp. 646; with 684 figures in the text. Price £1 16s.

value of careful and continuous observation of the most common things ; and even those who do not accept his conclusions will not withhold their tribute of admiration for the steady conscientious work on which they were based, or for the



Seedling of the Bloody Cranesbill.  
(*Geranium sanguineum*.)



Seedling of Good King Henry.  
(*Chenopodium Bonus-Henricus*.)

temperate manner in which they were stated—characteristics which are too often conspicuously lacking in those who claim to popularise the great naturalist's views.



Seedling of Wallflower.



Seedling of Fennel.

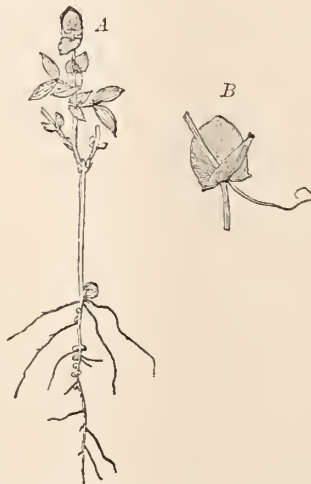
Sir John Lubbock ranks high among those disciples of Darwin who had the advantage of intimate personal relations with the great man, and who have conscientiously followed him in the laborious accumulation of facts and observations.

He is a striking illustration of the apparent paradox that the busiest men can always find time for more work. Sir John Lubbock might fairly consider his time more than fully occupied in the many and various public and private undertakings with which his name is honourably associated ; nevertheless, he finds leisure for



Seedling of Sycamore (*Acer Pseudo-platanus*).

conducting experiments, not only with plants, but with various insect tribes, as well as to contribute to literature essays which receive a ready welcome, the last of which, *The Beauties of Nature*, we hope to notice at an early date. As in the case of Darwin, we may not always accept his conclusions, but as records of observation his contributions to science are valuable.



Seedling of Yellow Vetchling (*Lathyrus Aphaca*).

A—showing true leaves. B—the stipules, which take the place of leaves when the plant is older.

The introduction to these volumes has already appeared in print in the *Journal of the Linnean Society*, and the forms of *Flowers, Fruits, and Leaves*, and the causes which in the author's opinion have combined to produce them, are dealt with in a small popular volume bearing that title. The present work may be

regarded as a storehouse of information regarding seedlings, in which will be found minute descriptions of numerous types of the principal natural orders of plants. These descriptions are of course mainly technical, and any attempt to deal with them would be out of place in these pages.

Our special object in calling attention to this book is to point out to Selbornians a field of investigation in which, if there is not much left for them to discover, there is undoubtedly plenty to observe. It is one, moreover, suited to these earlier months of the year, when objects of interest are comparatively few; it is open to all, and the collector as well as the observer will find pleasure in it. This is the observation of the seedlings of British and common garden plants, some idea of the variety of which may be gained from the cuts accompanying this article, for which we are indebted to the publishers of Sir John Lubbock's book.

Mrs. Brightwen, in her paper on "Seedling Trees,"\* directed attention to one aspect of the subject, but the observation and collection of seedlings in general opens up a much wider field, and will result in a great widening of knowledge of the early life of our plants. How few, for example, have ever seen the true leaves of the gorse? Yet the young plants bearing these may be found under any furze-bush in the spring by anyone who will trouble to look for them. The yellow vetchling (*Lathyrus Aphaca*), figured on the preceding page, is another plant which only produces leaves in its early stage.

Not only in our private but our public herbaria, seedlings are very slenderly, if at all, represented, and a good collection of them would certainly be a welcome addition to the National Herbarium at South Kensington. Anyone making such a collection for himself would find the seedlings easy to dry, and they would occupy but little space; he would stimulate his powers of observation and increase his knowledge, and would probably soon accumulate sufficient information for a paper for NATURE NOTES.

---

## TWO BOOKS OF VERSE.

THESE two dainty little volumes should have been noticed sooner. The first place is claimed by a lady who is an old friend and member of the Selborne Society. Her anthology of the robin was favourably noticed in our first volume (p. 43), and in 1890 we spoke at length in praise of her *Lyrics*. In *A String of Beads* (A. & C. Black, 4s. 6d.) Lady Lindsay has given us some delightful "verses for children." Whether we should have had this charming little book if Mr. R. L. Stevenson had never written his *Child's Garden of Verses* is a matter on which it is unnecessary to speculate; if not, we owe one more debt of gratitude to Mr. Stevenson.

Selbornians will turn with most pleasure to the sections "In the Garden" and "On the Sea-shore." Here are some verses from the former suitable to the season:—

Poor pale Snowdrop, budding in the Spring,  
Ere the golden thrushes yet have learn'd to sing;  
Poor pale Snowdrop, drooping, cold, and drear,  
Ere thy sister flowers on the earth appear.

Sweet pale Primrose, blooming in the Spring,  
When the callow fledglings from the nest take wing;  
Sweet pale Primrose, who but holds thee dear,  
Coming in the springtime, the morning of the year.

Fair pale Violet, given by the Spring,  
From the perfum'd South a message thou dost bring,  
Like a herald crying: See, the Summer's near!  
And in her train the wild rose, queen-flower of all the year!

---

\* NATURE NOTES, 1892, p. 142.

Occasionally we think Lady Lindsay is less happy. Her verses to the daisy do not please us, perhaps because so many poets have already sung so well about it ; and we must demur to the depicting of " lords and ladies " and water-lilies on the same canvas. But the following is a good children's rhyme :—

" Cluck, cluck," said the old brown hen,  
 " Cock-a-roo-croo," said the cock ;  
 " Surely at dawn, every now and then,  
 There's something amiss with the clock ;  
 For we teach the time to the tiniest chick  
 A vast deal better than he can tick !"

Here are two beautiful verses :—

Said Day to Night :  
 " I bring God's light ;  
 What gift have you ?"  
 Night said : " The dew."  
 " I give bright hours,"  
 Quoth Day, " and flowers ;"  
 Said Night : " More blest,  
 I bring sweet rest."

Mr. Norman R. Gale's *Country Muse* is a welcome singer, and in this " new series " (D. Nutt, 5s.), her strains are, if not sweeter than before, at least as fresh and true ; and this will be recognised by those who know her earlier warblings as no faint praise. The lines entitled " The Country Faith " strike us as very beautiful :—

Here in the country's heart  
 Where the grass is green  
 Life is the same sweet life  
 As it e'er hath been.

Trust in a God still lives,  
 And the bell at morn  
 Floats with a thought of God  
 O'er the rising corn.

God comes down in the rain,  
 And the crop grows tall—  
 This is the country faith,  
 And the best of all !

Here are two verses from " My Cherry Trees " :—

O children of the smoke and fog,  
 With faces pinched by early care,  
 Would God you might adventure forth  
 To breathe this country air !  
 Would God your ears might drink the song  
 Of grasses, birds, and singing trees !  
 Would God your eyes grew round to see  
 My wealth of cherry-trees !

A hundred thousand shining lamps  
 To light the glory of the green !  
 The rubies of my orchard hang  
 The sturdy leaves between ;  
 The blackbird pecks them at his will,  
 The brazen sparrow with his beak  
 Attacks some swaying globe of fruit  
 And stabs its ruddy cheek.

More Selbornian than any of the poems in this little volume, however, are the following lines to " A Bird in the Hand," with which we must conclude this too short notice :—

Look at this ball of intractable fluff,  
 Panting and staring with piteous eyes !  
 What a rebellion of heart ! what a ruff  
 Tickles my hand as the missel-thrush tries,  
 Pecking my hand with her termagant bill,  
 How to escape (and I love her, the sweet !)  
 Back where the clustering oaks on the hill  
 Climb to the blue with their branches, and meet !

Nay, polished beak, you are pecking a friend !  
 Bird of the grassland, you bleed at the wing !  
 Stay with me, love, in captivity mend  
 Wrong that was wrought by the boy and his sling.  
 O for a priest of the birds to arise,  
 Wonderful words on his lips that persuade  
 Reasoning creatures to leave to the skies  
 Song at its purest a-throb in the glade !

Bow, woodland heart, to the yoke for a while !  
 Soon shall the lyrics of wind in the trees  
 Stir you to pipe in the green forest-aisle,  
 God send me there with the grass to my knees !  
 See, I am stroking my cheek with your breast,  
 Ah, how the bountiful velvet is fair !  
 Stay with me here for your healing and rest,  
 Stay, for I love you, delight of the air !

---

## THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS.

THE Second Annual Report of the Society for the Protection of Birds is remarkable for two things—the steady progress in organisation which it is making, as evinced by the long list of local secretaries, and the entire absence of any recognition of the work of the Selborne Society. The first feature is a very gratifying one, and we cordially tender our congratulations to Mrs. Phillips and Miss Poland, on the success which has attended their efforts. As to the second, it seems to us a matter for regret that, in so wide a field of labour, the efforts of fellow-workers should not receive hearty recognition. For our own part, we welcome the aid of the many organisations which take up the same work upon which we are employed. The more channels through which right views about Nature can be disseminated, the better ; there is room for all, and abundant occupation for each.

The Report, though not long, contains many excellent things. Nothing can be better, for instance, than the following extract from Bishop Thirlwall's *Letters to a Friend* (p. 213).

“I love that companionable goldfinch. I hope he has strengthened your abhorrence of the infamous persecution of his sweet race, which is now going on with redoubled fury under the basest pretences, and from the vilest motives, by land and sea, and which threatens some branches of the family with extermination. The systematic destruction of small birds under pretence of their doing injury to agriculture, to which they were doing most valuable service, was bad enough. . . . But the massacre of myriads of sea-fowl, involving the starvation of many more myriads of their bereaved young, all for the sake of a little additional ornament for ladies' bonnets, fills me with grief and indignation. I conjure you never to wear a single feather that has been so obtained, and to use all your influence to dissuade your friends from doing so.”

Here is another telling passage: “Certainly nothing can well be more savage in design than a bonnet-trimming bought a few weeks ago for three shillings, and described on an appended paper as made in Paris, sold in London, and duly numbered for further orders. The chief feature is the lovely little head

of some insect-eating bird, split in two, and each half stuck aloft on thin skewers, the separated tail in the middle, the wings on either side, while a tuft of the buff plumes of the Squacco heron complete the monstrosity. If, as the old novelist, Richardson, said, 'we do but hang out a sign in our dress what we have within in the shop of our minds,' the wearer of such a decoration as this must have strange notions of beauty and congruity."

We wish all success to the Society for the Protection of Birds, and we claim from it a like sympathy for the Selborne Society.

---

### SELBORNIANA.

**Flowers of Avon at Aldworth.**—Tennyson's love of flowers, and of old-fashioned ones more especially, reminds me of an incident which, like the volume of Shakespeare grasped by him on his death-bed, associates him tenderly with his great predecessor. Staying at Stratford-on-Avon some few years ago, I naturally visited Anne Hathaway's cottage and garden. Its occupant at that time was a woman, somewhat advanced in years, who claimed to have in her veins Hathaway blood. As I went there more than once, a certain intimacy sprang up between us, and when I finally said good-bye to her she cut some sprigs of lavender that was not yet in flower, for it was Midsummer, as a parting gift, saying with a jingle that reminded one of the country couplets Shakespeare did not disdain to introduce into his dramas—

"Plant it in May,  
'Twill grow both night and day."

It was not May, but June, and I was not homeward bound for another week. But as I journeyed on through Warwickshire I kept the cuttings moist by placing them in my sponge-bag, and struck them without difficulty on reaching home, and what lavender I now have is descended from these few small cuttings. I told Tennyson the story, asking if he would like to have some of the same stock whose former flowers had sweetened the sheets of Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway. The idea pleased him, and Shakespeare's and Anne Hathaway's lavender is growing at Aldworth to-day.—Alfred Austin, in *National Review* for December.

**A Battue of Sea Birds.**—The enclosed cutting is from a recent *Standard*. Cannot the Selborne Society do something *at once* to stop this disgraceful wholesale destruction of sea birds?

ANNIE JONES.

"During the past fortnight of severe frost a vast number of sea fowl have been seen in Morecambe Bay. The fishermen have fixed two large guns on Chapel Island, and a great number of birds have been shot, and sent for sale to the inland towns of Lancashire. At a single shot from one of the guns 120 birds were brought down."

**A Motto.**—Here is a perfect motto for juvenile branches of the Selborne Society. I take it from a book entitled *Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth*.

"But what is thy duty? Hurt no living thing, spoil no beautiful thing, say no unkind thing; forgive, be kind, be loving, be truthful, be joyful, and do not *think* thyself very good, but *be* good."

W. WHITWELL.

**Kew Ait.**—We are glad to see that the condition of Kew Ait is again attracting attention. In our volume for 1890, p. 130. will be found a forcible article on its impending destruction; and during the last two years its condition has grown worse. The following paragraph appeared in the *Star* of January 14th:—

"Apparently through neglect and want of protection the island on the Thames at Kew, known as Brentford Eyot, is being gradually washed away by the action of the tide. The matter has been brought to the attention of the authorities by various local bodies and societies interested in the preservation of



the islands on the Thames. Recently a deputation from the Richmond Town Council had an interview with the Commissioner of her Majesty's Office of Works on the subject of Brentford Eyot, and in the result the Council has now decided to ask the Department whether they would be prepared to rent the island to the corporation at a nominal rent for a term of years, with option of purchase, the object being to protect and preserve the picturesque character of the eyot."

**Butterflies in Danger.**—Yesterday, in Cheapside, I saw what cannot fail to grieve all right-minded people. In a hosier's window were some ornaments for ladies, made up of feathers, ribbon, &c., and, as was declared, real butterflies. These were very pretty, although I cannot give their names. It seems to me if, as they state, they are real, it is a trade as deplorable as the milliners' in birds.

ALBERT C. ELSDON.

**Feeding the Birds.**—We feed the birds twice a day during this severe weather, and, as one of the valuable articles in *NATURE NOTES* recommended, have suspended a lump of suet and half a coco-nut from two rose-trees near the window, so that we are able to watch the birds. Blue-tits and marsh-tits much enjoy the suet, and occasionally slide down the string to reach it. A robin or two also visit it, and a blackbird flies up and pecks at it. I have seen three bullfinches at a time near here, but they never come near the house. Of course we have innumerable house-sparrows, a few hedge-sparrows, blackbirds, starlings, chaffinches, robins, several species of tit, and a missel-thrush or two. I wish we could prevail upon everyone to remember the poor birds.

KATHLEEN E. KNOCKER.

*Hildenboro', Kent.*

**Preservation of Birds in New Zealand.**—We are indebted to Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller, of Melbourne, for an interesting article from the *Evening Post* of Wellington, New Zealand, of November 10th, 1892, from which we take the following extracts:—

"Some time before Lord Onslow's departure from the colony, he wrote a memorandum to the Premier lamenting the rapid destruction—in regard to some species, extinction—of the birds peculiar to New Zealand. After pointing out the extreme scientific value of the avifauna of this colony, and expressing approval of the step taken in reserving Resolution Island as a kind of preserve, he urged that the little Barrier Island, near Auckland, should be acquired from the natives and reserved for a similar purpose. Mr. Henry Wright, of this city, was instructed by the Government to visit the island a few weeks ago to report on its suitability as a preserve. He thinks the island admirably adapted as a habitat for birds, and states that the birds to be found there now number forty species, some of which are extinct in all other parts of the colony. Mr. Wright thinks the island well adapted not only for preserving the avifauna, but also the flora of New Zealand. He has done something to direct scientific attention in England to the matter of preserving our native fauna and flora, and an excellent letter from him on the subject appeared in the *Spectator* of 24th September. Two days after this a leading article on the subject, evidently founded upon Lord Onslow's memorandum, appeared in the *London Standard*. This article warmly commends what has been done and is intended to be done in the matter by the New Zealand Government, which is, it declares, 'wise beyond the wont of Colonial Governments,' adding that 'if their present scheme is successful, and Museum collectors are kept off the preserves, the Government of the colony will be honoured by naturalists all over the world.' Mr. Wright's visit to the Little Barrier, and report as to the destruction of the kauri timber, has roused up the Government, and from the *Auckland Star* of the 3rd instant we learn that the Commissioner of Crown Lands and a party had left for the Island to eject all the bushfellers, and every European on the Island. The Government have already acquired and paid for one-third of the interest of the native owners, and negotiations are far advanced for the total extinguishment of the native title. In the meantime, the Government have a sufficient interest to give them legal power to prevent the further destruction of either the fauna or the flora, and we are glad to find that they seem determined to exercise it."

---

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Disappearance of Rooks' Nests** (p. 19).—I may mention a circumstance within my own knowledge which may throw a little light on this subject. About thirteen years ago, when we were living in an old house in Middlesex, which was surrounded by magnificent elm trees of great age, a series of violent autumn storms threw down several, whose full verdure had masked from human eyes all signs of decreasing vitality. They fell, as elms generally do, without warning, their shallowly imbedded roots tearing up a smaller surface of ground than one would have supposed likely. I do not think that a rook's nest was found in one of these victims to the wind, although their neighbours were thickly peopled. The rooks had doubtless detected a suspicious brittleness about the upper twigs in the previous building season, and had decided against trusting them for their homes. I had for several years remarked that one or two of the trees which fell that autumn had been avoided by the rooks, and had watched without success to ascertain the reason. My ultimate conclusion was that rooks are not only admirable architects, but trustworthy surveyors.

ELINOR F. RUMMENS.

*Eastbourne.*

[The Rev. Prebendary Gordon writes in the Selborne column of the *West Sussex Gazette*: "A writer in NATURE NOTES asks how to win rooks back to a deserted rookery. Dr. Buckland was once asked the same question by Sir Emerson Tennent. Frank Buckland has labelled the letter, showing the favourable result of following the Professor's advice, with the triumphant words 'Rookery restored.' Sir Emerson Tennent wrote to Dr. Buckland with reference to his house in County Fermanagh, Ireland: 'You will see that the crows (thanks to you) have begun to return to my demesne. The plan the steward took was to attach the old nests to the trees where he wished the new crows to build. They have taken the old nests to pieces (lawyer-like), and are building very near the spot.' Perhaps even a more excellent way was that adopted by Sir Percy Burrell, when he wished to establish a rookery at West Grinstead Park. Mr. Borrer (*Birds of Sussex*, p. 151) states that Sir Percy procured some boughs of trees with nests containing young, from about half a mile off, and fixed them in a clump of old oak in the aforesaid park. The parents came there, and the young were brought up, and a considerable rookery is now established. My friend Canon Borrer, rector of Hurstpierpoint, told me of young birds being brought in their nest from a village in Hampshire to Lincoln Inn Fields, and the old ones fed them all the way, and settled with them in the metropolis."]

**A Robin Query.**—Can any of your correspondents account for the somewhat curious fact, that robins never seem to increase in numbers, though there are always at least four, often five, and sometimes as many as six eggs in the nest, and not seldom two broods in the year, and, thanks to the pathetic story of the Babes in the Wood, they are protected, and favourites everywhere. Even the mischievous school-boy, who spares nothing else, will hesitate to kill a robin or rob the nest, yet they never seem to increase in numbers. Can there be any truth in the belief, so common in rural districts, that they fight and kill one another to such an extent that their numbers never increase? It is certain that two cock-birds, if put into the same cage, will fight till one is killed.

J. A. KERR.

*The Rectory, Clyst St. Mary, Devon.*

**Welsh Plant Names.**—Plant names in Welsh, as in many other language, may be roughly classified under three heads, viz.:—(1) Native, or peculiar names (2) translated names, and (3) corruptions of botanical and foreign names. A long and indiscriminate list of Welsh plant names would hardly interest the readers of NATURE NOTES, but a selection of some of the most peculiar and expressive may not be uninteresting.

A common name in the Principality for the Purple Foxglove is *Menyg yr Ellyll* (Fairy's or Folk's gloves); it is also known in some parts as *Menyg Mair* (Mary's gloves), and also as *Bysedd Cwn* (Dog's toes). *Cribau St. Ffraid* (St.

Ffraid's combs), Wood Betony, was once considered a sovereign remedy, and is still in high repute among the older inhabitants. *Palf y Llew* (Lion's paws) is not a bad name for the common Lady's Mantle, when the resemblance in shape between its leaves and the lion's paws is taken into consideration. The Tutsan or Park-leaves is familiar to every country schoolboy as *Dail tŵrch* (Swine Leaves); they put them between leaves of books, to which they impart their scent. *Clychau'r baban* (Baby's bells) is a pretty name for the Snowdrop, and *Llystiau'r milwr* (the Soldier's Weed) is not inappropriately applied to the Purple Loosestrife. Ribwort plantain is *Sawdl Crist* (Christ's sole). Thrift is *Clustog Mair* (Mary's pillow), and the Cowslip is *Dagrau Mair* (Mary's tears). The imaginative minds of our forefathers saw something startling in the Red Poppy peeping through the corn; they looked upon it with suspicion, and gave it the name *Llygad y Cythraul* (Devil's eye), and also called it *Drewlys* (Stinking weed). The Common Vervain has been invested with the name *Cas gan Gythraul* (Hated by the Devil); it was, as most know, one of the plants in most repute as a protection against evil agencies of all kinds. A curious name for the Cleavers, or Bedstraws in general, is *Llau'r yffairad* (parson's lice). This has especial reference to the clinging burrs, and is paralleled in several English names. The burrs of the Burdock are called *Bwm Beili* (Bumbailiff). Herb Paris is favoured with the charming name *Cwotwn Cariad* (Love's Knot). *Clych yr eos* (the Nightingale's bells) is given in some localities to the Wild Hyacinth, in others to the Harebells. Another becoming name for the same plants is *Croeso Haf* (Welcome Summer); the former, at any rate, is a true harbinger of summer. Another little flower, the Michaelmas Daisy, found by almost every cottage in Wales, which it cheers when all the others are faded and gone, is called *Fjarwel Haf* (Farewell Summer).

*Abersytwiith.*

G. REES.

**Birds at a Lighthouse.**—One of the keepers at the lighthouse on St. Catherine's Hill, Isle of Wight, told me on the occasion of a recent visit there that on several nights at the latter part of October large numbers of blackbirds, thrushes and larks had been observed, attracted by the light during their migrations. I should be glad to learn if any of your readers are aware that these birds migrate in the autumn, and do they leave us, or are they new arrivals?

If it were possible to supply lighthouse keepers with forms for the purpose of recording the different species of birds that come under their notice at the seasons of migration, very valuable information might be obtained.

W. DENNE.

[Dr. Morris Gibbs, in analysing the causes of the decrease in the numbers, or the absolute extinction, of certain of our birds, says that the lighthouses of our great lakes and coasts sacrifice many thousand each year, and possibly hundreds of thousands, the birds killing themselves by dashing against the lights when migrating seasonally. He doubts whether there exists an invention, with the exception of the gun, more deadly to birds than the electric light. Another indictment is brought against the headlight of the locomotive, and also against the telegraph and other wires which form a network through the country. All these causes unquestionably contribute in a greater or less degree to the destruction of birds; but it has been conclusively proved that when the number of birds destroyed at any particular place, by any of these agencies, has been carefully determined by a series of daily records, the result has inevitably been such as to lead to the belief that the accounts generally given of the aggregate destruction of birds by various forms of the electric light have been greatly exaggerated.—*Chicago News.*]

**Squirrels and Birds** (p.19).—A correspondent asks, "Are birds afraid of the squirrel?" Yes. A number of small birds, about twelve different kinds, come to my study window in the morning when I ring a bell, and a squirrel that has his "dray" in an evergreen oak just opposite has learned to understand the meaning of the bell, and often comes to share the meal. He looks so impudently pretty and self-satisfied sitting up and nibbling a piece of cheese, of which he seems very fond, holding it daintily in his paws, that one cannot help admiring him, but he is a great nuisance, as the birds all leave when he comes, and he cannot be got rid of without frightening the birds at the same time. Now and again one more

daring—usually a nuthatch, great tit, or sparrow—makes a sudden dash, and carries off some food, and is out of reach before the squirrel, which always makes a dash for the bird, can catch it. All the other birds, even the thrushes and blackbirds, seem afraid, and perch at a short distance, but never come near the window while the squirrel is there.

*Clyst St. Mary Rectory, Devon.*

J. A. KERR.

**Birds Mobbing a Squirrel.**—A correspondent of the *Reading Mercury* writes: "On Sunday, December 11th, at Earley, I observed a squirrel which had evidently strayed some distance from its native woods—(with which, however, there was a connection by means of a hedge-row, with trees, and a water-course)—followed by a number of small birds, chiefly sparrows, chattering wildly and almost venturing to the attack. The squirrel leaped nimbly, or rather flew from tree to tree, pursued by the feathery host. Why should there be this antipathy to the squirrel? Had the birds mistaken it for a sandy cat or kitten?"

**Sparrow and Kingfisher.**—The following occurrence, of which I was an eye-witness, may interest those who recently discussed the character of the sparrow so energetically in these pages.

Shortly after nine o'clock on the morning of the 18th November last, a kingfisher flew out of the Royal Humane Society's boat-house, in Hyde Park, and perched on the stern of a pleasure boat moored a few yards from the shore. A cock sparrow followed it and perched at the other end of the same boat. After a few moments' rest, the kingfisher flew off towards the Paddington end of the water. The sparrow immediately set off in hot pursuit, quickly overtook "the sea-blue bird," and after making two ineffectual shots at it, on the third attempt knocked it down into the water. Luckily no harm was done, for the kingfisher recovered itself and flew on screaming loudly, and the sparrow, apparently well satisfied with the result of his expedition, abandoned the chase. This incident confirmed the opinion I have long held of the London sparrow, that he is an ill-behaved ruffian.

Another point which struck me was the comparatively slow flight of the kingfisher. In books it is always spoken of as "darting" or "shooting" over the surface of the water, and when flying by itself it certainly does appear to go pretty fast. Possibly the metallic hues of its plumage give it the appearance of travelling at a greater pace than is actually the case; at any rate, this kingfisher never had the slightest chance with the sparrow.

A. HOLTE MACPHERSON.

**Domestication of Wood Pigeons.**—When a boy I rescued two helpless young wood-pigeons from some village lads and reared them by hand, forcing soaked peas down their throats. I kept them in a roughly made cage some three feet square, which stood in an enclosed kitchen garden in summer and in a barn in winter. Their wings were not cut, and they were allowed to go where they liked. In the morning I threw open the cage door, when they came on to my arms and had a feed of barley, varied by wild fruits in season, viz., acorns, holly berries, &c. The number of the former they would swallow was appalling; after that they took a digestive pill off the gravel path and then went for a fly, which I should think, often embraced a radius of half a mile or more. The shrubbery and well-planted grounds around the house covered about ten acres. Wild wood-pigeons nested close to the house, but my birds never fraternised with them, nor did they condescend to notice in any sort of way the house-pigeons in a dove cot a hundred yards off. They only settled in trees close to the house, and would always come to me when I whistled for them.

During their flights, which took place from time to time during the day, they often recognised me as far as half a mile from the house, and would dip down as they passed over my head. At first they wanted to alight on me, but I was afraid of their being shot by becoming too familiar with people in general, so I used to throw my cap at them and discharge my gun, &c., and they soon learned to know that I was not to be trifled with outside the premises. They were again fed in the evening, and were then put to bed. Their "time-keepers" were far better than mine, for if I were early, they were handy, and if I were late, they were in their cage and ready for their evening meal.

I kept them for two years, during which time they laid eggs, but did not hatch them. I was much from home. They knew me after a year's absence. Having to leave home permanently, I recommended that the cage-door should always be left open, so that they could go in if they liked, and food supplied. I was informed that they gradually left; no doubt they missed my kind caresses, which they seemed to thoroughly appreciate.

With regard to the wild birds in Hyde Park, I may relate that I have been feeding them lately with maize, and that they have learned to come to the whistle. One day one of the birds flew on to the railings and looked at me. I held out a handful of corn, and the bird immediately walked along the rail and took the maize out of my hand. They have now mostly left town for the winter in accordance with their custom, but I hope to renew their acquaintance in the spring.

*Bayswater.*

J. YOUNG.

**Wild Life in Tasmania.**—We beg to call attention to the first of a very interesting series of papers on "Wild Life in Tasmania" (p. 22). For this we are indebted to Mr. H. S. Dove, F.Z.S., who writes:—"My object is to present Nature as she is, fresh and living, and not from a museum point of view. Most people have the opportunity of studying books and stuffed specimens; only the few can observe the quadrupeds, birds, and insects of a country like this, as they are daily disporting themselves. It is mainly because I do not think anything of this kind has been written on the Tasmanian fauna that I venture to think a series of such papers might be not unacceptable to English readers." Such papers as this, and the one from New Zealand which we also publish in this number, open up new fields of observation, and can hardly fail to prove of special interest to the readers of NATURE NOTES.

**The Death's Head Moth and Bees** (p. 7).—A relation of mine, who has travelled much in South Africa, describing his experience when taking a bees' nest that had been found in the Kaap Valley, writes as follows:—"In the act of removing the honeycomb from the nest, my companion made a sudden dab with the knife in his hand, killing a death's head moth just as it emerged from amongst the cells; it was a large specimen, being two inches or more in length. He informed me that they are frequently found in bees' nests, and that he himself once saw no fewer than four in one nest, but he could give no explanation of their presence, although he was an intelligent observer. The Boers always keep a sharp look out for these moths in their hives, and in robbing wild bees of their honey, fully believing that should one succeed in stinging them (by flying straight up and suddenly darting down) the result would be certain death!" The bees' nest mentioned was found by following the call of a honey-bird, without any faith in his guidance, which, however, proved to be reliable in this instance; an account of it may form the substance of a future "note" for this Magazine.

MARIAN PENNING.

*The Parsonage, Henfield.*

**Magpies Flocking.**—Is it a common thing for magpies to flock together? One day I counted sixteen flying from a tree on which they had been holding a conference. They are very plentiful in Cumberland.

*Alston.*

J. E. PAGE.

[We have submitted your question to Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, who replies: "Yes, it is not uncommon, but why they do it I do not know. A friend once told me that he saw quite forty together once in Hampshire."]

**Cockchafers.**—Can any of your readers tell me whether cockchafers are met with in their locality? Years ago, in the Midlands, they were plentiful in the warm evenings, but for many years I have not seen or heard of any.

*Alston.*

J. E. PAGE.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Whether by starting a special department under this heading, and placing beneath it certain notices which have hitherto appeared elsewhere, we shall succeed in getting our readers to observe the very simple rules which we have laid down, is uncertain; but the experiment is worth a trial. In spite of our appeal to the contrary, our friends persist in sending us communications as to the supply of the Magazine, subscriptions, &c.; while MSS. and books for review sometimes find their way to us by a circuitous route, having been forwarded to the publisher, then sent to the Secretary, finally arriving at 18, West Square. Will our correspondents kindly understand that we decline to be in any way responsible for any communications which do not relate to the *editorial* side of NATURE NOTES?

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. Short notes on Natural History or Selbournian subjects will be especially welcome. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

Queries on any points connected with Botany, Zoology, or other branches of Natural History, will be answered if possible, and advice will be given as to the best books for students in any department of Natural Science; but all questions must be accompanied by the names and addresses of the writers, not for publication, if this is not desired. Except under special and exceptional circumstances, the Editor cannot undertake to answer questions through the post, even when a stamp is enclosed for the purpose.

Specimens sent for identification will be named, if sent carefully packed and in good condition, and *if sent to the Editor*, but we cannot undertake to return them.

M. S. Y.—Your letter has been accidentally overlooked. The variations in shape are not uncommon.

K. E. K.—Mr. W. F. Kirby tells us he has never heard of such moths, and suggests that there may be some confusion with Mayflies, some of which live only a few hours in their perfect state.

H. G. W.—Many thanks for the offer of the calendar, but we see no prospect of our being able to find room for it at present.

B. asks for a reference to the volume in which she will find Wesley's sermon "On the Future Life of Animals," mentioned on p. 18. We wrote this out in full many years ago, but our copy is mislaid. The text was Romans viii. 22, 23.

F. L. R.—We have already expressed our opinion of rabbit-coursing (*N.V.*, 1892, 21).

F. W. R.—We are much obliged for your offer, but are afraid the particulars would hardly be of sufficient general interest.

Rusticus.—The Humming-bird Moth (*Macroglossa stellatarum*) is not uncommon in warm summers: you will find it described in many natural history books.

A number of articles, reviews, notes and queries, are crowded out, some of which will appear in our March issue. We would appeal to our readers to do their utmost to extend the circulation of NATURE NOTES, which will be enlarged in size as soon as the number of subscribers justifies this proceeding. Advertisements of NATURE NOTES, suitable for distribution, may be obtained free from the publishers.

---

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

No. 39.

MARCH, 1893.

VOL. IV.

### A POET OF EARLY SPRING.

BY THE EDITOR.

**S**PRING has always been dear to the poets: they have lavished upon it their music and their imagination, and the result is that ordinary prosaic mortals, who know by experience that April is often cold, May inclement, and even June wet and shivery, have come to look upon both the season and its singers as equally unreal. The modern versifier, whose refrain is "May has set in with its usual severity," is at least as near the truth as was good Dr. Watts when he spoke of the rose as "the glory of April and May;" and it must be admitted that May songs and carols paint Nature in a far brighter aspect than she usually chooses to assume at that season of the year.

But the early Spring has a charm of its own. The time "when rosy plumelets tuft the larch"; when the golden flowers

That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty

are out in the meadows; is one of beauty and delight to the seeing eye, in spite of wind and sleet. The lengthening days, the opening buds that will not be kept back—these and many more signs we have that Spring is at hand.

The lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf;

and before these we have seen on the topmost boughs the blossoms showing red against the sky.

This is the time—or rather it is a time even a little earlier than this—that has been most made his own by one of the truest nature-singers of this or of any other time. He is not of those whose verses are to be found in most magazines, and whose volumes, many in number, are to be found in every bookseller's shop. He is silent when we would hear him sing; and he has

been accused of wilfully withdrawing himself from the public gaze. His utterances have not been chorussed by reviewers, and indeed the appreciation that has been expressed of him is but small: the best and truest, as it seems to me, is that which appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* on the 2nd of January last, from the pen of one in whose company I made the acquaintance last summer of Mr. Robert Bridges' *Shorter Poems*. Until then I had only known the few verses cited with warm approval by Mr. Andrew Lang in his *Letters in Literature*. Even among the readers of NATURE NOTES may be some who are still as ignorant as I was then; if so, they will be grateful to me, as I am to him who first called my attention to the *Shorter Poems*.

This, however, is neither the time nor the place for a detailed criticism of Mr. Bridges' music. It is to one strain only that I would call attention. He sings well and truly of Nature in all seasons, but one, hitherto almost unsung, he has, as I have already said, made his own. This is early Spring—

what time of year  
The thrush his singing has begun,  
Ere the first leaves appear.

The poet must speak for himself; and he shall do so in the verses which he calls "Last Week of February, 1890":—

Hark to the merry birds, hark how they sing!  
Although 'tis not yet Spring  
And keen the air;  
Hale Winter, half resigning ere he go,  
Doth to his heiress show  
His kingdom fair.

In patient russet is his forest spread,  
All bright with bramble red,  
With beechen moss  
And holly sheen: the oak silver and stark  
Sunneth his aged bark  
And wrinkled boss.

But neath the ruin of the withered brake  
Primroses now awake  
From nursing shades:  
The crumpled carpet of the dry leaves brown  
Avails not to keep down  
The hyacinth blades.

The hazel hath put forth his tassels ruffed;  
The willow's flossy tuft  
Hath slipped him free:  
The rose amid her ransacked orange hips  
Braggeth the tender tips  
Of bowers to be.

A black rook stirs the branches here and there,  
Foraging to repair  
His broken home:  
And hark, on the ash boughs! Never thrush did sing  
Louder in praise of Spring,  
When Spring is come.

In assuring my readers that the little volume whence these lines are taken is full of pictures equally beautiful and true, I



believe that I am rendering them a service for which many, at least, will be grateful. To me, apart from the choice of language and the flow of the music, there is in Mr. Bridges' verses the quality of absolute fidelity to Nature which I find in the prose of Richard Jefferies, and which gives to both a special charm.

I am enabled, by the kindness of the author, to print in NATURE NOTES a sonnet dealing with the same period, which has hitherto appeared only in his privately printed volume, *The Growth of Love*. Those who already know the *Shorter Poems* will be glad to add this to their collection.

While yet we wait for Spring, and from the dry  
And blackening east that so embitters March,  
Well housed must watch gray fields and meadows parch  
And driven dust and withering snowflakes fly :  
Already in glimpses of the tarnished sky  
The sun is warm and beckons to the larch,  
And where the covert hazels interarch  
Their tasselled twigs, fair beds of primrose lie.

Beneath the crisp and wintry carpet hid  
A million buds but stay their blossoming,  
And trustful birds have built their nests amid  
The shuddering boughs, and only wait to sing  
Till one soft shower from the south shall bid  
And hither tempt the pilgrim steps of Spring.

---



---

### WHITE OF SELBORNE.\*



HIS year is the centenary of White of Selborne, the country rector whose name, like Walton's and Herbert's, "smells sweet and blossoms in the dust."

He was a naturalist of the kind that every man may be who lives in the country and is not short-sighted. The advantages of short-sight are numerous, but no one who is "myope" can be a naturalist. To such a one, most birds are much alike: a blot or a flash, and that is all. He cannot tell a missel-thrush from a mavis, and at most distinguishes a hawk from a hand-saw. Consequently the excitement into which an early swallow or a martin throws his neighbours is unfamiliar to the short-sighted person, and how anybody can distinguish one of these fowls from another is what surprises him. To him a hoopoe might appear with perfect safety—he would never think of shooting it; nor does he distinguish between a heron (except on the wing) and a bustard. The capercailzie, unless it attacks him, as this ferocious bird is fabled to do, leaves him cold; and he would not discriminate between a cassowary and

---

\* We are indebted to the Editor of the *Daily News* for permission to reprint this interesting article from its columns of January 21st—ED. N.N.

an ostrich, unless indeed the creature conspicuously hid its head in the sand. He does not care whether swallows hibernate or not. White seems to have believed that they did, and perhaps they do; all sorts of things may happen. These are questions into which a sensitive mind thinks it almost indelicate to inquire. Swallows, according to Théophile Gautier, sit about on railings in autumn, afterwards they go to Athens, Smyrna, the First Cataract, and elsewhere. White himself did not think that those "poor little birds," young swallows, go to Goree or Senegal; it seems too much to expect, though Henri Murger, on the other hand, declares that they fly a thousand miles at a stretch. "Some do stay behind and bide with us during the winter," says White. He mentions a clergyman who found some torpid swifts (which are very much the same kind of bird) in a church tower in winter. With genuine but mistaken kindness he hung them up in a basket near the kitchen fire, and they never recovered. Sometimes they stay late, and sometimes they go away early, and to chronicle all this was a matter of interest to White and to many other persons.

As to cuckoos, White did not know why they do not hatch their own eggs. Recent observers, however, record instances of maternal devotion in the cuckoo. The question arises, has the great emotional wave of sentiment reached cuckoos, and are they beginning to be converted characters, or are we to suppose that they originally hatched out on their own account, and that a few still revert to the ancestral habit? The American cuckoo does hatch her own eggs, but that may be owing to the influence of the Pilgrim Fathers, and to the superior morality of the American continent. White, of course, was not a Darwinian, but a Darwinian would easily account for the peculiar morals of the cuckoo (which are execrable), and for its want of maternal instinct. Not to be hatched by their mothers, on some accidental occasions, agreed with the young cuckoos; they survived better than other cuckoos, but acquired loose habits. Hence they gradually left off hatching their own eggs. This theory might not have seemed satisfactory to White, but it is at all events evolutionary, as far as it goes. Concerning cats—a creature more easily observed than a small bird—White remarks that they are "violently fond of fish," yet inexperienced as anglers. Some cats, however, have been fishers, in spite of their native dislike of water, which in itself accounts for their love of a fish diet. They like it because they cannot usually get it by their own exertions. Mr. Buckland, however, mentions a cat called Puddles, who used to dive out of a boat and catch dogfish. Mr. Buckland thinks a cat on the roof might catch a young swallow. Probably it could do more. A cat at Whitchurch, in Hants, used to lie above a swallow's nest, and take the birds at the wicket, as it were, when they flew out. It never injured them, and seemed to act thus purely as a matter of sport. This is not more extraordinary than the

fact noted by White of a boy who ate bees. To be sure he was an idiot boy. He would have made a fine subject for Wordsworth. He was not more remarkable than a local leper, whose case leads White to form conjectures as to the cause of the decline of leprosy. He attributes the disease to the winter eating of salt meat, the scarcity of vegetables, and the salt fish of Lent. We are apt, perhaps, to think of White as a man only interested in birds, but he was really a kind of rural Pepys, and all Nature had the same undying interest for him as human nature had for the immortal Samuel. Living in a lonely place, where nobody cared to talk to him about natural history, he wrote his pleasing and unaffected observations in letters to friends. The autumn manœuvres of rooks were food for his mind—

Upon a gate he leans and sees  
The pastures and the quiet trees—

not reflecting on the sum of all things, like Mr. Matthew Arnold's philosopher, but on the rooks saying their vespers—"the ravens call upon Him."

Selborne possessed antiquities which also amused White. Wolmer Pond was fabled to contain treasures, and in the dry summer of 1741, hundreds of Roman coins were found in its bed. White bought several of Marcus Aurelius and Faustina. The Empress with the unlucky reputation (which we trust Mr. Swinburne exaggerates) "had a very agreeable set of features," according to White. How the coins came there, like the mystery of the swallow's winter, puzzled him entirely. Lord Selborne speaks of Roman vessels, capable of containing 30,000 coins, found by himself, or in his own time. No fewer than 29,773 coins were actually recovered near Wolmer Pond in 1873. The Romans interested White much less than his predecessors, the Priors. He was fortunate in living in one of those old English parishes where prehistoric peoples and Romans and the mediæval Church have all left abiding marks of their occupation. An intelligent man needs no more than the run of such a parish to keep him happy and busy. Many of them are epitomes of the history and, if we may use the term, the pre-history, of the island. Palæolithic and neolithic flints, bronze arts of all dates, Roman tiles, mosaics and pottery, foundations of villas, lie on or near the surface; old names, tombs, and coats of arms on the walls of church, manor, and farmhouse speak of the years since the Norman Conquest. All is old, grey, and bowered in beautiful woods and slopes of hills, themselves vocal with many birds, and haunted by the few harmless beasts, hedge-hogs and badgers, perhaps otters if there be a stream, which mankind has spared. Naturalist and historian and antiquarian may all be happy here, and bequeath a book as innocent and curious as White's to the world, when they leave it for the rural grave beneath the yew and the "G.W." on the simple tombstone.

---

## HORSE CHESTNUT BUDS.

Through budding woods the fair young Spring  
 Laughing and gaily carolling  
 Trips hither on her wayward feet ;

and while she is still far distant, all living things prepare to greet her. Nor is the horse chestnut behindhand. Before the snow has disappeared every branch has lost the weary downward curve of autumn, and springs with fresh vigour upwards, while the tip of each twig glistens like a star in the sunshine. The tree has decked itself in diamonds to greet the coming Spring.

When we look more closely for the cause of this brilliance we see that the large oval buds are sheathed in many bracts or leaf-scales overlapping each other, and coated on the outside with a sticky kind of varnish which reflects the light.

If we dissect a bud, or better still, watch it slowly unfolding day by day, we shall see that these scales are not all alike. The bud contains a central stem, on which these scales are arranged in sets or whorls of four, each whorl alternating with that below it. The lower outermost scales are broad, hard, and woody ; each whorl becomes longer and more leaf-like as it approaches the apex of the stem. The innermost of all are very transparent at the edges. They are generally green within, and brown or pink without. The outside of each is sticky, the inside lined with soft hairs. If the branch is in a sheltered place these scales remain and grow longer as the bud slowly unfolds, and within them is seen a conical mass covered with fine pink hairs resembling wool, with faintly marked green ridges on its surface. These are baby leaves, covered on both sides with "wool." They are folded like tiny fans ; each leaflet with its under surface turned away from the centre. Slowly the woolly cone pushes its way through the sheltering scales, and very gradually

Grey hoss ches'nut's leetle hands unfold  
 Softer 'n a baby's be at three days old.

But they come out into a cold world, and for some days the little hands droop in a miserable fashion, as if they would fain be back again in the soft warm cradle in which kind old mother Nature has hidden them so long. Then the warm sun kisses them, and the Spring winds whisper that their rough play is kindly meant, and they learn confidence and spread themselves upwards and outwards to meet their friends.

Then the "wool" gradually disappears, clinging longest to the veins on the under side, and the scales, no longer needed, fall away, leaving rings of scars behind, which remain as long as the tree lives, each set marking the birthday of a branch. The baby stem, hardly an inch long in March, may lengthen out two feet by midsummer and bear many leaves, or be checked in its growth by a cluster of flowers.

The buds that contain the flowers are always at the apex of the branch; they generally contain only four leaves. The young flower cluster consists of an upright stalk thickly covered with pinky brown "wool" on which round green buds are irregularly scattered. These are more crowded towards the apex.

Not only does each bud contain a stem, many leaves, and, possibly, a cluster of flowers, but sharp eyes may discover a tiny swelling at the base of each tender leafstalk, and if you watch it you will discover that provident Nature, even before the buds of 1893 are fully opened, has already formed baby buds for 1894.

Last May prizes were offered by the Northern Heights Branch of the Selborne Society for a description of an oak, beech or horse chestnut tree. The first prize was gained by Miss Dorothy Gordon, niece of Frank Buckland—subject, the oak. Most of the competitors came either from the Girls' High School, Swansea, or from the Technical School for Boys, Walsall, and among these it was curious that nearly all the girls chose the horse chestnut and all the boys the oak. No one chose the beech. The teachers of both schools are to be congratulated on the warm interest their pupils showed in the subject.

BESSY HOLLAND.

---

### "THE DEATH OF CORTES."

(Under this somewhat misleading title the *Belize Angelus* gives an account of an old horse, usually known as "Tes," belonging to the Mission at Corozal, British Honduras. The *Angelus* is not likely to come into the hands of many of our readers, and we think they will read the account with interest.—ED. *N.V.*)



FEW names have been oftener called in the grounds of Corozal than that of this faithful horse. When quite young, some seventeen years ago, he had the place to himself, the school children being familiar with him and sharing with him their bread and butter. They would pull his chin and tail—run under him for a ball or a plaything—and he seldom made any show of annoyance or fear, except stones or other missiles were thrown at him, and then some one invariably paid for the offence. A little boy, on a visit to Corozal, was warned on no account to molest the horse in this way, but we found out that the warning was too late, for Cortes took him by the arm the next time he appeared and scared him well. It was unwillingly owned by the boy that he had indeed pelted him. Tes took no further notice of the matter.

\*When the school-bell rang he generally put his head in at the doorway and slept there an hour to the tune of A B C, or to the humdrum multiplication table, so that once to the great

annoyance of the head-teacher, who had heard the name Caballo Cortes and had reckoned his name on the list as present, he had to re-pass his calculations to make the return correct.

He knew the sound of the dining-room bell as well as the cat, and rested his chin on the window-sill in expectation of a dole. Bread, meat, fruit, were equally acceptable to him, and he did not object to stronger food. More than once he waylaid the cook and the boy as they passed with the food from the kitchen to the house, knocked the rice-dish out of their hands, and allowed the rest to pass.

On one occasion I told the boy in his presence to go and pull a large sour-sop and bring it in for lunch. Two or three friends were talking with me at the time, and the horse, as was usual with him, for he never shunned society, joined the group with attentive ears. Cortes turned his eyes on the boy till he got to the tree, and then swerved round into position to observe. Between the tree and the door-way at which we were talking there was a tacista fence, or rather screen, as at each end there was passage. The boy had hardly begun to descend the tree, when Cortes started to intercept the fruit. "Run behind the screen" I called to the boy, and lo! a veritable game of puss-in-corner took place; the boy and the horse running hither and thither till at last by a feint the boy got the start for the door at the end of the building, with the horse after him.

I was one day lining a board to cut in two. Cortes stood and watched for a minute or two, then took the pencil between his teeth and drew the line with me.

At the time we were building the school-house we had trouble from time to time to keep him in bounds; for the labourers carelessly left the gate open, and Cortes was always on the alert for such neglect. I was at my window shaving, as the breakfast bell rang, and the men, as usual, dropped their tools and passed hurriedly out, leaving the gate ajar. There was no helping it; before I could get down or call the boy, the animal would be through and away to the street. So I opened the sash and called out, "Cortes, come back." He turned his big eyes up to the second storey, as if expostulating, but proceeded. Old Maria, the cook, took up the cudgels for me, and said, "Don't you hear? Father tell you come back!" He deigned to throw an inquiring look at her, but continued his outward bound course. A few yards more and he would be beyond my power. So I put on stress of language, that evidently he took in its true sense, and bade him come away; he gave one more look at the window—one neigh of vexation attended by sundry plunges and wild kicks, and returning through the gate rushed to the far end of the grounds in disgust and remained there the rest of the day.

He was not the best riding horse, but there are many which could not rival him as an all-round horse. He was strong and reliable for a journey. If your hat fell, or your handkerchief dropped, or anything became deranged, he would stand un-

yielding even to spur until you had put things straight, so that you had reason to look about, if of his own accord he stopped on his way. A strange Father once let fall his overcoat and forced the animal, in spite of his good intention, for he could not talk, to proceed on his journey. Within half-an-hour an officer came up to the Father bringing his lost apparel—discovering to the unaccustomed Padre the reason of the horse's delay.

During the rainy season once I had to cross a nasty mud hole which extended from side to side of the road. Cortes objected to mud, and walked the whole line to find a decent passage. But it was mud, mud, mud, except at one place where some pedestrians had thrown the limb of a tree across. To my amazement and dread the animal carefully placed one foot after the other on the round bough and landed me safely on the other side of the swamp, as much to his own satisfaction as to mine.

During the rainy season he would wait his opportunity of stealing into the house, and, as if conscious of being in the wrong place, would sidle up against the wall behind the door, like a beggar asking not to be driven out.

He never was cheated of his corn, for nothing short of a rope could ever make him quit the doorway till he had had his allowance.

## THE LAST OF THE KINGFISHERS.

Inhuman man ! curse on thy barbarous art,  
 And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye ;  
 May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,  
 Nor even pleasure glad thy cruel heart. —*Burns.*



SOME ten or twelve summers have flown since the beautiful kingfisher was last seen sporting over the sparkling trout streams which abound in Carnarvonshire ; and the dipper only remains to remind us of that glancing flight, those gorgeous plumes, and sprightly motions which characterise the former bird. The eagle is no longer observed floating above the mountain-tops, and the solitary croak of a raven is a rare occurrence. The boom of the bittern is silent in the lonely marsh, and the woodcock are becoming scarcer year by year. Passing mallards are seldom observed against the rosy sky at sunset, and the gay little goldfinch is destined to be a victim for the bird-catcher's lime. But, alas ! the kingfisher—the pride of the ornithologist—has already fled, never, I fear, to return again to its favourite haunts. Though it may be plentiful enough in some favoured spots, its days are numbered, and, if something is not done for its protection, it will surely be swept away, leaving only its dry bones to remind us of the old days, when it graced our rippling streams, and flew before us from stone to stone, as we carried the rod in the month of May.

Can we, as naturalists, shut our eyes and suffer our friend to become a target for the loafing gunner? The laws already enacted are absolutely worthless, being not enforced to the extent that they should be, neither do they inflict any punishment on the ruffians and schoolboys who ransack our fields and hedgerows daily in search of birds' eggs, in the spring and summer months. If some influential personage would stand up on behalf of the birds, protest against the wanton cruelty and destruction now going on, and place the state of affairs before Parliament, we might get something done to shield our feathered favourites. Who will plead for the kingfisher?

I shall ever remember the first time I sighted a kingfisher, not because it was the *last* time, but because it came upon me so suddenly, and at a moment when I never dreamt of observing the bird which I had so long wished to see. It was a lovely summer's day, some dozen years ago, when I strolled down to the little stream which ripples under the willow trees, and slowly meanders between the yellow flag-lilies, ere it empties its waters into the Conway. A reed-warbler was chattering on the opposite bank of the stream, but its notes were toned by the many sounds of summer which filled the air, when I was attracted by a shrill, but plaintive, cry, which appeared to be coming nearer and nearer to me as I listened and waited. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of a ruby and white breast, which shone in the mid-day sun, approaching, and in an instant the object, for which my soul had so long yearned, stood before me. Perching on a mossy stone, in the midst of the murmuring streamlet, was a kingfisher. Its graceful body, clothed in the most resplendent plumage, which defies the pen to describe, was reflected upon the water. For a moment it remained and in a moment it was gone! Never since that day have I observed those azure plumes, and, alas! I doubt very much whether I shall ever be able to welcome that king of birds back again. I have visited those fern-clad banks and mossy stones times without number since that cherished, yet painful, summer's day, like one who pays a pilgrimage to the resting-place of some great departed. It all seemed like a fairy fancy—that faint chirp which had never before fallen on my ear, and the streak of light which followed it as it sped its arrowy course, like a meteor through the heavens, away over the reed-beds and green alder trees, will I never forget. Shortly afterwards I learnt, to my sorrow, that that type of beauty had crossed the path of some idle so-called sportsman, and had been placed in the hands of a local taxidermist.

I trust that the personal details given in this short article may be excused; they are given solely with the view that they might catch the eye of some thoughtless individual who idly wastes his powder and shot over creatures that would be such a source of pleasure and gratification to those who delight in the wondrous and beautiful sights which Nature reveals to those who love her.

A. T. JOHNSON.



## WINTER ACONITES.

THE first gold gift has come to bless the year  
 From Earth's abundant bosom, where the snow  
 Seemed, with its silent folds, a month ago,  
 To still all pulsings of the heart that, here,  
 Asserts a deathless love by symbol clear  
 To wistful eyes, long watching. Now we know  
 Asleep, she dreams of waking—beating low,  
 That faithful heart reminds her Spring is near.  
 Death-like she wore her garments—we were sad;  
 In solemn dirge, snow-laden winds her fate  
 Bewailed, while ran the year's remaining sands.  
 Birds carol her awaking—we are glad,  
 But sing *our* songs in silence; longing, wait  
 Her gifts, like children, and extend our hands.

RICHARD F. TOWNDROW.

## FOOTPATHS.

Two or three pamphlets—small in size but important in contents—have been awaiting notice for some time. They deal with the subject of footpaths—one of the many subjects which specially appeal to Selbornians, and show that attention is being aroused, at a somewhat late period, to the necessity for preserving these invaluable adjuncts to the delight of a country stroll.

The Northern Heights Footpath Association, in its two reports, shows good work done with regard to footpaths, and wisely impresses upon its subscribers the importance of preserving roadside strips. The chief work of the Association, however, has been the production of an excellent little "map of public footpaths north and north-west of London," which shows distinctly the public and disputed paths in the district. This should be taken as a model by all similar bodies; and such bodies should be much more numerous than they are. The map can be had for sixpence from the Hon. Secretary, Eirene Cottage, Gainsborough Gardens, Hampstead, N.W.; and the same sum will obtain another excellent little work from Messrs. R. E. Taylor and Sons, 19, Old Street, Aldersgate, E. This is the first series of *Field-path Rambles*, which is devoted to the beautiful country round Bromley, Hayes, Keston, Chislehurst, Orpington, &c. The author's name, "Walker Miles," is extremely appropriate, and a preface is contributed by Mr. R. Ritherdon, Hon. Sec. to the Bromley Footpaths and Common Preservation Society. Nine routes are given, and the directions are so full and clear that the pedestrian will be able to find his way anywhere in the district if he has this little book in his pocket.

The preface, though short, is full of practical suggestion, and concludes, as we would do, with an earnest appeal for the more general formation of "societies for the protection of public interests of this kind."<sup>5</sup> The way in which the land-grabber carries out his dishonest schemes is admirably described: "Many will have observed during their walks, and particularly during a holiday out of town, what a vast amount of wayside waste, common land, and footpaths, has been stolen from the public in past times. A low wire fencing intended to create as little attention as possible is usually erected in the first place, and is probably allowed to remain for a year or two. The next step is frequently the erection of a somewhat stronger and higher wire fencing with stouter posts than at first erected, which, if allowed to remain without question, in due course give way to either a wooden or unclimbable iron fence. When this latter has been suffered to

remain undisturbed for twelve years, the encloser pleads that by the Statute of Limitation he is entitled to consider this land as his very own." We are glad to see that other guides on the lines of this one are projected; they cannot fail to be very useful to the Londoner during the coming summer.

The Report of the National Footpath Preservation Society for its eighth year (1891-92) gives a good account of work done. A list of 158 cases of interference with public footpaths and encroachments on roadside wastes, &c., have come to the knowledge of the Society during the year, and the total number of cases now dealt with has reached 880 in a period of eight years. In many of these, action has been taken with satisfactory results. The Society, which we have more than once commended to the notice of Selbornians, now numbers nearly 1,000 members. Those wishing to know more about it should write to the Secretary, Mr. H. Allnutt, 42, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., for a Report, which we should like to see issued in a more convenient form than it at present possesses.

---

### FIELD PHILOSOPHY.\*

THE present generation ought assuredly to be distinguished for the possession of a large number of observers who study nature in the fields, for it evidently delights in books on the subject, just as fishermen seem never to be weary of reading about fishing. Mr. Grant Allen and Dr. Wilson present us, in the work named below, with good specimens of the class. Bright and picturesque, dealing with very various scenes and subjects, each collection of papers should serve as a stimulus to the reader to go and do likewise, to turn his steps to some point in the country side, and see whether he cannot enjoy for himself the keener charm of doing what it is so pleasant to read about.

One remark, however, constantly suggests itself as we study the descriptions of both authors. To our own taste, it would be still more interesting to be told what they actually have seen, instead of what they deduce from the objects they observe concerning the life of the past and their hypothesis concerning it. It is with this that as a rule they deal, but when they depart from the rule and record mere facts the result appears more satisfactory. Mr. Grant Allen, for instance, has a paper entitled "Eight-legged Friends," in which he records his observations of two spiders which he had the opportunity of watching in circumstances so singularly opportune that they cannot fall to the lot of many. These creatures spun their webs outside a window that did not open, so close to the glass that they could be observed from within with a platyscopic lens, and into these webs insects of the most various kinds appear constantly to have strayed—flies and midges, wasps, bumble-bees and humming-bird hawk-moths. The history of the architectural achievements of the pair, of their individual characteristics and various methods of treating their various captives, and of their ghoulish habit of devouring their husbands, for both were females—is as good as a romance of the most tragic type; and we would rather have more of the same sort, in place of the construction of hypothetical genealogies, which, truth to tell, become a little monotonous when once the principle becomes apparent on which they are framed.

Dr. Wilson has some interesting chapters not exclusively based on his own observations, giving information about common objects. In "Seal Skins and their Wearers," for instance, he tells us of the habits of the animals from which these valuable articles are procured, and of the various labours and process which secure them for our use. He has also an article on spiders, whence we gather a number of curious details concerning their susceptibility to music. It would appear that sounds of a certain kind suggest to them the buzzing of an

---

\* *Science in Arcady*, by Grant Allen. London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1892, pp. 304, price 5s.

*Science Stories*, by Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E. London: Osgood, McIlvaine and Co., 1892, pp. 269, price 5s.

entangled fly, and that they therefore rush to secure the booty. Some species will under this impression actually tackle a tuning fork. Others take it for a note of danger and drop from their web, or otherwise take themselves off.

The paper entitled "Do we eat too much?" a question which, as it implies, is to be answered in the affirmative, concludes with a forecast of the future, when science shall enjoy its own, which, as some may possibly think, suggests the addition of a new horror to life, beside which dyspepsia itself will pale its horrors. "The restaurant (of the dim future) may be provided with its diet tables, and our waiters (of the scientific era of life) may produce our food as per scale of dietaries."

"The Actor's Art among Animals," is somewhat disappointing, and may seem to illustrate the remarks already made as to the comparative dearth of actual observation met with in such treatises. The author confines himself almost entirely to what may be learnt from books and museums, concerning the changes of colour whereby animals assimilate themselves to their surroundings. But we hear nothing of the dramatic skill with which a hen partridge or willow-wren will decoy an intruder from her nest by feigning to be wounded, nor of the artful mimicry with which the sedge-warbler will bewilder a blackbird, or a black-cap will outdo the thrush in his own song. These are the things for a field naturalist to study, and a faithful and vivid record of such would enable him to produce books still more interesting and instructive than those before us.

JOHN GERARD.

## SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

BEAUTIFULLY printed and "got up," as Messrs. Macmillan's books always are, we must confess to being disappointed with Miss Yonge's *An Old Woman's Outlook in a Hampshire Village* (Macmillan, 3s. 6d.). There is very little of it to begin with, and yet Miss Yonge has shown powers of observation in those many volumes which have been the delight of several generations since the *Heir of Redclyffe* appeared, just forty years ago—volumes in which, as has been observed, even "large families have been made interesting." When we go on to say that the little is not always accurate, we do so with a sense not only of regret, but of surprise, for many years ago Miss Yonge gave us a little volume, *The Herb of the Field*, which contrasted favourably with most popular books about wild flowers. The *Outlook* is arranged in twelve monthly portions, which, we imagine, originally appeared independently—at least, this seems the most natural way of accounting for the repetitions which occur here and there. But the errors of fact are more serious, and should be corrected in any future edition. The spelling of the names of plants is odd enough, as when we are informed that the Latin name of the hazel is "*Corylla*," of the mistletoe, "*Tiscus albatius*," and of the woodsorrel, "*Oxalis actosa*." But this is nothing to being told that "the little Banksia roses are not roses at all, but an Australian creeper" (p. 49), and that the tubers of an arum (apparently *Richardia athiopica*) "afford the best starchpowder or arrowroot, *which is really arum-root*!" In the former case, Miss Yonge seems to be confounding the *Kerria*, commonly called "Corchorus japonicus," with the Banksia rose; in the latter, there is some confusion between arrowroot and *Portland* arrowroot, which was at one time prepared from the tubers of our English arum. The notion that the May doll is "a remnant of honour to an image of the Blessed Virgin on the opening of the month of Mary" is untenable, as this dedication of May is comparatively modern.

There is a good deal of pleasant reading in the book of a chatty, social sort, and a certain amount of local observation. But Canon Atkinson's *Moorland Parish* has spoilt us for inferior works of the kind, and Miss Yonge's *Outlook* can hardly claim as high a place as Miss Mitford's *Our Village*.

*Astronomy for Everyday Readers*, by B. J. Hopkins (London: George Philip & Son, 1s.), is intended for those who wish to have some knowledge of the

heavenly bodies, and their relation to and effect upon the earth in which we live, yet are unable or unwilling to go deeply into the science of astronomy. For such it is well suited. Mr. Hopkins tells his story simply, clearly, and in an interesting manner, interweaving many historical incidents with his explanations. The solar and sidereal systems are treated in an introductory chapter, perhaps less fully than some "everyday" students might desire, and we have not found any mention of multiple stars, an interesting subject to most students. On the other hand day and night, the phases of the moon, the tides, eclipses, have each a chapter to themselves, and meteors, shooting stars and comets are also treated at comparative length. The explanations are, as we have already stated, clear and interesting, and there are several useful illustrations. Perhaps the author's observations of the Hebrew account of the creation would not meet with universal assent, and exception might be taken to one or two other points, but we can safely recommend Mr. Hopkins' book as a useful primer of astronomy. The prefatory biography of the author, interesting as it is, might, we think, have been omitted with advantage.

W. H. C.

We have delayed our notice of the Rev. H. D. Rawnsley's *Notes for the Nile* (Heinemann) because we had hoped to devote more than a paragraph to it. But the pressure on our space does not lessen, and we must not further postpone the mention of this very interesting and readable volume. Mr. Rawnsley needs no introduction to our readers, who know him as a warm friend of the Selborne Society and its magazine. Even in Egypt he was able to emphasise Selbornian principles. He "examined every donkey for the 'raw,' and refused the whole twenty rather than encourage donkey-boy brutality." Here, again, is a pleasant passage: "It was the bird-life of Ra Hotep's time that charmed me. The great man's three hawks were there, but these were of small account when compared with the interest of the wagtails drawn to the life. For the wagtail befriends every Nile traveller to-day, lights on the deck of his dahabieh, comes into his cabin, and as they are in colour and dress to-day, so I gather from Ra Hotep's tomb they were in the days of Seneferu; they have not changed a single feather of their dress, and they are the beloved bird of the family of those who dwell beside the Nile to-day, as they were then." It is a very interesting book, but we like Mr. Rawnsley's original verses better than his translations.

Messrs. Cassell have published an introduction to the collection and preservation of *Beetles, Butterflies, Moths, and other Insects*, by Messrs. A. W. Kappel and W. Egmont Kirby. It is a handsome small quarto, with twelve capital plates, and is very cheap at its price of 3s. 6d. A great deal of care has been shown in the selection of types, and there is a capital introduction dealing with the classification, structure, metamorphoses and collection of insects. The cover is the least pretty part about it, but there are two excellent indexes (we should have preferred them in combination), and that in itself is no small recommendation. It is just the book to give to a young Selbornian.

"*Voices from Flowerland* ; original couplets by Emily E. Reader : a Birthday Book and Language of Flowers, illustrated by Ada Brooke" (Longmans, 2s 6d), is one of those little volumes that make one wonder why they are produced, and who buys them. Do any sane persons employ "the language of flowers"? Do they really burden their minds by remembering that "basil" means "hatred," for example, or that a "red primrose" signifies "unpatronised merit," or colts-foot "justice"? Why should "wild sorrel" signify "ill-timed wit," of which Miss Reader observes:—

"Ill-timed jests like darts at random fly,  
And wound alike both friend and enemy."

The bilberry—that harmless if somewhat insipid fruit—signifies "treachery":—

"Around you treachery binds her burning chain  
To cut your soul and tear your heart in twain."

If anybody wants 366 couplets of this kind, here they are. Some of Miss Brooke's designs are pretty (the frontispiece is not), and the volume is beautifully printed.

## SELBORNIANA.

**The Excursion to Selborne.**—It has not been found possible to give in the present number the additional particulars as to the Midsummer Day excursion promised in our last. We would, however, invite all who can do so, and who propose taking part in the excursion, to send in their names to Mr. Western at 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C., and we would especially urge Secretaries of Branches to bring the matter before their members at as early a date as possible.

**The Birds of New Zealand** (p. 35).—The *Standard* of Feb. 10th says:—"We are sorry to hear that difficulties have arisen in reference to the negotiations with the natives for the purchase of the more important of the two islands which it is proposed to use as a bird reserve; and that unless the Colonial Government be stimulated by public opinion on this side, there is some danger that the matter may be allowed to drop. The Zoological Society of London has just passed the following Resolutions on the subject:—

"The Council of this Society have learned with great satisfaction the steps that were proposed to be taken by the Earl of Onslow, when Governor of New Zealand, and by the Houses of General Assembly, for the preservation of the native birds of New Zealand, by reserving certain small islands suitable for the purpose, and by affording the native birds special protection on these islands.

"The Council much regret to hear that difficulties have been encountered in carrying out this plan as regards one of these islands, and trust that the Government of New Zealand may be induced to take the necessary steps to overcome these difficulties, and to carry out this excellent scheme in its entirety.

"The Council venture to suggest that, besides the native birds to be protected in these reserves, shelter should also be afforded to the remarkable saurian, the Tuatera lizard (*Sphenodon punctatus*), which is at present restricted to some small islands on the north coast of New Zealand, in the Bay of Plenty."

**Bird Catchers.**—A Bird Protection Secretary from Worthing writes:—"We are infested with bird catchers from the first thing in the morning to the last thing at evening. I see them from my windows, and one is powerless to interfere; I wish a law could be passed to stop their horrid trade. Then these unhappy birds are sold to boys for  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, who tie strings to the leg and pull them backwards and forwards till they die from exhaustion."

**Lantern Slides.**—Can any reader recommend magic lantern slides for Selborne Society purposes? I think if there were suitable slides it would be a capital way of interesting country people and children, and so making them look at things out of doors with more intelligence.

Milford, *Lymington*.

HERBERT E. U. BULL.

**Folk Songs.**—Should any readers of NATURE NOTES, or their friends, be interested in old ballads, songs and tunes, such as are remembered by country people, may I draw their attention to the fact that I have for some time past collected traditional songs and tunes from all parts of England, with a view to saving much that is beautiful and curious.

Thanks to kind helpers I have already several hundred songs, a large part of which will very shortly appear in print, words and tunes given exactly as noted down from the singers. If any of your readers have the opportunity and wish to contribute at any time towards the collection I shall be most grateful, and every acknowledgment shall be made of their help. The love for old ballads, carols, game-songs, harvest-healths, &c., has so much died out amongst the younger generation that the older country folk, amongst whom these songs still linger, are very shy of confessing that they know them; it is therefore necessary to begin inquiries cautiously. By prefacing that "the old tunes and songs are so far better than the new" one often unlocks the lips of the timid singer. Very few singers have the power of discriminating between a really old ballad and a trashy modern one. Collectors should, therefore, not be discouraged by having 'The Miller of Dee,' and 'No Irish need apply!' presented to them as equally "ancient." The best way of saving what is valuable is to accept everything, and afterwards to patiently sift the good from the bad. Questions such as the follow-

ing are useful :—"What used the people hereabouts to sing at harvest-suppers? at May time? at Christmas time?" &c. "Are there any old singers who know such ballads as 'Lord Bateman' or 'The Banks of Sweet Dundee'? or who remember old game-rhymes, carols, healths, &c., learnt from their parents in bygone days?" If the collector cannot note down the simple air of a song there is usually to be found some schoolmaster, organist or musical friend who will kindly do this. Words or tunes, *even if fragmentary*, are valuable. In all cases the name of the singer, the locality and other particulars of interest connected with the contribution should be given. May I add that song-hunting becomes a most fascinating pursuit, and well repays one for any trouble incurred.

*Lyne, Horsham, Sussex.*

LUCY E. BROADWOOD.

**A Plea for the Skylark.**—As we are approaching spring once more, I would plead for these small birds, whose lives are ruthlessly sacrificed to epicurean appetites. It goes to my heart, as I pass the poulterers' shops, to see scores of these small birds, to think that they are slaughtered in thousands for the sake of the small mouthful upon their tiny breasts. Surely these little birds, whose voice is the sweetest earthly melody, and whose song gladdens the hearts of emancipated city toilers when they are fortunate enough to get a few hours among the green fields, might be spared from the universal slaughter? As one watches the upward flight of the skylark from earth to heaven, and listens to the rich song he warbles forth of joy and gladness, who shall say what new hopes and heavenly aspirations he may inspire in the hearts of his listeners?

ARTHUR DOVE.

The Annual Meeting of the Lower Thames Valley Branch was held at Richmond on the 25th of January, and was most successful. The Mayor of Richmond, Mr. C. Burt, took the chair, and moved the adoption of the report, which had been read by Mr. John Allen, the honorary secretary. Sir Richard Temple, M.P., in seconding this, particularly deprecated the destruction of the local flora, which is in progress all around London on its open spaces, and offered to use his influence with the Conservators of the Thames to protect from undue mutilation the vegetation on the banks. Dr. Dudley Buxton, in moving a resolution recommending the aims of the Society, drew attention to the projected excursion to Selborne on the 24th of June, in celebration of the centenary of the death of Gilbert White. Mr. Otter, who followed, congratulated the Branch on the work done during the year, and held it up as a pattern to other Branches. A photographic exhibition of views of places of interest and scenery on the Thames was held concurrently with the Annual Meeting, and on the evening of the following day. It was largely attended on both occasions. At the February monthly meeting, Mr. C. H. Wright lectured on "Mosses," at the High Schools, Richmond. By the aid of diagrams, black-board sketches, dried specimens, and microscopic slides, the lecture was very fully illustrated. Mr. Wright went fully into the structure of some of the typical genera, and finished with some references to the uses of these plants. Too much praise cannot be given to the energy displayed by the officers and members of this flourishing Branch.

We are sorry to see that, owing to "pressure of other matter," Prebendary Gordon's "Selborne Column" in the *West Sussex Gazette* is to be discontinued "for a few weeks." We note, however, with pleasure that the *Hackney Mercury* is now devoting considerable space to "Natural History Notes," among which we find local Selbornian information, and a kindly reference to NATURE NOTES. We have to thank the press for many kind notices, and especially the *Sheffield Independent* for the long and appreciative review which appeared in its issue for February 10th.

We are indebted to Mr. Edward J. Tatum for a copy of the *Salisbury Diocesan Gazette* for January, which contains an account of the "Wild Flower Classes" referred to in last year's NATURE NOTES (p. 236). These classes have been held in ten parishes, and have an aggregate of seventy-nine members. Ten prizes have been awarded by the Bishop of Salisbury to the most promising pupils—the prize in each case consisting of a book on some branch of Natural History. We are sorry that we cannot find space for extracts from this very interesting report, which concludes by recommending our Magazine "to the attention of all lovers of

Nature, and the Wild Flower Classes in particular." The bound volumes of NATURE NOTES are especially suitable as prizes for classes of this kind.

We regret to record the death of the Rev. F. O. Morris, of Nunburnholme, Yorkshire, at the age of eighty-two.

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Daily Flight of Rooks.**—I should much like to know why countless thousands of rooks should be attracted from this north side of London to some spot lying in a south or south-easterly direction. These birds may be seen every morning by daybreak, flying high up in the air in a steady stream, all in the same direction, and this goes on for an hour or more. Then in the evening, about dusk, they return in the same business-like fashion, having done their day's work, and drop down to their respective rookeries on their way home. I have been told that they are attracted to the Thames Valley by some congenial food, to be found there at this wintry season. Can any of the members of our Thames Valley Branch throw any light upon what the attraction is, and whether the rooks are to be seen there in great numbers in any special locality?

ELIZA BRIGHTWEN.

**Memory in Birds.**—Six months ago I had a day boy who was happy only when in mischief, and it was not until a day or two after the escape of four foreign birds and an English greenfinch that he was found to be in the habit of opening a slide in one of my aviaries, and letting out a bird "to see it fly." A Virginian nightingale and an Indigo bird remained near for a few days, and then disappeared, but the greenfinch was never seen. A month ago, however, during the late severe weather, I was astonished to find one within an enclosed portion of an outdoor aviary occupied by a hand-reared starling; he seemed very much at home, and evidently master both of the situation and starling, and as this was the home of my escaped greenfinch, I wonder if I am wrong in supposing he has voluntarily returned to captivity, and his old quarters. The starling's drinking-water hangs outside his aviary, but has lately been removed at night, and it must have been during its absence that the greenfinch was able to find an opening large enough to force his way through. He has still the same means of egress he had of ingress, but has no desire to avail himself of it. His perfect contentment (like his appetite) is very great, and his old habits are to the fore, for the starling may not eat his own special food until the greenfinch allows him to do so.

Watford.

M. OSBORN.

**Cockchafers** (p. 39).—Though not nearly so plentiful as they were twenty years ago, cockchafers are still to be met with sparingly every year in this part of North Berks. Years ago the small species known as the "summer dor" literally swarmed round elms in some seasons.

Fyfield, Abingdon.

W. II. WARNER.

The cockchafer (locally called "humbuz") is still to be found here, but is far less abundant than formerly. About thirty-five years ago it was rather unpleasantly plentiful on May evenings.

Malvern Link, Worcestershire.

R. F. TOWNDROW.

I met with cockchafers plentifully at Goring (Oxon) on July 11th, 1892. The insects were swarming about trees and bushes, and lads were endeavouring to knock them down with their caps; their successes enabled me to identify them.

J. F. CORDON.

I cannot remember having seen a cockchafer in this part of North Kent for several years, nor have I had the larva reported to me as destructive hereabout. Some ten years ago it was very plentiful near Gravesend, flying at night in swarms round elms and limes. Along one road they were to be seen lying by scores, crushed by foot-passengers or vehicles, for they strike themselves somehow against the branches, then drop, and when down, seem to have great difficulty in rising. The irregularity of the appearance of this species has been remarked upon in

scientific and gardeners' journals. One circumstance that may have to do with it is the slow growth of the larva, which is supposed to be three years—some think even more—in attaining its full size.

*Gravesend.*

J. R. S. CLIFFORD.

**Squirrel Mobbed by Birds** (p. 38).—The squirrel is often set upon by birds when he strays from his usual haunts. I have seen one mobbed by sparrows when in this predicament. The reason for this dislike on the part of the birds arises, I believe, from the squirrel's *penchant* for robbing nests. Talking to an old gamekeeper last year, he said that he once saw a squirrel cross a woodland path carrying an egg in its mouth; he shouted, which caused the little animal to drop the egg, which proved to be a pheasant's.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

W. H. WARNER.

**Natterjack Toad**.—I should be greatly obliged to any reader of NATURE NOTES who would inform me of localities where this interesting amphibian is still to be found. I greatly fear that, like many of our birds and insects, the species is gradually disappearing. Twenty years ago the natterjack abounded on a small heath about two miles from my present residence. It gradually decreased in numbers year by year till it became quite extinct, though the situation is unaltered. I saw my last specimen in the spring of 1890.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

W. H. WARNER.

**Birds and Lighthouses** (p. 37).—The work suggested by Mr. W. Denne in NATURE NOTES for February has been done. One of the lighthouse keepers at Hurst Castle recently lent me a copy of the Report for 1886 issued by the Committee of the British Association appointed to enquire of the lighthouse keepers. A schedule was sent out to lighthouses round the coast of the United Kingdom to be filled in with the names of the birds observed, their numbers, the date, weather, wind, &c. It was, however, issued to Hurst Castle only for one year. The head keeper of the lighthouse wrote to say that so few birds were attracted to the light that it was hardly worth while furnishing the schedule; it is a comparatively low light at the end of a shingle beach stretching into the Solent, and only shines seawards. He told me that in the thirteen years during which he had been at Hurst, he had not seen as many birds at the light as in any three years at his former station, Flamborough Head.

*Milford, Lynnington.*

HERBERT E. U. BULL.

May I refer Mr. Denne to the Reports of the Committee appointed by the British Association to examine into the migration of birds. This Committee continued its researches for some years, and put itself in communication with the keepers of light-houses and light vessels all round the coast, who filled up forms supplied them. I think these Reports prove beyond all doubt that—strange as it may seem—nearly all our wild birds are migratory. Indeed, to quote the words of the Sixth Report (for 1884), p. 69: "With very few exceptions, the vast majority of our British birds, such as are generally considered habitual residents, the young invariably, the old intermittingly, leave these islands in the autumn, their place being taken by others, &c." Blackbirds, larks, sparrows, robins, chaffinches, yellow hammers, &c., are included in the published lists, and their course seems principally across the German Ocean, and not, as one might expect, across the far narrower English Channel. These Reports are sold by R. H. Porter, 6, Tenterden Street, W., price 2s. This strange migration may help to answer the "Robin Query," of the Rev. J. A. Kerr (p. 36), and may account for what I think I have noticed, the very slight increase in the number of our smaller wild birds since the passing of the Gun Act and the Wild Birds' Preservation Act.

*Costock Rectory, Loughborough.*

C. S. MILLARD.

**Popular Science**.—The *Speaker* for February 11th contains a notable example of the "popular science" article, in the form of a paper on the Snow-drop. All the usual unauthenticated traditions are found in it—the procession of "girls dressed in white" on Candlemas Day; the "monkish legend" already called in question in these pages (NATURE NOTES, 1892, p. 154); the "curious ceremony" (rightly so styled) which involved the removal of the "image" of "the Virgin" from "above the altar," and the strewing of snowdrops in its "empty place;" an "old legend," recorded on the high authority of Mr.



Thiselton Dyer—as well as one or two oddities connected with its names, and (of course), a couplet—here called an “adage”—from T. F. Forster’s well-known spurious antique. The folk-lore of flowers contains much that is charming and interesting, but the continual serving up of more than twice-cooked cabbage palls upon the appetite, even when accompanied by such sauce as the *Speaker* on this occasion affords.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B.—Mrs. Suckling, of Highwood, Romsey, Hants, writes :—“I can lend B. Wesley’s Sermon on ‘The Future of Animals’ and one or two other things on the same subject, if they will be returned.” The sermon will be found in Wesley’s Works, vol vi., p. 226 (12mo ed.)

J. H. S.—The latest Report of the Selborne Society is that given in NATURE NOTES for June, 1892, which may be obtained from the Secretary, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C., by forwarding 2½d. in stamps. As to cockroaches, they are useful as scavengers, but that is about all that can be said for them.

J. R. T.—We regret that we cannot find room for the extract.

G. A. M.—Your note was forestalled by the paragraph from the *Evening Post* given at p. 35.

F. G. S.—The butterflies of Malta are of no special interest; you will find them all in Kirby’s *European Butterflies and Moths*, or his *Manual of European Butterflies*.

F. C.—(1) *Ramalina Curnowii* Crombie; (2) *R. breviscula*, Nyl. A sketch of Gilbert White’s life is prefixed to most editions of his *Selborne*.

W. W.—*Alnus laciniata* is a cultivated form of the common alder. We do not think the colouring of either of the books you name very satisfactory, and that of *English Botany* (ed. 3) is no better. The book you name should fulfil all your requirements.

Senex.—*Agaricus procerus*.

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., not later than the 15th of the month.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. Short notes on Natural History or Selbornian subjects will be especially welcome. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

Queries on any points connected with Botany, Zoology, or other branches of Natural History, will be answered if possible, and advice will be given as to the best books for students in any department of Natural Science; but all questions must be accompanied by the names and addresses of the writers, not for publication, if this is not desired. Except under special and exceptional circumstances, the Editor cannot undertake to answer questions through the post, even when a stamp is enclosed for the purpose.

Specimens sent for identification will be named, if sent carefully packed and in good condition, and if sent to the Editor, but we cannot undertake to return them.

We shall be glad to notice any books bearing upon Natural History in any of its branches, and to direct attention to magazine articles of the same kind, if these are sent to us. Publishers will confer a favour upon our readers if they will always state the price of any volumes they may send, in order that it may be quoted in the notice. This addition is much appreciated by our readers, and is desirable in the interest of the volumes themselves.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business, as well as the names of those wishing to join the proposed excursion to Selborne on June 24th, should not be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

## SELBORNE SOCIETY.

LIST OF BRANCHES, WITH NAMES OF HONORARY SECRETARIES.

ATALANTA.—Miss M. Parmenter, The Limes, Braintree, Essex.

BATH.—W. G. Wheatcroft, Esq., Abbey Chambers, Bath.

BAYSWATER (with Kensington).

BIRMINGHAM.—Mrs. Windle, 33, Clarendon Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

BOLTON-LE-MOORS.—Miss Heelis, Markland Hill, Heaton, Bolton-le-Moors.

BRIGHTON.—Miss E. Bourne, 12, Denmark Terrace, Brighton.

CAMBRIDGE.—F. A. Hort, Esq., Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

CLAPTON.—R. M. Watton, Esq., 14, Narford Road, Upper Clapton.

CROYDON, E. A. Martin, Esq., 21, Carew Road, Thornton Heath.

DORKING.—Vacant.

DUBLIN.—Vacant.

EPHING FOREST (FOREST RAMBLERS).—Percy Lindley, Esq., York Hill, Loughton, Essex.

FORTH.—Miss I. B. Waterston, 45, Inverleith Row, Edinburgh.

GUILDFORD.—Vacant: temporarily with Haslemere.

HALIFAX.—Miss Marchetti, Manor Heath, Halifax.

HASLEMERE.—Miss A. M. Buckton, Weycombe, Haslemere.

ISLE OF WIGHT.—Vacant.

KENSINGTON.—Miss M. Hope, 14, Airlie Gardens, Kensington.

KENT (NORTH).—Vacant.

KENT (WEALD OF).—Miss K. Knocker, Little Hollenden, Hildenboro.

LAKES.—Miss Rawson, Falborough, Windermere.

LIVERPOOL.—Miss B. Crossfield, 24, Ullet Road, Liverpool.

LOWER THAMES VALLEY (RICHMOND DIVISION).—J. Allen, Esq., 8, Clarence Road, Kew.

LOWER THAMES VALLEY (EALING), with Richmond Division.

MALVERN.—Rev. F. H. Fowler, St. Mary's, Great Malvern.

MARKWICK.—Miss Borrer, Brook Hill, Cowfold, Horsham.

NESTON.—Mrs. R. Bushell, Hinderton Lodge, Neston, Chester.

NORTH SOMERSET.—Miss A. Fry, Failand House, Failand, near Bristol.

NORTHERN HEIGHTS.—Miss A. Martelli, 6, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead.

NOTTINGHAM.—Miss Foster, The Park, Nottingham.

PINNER.—Lady Watkin Williams, Pinner, Middlesex.

RAPE OF LEWES.—Mrs. A. Payne, Hatchlands, Cuckfield, Hayward's Heath.

"RICHARD JEFFERIES."—Miss H. Umlin, The Grange, Rustington, near Worthing.

ROME.—A. J. Moriarty, Esq., English College, Rome.

ROTHER VALLEY (CHICHESTER).—Vacant.

ROTHER VALLEY (MIDHURST).—Miss Richards, Easebourne, Midhurst, Sussex.

ROTHER VALLEY (PETERSFIELD DIVISION).—Mrs. Ticehurst, Petersfield, Hants.

SELBORNE AND LIPHOOK.—Miss Fowler, Liphook, Hants.

SOUTHAMPTON AND BOURNEMOUTH.—Miss L. G. Bull, The Elms, Shirley, Southampton.

SUTTON.—R. Hill Blades, Esq., The Firs, Sutton, Surrey.

TUDOR (BOOTLE).—J. J. Ogle, Esq., Free Library, Bootle-cum-Linacre.

WEYBRIDGE.—Vacant.

WIMBLEDON AND PUTNEY.—Miss Ada Smith, Walcot Lodge, Putney.

WENSLEYDALE.—Miss M. Dundas, Thornburgh, Leyburn, R.S.O., Yorkshire.

# Nature Notes:

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

No. 40.

APRIL, 1893.

VOL. IV.

### MR. RODEN NOEL'S SPRING POETRY.

**T**S there any poet more intimate with Nature in her various moods than the Hon. Roden Noel? any whose song more rings out her joy, and clarions her glory, and basses forth her awe and terror? His song of her is no strange music imperfectly caught and more imperfectly reproduced; it is the song of the own country, the song its child sings because he cannot choose but sing it.

The present article deals with this nature poetry only so far as it belongs to the Spring, to "the sweet o' the year," and it is assuredly best to let the poet himself speak rather than to make comments on his work. "Uncouth, unkist," unknown, unloved—but known, how loved, indeed! The early Spring is over, so we leave his snowdrops, his "darling spirits of the snow," which have softly glided away from us until next year, and we listen with him to the song of the "lark on his own music lost," and lose ourselves in "the blind bliss buoying up a lark, floating in sunlight."

I have said that Mr. Roden Noel understands the terror of Nature as well as her joy, for he is at one with her in all her moods, but to-day, this spring-time, he shall sing to us only of the joy of nature, the bliss in the blood which is the poet's very fount of youth, renewed with the renewal of Spring.

Let us hear him tell of "A Walk in Spring."

We passed by the wicket-gate you know,  
To the tender-budding wood,  
Dew lingering in the blooms below,  
Where intermittent flowed  
Warm sprinkled sunlight to and fro  
With the leaflets' frolic mood.

By the broken gate that idly swung  
 Near umber tilth ajar,  
 Our eyes to faint horizons clung,  
 Bloomed as young wheat-sheaths are.  
 You deemed it must be sea that hung  
 Blent with yon skies afar.

Lo ! red thorns on the briar fair,  
 And buds uncurling green,  
 Bird-notes flash lavish everywhere,  
 Spill water brimmed, or lean  
 Long plainings on the summer-air  
 That seem to sleek the sheen.

A foal lithe frisking round his dam  
 In cowlipped meadow plays ;  
 Pushing, a weak-limbed nestling lamb  
 Beneath his parent sways ;  
 With cool slant shade each blade's green flame  
 A sister blade allays.

\* \* \* \*

Shy secret of the bud and leaf,  
 Shy secret of the bloom,  
 And such as now in Springtime flood  
 Sweet nests in emerald gloom  
 Of boscaige, where some finch may brood,  
 And a stray beam only come.

Let us hear with him the songs of the birds. Go to the hawthorn bush wherein there hides deep "A nest of pale eggs tiny with a blush and mottle of wine." . . . . There is the mother chaffinch sheltered—

Whose gay mate sits nigh,  
 And chirps to her—yon linnet dipping by  
 Sings as he flies, and perching in the ash  
 A runnel long of melody doth flash  
 From him and wander through the woodland far,  
 Whose notes impetuous ecstatic war  
 Which shall be first ; they hustle and they throng  
 As all the teeming Spring were in the song ;  
 That little elf will utter forth the whole ;  
 Well may he quiver, and beyond control,  
 The rapture whirl him from the leafy shade  
 With shimmering wings adown the sunlit glade !  
 But he is not alone—hark ! trickling notes  
 From the hid blackcap.

\* \* \* \*

Clear pipes the blackbird, and a thrush's love  
 Flutes softer—hark ! the lark is in the blue,  
 Whose music-sea the sunlight eddies through."

One would like to italicise that last line, and many another line of this poet's, but it is better that each reader should italicise for himself !

Here is the nightingale's ecstasy.

I who longed for the whispering cool of the grove,  
 Stole to the valley of verdurous gloom,  
 Where a nightingale sings evermore to his love,  
 As though man knew no sorrow, nor earth e'er a tomb.

A bird hath a nest in a twilight of leaves,  
 All woven of mosses, and lichen, and down ;  
 An eye there is glistening, a bosom there heaves  
 You may see there love's miracle, when she hath flown—  
 Four delicate ovals, flecked faintly with wine—  
 She is guarding the mystical marvel of life,  
 The wind-flower illumines her bowery shrine,  
 And the pale flame of primrose around her is rife.  
 But the nightingale sings ! how he sings ! what a song,  
 Clear water that falls, or meanders in day ;  
 From a smooth stem of sound, that is mellow and long,  
 Notes of fountainous blossom are lavished in play ;  
 And one of his delicate silvery measures  
 Recalls one who whips a clear water of glass ;

\* \* \* \* \*

I am sheathed, like a chrysalid silken, with joy.

And again in " The Secret of the Nightingale " :—

The ground I walked on felt like air,  
 Airs buoyant with the year's young mirth ;  
 Far, filmy, undulating fair,  
 The down lay, a long wave of earth ;  
 And a still green foam of woods rose high  
 Over the hill-line into the sky.  
 In meadowy pastures browse the kine,  
 Thin wheat-blades colour a brown plough line ;  
 Fresh rapture of the year's young joy  
 Was in the unfolded luminous leaf,  
 And birds that shower as they toy  
 Melodious rain that knows not grief.

\* \* \* \* \*

They allured my feet far into the wood,  
 Down a winding glade with leaflets walled,  
 With an odorous dewy dark imbued ;  
 Rose, and maple, and hazel called  
 Me into the shadowy solitude ;  
 Wild blue germander eyes enthralled,  
 Made me free of the garden bowers.

\* \* \* \* \*

There a wonderful laughing sisterhood of flowers meet him—  
 anemone, starwort,—so he called the *Stellaria* (stitchwort), a  
 poet's licence—"and pale yellow primrose ere her flight,"  
 cuckoo-flowers and wild hyacinths; and the flowers promise  
 to show him the bride-bed of Philomel, their queen, and they  
 whisper to him to—

move with a tender, reverent foot  
 Like a shy light over bole and root.

Into the heart of the verdure stole  
 My feet, and a music unwound my soul ;  
 Zephyr flew over a cool bare brow—  
 I am near, very near to the secret now !  
 For the rose-covers, all alive with song,  
 Flash with it, plain now low and long ;  
 Sprinkle a holy-water of notes.

I might go on and on quoting, but with one quotation more I  
 must close.

I thank Thee, Lord, I may enjoy  
 Thy holy Sacrament of Spring !  
 For dancing heart when leaflets toy,  
 Or when birds warble, and wave wing ;  
 For tears, for April tears of joy !  
 The cuckoo thrills me as of yore,  
 The nightingale is more than wine ;  
 Bluebells in the wild woodland pour  
 Hues purpler, but not more Divine  
 Than blithe fresh hues of Heaven on high ;  
 I thank Thee, Lord, before I die.

\* \* \* \* \*

May we all join in thus *Returning Thanks*.

E. H. HICKEY.

## WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA.

### II.



On awaking early in the morning of a fine spring day, what a chorus of bird voices greets our ear! The first to tune up soon after dawn is the native sparrow, with two oft-repeated long whistling notes, very like those of the quail, but with this difference—that the second note of the latter soars upward until at the termination it becomes almost a little shriek, whilst that of the sparrow descends. He is immediately answered by other sparrows in the vicinity, until the place resounds with these notes. There is a brown-plumaged bird here with a very curious whistle which penetrates to a good distance, and somewhat resembles the police whistle; this, however, is usually heard later in the day.

The cuckoos have a cheerful rippling sort of note, one of the pleasantest sounds in the bush; it is entirely unlike the call of the English bird, although one of our cuckoos (for there are at least three species here) has a double whistle which bears a very distant resemblance to it. The robin has a short, very plaintive song, and the long-tailed wren warbles forth a tiny, though more cheerful, ditty. The melodious piping whistle of one of the larger honey-eaters is an early morning sound, as is also the distant hoo-o-o, hoo-o-o, of the splendid bronze-wing pigeon. A pair of hawks are circling overhead, uttering shrill cries, while from the dark green myrtles down the creek comes the ka-ka, ka-ka of the black jay.

Let us strike through this little patch of ti-tree scrub and so out on to the road, and see what others of Nature's children are bestirring themselves. A typical bush road it is, partly "corduroyed," or formed of young trees cut into lengths and laid side by side with sand thrown upon them, and partly in a

state of nature. On each side the scrub is growing luxuriantly, and our attention is at once arrested by the pretty flowers of the epacris, which are everywhere in profusion. It is a graceful heath-like plant, growing from the height of six inches to three or four feet, and we notice here three species—a dark red, a pink and a white. It is called by the bush folk “native fuchsia,” and forms a beautiful bordering to our rough track, the colours of the flowers being well set off by the dark green of the scrub behind. There are also here three kinds of wattle (*Acacia*) in flower, the prickly being covered with long spikes of yellow blossom, the other two bearing little round yellow sweet-scented tufts. Up this stem of young ti-tree, scarce three feet high, is climbing a tiny creeper, with no leaves that we can make out, but abundance of little oval blue flowers, or rather buds, for they never seem to get beyond that stage. The young gums (*Eucalyptus*) are also in flower, bearing bunches of small, yellowish, feathery balls, and some kinds of ti-tree are showing their white blossoms.

Intermingled with the epacris which borders our track are three species of *Boronia*, with flowers somewhat resembling very small wild roses, the colours being three shades of purple, one so faintly tinted as to look almost white. The medium-shaded variety has a very sweet scent. They are sometimes called “native roses,” as the *Epacris* is styled “native fuchsia;” but higher up the road we can get real roses, for there the sweet-briar flourishes, and disputes with the bramble the right of possession. We have now arrived at a gentle dip in the road, and, descending the slope, find ourselves in a little flat of ten or twelve yards in extent, where pools of rain water are still lying in the whitish sand, and where the scrub and wild flowers are growing luxuriantly.

Here our attention is at once caught by the pretty birds commonly styled honey-eaters, which congregate in unusual numbers just at this spot, attracted perhaps by the wealth of floral beauty. Very busy too are the pretty creatures on this bright spring morning, flitting hither and thither, playing with each other in their rapid flights, and making the air musical with their clear notes and melodious pipings. We can distinguish three separate species in this one small spot—all birds of a slender, graceful build, with long delicate curved beaks. The largest is about the size of a starling, of a soft greenish yellow, with a patch of brighter yellow on the throat. Next comes the handsomest of the three, slightly larger than a hedge-sparrow, and exceedingly elegant in appearance. His head is dark, his breast a beautiful chestnut with a white streak running through it from the throat, and along each wing is a broad stripe of bright yellow. It is very pretty to watch him running up the bark of one of the giants of the forest, picking away with great energy the while at the insects concealed in the crevices, like a miniature woodpecker; or descending, cling sideways to one of

the epacris stalks, and insert his slender bill into each blossom in turn until the whole have been explored. For the third species, he is a good deal smaller than the last, and his plumage is very quiet in tone, being mainly a dark grey, with a somewhat lighter collar; he is, however, no way behind the others in energy, either at work or at play, and makes as much noise as any of them.

But the inner man is reminding us that breakfast will not be unacceptable at this stage, for the fresh morning air has sharpened our appetites; so we turn our backs for the time on our feathered friends, and trudge back through the boronias and wattles and gum saplings to the hut upon the hill, where a blazing log fire soon beams from the capacious chimney, and the bush piano (the frying-pan) plays the pleasanter of airs.

HAMILTON STUART DOVE.

*Table Cape, Sept. 10th, 1892.*

---



---

#### ANTICIPATIONS.

How slowly winter weeps itself away  
 And lingers, while impatient for the spring  
 We watch the melting snows, and thrushes sing  
 A hesitating prophecy of May.

Spring comes not yet, but sometimes there arises  
 From the warm south a gentle air that sings  
 Of what will be, and softly murmuring brings  
 A tale to us of summer's sweet surprises.

And bright there comes to us a golden gleam  
 We see before us, stretching far away,  
 The April soon to be, the fairer May,  
 The golden shining June, and in a dream

We journey far away from winter bare,  
 We taste in fancy all the summer's pleasures  
 We see beforehand April's rarest treasures,  
 And fly with wings of swiftest fancy—where?

Away to the meadows! the cowslips are sweet,  
 The morning is dewy, and up from my feet,  
 Springs the lark with his love song, no gladder is heard,  
 'Tis the merriest love song e'er carolled by bird.  
 Away to the brookside! the dragon flies skim  
 Over pools, under alders so dusky and dim,  
 The sunlight gleams on shallow and reach,  
 The kingfisher glows past the shingly beach,



The water sings, and the busy swallows  
 Hunt for the Mayflies in sunny hollows.  
 Here, like gold, are king-cups growing,  
 Forget-me-nots close to the waters flowing,  
 Anemones pale, here tenderly blows  
 The violet sweet and the pure primrose.

Away to the woods! the thrushes sing  
 All day long, how their glad notes ring  
 Among the larches sweet and clear  
 All through the nesting time of year.  
 The blackbird warbles loud after rain,  
 The cuckoo calls, again, again,  
 The chaffinches drop from their silvery throats  
 A little peal of merry notes,  
 As though they laughed with pure delight;  
 While deep wood and out of sight,  
 Tenderly, softly, the shy wood dove  
 Murmurs all day her note of love.

Away to the forest! The solemn firs  
 Stand like sentinels dark and high,  
 And the wind continually moves and stirs  
 In their topmost boughs a gentle sigh,  
 And a star rises up in the evening sky,  
 And like the temple of God it seems  
 More holy and grand than our loftiest dreams.  
 And the pine trees murmur of peace more deep  
 Than dreaming waters or infant sleep.  
 Here I would stay, while the twilight dies,  
 Till the sunset fades, till the pale moonrise  
 Over the dark woods sheds its light,  
 In the dying day, in the solemn night,  
 Here there is always a whisper of peace  
 Ever persistent, it does not cease.

M.R.G.B.

---



---

### INSECT-COLLECTING.



AY I venture to express regret that the author of *Move About Wild Nature*, should in that attractive volume seem to advocate (pp. 238, 239) the collecting of insects on the part of the young, in their pursuit of Nature-study. As a child I was myself an enthusiastic entomologist and collector. There does not now seem to me any necessity that the two should go together; and this more especially when I recall the horrors that so often took place. Not seldom were the larger lepidoptera, supposed to be killed quite dead over night, found next morning wriggling on their pins—or, far worse.

having laid a quantity of eggs on the strip of cork where they were pinned. This was a dreadful business, and filled me with compunction. It was also always a trial to have to pinch the smaller butterflies: but it was supposed that all this had to be done, and done it was. Coleoptera fared better in our hands (we were three ambitious young collectors), for the boiling water in which the beetles were soured was bound to kill outright.

All this system of killing may or may not deaden the sensibilities of those who practise it. More often than otherwise, with advancing age, the feeling of tenderness grows greater for "our little brothers and sisters." But is it not a pity that so many short lives should be thus uselessly and even painfully shortened? That, for ourselves we should have *this* remorse—small though the pangs of it comparatively be—added to all the rest in after years? And then, apart from the squandering of life and unmeant cruelties of youth, does not all that traffic in chrysalids, &c., with the Natural History shops, serve to encourage a trade which in the long run must affect the continuance of some of the rarest and most beautiful of our English insects? May not some much-sought-after species practically cease to exist? Numbers are season after season collected in the Cambridgeshire fens: lovely green and brown pupæ. Attracted once by some of them in a "naturalist's" window, I went in and selected two or three from several drawers-full that were brought out. I believe they were pupæ of the scarce swallow-tail, but they never came to anything, and they were the first and last I ever purchased.

Instead of the collections laboriously made, of stiffened fading specimens, doomed eventually to be tired of and spoilt by dust and mites, how far more healthy and pleasant, for at least the youthful entomologist, to observe the habits and manners of the living insect! There is too much of killing in all branches of Natural History, too little reverence for life, whether in its higher or humblest forms. No one can believe until he tries it, what the delight is of watching the movements of some beautiful or curious insect, either in the open, or kept for a little time under a glass on the table. For those who have time and patience, it is perhaps still better to make a pet of it if possible, in ways Mrs. Brightwen knows so well how to teach. A few notes, a word or so describing the living creature, with its name and family, and perhaps a small drawing of it carefully made, and then to set it free, uninjured, to go where-soever it will—this surely is better than killing and pinning a hundred insects amongst the dull, forlorn ranks of a collection.

The difficulties which apparently belong to the rearing of insects, are always rather sickening. In that most interesting quarter of the "Zoo," the insect houses, the pleasure and wonder of seeing live foreign butterflies is too much tempered by the painful spectacle of the newly born, bred to misery. Some with fresh unsullied wings, some battered and dying, all

in hopeless discomfort, either crawling up and down their narrow cages, or lying wasted and lifeless on the moss. In the windows of shops where they are kept, one too often sees imprisoned caterpillars, faint with hunger, roaming over stale and withered leaves. Should you go in and remonstrate, you are told that "they will be fed when their turn comes; there are too many to be attended to all at once." This perhaps long past 3 p.m. Reflecting upon the neglect and wretchedness almost sure to ensue when insects are either kept alive or killed for collecting purposes, I cannot but conclude that simply to watch them living their own happy wild life in garden or wood or road side, is best for all.

What a splendid visitant (in very little) recalls itself as I write! It rested on the edge of a book on my writing table one morning in June last. My attention was aroused by the waving of its long green antennæ. The ample, transparent wings, green-veined, and suffused with purest prismatic colours, half veiled a slender person of fairy green. The full prominent eyes show like jewels of emerald and gold. The whole radiant creature was an embodiment of grace and exquisite colour. Alas! it had no speech wherewith to tell that this was its very first appearance in winged perfection: that it still was soft and gluey. Presently it became restless, and fearing lest it should take flight and lose itself within the room, I lightly took it up by the two wings and placed it on a leaf outside the window. The dismay with which I found the wings adhered and could not open in flight, recurs whenever I think of it—the poor maimed lace-wing fly! I tried gently to separate the wings with the point of a small penknife; but all efforts were without avail, and the lace-wing, running down under the leaves, had to be left to its fate. It would have been better never to have interfered at all. For the handling of frames of such wondrous delicacy, human fingers are all too coarse. You will say it would have been no worse to have killed the fly and fixed it in a cabinet! I do not think so.

E. V. B.

---



---

### SPORT WITHOUT A GUN.\*



THE idea that no opportunities for enjoyment await the rambler through woods and fields except in the use of a gun is, happily, passing away. To maintain it is to admit that one's eyes and ears are unable to appreciate the pictures and music with which woodland and wayside are filled, or that one's mind is not to be affected by the wonderful things which nature is constantly disclosing to the attentive

---

\* This suggestive and thoroughly Selbornian article is quoted by *The Photographic News* of March 3rd, from *Our Animal Friends*, an American book of which we should like to know more; will any transatlantic reader send us a copy, so that we may bring it to the notice of our readers?—ED. N.V.

observer, or else that one's soul can be satisfied only by the brutal delight of killing something.

I was once standing at a railway station in Canada, when the winter was just relaxing its icy grasp. Masses of snow were still banked in the fence corners, but here and there the grass was to be seen, the sun was shining, and every one stood out of doors basking in its warm beams, and apparently reflecting joyfully that the long siege of cold would soon be over, and leaves and flowers would enrich the landscape with colour and fragrance. Yet what a shallow and ineffective veneer upon the character this gentler mood proved to be! At that moment a bird came flying over the desolate fields, carolling its sweet greeting, and perched upon the telegraph wire. "Oh, there's a blue-bird!" exclaimed a half-grown youth to his companion; "let's kill it!" He stooped for a stone, and when I shouted, "Drop that!" all the people stared in amazement.

What sort of a disposition must those boys have had, who were eager to kill the first bluebird of spring in a winter-beset region? And what shall be said of the grown and presumably sensible people who saw no reason, or were too weak-kneed, to protest?

The blunting of the sensibilities in a person who either does or acquiesces in an inhuman act, is one of the worst consequences of the action. In the higher and farther-reaching sense, cruelty injures him who inflicts it more than the creature on which it is inflicted. One bluebird more or less in Canada may be of small moment; but no community can afford to nourish or tolerate such a sentiment as the stoning of that little harbinger of spring implied.

One of the most satisfactory directions in which amateur photography has turned has been toward the "taking" of living animals in their native haunts. Here is a substitute for the gun. It has all the excitement of the chase, except the sight of the death-pang, and it brings back a durable memento of achievement—a trophy worth having. Like the hunter, the photographer of living animals must know their habits, find their haunts, outwit their vigilance, and lull their suspicions. Modern long-range firearms, with improved powder, make it a comparatively easy matter to get within shooting distance of almost any animal; but the sportsman who seeks to take the picture instead of the life of a wild creature must stalk it far more carefully, get much nearer to it, and obtain a clearer view of it. Those who have tried it affirm that the uncertainty, cleverness, and excitement belonging to successful photography of this kind are far more than are required in shooting the same game, and *far more fun*. The trophies, too, are much more interesting. A stuffed hide, no matter how well done, requires a tremendous strain of the imagination that is asked to make it real; and a skin stretched as a rug upon the floor, or a pair of antlers hung against the wall, are useless to bring back the scene of the chase

to any one except, perhaps, the hunter himself. But the photograph of a stag browsing in his native glen, of a woodcock crouched upon her nest, or a heron intently fishing in some reedy pool, unsuspecting that a camera has been focussed upon it, forms a vivid memorandum whereby other eyes than those of the artist can realise the scene and share the pleasure.

What can be more sportive or sportsmanlike, or more exciting and enjoyable, than the search of a botanist for some rare plant, with the constant surprises that greet his observant eye, and the eager watch and hope for others? The naturalist needs no gun for his enjoyment, and only to a small extent for his work. As he ranges the woods with opera-glass, note-book and collecting-boxes, his hours are full of amusement, his faculties are alert, and his mind is as pleasantly occupied as if he must kill everything he sees in order to satisfy the savagery left in him from the childhood of the race, or the more artificial and meaner feeling of rivalry with some other sportsman who has made a big bag.

These are only hints or suggestions of the enjoyment reserved for him who leaves his gun at home; and he will find that instead of losing he has gained, for if really he be the true "sportsman" he vaunts himself, he cannot but feel a twinge of shame whenever some innocent creature yields its life in agony, that he may experience a momentary thrill of savage triumph. To-day he argues or crushes down these troublesome thoughts of self-reproach and sympathy; but having laid aside his gun, he will by and by come to perceive that it is better to let his nobler instincts prevail, and will conclude that the truest sportsman is he that is true to himself.

ERNEST INGERSOLL.

---

### BEAST AND MAN IN INDIA.\*

MR. J. LOCKWOOD KIPLING writes sympathetically and interestingly about the common animals of India and their treatment by the natives. In the introductory chapter the author attempts to compare the East and the West as regards their treatment of animals. The verdict seems to be given in favour of the West, even though in the East religion commands humanity to be more humane towards the brute creation. But this is judging the East by a European standard, which is always dangerous. Mr. Kipling drops the judge after the first chapter, and proceeds to give us, in pleasantly written narrative, the results of many years' careful observation of animal life in India. The great interest of the subject—an interest which the author makes the most of in selecting for treatment chiefly the domestic animals of India—lies in this, that in India, beast and man are related in a peculiar and intimate manner, that has no counterpart in Europe. Mr. Kipling's extensive experience enables him to bring home this relation to his readers, and we learn how much such humble creatures as the sparrow and the

---

\* *Beast and Man in India*: a popular sketch of Indian Animals in their relations with the People, by J. Lockwood Kipling, C.I.E., with illustrations. Macmillan and Co., 8vo, pp. 359. Price 7s. 6d.

crow, the monkey, the ass and the cow, influence, and even form part of the life of the people. This peculiar relation between man and beast may be traced to two reasons principally; we exclude the influence of the belief in transmigration, according to which an Indian looks upon a bull not simply as a bull, but as "a potential grandfather," for the belief does not obtain extensively. The two chief reasons are, first, the precepts of the Hindu religion, which make certain animals sacrosanct, and give them so far an equality with men; and secondly, the indispensable usefulness of certain animals to men for the support of human life. These two factors occasionally give rise to opposite tendencies; where compromise between the two is impossible, religion generally yields to necessity. Sacrosanct oxen have a hard time of it when yoked to a cart. But the much-abused cart driver is not breaking the law, for though "elaborate damnations are ordained by Brahminical authority against cow killing," no provisions are made for ill-treatment short of death. It is indeed a mistake to suppose that the precepts of the Hindu religion have brought about that system of kindness.



A RUSTIC KRISHNA.

towards animals which we advocate in these latter days. But the Hindu is not, as a rule wantonly cruel. "Village boys are not there seen stoning frogs, or setting dogs at cats, nor tying kettles to dogs' tails, and it has not been found necessary to forbid bird nesting by Act of Parliament."

Birds indeed are well off in India. Many of them are sacred, and therefore a nuisance. The sparrow is the type of a thing of naught, an intrusive feathered fly to be brushed aside, but on no account to be harmed. The crow, too, is privileged, but he scarcely needs protection, for he is endowed by nature with an alertness and cunning which enables him to pursue a career of "variegated crime" with impunity. But the sacrosanct of the feathered tribe, however much of a nuisance they may be, are harmless when compared with the four-footed creatures equally privileged. The monkey, who is protected by a grateful people for the

services Hanuman (the monkey god) rendered Rama in the old Hindu epic, can be ingeniously destructive. The ox is sacred and inoffensive, except when it takes the shape of a Brahminy bull, when the stoutest heart need quail, and safety only lies in flight. The ass, as may be expected, is outside the pale of religious protection; to say that he gets more kicks than halfpence would be the merest commonplace. His life besides is made more miserable by the unenviable post to which Hindu mythology has appointed him, as the *vahan* or steed of Sitala, the goddess of small-pox. His usefulness is beyond doubt, as the potter and washerman abundantly testify, and his home-loving nature has earned him the unique privilege that when his day's work is done "he is not plagued with tether or heel rope," like his big brother the horse, but is free to wander over the village common.



THE POTTER AND HIS DONKEY.

Mr. Kipling's book is full of interesting facts and stories about Indian animals, but space will only permit us to point out two interesting features in it as yet unnoticed: first, the author's own illustrations (two of which, by the kindness of the publishers, we reproduce), which are sometimes very instructive; for instance, we learn how very different in appearance is the Indian cow, with its "hump and falling hock," from its English representative. Then the collection of Indian proverbs drawn from the habits of animals. The Oriental mind loves to express its thought in figurative language, and it naturally takes its metaphors and similes from the animal life continually present before it. These proverbs are thus the small coin, and very often the sole coin, of Indian talk; and in reading them we are familiarised with a leading characteristic of the national mind.

J. J. PLATEL.

## LIFE IN THE FIELDS.\*

It has been found possible to put together yet another volume of the hitherto uncollected essays of Richard Jefferies, and one which, although it cannot rank among the best of his books, is by no means the least interesting of them. It contains some of his earliest and some of his latest work, the former dating from 1872 and 1874, the latter published since his death; while one of the essays, "A True Tale of a Wiltshire Labourer," has not hitherto appeared in print. To this last, and the half dozen more on kindred topics the volume owes most of its bulk and nearly all its value; the remainder are mainly fragments, and add nothing to Jefferies' reputation. These last are of the style which we usually regard as characteristic of the writer—a style more adequately displayed in the *Life of the Fields*, of which we are glad to welcome a neat edition of the right size and shape for the pocket. When shall we have a similar re-issue of the *Gamekeeper at Home* and *Wild Life*—perhaps his best books?

The life of the field to Jefferies however, always included its human element. In *Hodge and his Masters* this prevailed almost to the exclusion of the natural features, although in other books it was kept in the background. Very pathetic and sad in many ways are the aspects of country life as portrayed by this man, who wrote from intimate knowledge, and was in keen sympathy with his subject. "The Labourer's Daily Life," in which "there is absolutely no poetry, no colour," as Jefferies describes it, is almost as hopeless as *A Village Tragedy*, saddest of books; and the efforts to improve it do not seem to be very successful. "Field-faring Women" have no better time, although Mr. Jefferies does not adopt the view that field labour is degrading to women; and the children, "hardy young dogs, one and all," although they enjoy life at its beginning, soon settle down to hard work and drudgery. We have for some time known that the poetry of rural life is in the main perceptible only by those who regard it from a distance, and a course of Jefferies cannot fail to deepen this conviction.

In each of these volumes, much of the information is conveyed in narrative form. Jefferies could not write a novel, but such sketches as "John Smith's Shanty," "The Field-Play," and "The Wiltshire Labourer," are in many ways prototypes of the short story which has of late been so much in vogue, and—in that curious way in which one thing sometimes reminds us of another quite unlike it—recall the graphic narratives of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. They are "realistic," to employ a much-abused word—perhaps somewhat too much so to suit all tastes—and have undoubted power.

But it is in such sketches as "The Pageant of Summer," in *The Life of the Fields*, foreshadowed by the earlier "The Coming of Summer" in *Toilers*, that we find the Jefferies dear to Selbornians—the man who not only saw what we can all see if we choose, but who set it down so accurately that to read one of his chapters by the fireside is to be transported into the fields of summer. There is no need to quote from it, if we began it would be difficult to stop, and half-a-crown will buy the whole book. The "Water-Colley," again—by which local name the water-ousel or dipper is intended—is a delightful piece of writing, although it contains one slip, for Jefferies speaks of the "early purple orchis," when it is clear from his description that he means the spotted orchis (*O. maculata*). In "Village Miners" we have a delightful talk about country words and old-time phraseology; even in a London square and among the pigeons at the British Museum the life of the fields is traced—"it is there too, if you will but see it."

The great charm of books such as this lies in their absolute simplicity and straightforwardness. Years back, when some who are now in middle life were young, essays about natural objects would have teemed with moral and religious teaching—would, indeed, have been written mainly with a view to that end. Now-a-days the fashion of teaching has changed, but the passion for it remains, and we have many delightfully written little volumes, the only drawback to which is that the author is all the while paving the way for inferences which, if they are not borne out by facts, may, at any rate, claim the merit of originality.

---

\* *The Toilers of the Field*, by Richard Jefferies. Longmans, 8vo, pp. 327, 6s. *The Life of the Fields*, by the same. Chatto and Windus. 8vo, pp. 262, 2s. 6d.



The compiler, and the writer who has nothing to say, are, and so far as we can judge will be, with us always, and need not be mentioned unless duty calls upon us to notice their works. But a Jefferies, like a White of Selborne, is rare: his writings should be read and read again, and cherished as a precious possession, and they should be among the very first to appear on the shelves of that Selborne Library which we hope will, at no distant date, form a prominent feature in the work of every branch of the Selborne Society.

---



---

### SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*An Account of British Flies (Diptera)*, by F. V. Theobald, B.A., F.E.S. (Vol. i., 8vo, pp. xx. 215, plates and woodcuts. London: Stock.) The Diptera, or two-winged flies, are, as far as known at present, more numerous in England than any other order of insects except the *Hymenoptera* and *Coleoptera*, the number of existing species being variously estimated at from 2,500 to 3,000. But very little attention has been paid to them in this country, for—if we except a small number of students who have taken up their study within the last few years, and general writers on entomology like Curtis and Stephens—Haliday, Walker, Meade and Verrall almost exhaust the list of English writers on the order, and even their work, except Walker's *Insecta Britannica Diptera* and Verrall's *Catalogue of British Diptera*, has been exclusively confined to papers in periodicals. Hence Mr. Theobald has done good work in bringing together a large amount of information which will be very useful to young entomologists who wish to take up the study of Diptera, especially if working in the country, at a distance from large libraries where they cannot obtain the great European works, even if they should be able to read them. On the Continent things are much more satisfactory, and the great works of Macquart and Robineau-Desvoidy for France, Meigen and Loew for Europe generally, Schiner for Austria (perhaps the most complete and valuable book of all), Rondani for Italy, Van der Wulp for Holland, and Zetterstedt for Lapland, leave little to be desired; though the number of smaller books and papers on Diptera is much less than that relating to the more popular orders of insects. Too much should not be expected from a book of the character of Mr. Theobald's, but we notice here and there a slight looseness of statement which he would do well to avoid. Thus, Walker's *Diptera*, which is stated to have been written "more than fifty years ago" bears dates 1851, 1853 and 1856; and Morris's *Catalogue of British Insects*, referred to as published nearly fifty years ago, was published, we believe, about 1865, or perhaps even later. W. F. K.

*Old Rabbit, the Voodoo, and other Sorcerers*, by Mary Alicia Owen. Illustrated by Juliette A. Owen and Louis Wain. (8vo, pp. xv., 310. London: T. F. Unwin. 6s.) Those who are acquainted with "Brer Rabbit"—and we hope all the readers of NATURE NOTES are reckoned among their number—will be glad to learn more of his adventures from the pen of another recorder. But in Miss Owen's delightful book our old friend meets with a formidable rival in the shape of "Ole Woodpecker," who occupies in the feathered world the position which Brer Rabbit fills among animals, is more than a match for "Blue Jay"—Mark Twain's blue jay—and is as unprincipled, as unscrupulous, and, we regret to add, as successful as that "lowdownest watsizname" himself. Of course, as Mr. C. G. Leland points out in his brief but suggestive preface, the importance of such a collection of stories as this is to be found in its scientific aspect; and the student of folklore will fully appreciate the care with which Miss Owen has brought together so much hitherto unpublished matter bearing on the mysterious subject of Voodooism and the like. But just as the Brothers Grimm provided by means of their investigations a most fascinating collection of tales for children, so such books as this not only gratify the learned, but add various delightful beings to the population of our playrooms and nurseries. It has been said, both of *Uncle Remus* and of the present volume, that the dialect in which the stories are narrated detracts from the charm of the book. We do not think so. On the contrary, it appears to us that the stories gain by this quaint medium, which really presents so little difficulty that we

are inclined almost to resent Mr. Leland's consideration in giving "in parentheses the correct form of many words." Those who experience any difficulty will find it disappear if they read aloud any words which appear to them strange. Such books as this offer many temptations to the reviewer, but the exigencies of space will not allow us to dwell at length upon its interesting contents. But we can at any rate—and this is, after all, the best thing that a reviewer can do for a good book—recommend our readers to buy the volume for themselves. In the present instance, a word must also be said for the quaint and unconventional illustrations, some of which are extremely funny.

While on this point, a paragraph in the "Official Notices," at p. 80, seems to render it necessary for us once more to say that the value of reviews appears to us to depend entirely upon their honesty. It is always more pleasant to praise than to blame; but if the reviewer is not to say honestly what he thinks of a book, he had better hold his tongue. In some quarters it seems to us that other influences than the value of the book under notice have weight with the reviewer. This has not been, and so long as we occupy the editorial chair will not be, the case with the reviews in NATURE NOTES. We cannot, for example, extend to such an echo of the weaker notes of Richard Jefferies' work as is brought under our notice in Mr. J. H. Pickard's *Sunbeams and Summer* (Digby and Long, no date!) the recommendation which we have given elsewhere to *Life in the Fields*. These *Sunbeams* are too feeble to penetrate far; their light is borrowed, and "moonbeams" would be a better title. It looks a very easy matter to write as Jefferies wrote; but try it, and you will once more realise how deceptive appearances are. Or put a page of Mr. Pickard's book beside a sentence of Jefferies—the print of the former is so large that the proportion is fairly accurate—and you will at once see, if you know "the country life," the poverty of the former and the wealth of the latter. Mr. Pickard knows names where Jefferies knew things, and he harps so long upon one string that his melody becomes a monotone—a term which he rather oddly applies to the note of the cuckoo. He says he never wearies of "the exact repetition of scented bloom and flowercup all around;" but the "repetition" in real life is *not* "exact"—if it were, we should weary of it as we do of Mr. Pickard, and as we do *not* of Richard Jefferies. By what towing path did the writer find at the same time, "golden iris," "purple loosestrife," and "great beds of marsh marigolds with wide expanded blossoms"?

---

## SELBORNIANA.

**Protection of Wild Birds.**—An admirable poster has been issued by the R.S.P.C.A. It may no doubt be obtained of the secretary, Mr. John Colam, 105, Jernyn Street, S.W., and should be widely distributed in suitable places. We hope Selbornians will take the matter up. The bill runs as follows:—

### "PROTECTION OF WILD BIRDS.

"Any person who shall during the close time provided for all wild birds (including nestlings) shoot, trap, snare, net, or otherwise take any wild bird; or shall have any wild bird in his possession; or shall refuse to give his name and place of abode when desired by any person who may discover him committing either of the above offences, will be prosecuted by the police, or by the above Society.

"The close time for Middlesex (County Council area) and Hertfordshire is, from February 1st to August 31st; for Anglesey, from March 1st to October 1st; for Devonshire, Durham, Huntingdonshire, and Northumberland, from March 1st to August 31st; for Yorkshire (North Riding), from March 1st to August 11th; for Essex, Isle of Ely, Liberty of Peterborough, Lincoln (parts only), from March 15th to August 31st; for all other parts from March 1st to July 31st.

"Owners and occupiers of land, and persons authorised by either of them, but no one else, are allowed for the protection of their gardens or field crops to kill or take certain wild birds on such land (nowhere else) but even they are forbidden to kill or take any bird included in the following list, viz.:—American quail, auk, avocet, bee-eater, bitterne, bonxie, colin, cornish chough, coulteneb, cuckoo, curlew, diver, dotterell, dunbird, dunlin, eider duck, fern-owl, fulmar, gannet,

goat-sucker, godwit, goldfinch, grebe, greenshank, guillemot, gull (except black-backed gull), hoopoe, kingfisher, lark, lapwing, loon, mallard, marrot, merganser, murre, nighthawk, nightjar, nightingale, oriole, owl, oxbird, oyster catcher, peewit, petrel, phalarope, plover, plover's-page, pochard, puffin, purre, razorbill, redshank, reeve or ruff, roller, sandcring, sandpiper, scout, scalark, seamew, seaparrrot, sea-swallow, shearwater, shelldrake, shoveller, skua, smew, snipe, solan-goose, spoonbill, stint, stonecurlew, stonehatch, summer-snipe, tarrock, teal, tern, thick-knee, tystey, whaup, whimbrel, widgeon, wild duck, willock, woodcock, woodpecker. (43 & 44 Vic. c. 35.)"

**A Plea for the Primrose.**—We wish to renew the plea which we have made in previous years to those who wear primroses on April 17th—the death-day of Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Darwin. Many who live in the country send primroses to their friends in town; if they will content themselves with gathering the flowers and leaves, no harm will be done, but too often the whole plant is grubbed up, "to make a [London] holiday." Selbornians should by precept and example deprecate this wanton practice.

**Lantern Slides** (p. 55). I was much interested in Mr. Bull's note on this subject in your March number, having tried in vain to discover a set of slides on British birds. I have therefore begun the formation of such a set, by having photographs taken from drawings and engravings, and should be very glad to hear of any pictures suitable for reproduction, especially such as are not copyright. I suppose that Bewick's answer that condition. I have obtained permission from the S.P.C.K. to copy Wolf's charming brown owl and wood pigeon from Johns' *British Birds in their Haunts*, and am now anxious to borrow an early edition of the work for that purpose.

*Wavertree, Liverpool.*

(REV.) J. E. KELSALL.

**Pinner Branch.**—The members of this Branch assembled on March 8th in good number at Mrs. Loveland's house, Barrow Point, to hear a discursive lecture by the Rev. J. Kirkman on Fungi. The lecturer brought many of the chief books on the subject for inspection, and some coloured charts. More important, however, was an ample contribution of numerous specimens gathered in the neighbourhood and brought by the members. Mr. Kirkman's address was listened to with much interest, and spores of mushrooms, &c., were shown under the microscope. Mrs. Brightwen talked pleasantly on several departments of organised life, giving, with her specimens, more than enough to set all the members thinking and observing until the next meeting.

**Barbed Wire.**—A Bill has been brought into Parliament by Mr. A. C. Morton, Mr. J. T. Brunner, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), and Mr. Joicey, with the object of preventing the use of barbed fences in roads, streets, lanes, and other thoroughfares. The penalty for contravention is fixed at £10, and £1 for every day thereafter while the offence is continued.

**A Salutary Lesson.**—John Thomas Robinson, Arthur Robinson, and Isaac Tyrell were charged with damaging a quantity of growing furze at Putney Lower-common. Michael Rummey, the common keeper, said he saw the prisoners cutting the furze down. They told him they did not know they were doing any harm, and that they wanted some sticks for umbrella handles. Jesse Reeves, the head common keeper, said a large number of trees on the common had been permanently injured. Every stick which could be made into a walking stick was taken away. Mr. Denman said there would not be a tree left if that kind of thing were allowed. He fined prisoners 20s. each, or fourteen days.—*Standard*, February 18th.

**Why Multiply Societies?**—We noticed recently in the *Echo* a proposal to establish a "Skylark Protection Society," to which an amendment was suggested that it be called "The Songbird Protection Society." Selbornians would be doing good service to the cause by calling the attention of such writers to the Selborne Society, which, with the Society for the Protection of Birds, amply covers the ground. Nothing is gained by the multiplication of bodies having the same objects in view: "Union is strength."

**Thrushes and Drink.**—Under this heading a writer in the *Echo* of March 2nd says:—"It has come to my knowledge, not for the first time I am sorry to say, that a nest of thrushes can be obtained for a drink at a 'pub' not many yards from Battersea Park. The birds are one of its features, and their nests should be protected. There are some of the employés not free from taint. The writer has been promised a nest. Try and stop bird-nesting in the park, and you will be thanked by those who ramble therein." No name is attached to the letter, but if the statement be accurate, we beg to call the attention of the London County Council, on which Selbornian views are represented, to an occurrence which reflects seriously upon those responsible for the care of the Parks.

**A Choice Combination.**—What do you think of the following combination? I fancy you may deprecate more than one part of the simple news. The other day Lord Ribblesdale and the royal stag-hounds came our way; and, after a long and devious chase, the stag, crossing and recrossing the Thames, was at last caught uninjured; but a village girl saw him with his hind feet "hitched" on a barbed wire fence put up by the agents of an absentee landowner to stop up a much-used footpath: hardly fair to the public in general, or to the individual stag!

BERKSHIRE VILLAGE.

---

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**An Early Wood Pigeon.**—On February 10th I picked up a *young* wood-pigeon (or stock dove, I am not sure which), which had been blown out of an ivy clump the preceding night. This, I think, a very singular thing so early in the year. The bird was fully fledged, and had left the nest some little time, as the crop was full of food self gathered—not the half-digested substance furnished by the parents as food for their young before they leave the nest. The contents of the crop were beech-mast, and an equal quantity of the leaves of the lesser celandine, now springing up under the beeches. This bird must have been hatched about the end of Decemoer, and on referring to my notes, I find that wood-pigeons were cooing on the 24th and 28th of that month, in spite of the sharp frost then prevailing. In connection with this fact, a friend of mine, resident in Aberdeenshire, writes me as follows: "I wish to draw your attention to what I think a strange circumstance, viz., wood-pigeons cooing *at night* during the past week (the end of January), between ten and eleven at night; they have been cooing all over the plantations just as you may hear them in the early morning in the month of April." My friend, I should say, is a good naturalist and a keen observer.

Watford.

GEORGE ROOPER.

**Natterjack Toad.**—Over fifteen years ago, I and other members of our country local "Science Gossip Society" found the natterjack toad in some low sandy cliffs on the coast of Suffolk. They were in holes, some eight or twelve inches deep in the side of the cliff, perhaps several natterjacks congregated at the bottom of one hole. I kept some specimens alive in a bath half filled with light dry earth, and it was most interesting to watch them in this. They worked holes for themselves in the earth, and would sit in them, looking out in a most grave and comical manner. They readily allowed me to see them eat, and would snap up an ant dropped in front of them, or a small spider offered hanging at the end of one of his own threads. This "snapping up" was so rapid that it had the appearance of just a flash of a greyish something, coupled with the disappearance of the insect. In reality it was the rapid flicking out of the tongue, and its as rapid withdrawal with the insect. On one occasion two of my natterjacks were sitting solemnly side by side; a small fly settled on the eye of one, he gravely winked the eye, causing the fly to crawl a little higher up; his brother natterjack turned half round, and, with a flick of the tongue, swallowed the fly.

J. A. EISEDELL.

**The Sparrow once more.**—I should be extremely sorry to resuscitate the wordy warfare prevailing in your columns last year anent the sparrow, but I think it would interest your readers to note what Gilbert White has to say on the

subject, and this, I fancy, has been overlooked by your correspondents. In Letter XX. (February 26th, 1774), to Daines Barrington, he remarks: "When they [the sand martins] happen to breed near hedges and enclosures, they are dispossessed of their breeding holes by the house-sparrow, which is on the same account a fell adversary to house martins." Also in Letter XXI. to the same gentleman, dated September 28th, 1774, he says, "I have suspected that they [the swifts] sometimes usurp upon the house-sparrows and expel them, as sparrows do the house and sand-martin; well remembering that I have seen them squabbling together at the entrance of their holes, the sparrows up in arms, and much disconcerted at these intruders."

G. W. KIRKALDY.

**Horse Chestnut Buds.**—Those who read the delightful description of horse-chestnut buds (p. 46) will be interested to know that if they are gathered before they open and put into water they will gradually unfold and develop both leaves and flower buds. The bud at the tip of a branch which I put in water in the middle of January has now four leaves and a spike of flower buds. The first pair of leaves measures eight and a-half inches from tip to tip, and the second pair five and a-half inches. Another branch, though its leaves are less advanced, has grown three and a-quarter inches, and the flower stalk has about 100 tiny buds on it. Many other buds, especially hawthorn, lime and sycamore, open freely in water, but the horse-chestnut is best.

PHILIP JONES.

**A Census of London Rookeries.**—It has often struck me that the London members of the Selborne Society would be doing a useful piece of work if they would accurately note the number of rooks' nests in the various small rookeries that still exist within the area covered by the London Directory. Only nests that are *inhabited this year* should be counted, and if the results were sent to the Editor of NATURE NOTES by the middle of April, there would still be time to compare the various reports, and, if necessary, verify them before the leaves are out. Then I would further suggest that the results should be published from year to year: and I am sure that the facts thus collected would be of interest. For the rook population fluctuates in a very curious way. Since the trees were felled in Kensington Gardens—I think in 1881—I have noticed no nests there till last year, when one was built near the north end of the Broad Walk, but was soon deserted, and another near the south-west corner of the gardens. At the present time, however, there are, I believe, eleven nests in process of building near the north end of the Broad Walk, and it is an interesting question where the rooks have come from. They must have migrated from the country districts; and what can have led them to do that? Other spots to which I should like to direct the attention of your readers are the grounds of Chelsea Hospital, where several pairs were building last year; Church Street, Kensington, where one nest was built last year, but was soon abandoned; Holland Park (where a pair of magpies were also noticed last year); Albion Street, north of Hyde Park, where there was one nest last year, and where two or three are being built now; Connaught Square, which had five or six nests last year; the Marylebone Road, where a dozen years ago there used to be at least a dozen nests; Gower Street, at the back of which one or two nests existed not long ago; and lastly, the well-known colony in Gray's Inn.

J. S. M.

---



---

## OFFICIAL NOTICES.

**EXCURSION TO SELBORNE.**—It is hoped by the Council that the travelling expenses of the day, including the railway fare and conveyance from Alton to Selborne and back, will not exceed five shillings a head. Addresses will be given during the day by influential persons acquainted with the neighbourhood, and parties will be conducted by archaeologists, botanists and others.

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** will be held at the rooms of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, S.W., on Wednesday, 3rd May, at 8 o'clock. Speeches will be delivered by several distinguished members

of the Selborne Society. The annual report and balance sheet will be presented, and a new Council will be elected for the ensuing year. All subscribing members of half-a-crown and upwards are eligible to the offices of the Society and qualified to vote at the General Meeting. It is hoped that all members and friends of the Society who live in or near London may be able to attend. The galleries are hung with pictures, and several exhibits of special interest to Selbornians are promised.

Mr. Martin having written to resign the hon. secretaryship of the newly-formed Croydon Branch, the Council unanimously resolved that he be asked to reconsider his resignation, and hoped that he would not allow any personal feeling in respect to recent reviews of his books which appeared in NATURE NOTES to influence his decision. Mr. Martin has kindly consented to withdraw his resignation in response to the wish of the Council.

A. J. WESTERN, *Secretary.*

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**E. P.**—If you apply to the Director, Royal Gardens, Kew, he will probably forward you a ticket.

**S. W. T.**—The "Collector's British Land and Freshwater Shells," by Lionel Adams (Bell & Sons, 7s. 6d.).

**J. H. T.**—Mr. W. F. Kirby suggests that the moth was probably not *Brumata*, but some other species. Will you kindly note that the Editor's address is 18, West Square, S.E., and not care of the publishers?

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month.* The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. Short notes on Natural History or Selbornian subjects will be especially welcome. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

Queries on any points connected with Botany, Zoology, or other branches of Natural History, will be answered if possible, and advice will be given as to the best books for students in any department of Natural Science; but all questions must be accompanied by the names and addresses of the writers, not for publication, if this is not desired. Except under special and exceptional circumstances, the Editor cannot undertake to answer questions through the post, even when a stamp is enclosed for the purpose.

Specimens sent for identification will be named, if sent carefully packed and in good condition, *and if sent to the Editor*, but we cannot undertake to return them.

We shall be glad to notice any books bearing upon Natural History in any of its branches, and to direct attention to magazine articles of the same kind, if these are sent to us. Publishers will confer a favour upon our readers if they will always state the *price* of any volumes they may send, in order that it may be quoted in the notice. This addition is much appreciated by our readers, and is desirable in the interest of the volumes themselves.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business, as well as the names of those wishing to join the proposed excursion to Selborne on June 24th, should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

We regret that, owing to the continued and increasing demands upon our space, we are compelled to hold over numerous contributions, and to decline others. The only remedy for this course of action is the enlargement of NATURE NOTES, which will take place as soon as the number of subscribers justifies this proceeding. Advertisements of NATURE NOTES, suitable for distribution, may be obtained free from the publishers.

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

No. 41.


MAY, 1893.

VOL. IV.

---

### THE ABUSE OF ADVERTISING.

BY THE EDITOR.

HERE can be no doubt of its existence, and it is growing. Take up a magazine, and shake it, and you shall find the floor strewn with fly-leaves of all colours and shapes and sizes, each advertising "ships, or shoes, or sealing wax," or equally miscellaneous wares. It is worse when shaking produces no such effect, for then you shall discover them sewn or otherwise fastened into the body of the book, and if you yield to your first hasty impulse, and tear them out, either you will damage your magazine, or horrible, ragged, jagged, untidy fragments will remain securely fixed. *Atalanta* does this, and it is bad enough, but the illustrated weekly papers go several better—or worse. We heard of some one the other day who gave up the *Illustrated London News* on this account, and ordered the *Graphic*; but we did not hear what was said (and perhaps it is just as well) when it was discovered that this resulted in no improvement. Does any one bind these papers? Probably not; no one would perpetuate the advertisements which gradually are usurping the pages of the papers named, and are making their way into every imaginable corner of others.

Perhaps this may be considered a matter outside the scope of the Selborne Society, but when the plague extends to the open fields it calls for a protest on our part. It is bad enough as we wind up the St. Gothard, or walk to Andermatt from Goschenen, to be reminded in gigantic letters, displayed on some suitable rock, of a certain kind of chocolate; but this is not comparable in extent of nuisance to the almost continuous chain of advertisements which we noticed at Easter in the fields between London and Oxford. These hideous erections, usually of tin, with vile

glazed inscriptions setting forth the names of some popular remedy, are planted in the fields, so that you shall scarcely be able to glance out of window at the country without seeing one or more of them. A correspondent last year (*N. N.*, 1892, p. 235) wrote strongly, yet not a whit more so than the matter deserves, about this practice, which has hitherto been allowed to increase unchecked.

Not too soon, therefore, and yet we hope not too late, has this abuse of advertising attracted serious attention. Last month we deprecated the multiplication of societies, but we have nothing save encouragement for the National Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising, although we could wish that it had found a shorter name. Formed only on the 14th of last February, it already numbers in its ranks many representatives of art, science, literature, and other branches of culture—amongst them Sir W. H. Flower, Sir Edward Fry, Mr. William Morris, Mr. Robert Bridges, Mr. Alfred Austin, Mr. P. G. Hamerton, Mr. W. B. Richmond, Mr. A. Waterhouse, Professor Ray Lankester, Mr. Lecky, Mr. Walter Besant, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, and Mrs. Richmond Ritchie.

The objects of the Society as at present defined are only two:—

(1) Of checking the abuse of the practice of spectacular advertising.

(2) Of protecting and promoting the picturesque simplicity of rural and river scenes, and the dignity and propriety of our large towns.

These are developed in an admirable little circular which will be forwarded, with list of members, by the Hon. Secretary *pro tem.*, Mr. Richardson Evans, Camp View, Wimbledon. The annual subscription is only half-a-crown, and we trust that many Selbornians will enrol themselves as members. The Rev. Prebendary Reynolds, 5, Amen Court, E.C., is Hon. Treasurer, and will receive donations and subscriptions. "It is essential to the authority and efficiency of the Society that it should represent, demonstrably, a large body of sober opinion throughout the country. If there is any risk of failure, it lies in the diffidence or the despondency of those who feel the need of remedy. The number of those who can give active personal help may be limited, but all who join are thereby contributing necessary assistance."

Although so young, the Society has already set to work. "A legal Sub-Committee is engaged in investigating the present condition of the law with regard to the powers of control and the rating of hoardings. The provisional Committee has also been in communication with others interested respecting Bills now before Parliament." A public meeting for the election of officers (all of whom will be honorary), and for other business will be held in May, but the date has not been fixed at the time of our going to press. It will doubtless be widely advertised, and we trust Selbornians will attend in full force.



## GILBERT WHITE.\*

THOU wast a poet, though thou knew'st it not,  
 Then on a merry morning, when the thrush  
 Fluted and fluted musical in the bush,  
 And blackbirds whisked along thy garden-plot.  
 Didst watch an hour beside thy hanger's foot.  
 The quivering kestrel hung aloft the skies  
 To mark aught stirring, or with pensive eyes  
 In cherry-orchards didst forecast the fruit.  
 And shall I deem it idle thus to scan  
 The myriad life, and reverently wait,  
 A patient learner, auguring, behind  
 The restless hand, the unhesitating mind?  
 This was thy daily task, to learn that man  
 Is small, and not forget that man is great.

ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON.

## THE HARVEST MOUSE.

(*Mus minutus*.)



SI think that this little being, the smallest but one of the British quadrupeds, is not often kept as a pet, I have made a few notes on the appearance and habits of one which was in my possession during July and August, 1892. His early home was in the cornfields of Essex; when full grown he met captivity half-way by running up a mower's sleeve. He then lived two months, and to all appearances, very happily, in a larva breeding-cage, and died from the effects of the thunder-storm of August 18th.

I will now describe the species so far as my personal observation of this tiny individual went. His whole length was 3.1 in., the body being 1.7 in., and the tail 1.4 in.—a creature so small that the very turn of a hair gave or subtracted a beauty. The fur of the upper part of the body was of the colour of ripe red wheat, so that when standing on the ears of corn he could hardly be distinguished from them; the fur on the hind legs was of a warmer and brighter brown than the rest of the back. The under side of the body from the throat to the tail pure white. The ears short and generally pressed back; the eyes not so large in proportion to the head as in the dormouse, when casually looked at their expression appeared mild and inattentive, but

\* Reprinted, by kind permission of the author, from *Le Cahier Jaune* (see p. 89).—ED. N.V.

† *Sorex pygmaeus*.

with a lens could be seen the restless, wideawake pupil directed sharply this way and that. The minute incisors were light brown.

The hind legs were much longer and more powerful than the fore : owing to this, many of his attitudes and movements strongly resembled those of a kangaroo, as for example when he stood erect, his fore-paws hanging down, his sensitive nose snuffing the air as if he would by smell discern the boundaries of space into which he was about to make a reckless leap. But if at one time he looked like the lowly marsupial, at another his arboreal (I should say gramineal) habit and prehensile tail brought the monkey, far above him in rank, to one's mind. I could not watch him for five minutes without seeing how useful this prehensile tail was to him : when in danger of slipping from a grass stalk or leaf he would instantly coil it once or twice round either these or a neighbouring stalk ; again when running down a vertical or inclined haulm he put his tail on as a drag. He sometimes wound it round my fingers to steady himself. I then felt a peculiar sensation of clinging impact, due, I think, to the rings of short stiff hairs on the tail, the points of the hairs directed towards its tip. So long as the tail was wound round a support he felt secure enough to wash himself, or eat, notwithstanding the slenderest foothold. It was of use even on a level surface, for he would stand like a kangaroo on his hind legs and the lower joints of the tail.

As regards the habits of the harvest mouse I can only offer a few remarks ; I did not know mine in the capacity of nest-builder and parent. We can all remember or refer to Gilbert White's classic description of the nest and young of his " new mice " (*vide* Letters xii. and xiii.). The everyday life of my mouse, however, I had fair opportunity of watching through the glass front of his cage. What chiefly struck me was his incessant activity ; I never saw him asleep. Perhaps, inasmuch as he fed chiefly at night, he might be called a nocturnal animal, but by day as well he was bewilderingly lively ; playthings seemed a necessity of his existence, so I gave him a constant change of furniture. Wheat stalks tied in a bunch would form a ladder from floor to ceiling, then hay for hiding places and millet stalks for bridges, and various wild grasses which seemed to furnish him with interesting problems in their dissection. His perseverance and energy in the face of crushing odds were most instructive to witness. It might be his task was to tear into narrow strips the leaves of ribbon grass, or to shred up a cluster of green oats : the work was done in spite of uncertain foothold and frequent tumbles and the hard and scratchy nature of the materials worked on. I may here add to the list of his accomplishments that he was a fearless and rapid swimmer.

He was beginning to grow tame enough to jump from his cage on to my hand (even from the first he had submitted to my rubbing behind his ears), but if by chance I handled him

roughly or disturbed him oftener than he considered reasonable, he opened his mouth menacingly, uttered a considerable squeak, and even gave me a warning bite; I cannot imagine what tiny creature of the fields he was wont to keep in check by these warlike demonstrations.

Like all his family he spent much time in the care of his fur, his fingers and his nails; he was untiring in his efforts to keep every hair in order and to keep his little paws free from every particle of sand or dust. On one occasion I saw him standing on a corn-stalk supported by one hind leg and his tail while the two fore paws were dragging the other hind leg to his mouth to be cleaned.

So far as my experience went his only food was grain, wild or cultivated; he was quite indifferent to the colours of juicy fruits, while every part of a grass seemed familiar to him, either as furnishing food or pastime. He held a grain of wheat by the ends, one in each hand, the furrow generally kept outward, that is, away from the teeth; a little strip or bar containing this furrow was left when the grain was eaten; judging by the number of these little "bones" that I daily cleared from his cage he must be a destructive little creature in the corn-field and the barn. He was as fond of millet as of wheat, and very deftly fetched the small seeds out of their envelopes. I saw him once or twice lap water from a little dish, but he seemed much more to enjoy licking wetted leaves. He died when I was from home, and I cannot tell whether the cause was directly the lightning, or indirectly from fright; he was probably unable to shelter as he would have done in a wild state.

Before concluding I will make one remark bearing on the distribution of the species. I am strongly inclined to believe that the mouse which appears with the ear of corn on certain coins of Metapontum of the fourth century B.C., represents *Mus minutus*, although the southern limit of the species is now about four degrees north of this city. I should have liked to enter into more detail and to describe the coins in question, giving my reasons for the identification, but I fear the point may be considered rather of archæological interest, than belonging to natural history. If, however, any of your readers should think the point worth further inquiry, I would very gladly give these details.

CONSTANCE GARLICK.

---

## WORK FOR THE NATURALIST.

**T**HAS been said with much truth that to take away the hope of making fresh discoveries is to deprive the pursuit of natural history of half its zest, and it is sometimes assumed that, in consequence of the industry and acumen expended in the field of recent years, there can be little or nothing still left for the investigator to glean. It would seem, however, to be more true to say that every fresh discovery does but multiply the questions calling for settlement, and provide him who would serve the cause of science with abundant matter for research.

The two works named below\* are a striking testimony to this. Dealing alike with the subject of animal life, though on different plans, they both present a broad view of our discoveries in its regard, and of the conclusions drawn from these discoveries as to the genealogical connection of its various forms. Here, however, the resemblance ceases. While Mr. Thomson's *Animal Life* is content to set forth conclusions, Mr. Mivart in his *Types of Animal Life*, entering more fully into the evidence as forthcoming



THE MARSUPIAL MOLE (*Notoryctes*).†

in sundry representative instances, enables us to understand not only how much has been done towards the construction of a complete history of life developments, but how much more remains to do before we can speak with scientific certainty even upon points which appear most clear.

To take one example in illustration. Speaking of the relationship of different forms one to another, Mr. Thomson says,‡ “indissolubly linked to the birds are the reptiles,” and elsewhere,§ “the most reptilian, least bird-like of birds, is the oldest fossil of all, placed in a sub-class by itself—the *Archæopteryx*.”

\* *The Study of Animal Life*, by J. Arthur Thomson, M.A., F.R.S.E., &c. London: John Murray, 1892, pp. 375.

† *Types of Animal Life*, by St. George Mivart, F.R.S. London: Osgood, McIlvane & Co., 1893, pp. 374.

‡ From *Types of Animal Life*.

§ p. 9.

¶ p. 267.

But on this subject, giving us fuller information, Mr. Mivart introduces us to new problems. It has been suggested, he tells us, that birds were derived from certain extinct reptiles, and that these were akin to the fossil *Iguanodon*. He then continues: "That the iguanodon-like reptiles were in some respects like the ostrich and its congeners is not to be denied; but then the ostrich and its allies are not creatures on the road to become flying birds, but seem rather to be degraded descendants of birds which once flew. Moreover, the oldest known bird, the archæopteryx, is not at all ostrich-like, but has much more affinity with ordinary birds, save as regards its hand and tail. Thus the origin of birds is a question still open to dispute, and while welcoming gladly light from any side upon the problem, we would carefully eschew a hasty dogmatism on that, as on every other subject."\* The light for which an accomplished naturalist thus asks is what other naturalists should seek to supply, and it is not only the relationship of class and class that may serve as a subject for their investigations. Instances are numerous where the true position of a genus in its own class is still a perplexity to classifiers. Thus the crested screamer of South America has been variously assigned to such utterly different groups as the rails, the geese, and the ostriches, while our own water-ousel, who used to be thought an indubitable thrush, is now placed between the fly-catchers and the tits, and there are some who, and not without reasons appealing especially to out-of-doors naturalists, would rather consign him to the family of the wrens.

To take a few more instances from the books before us, of things yet to be discovered, why is it that, as Mr. Thomson tells us,† the insects of a certain small tract in Brazil tend to be blue, and a few miles away to be red? Whence comes the tendency to deck themselves with "eyes" which spangles the train of the peacock, the wings of the allied argus pheasant, and tail and wings alike of the peacock-pheasant? ‡ How is it, again, that so curious and complex a piece of mechanism as the fangs and venom-bag of a poisonous snake counts for so very little in the tale of development, that a poisonous snake is frequently far more closely allied to non-poisonous than to other poisonous ones?§ To this may be added the still more puzzling fact that the possession of the terrible power which makes venomous snakes the most dreadful objects in nature, appears to bring no benefit at all proportionable to the cost of manufacture. Mr. Hudson, in his *Naturalist in La Plata*, gives it as his opinion that no creatures get so little good towards the struggle for existence from a special organ of their own as do these serpents, and it is a plain fact that the non-poisonous members of the family are far more numerous and seemingly more prosperous. It is even

\* p. 95.

† p. 49.

‡ *Types of Animal Life*, pp. 69, 70.§ *Ib.*, p. 129.

asserted that when the hostile Caribs introduced into the West Indian island of St. Vincent, which contains no venomous snakes, some of the dreaded "rat-tails" of St. Lucia, in order to injure the English possessors, the intruders were promptly devoured by the indigenous black snakes, though these in our phrase are "harmless." What then can be the explanation of the enormous venom-glands of the Asiatic *Adenophis*, extending back for fully one-third of the reptile's entire length, so as to push the heart back much behind its usual place? \*

We have again, as Mr. Mivart tells us,† a very remarkable resemblance between frogs on the one hand and tortoises on the other, which, however, is clearly but an instance of the independent origin of similar structures. So, too, the deceptive appearance of size in the turtle's brain is paralleled not only in the case of two frogs but of an African rat,‡ where there can be no question of common descent.

In the case of the opossum, we are told, two different and contradictory hypotheses are suggested by one set of facts. The recently discovered marsupial mole has a pouch like the rest of its class, but turned backwards instead of forwards, that it may not act as a dredge while the animal bores through the earth. How was such a development effected, and how did the pouch perform any functions at all while it was half way between the two positions?

These are but a few samples of the mass of problems which are the direct product of our increased knowledge, and which, while they demand solution in order to confirm our theories, serve at the same time to allure the naturalist to labour by holding out the hope of making discoveries. These points, and a multitude of others, must surely be capable of settlement, but till this is received it would rather appear as though we had as yet succeeded far better in exhibiting the extent of our ignorance with regard to the inner secrets of nature, than in displaying our knowledge.

JOHN GERARD.

---



---

## TWO BOOKS OF VERSE.

WE owe our acquaintance with *Le Cahier Jaune*, a privately printed volume of poems by Mr. A. C. Benson, of Eton College, to a notice which appeared in the *Star*, in the course of which some lines from a sonnet on Gilbert White were quoted. Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, the writer of the notice, was good enough to send us the remainder of the sonnet, and through his kind offices we obtained the permission of the author to reprint it in these pages (see p. 83). The book contains several poems which we should like to quote, but space compels a short notice. Blended with the notes which characterise modern poetry, there is a true and tender appreciation of Nature which now reminds us of Wordsworth, now of Tennyson, but which is no imitation of either. Nor does Mr. Benson take his inspiration from the flowers which usually attract the poet's attention. He is as appreciative of cherry-trees as Mr. Norman Gale, and he finds a source of inspiration in the Knapweed, which surely no poet has hitherto selected as a subject for verse.

---

\* *Types of Animal Life*, p. 135.

† p. 120.

‡ p. 121.

“By copse and hedgerow, waste and wall,  
 He thrusts his cushions red ;  
 O'er burdock rank, o'er thistles tall,  
 He rears his hardy head :  
 Within, without, the strong leaves press,  
 He screens the mossy stone,  
 Lord of a narrow wilderness,  
 Self-centred and alone.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Mute sheep that pull the grasses soft,  
 Crop close and pass him by,  
 Until he stands alone, aloft,  
 With added majesty.  
 No fly so keen, no bee so bold,  
 To pierce that knotted zone,  
 He frowns as though he guarded gold,  
 And yet he garners none.”

The sonnets on Gray and Cowper are beautiful ; and the little book abounds in pictures such as this of “an English home” :—

“Deep in a hazy hollow of the down,  
 The brick-built Court in mellow squareness stood,  
 Where feathery beeches fringed the hanging wood,  
 And sighing cedars spread a carpet brown.

“Out of the elms the jetty treefolk sent  
 A clamorous welcome : while the roses made  
 Their vesper offering, and the creeper laid  
 His flaming hands about the pediment.”

The Rev. M. S. C. Rickards, whose *Lyrical Studies* we have lately received, is already known as the author of books of verse. Like his previous volumes, this one is largely occupied with natural objects, about which he writes with knowledge and sympathy. We do not find in his verses the note of distinction which is manifested in *Le Cahier Jaune*—indeed, we are inclined to think that if he were a less facile and fluent writer, Mr. Rickards would achieve better work. Many of his poems would certainly bear condensation—the “Ode to the Wood Sorrel,” for example, which is artificial and strained in sentiment, and in which “noontide” and “soon died” appear as rhymes.

---

## FIELD-PATH RAMBLES.\*

THE authors of these three little books, whose titles we quote, are fortunate in being able to put them upon the market at such an unusually favourable time as the present. Five or six weeks of continued drought have brought the fields into a most excellent condition for walking, and the publication of anything that will facilitate the enjoyment of the beauties of nature is bound to be most welcome to every healthy-minded citizen. The average Londoner, unmindful of the rural paradises which railway development has placed within his easy reach, is far too apt to be contented with the limited attractions of the metropolitan parks. If he is able now and again to break away from the monotony of bricks and mortar, the intolerable dust, and noisy boredom of London life, and is willing to make

---

\* *Field-Path Rambles in West Kent*, by Walker Miles. Second Series. Illustrated. London: R. E. Taylor and Son, 19, Old Street, E.C., 1893. Price 6d.

*Our Lanes and Meadow Paths, or Rambles in Rural Middlesex*, by H. J. Foley. *Rambles on the Herts Border*, by the same. Illustrations and map. London: Truslove and Shirley, 143, Oxford Street. Price 1s. each.

an effort to escape for a few hours, he cannot do better than buy one of these or similar guide-books, and a railway ticket, and follow out the picturesque routes indicated for his guidance. The benefits which he will derive from his excursion are too many and too obvious to be specified. Let it suffice to mention the fresh air, the sense of rest and freedom, and the ample opportunities for peaceful meditation in the lap of nature.

As to the comparative merits of the books on our list, that by Mr. Miles deals with the country lying to the south-east of London, and is most practical and precise in its directions how to avoid the high roads and follow the prettiest foot-paths. Broadly it describes two main routes from Bromley to Gravesend and to Rochester, which may be broken into sections suited to the muscular capacity of the pedestrian. Attention is called to objects of interest.

Mr. Foley has adopted a more picturesque style of writing, which sometimes rather obscures the description of the route one is following, but reference to the excellent map at the beginning of each volume speedily makes the way clear. In these maps are marked all the principal foot-paths in the district to the north-east of London, extending over an area of some eighteen by twelve miles. An immense quantity of antiquarian and other information is supplied, but we must warn the reader not to trust too implicitly to the author's botanical references. He will hunt in vain for the bee orchis at Mill Hill (p. 12); the "brilliant scarlet flowers of the dock" (p. 31) belong to the sorrel; it is certain that "each variety of the wild rose" (p. 31) is not to be found in the Brent valley; and we are decidedly sceptical as to the Willow-herb "with its beautiful crimson flowers as large as petunias" (p. 62). A little revision of this part of the work would add to its usefulness, nor would Mr. Foley's volume suffer if certain redundancies were excised. The publishers have failed to state on the title-pages the date of these two volumes and the fact that they are new editions.

ANTONY GEPP.

---

## COMMONS AND OPEN SPACES.\*

In this little pamphlet the history of our commons and open spaces is carefully traced out. The author, himself a lawyer, seeks to dispel the legal theory, which has become engrafted to a large extent in the public mind, that the rights commoners at present possess are held of the lords of the manors alone, and date from the time that these lands were granted by the kings to his under lords. That these rights can be traced back to periods far more remote than those in which the manors were parcelled out is Mr. Birkett's main contention. As instances of this he quotes a manor in Hertfordshire, Ashdown Forest, Dartmoor Forest, Malvern Chase, Epping Forest and the New Forest. In some cases several manors and villages lay in the midst of one and the same forest or waste, to which the inhabitants resorted in common to take whatever they wanted. At various periods declarations of these rights were made before Forest Courts, and the lists show them to have been practically limitless.

But the struggle to keep them has been something enormous. Time after time did the lord of the manor attempt, sometimes successfully, to wrest the rights from the commoner. With equal stubbornness did the latter strive to retain them. A short cut to the deprivation of commoners' rights was found in inclosure of the waste lands. To effect this the aid of the legislature was summoned, and statute after statute authorising inclosure of, and encroachment upon, commons and forests, was passed. Fierce contests took place between the lords' men and the commoners; and not a few rebellions, recorded in the most elementary history of England, arose from this cause.

Though inclosure by statute has now practically ceased, lords of the manor

---

\* *Commons and Open Spaces: their Origin, History and Utility, with Suggestions for facilitating their Preservation.* By Percival Birkett, Hon. Solicitor to the Commons Preservation Society, &c. C. F. Roworth, Great New Street, Fetter Lane, E.C. 8vo, 40 pp., 1893



to this day surreptitiously filch the common land. Their methods are slow but certain—a low railing, next a wire fence, and then one of stout oak—and the patch of gorse, ling and heather is shut off for ever from public gaze. To redeem it the petitioners must undertake an expensive and often ineffectual lawsuit. Here Mr. Birkett steps in with a suggestion. He proposes that an Act should be passed enabling inhabitants of a district to adopt an Act for the preservation of their commons, in the same way that they adopt the Free Libraries Act to enlighten public intelligence. Such an Act would strike a fatal blow at the encroachment system. For what has that system done? Words cannot measure its evil effect. Where it has been in force in the country side it has driven the peasants to the town, for every acre encroached upon means so much less fuel for the cottager, so much less pasturage and litter for his beast. Daily do the trains bring the labourer from the eastern counties to London in search of work, but the New Forest squatter need never leave his home. The harmful results of past and present encroachment in the neighbourhood of large towns are but too patent. Enfield Chase, Finchley and Hounslow Commons, are such only in name, and in reality strongholds of the suburban jerry-builder. The lord of the manor still asserts his right to enclose Fortune Green at thickly populated West Hampstead; and Hayes Common to the south-east of the metropolis was the scene of stealthy encroachment no great while back. A letter recently written by that warm friend of the cause of open spaces, Miss Octavia Hill, which is quoted here by her permission, forms a striking commentary on the whole subject. It opens up a side of the question upon which Mr. Birkett has not touched—the fact that these encroachments on commons and footpaths triumph for want of local opposition.

Let an ancient footpath be threatened, and “a meeting of the inhabitants in vestry is called to decide on whether or no it is to be closed; the law allows the question to be decided by what is called the plural vote, unless anybody has spirit, knowledge, and money enough to oppose at quarter sessions. The plural vote means that every man has votes according to the value of his property. The matter to be decided involves no expenditure of rates, where a man who pays most may have right to more weight. It is a question where he who has least land is most concerned, yet a £50 assessment gives one vote, and every £25 additional assessment gives an additional vote, with a maximum of six. So that this year we have a footpath being closed—and legally closed—where 75 persons voted against the closing, and 46 for it; for the 46 cast 103 votes.” Pending alteration in the law, the only thing that remains to be done is to intensify local opposition by meetings, speeches and otherwise. By that means why should not the 75 be doubled and the footpath saved?

One important aspect with regard to open spaces has been overlooked by Mr. Birkett. The sorry part played till lately by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests with regard to the Royal Parks and other domains has been matter of indignant comment. Mr. Birkett states, truly, that the War Department “thought it would be a nice thing to place a rifle range in the New Forest,” but he fails to mention that the Woods and Forests Commissioners had a share in the transaction. For the still deplorable condition of Kew Ait, the latter, too, are responsible.

Again, let us suppose that by order of the same body Regent's Park and Richmond Park were to be shut up to-morrow. Words could not describe the just and mighty outcry that would arise; illimitable would be the number of indignant epistles daily appearing in the newspapers; crowded the meetings nightly held in our public assembly rooms to utter one and the same protest, and to pass unanimously one and the same resolution against such an act of tyranny. The recent happy issue of the New Forest difficulty has well-nigh made such a contingency impossible; so far as the Royal Parks are concerned, the gate once open can never be shut. But what about the gate that is unopened?

Let us pass down the High Street of Kingston-on-Thames. The once quaint old borough is now sharing the fate of all neighbour towns and villages within twelve miles of the City. Ugly accretions in the shape of monotonous rows of modern villas are hemming in the ancient market-place, and the venerable church tower that keeps guard over “Father Thames.” The river crossed, we soon find ourselves free of the houses, in a road overarched, it is true, with trees, but flanked on either side with ominously high walls and fences. A pleasant walk, indeed, it is along this road on the evening of one of those rare days in spring, which, while

they last, make our climate a paradise. Pleasanter still would it be if those lofty walls could be scaled, the barred gates opened, and leave be given to stroll at large through the broad meads beyond stretching down to the Thames. Hampton Court Paddocks they are called, but Hampton Court Park would be a nobler name. By all means let the dignified pensioners who dwell in the apartments of the once royal palace continue to enjoy the pleasure of wandering in the ample grounds around them, but let them share their delight with the outer world, and especially that part of it which lies just across the stream in the crowded suburbs of Kingston and Surbiton.

It was but the other day, and since the above was written, that a deputation of the leading inhabitants waited on Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, with a petition that the paddocks might be thrown open to the public, and the result was a promise that he would use his best endeavour, in the proper quarter, to secure the opening of as much of the domain as was possible. Such a friend of the Open Spaces Movement as the present First Commissioner of Works may safely be relied upon to give the matter the fullest consideration—a consideration that will surely lead to one issue only—the abolition of such an anomaly as a royal park open to a select few and rigorously barred against the many.

Here we leave the subject—one fraught with deep interest, for it concerns the welfare of the nation at large. Much more might have been said, but our only endeavour has been to throw a side light on some of the difficulties, encouragements, hopes, and fears, of those who work in the cause of Open Spaces.

ARCHIBALD CLARKE.

## SELBORNIANA.

**To Church Decorators.**—May I be allowed to protest against what seems to me to be a most undesirable novelty in church decoration? I allude to the digging up of primrose plants—roots, leaves, flowers and all—and using them embedded in moss for the adornment of the base of the font. The eventual fate of the unhappy flowers I do not know, but as they were used in a town church, it is not unlikely that they were simply thrown away.

No one likes to see a church properly decorated more than I do, and of all decorations none are more charming and cheering than those of the Easter festival, coming, as they do, after the gloom of Lent; but surely a line might be drawn at the use of cut flowers, or of ordinary plants in pots. Moreover, it is quite possible that the primrose roots in question were obtained without the consent of the person on whose land they grew, and were like some holly, of which an old-fashioned clerk once said in my hearing—"That's got for me, and I never asks no questions."

JULIAN G. TUCK.

*Tostock Rectory, Bury St. Edmunds.*

**Easter Custom at Capri.**—The following extract from a letter just received from Capri may prove of interest:—

"They have a curious custom here, which I believe is peculiar to Capri. On the Saturday in Holy Week, at the High Mass, the people bring little birds. When the 'Gloria' begins they let them all fly in the church as a symbol of the Resurrection. It sounds so pretty and poetical, but we went to see it, and it was so sad to see the poor little birds—some held in pocket-handkerchiefs, some stuffed into boys' pockets, others pinched up in their hands, or held by the legs and allowed to flutter their wings; some could not fly when they were let out, and fell down to the ground; but many flew up to the roof of the church, trying to perch here and there. What happens to them I do not know, as the windows do not open. They say the priests catch them and eat them! There are such lovely little birds here, and they shoot them all. A man brought a quantity (dead) to sell the other day—such lovely little things! and among them three hoopoes."

Is there no branch of the Society in Italy which might use its influence to stop the wholesale slaughter of the lovely little creatures?

*Newhouse, Salisbury.*

MARY EYRE MATCHAM.

**A Merited Rebuke.**—The *Hackney Mercury* of April 8th, always Selbornian, contains the following remonstrance concerning an item in an industrial exhibition lately held at Dalston. The exhibit “consisted of three enormous cases, the butterflies in which were so arranged as to represent respectively a star, a catherine wheel, and an heraldic device. To say with any degree of accuracy what number of insects—and portions of insects—must have been used in the preparation of even one of these would be well nigh impossible, but we should not be very far wrong in saying that they could be reckoned by thousands. As a monument of industry and a marvel of constructive workmanship we have certainly never seen their equal, the perfect symmetry of the insects reminding one of nothing so much as the carpet bedding which is so familiar a feature of our public parks. But what a terrible carnage is represented by the sum total of these exhibits, and *cui bono?* Nameless, and in many cases mutilated and in unnatural positions, these insects are valueless as an aid to scientific research, and, so far as we can see, can serve no earthly purpose than that of giving evidence of indomitable perseverance and skill at the expense of some of the frailest of God’s creatures. It is just this wholesale and wanton slaughter of Nature’s choicest ornaments that the Selborne Society seeks to prevent a practice which in some cases—notably the beautiful swallowtail butterfly—has resulted in the partial extinction of the species.”

**A Selborne Lecture.**—On Tuesday, April 11th, at a meeting of the Young Men’s Society in connection with Trinity Presbyterian Church, Wimbledon, Mr. G. W. Kirkaldy read an essay on “Gilbert White of Selborne.” The essayist briefly sketched White’s life history, and gave a description of the village and the more outlying parts of the parish; also a notice of the various animals mentioned by White in his letters. Reference was made to the Selborne Society and the good work it was doing, and prospectuses were distributed among the auditors.

**The Egret Again.**—The *Cornhill Magazine* for April speaks of “the miserable fate that awaits many a beautiful little egret just when, in its fairest dress, it sits on the nest. One feather firm, we are told, has as many as fifty men employed in the nesting season to secure those feathers that milliners call aigrettes, which are so much worn in women’s bonnets. Some will tell you that these are chiefly manufactured from goose quills. That is true of the cheaper ones, but the aigrette in a lady’s bonnet is the crowning beauty of an egret mother. The collector waits till she is on her nest, her little breast full of peace, and the young just hatched, so that the mother will not leave them easily, though alarmed. He ruthlessly seizes her, tears off her crowning plumes and her wings, and then throws her down, gasping, torn and fluttering, to die beside her little ones, who, deprived of her fostering care, die also miserably. Lately, at a meeting of anti-vivisectionists, it was a curious instance of ‘the evil wrought through want of thought’ that many of the ladies protesting against the cruelty of vivisection wore those very egret plumes in their bonnets.”

**Thrushes and Drink.**—We have received an extremely satisfactory assurance from the London County Council that it is “the desire of the Parks Committee of the Council to take every possible step to preserve bird and animal life in the parks under their control.” The Chief Officer of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Department asks for such information as will enable him to investigate the case to which we referred at p. 78. Can any reader supply this?

**Lantern Slides** (pp. 55, 77).—I do not know if it would be possible to photograph cases of birds successfully, but if so I cannot imagine a more interesting lecture than one that could be illustrated by numbers of the cases of birds to be seen at the little museum belonging to Mr. Hart, of Christchurch, Hants. The birds are just as you would see them in life—the stone-chat on the top of a furze bush, the nest of eggs in the midst of the bush, and the identical piece of turf the bush grew in at the bottom of the case; the ringed plover on the pebbly beach, her four babies huddled together, evidently about to disappear in the sand to avoid the intruder; the nightjar nestling amid the heather, so like it that one may tread on it almost without seeing it; the peregrine in the haunt it has frequented for at

least a century, the exact facsimile of its present surroundings in the cliff which Mr. Hart knows so well, and has so tenderly watched for many years. And so I might go on but for space. I would fain take all nature-lovers to see this collection, and if possible to hear the thrilling tales of bird life learned in Mr. Hart's own experience. The next best thing to this is to have lantern slides of them.

*Bournemouth.*

M. E. COWL.

[The beautiful cases of birds similarly treated in the Natural History Museum would serve admirably for reproduction on slides. We hope our correspondent will not fail to pay these a visit when she is next in town.—ED. *N.V.*]

**A Plea for the Hare.**—The agitation about the Royal buckhounds and the hunted hind still seems, from paragraphs which appear in the press from time to time, to hold its ground. There exists, however, a far worse form of cruelty, which, so far as I know, is allowed to pass unnoticed. I allude to the hunting of hares late in the season. That this wrong is wrought solely and entirely by want of thought is not questioned for a moment. The pack of beagles which hunts the country lying in the neighbourhood of Eton belongs to a community who are true gentlemen all round. Were they convinced of the unfairness of their action, it is certain that they would be the last to practise it. Still, year after year, the cruelty goes on, unheeded and unchecked. For the poor hunted hare there is neither pity nor closure; and up to the latest days in March, when the hare is breeding and often is almost too heavy to run, she still is hunted. This very season, the last time the beagles were out in the fields of the Dorney and Burnham Liberties happened indeed to be the day after the Easter holidays had commenced. It is, therefore, most likely that the master of the pack, being absent, knew nothing about it.

Hares are fond of wallflowers, and sometimes they feed too freely upon them when they run into the garden from the open fields. But we do not grudge them: and to discover a hare couched snugly in the orchard grass on a sunny March morning is always a delight, since it gives assurance to the hope that our territory is often as a city of refuge to the scared and panting creatures.

MARCH HARE.

**Domestication of Wood Pigeons** (p. 38).—I was much interested in Mr. J. Young's letter, but the writer confounds "domesticating" with "taming." By constant care and attention he *tamed* his young wood pigeons, but they were as far as ever from being *domesticated*. As in a similar case recorded by Yarrell, the eggs laid were unproductive, but, had they been fertile, unless subjected to the same treatment as their parents, the young would undoubtedly, when the breeding time arrived, have flown away, seeking "fresh woods and pastures new," never to return. So, if confined and continuing to breed, would their children and their children's children to *any* generation. A wild bird may be *tamed*, but he never can be *domesticated*.

Should Mr. Young, however, again bring up young wood pigeons from the nest, I venture to offer him a hint. He says that in feeding them he "forced boiled peas down their throats." In so doing he must have forced their delicate beaks asunder, for I am certain that they would never have voluntarily opened them, and I wonder that he did not dislocate the jaw or break the soft beak in so doing. Now the pigeon feeds its young in a manner the exact opposite to that of *any* other bird. Yarrell says: "The parent birds insert their own beak between the mandibles of the young bird, thus feeding them with a pulpy mass already half-digested." This is entirely wrong. The *young* birds insert *their* mandibles into those of the old ones, forcing their heads half down the mother's throat, and frequently making the edges bleed in their frantic efforts to get at their food. Fifty years ago I pointed this out to Yarrell, but though a wonderful compiler he was not much of a naturalist, and as he could not find the fact recorded in any *book* he simply ignored it, and I daresay the error has been repeated in after editions of his really valuable work. Other differences are these: (1) The pigeon has no gall-bladder; (2) it *drinks*, not like birds in general, lifting up their heads to let the water trickle down, but as the beasts do, by suction. Its mode of feeding its young I have mentioned. The droppings, again, are void of offence, and are used, practically, as lining for the slight fabric that does duty for a nest, rendering it warm and solid when the young are hatched. Other differences there are, but to class the bird amongst the Rasores, as Yarrell does,

is manifestly absurd. This class, of which our barndoor fowls are types—as their name (scratchers) implies—get their living and feed their young by *scratching* in the earth. Pigeons have weak legs and toes, quite useless for scratching or running, in which the Rasores—partridges, pheasants, &c. for instance—excel. Birds of that class roost and nest on the ground—pigeons on trees. The Rasores lay many eggs—pigeons two only. The Rasores are polygamous—pigeons monogamous. In fact, Mr. Yarrell might just as well have classed them with the Falconide or the Corvidæ as with the Rasores, with which they have not any one point of affinity.

GEORGE ROOPER.

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Rooks in Kensington Gardens.**—Mr. T. Digby Pigott, whose book on London birds we noticed last December, writes to the *Times*:—"If, in these crowded days, you can spare a corner in your columns to record proceedings of a London Parliament other than that now occupied with high matters at Westminster, it may interest some of your readers to learn—if they have not already discovered the fact for themselves—that the rooks have decreed that nesting is again to be allowed in Kensington Gardens.

"The Kensington rookery in its palmy days contained a hundred nests or more; and as lately as 1878 or 1879 from thirty to forty were commonly to be counted. But the wholesale felling of ancestral elms a few years ago was a slight which could not be passed over, and since then—until last year, when one pair built obscurely in the south-west corner—not a rook has, I believe, bred in the Gardens. At the present time there are eleven nests in a more or less 'forward state of preparation;' and, as the sun set behind the Palace this evening, some fifteen couples were indulging in their usual games in the air before settling in for the night.

"The tribal laws which regulate the family affairs of rooks are stringent and rigidly enforced; and though an inexperienced pair may every now and then be foolish enough to fancy themselves free to build outside the bounds prescribed, it is commonly only to learn to their cost that, with birds, laws are made to be obeyed. The numbers of the new colony, the abandonment of the last year's nest in the corner, and the bold occupation of the old site, are proofs presumptive that the return of the exiles is with the sanction of constituted authority, and we may look forward with confidence to seeing the re-established rookery increased in size next spring."

**Rooks at Hampstead.**—The suggestion that a census should be taken of all new nests this year in London rookeries is a good one, but I am inclined to think that in some of the larger rookeries it would be somewhat difficult to carry out. A strict observation would have to be made daily, for rooks are most capricious in their nesting operations, often beginning a nest, and pulling it to pieces when finished, or deserting it for another locality. They also make use of the last season's nests, which they often renovate; in some instances they build on the top of one of the old nests, making it a difficult matter to know whether it is inhabited or not. During the last few years I have noticed a strong migratory tendency among the rooks of Hampstead. The largest rookery at present is close to the High Street and now contains fourteen nests, all of which appear to be inhabited. This rookery two or three years ago was almost deserted, when several new nests appeared in the trees at the bottom of Haverstock Hill, built no doubt by the recruits from Hampstead. Not finding this place all they desired they have been gradually coming back to Hampstead, and this year there has not been one nest made at Haverstock Hill. Last year for the first time three nests were built in the elms at the top of the grove near the White Stone Pond, Hampstead, which seemed a suitable place for a rookery to be established; but for reasons known to themselves they have this year deserted the place, and have

now established themselves in the trees by Christ Church, a few hundred yards away, where to-day I counted eight new nests. In the early spring several rooks were to be seen every day surveying the trees in Gainsbury Gardens, not far away, and commenced to build several nests, but suddenly in one of their capricious moods they forsook the place for the trees at Christ Church, and only one solitary nest remains. The total number of nests now occupied in Hampstead is twenty-three, being six to eight more than last year.

JAMES E. WHITING.

**Toad infested with Larvæ.**—During the summer of 1891, whilst walking down a Surrey lane near Redhill, I came across a toad which, on my approach, assumed a very curious attitude, placing its head between its front legs and under its body, precisely as though it was about to turn a somersault. On taking it up and examining it, I observed that its nose was sore and bleeding, and I concluded some cat or dog had been attacking it. Placing the poor creature in my handbag, I brought it home, gave it a bath, and turned it into the back garden, expecting to find it better in the morning. On carefully examining it again I found it to be much worse, and that its nostrils were filled and partly eaten away by the larvæ of some dipterous insect. Getting a pair of fine forceps, I extracted no less than eleven large larvæ from the poor creature's head. These eleven larvæ had doubtless caused the poor animal much pain and injury, for it never seemed to enjoy vigorous health afterwards, eventually dying last month. I would like to know if toads are subject to the attacks of dipterous insects, and what is the particular species which thus attacks them.

ROBERT CORNER.

[Mr. W. F. Kirby has kindly supplied us with the following note:—"Many accounts have been published of frogs and toads having been found with their heads infested with dipterous larvæ on the Continent, chiefly in France and Belgium. The fly is called *Lucilia bufonivora*, but is believed to be identical with *L. sylvorum*, a species found in most parts of Europe, including England. It is, however, very probable that more than one species attacks frogs and toads in this manner, and I think it is still undecided whether they attack healthy or only diseased or injured individuals. The *Entomologists' Monthly Magazine* for January, 1892, contains a paper on the subject of dipterous larvæ attacking toads in Wales. In this case the insect appears to have been a species of *Calliphora* (blowfly), and not a *Lucilia* (flesh-fly)."—ED. N.N.]

**Early Hawthorn Buds.**—I enclose some well-developed buds of hawthorn blossom, gathered from the west side of a hedge. Is not this most unusual for March? Gooseberries are in bloom; larches are green and ornamented with scarlet cones well formed.

E. M. BELL IRVING.

Mayfield, Sussex.

**Curious Behaviour of a Great Tit.**—On Sunday morning, March 19th, a great tit was observed pecking and tapping at a passage window, and from that time up to the present date (April 10th) he has come daily at dawn, and continued his operation of flying up and down and pecking at the glass. The bird seems to have a preference for this passage window, before which there is continual passing to and fro, but he often visits others, and until late afternoon is never long absent from the house. Once the tit came into a dressing-room and rested in a boot, and has twice besides entered the house for a few minutes, but he showed no inclination to stay, and he seems to prefer closed to open windows. The bird takes no notice of scraps of fat, &c., hung out for him, and unless he comes after insects invisible to the human eye, we are quite at a loss to discover his object. It has been suggested that as the bird seems solitary, he is attracted by his own reflection in the window. Can any other reasons be suggested for the bird's conduct?

A. F. B.

Rogale Vicarage, Petersfield.

**Cockchafers** (p. 57).—A species of cockchafer, locally termed "May-bugs," swarmed last summer about the high ground at Hextable, in North Kent, appearing in the evening after sun down round the bushes and trees, and falling down the chimneys of the house where I resided.

A. COCKS.

Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells.

**Sagacity of a Sow.**—We are indebted to the owner of this intelligent sow for the following account:—"Before railway communication was laid to Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada, the settlers were very careful to be well supplied with live stock, and the many and large farms in the Saskatchewan District possessed some very fine specimens of domestic animals. The subject of this anecdote, however, was remarkable neither for breed, appearance or any other animal qualifications. She was a sow, whose owners, as is often the case with the Irish peasantry, made a pet of and spoiled her. One day a bucket of bran mash was brought to the yard to the cow, waiting patiently for her daily portion. The sow showed herself slighted at not being served first, and grunted and sniffed around several times, vainly trying to get her nose near the coveted food. After a time she was seen to disappear, and in a few moments returned with as much sweet hay as she could carry in her mouth. She placed the hay on the ground close to the bucket, when 'Daisy' the cow immediately lifted her head to see whether she could have anything better than bran. This was all piggy wanted: she took possession of the food, and soon finished the contents of the bucket in spite of poke, pushes, &c., from the disappointed and vanquished cow."

**The Natterjack Toad** (pp. 58, 78).—The only toad found in Ireland is the Natterjack or Cornish toad, and this only in one limited district at the east end of Dingle Bay. The district is known as Ross Begh; thirty years ago it was plentiful there, and doubtless it is so still; this is at the south side of Dingle Bay, but I have been told that the toad is also found at the northern side. Our common brown toad is not a native of Ireland, and there is a tradition, although a very doubtful one, that the frog was introduced in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by some of the professors of Trinity College, Dublin, who brought the spawn from England and placed it in the ditches in the College Parks, having previously failed in the introduction of live frogs. There is no snake of any species known in Ireland; the green lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) is occasionally found, and the smooth newt is common in the midland counties. I am not aware of the warted newt being a native, the mole is not a native, the badger is very rare, and the black rat, if not extinct, is very nearly so.

ROBT. J. LECKY.

**Spring Flowers at Bath.**—As the time of the flowering of plants affords one of the best indications of the mildness or otherwise of the season, and as the glorious spring weather we have been enjoying of late is quite out of the common, I have jotted down a few notes of flowers which I have seen or gathered within the last few weeks in the neighbourhood of Bath, which I venture to send thinking that they may be useful for reference in years to come. On Good Friday, March 31st, I observed in flower between Bath and Kelston, ground ivy, ladysmock, red campion; blackthorn and bullace were in full flower in the hedgerows, and gave an indescribable charm to a very pretty landscape. Daffodils and marsh marigolds have been in flower in St. Catherine's Valley for more than a month. Our charming little park is looking lovely at the present time. The almond trees have been in flower for some ten days. Cherry trees, both single and double flowered, are displaying an abundance of bloom. Yesterday, April 5th, I observed Darwin's barberry (*Berberis Darwinii*), *Pyrus japonica* and the purple magnolia (*Magnolia purpurea*) in flower. The Glastonbury thorns (*Crataegus Oxyacantha*, var. *præcox*) will soon be in flower. The white petals, though not yet unfolded, are visible. These early thorns are quite a fortnight in advance of the other whitethorns in the park. The following extract from Gilbert White's *Selborne* will serve to show the normal time of the flowering of some of the plants referred to.

"Naturalists' Calendar:—Daffodil fl. February 24th, April 2nd. Marsh Marigold fl. March 20th, April 14th. Wild Cherry fl. April 18th, May 12th. Barberry Tree fl. May 17th, May 26th. Ground Ivy fl. April 3rd, May 15th."

Bath.

W. G. WHEATCROFT.

**A Pet Lamb.**—Last March the shepherd brought home two little lambs. They were half-starved little things; their mother had been unable to stand, and was now dead. They were kept warm and dry in a small shed and fed by hand

from a bottle of milk. One of them, however, grew gradually weaker and was soon quite prostrate. The little sister tried in vain to make her little companion come out in the sun, and then stood bleating at the gate. "Lily" (as the children called her) could nibble a little grass, and might be seen daily on the Green. She is one year and one month old now, and her fleece is splendid. She follows the children up and down the road, walks demurely at the side when the children walk in procession from the school gate to the lych gate of the church yard, and seems quite hurt and astonished at being turned back there. If the school-gate be left open, she comes bleating up the path and into the school-room if she finds the door open. She wears a blue ribbon and a bell, and the children pet her and hug and kiss her, and save their money to buy her "sweets," of which she is very fond. She feeds on the Green, but is fed with maize twice a day. If she is hungry she finds her way into the house and into the pantry and "asks" for food, even sniffing at the bread-pan. In the dinner-hour she has gambols with the children on the Green. She runs after them and then leaps in the air for pure fun. When she finds the children are going into school, and the gate is shut in her face, she gallops off home and calls out for someone to come out and talk to her. If any *strange* hens should wander into her little yard she knows them to be intruders (though there are many hens), and promptly drives them out. She follows the children up and down the lane, and sometimes has to be shut up in the yard to keep her from going with them to Aylesbury! In the holidays she misses the children, and stands bleating at the school gate. Indeed, last Christmas the children told me, "Lily missed you so much, Governess, she would not eat her food." It was certainly curious that when she failed to find the children in the school, she went over to the church-yard gate and listened there for them. And on Sunday evening, when all the folks are gone to church or for a walk away from the village, Lily goes disconsolately up and down in front of the cottages, bleating.

AGNES W. HARTE.

*Hulcote, Aylesbury.*

**Disappearance of Rooks' Nests** (p. 36).—There was formerly a large and historic rookery in the old elms of Wombwell Park, near Gravesend. In 1887 the rooks took their departure, and removed by degrees every vestige of their nests. As during the succeeding year a new rookery was formed in the neighbourhood of Southfleet, about a mile distant, it is presumable that at least part of the rooks settled there, but it has been supposed that some of them joined another rookery in the ground of Perrock Hall, a mile, or rather more, to the east of their ancient settlement. Various were the conjectures as to the cause of this migration, but I think a very probable one is that the rooks were offended at the noise that attended some festivities held in the Park on the occasion of Her Majesty's Jubilee.

*Gravesend.*

J. R. S. CLIFFORD.

**Hardiness of Canaries.**—I have had these last two winters a proof of the hardiness of canaries. I turned out a large number of these birds into an aviary in my garden after the breeding season was over, and allowed them to remain there until the spring. It is only now that I have brought them into the house, and put them in cages for pairing. I should say that the aviary, made of thick wire, is placed against a wall, the roof only partially covered, and the outer side wholly exposed. This last winter in its earlier part was very severe, but though there was a hard frost, and snow was driven through the wire, and a coating of ice lay on the drinking pans, the canaries did not suffer, and have been singing as merrily for some months just as though there were no winter in the world, and the season was eternal spring. Last summer I left some pairs in the aviary, and they built nests, laid eggs, and hatched their young. As there were other birds in the aviary, bullfinches, chaffinches, and greenfinches, the canaries were a good deal disturbed, and their nests were sometimes pulled to pieces, so that I cannot say they were as successful in rearing their young as they are when placed in separate cages, two and two. This year I have only left one pair in the aviary, and there are in it fewer English birds, for, strange to say, though what are considered the more delicate birds survived the wind and rain and snow, two or three goldfinches and chaffinches, and one bullfinch, died. It is an interesting question whether canaries could be so acclimatised as to live out altogether in the open air in this country, though one fears they might be unable



to find proper food and sufficient for their wants, and no doubt they would meet with enemies from which they would find a difficulty in escaping, while their colour would expose them to the cruelty of boys, and the snare of the bird-catcher.

CHARLES D. BELL, D.D.

*The Rectory, Cheltenham.*

**Nightingales in Surrey.**—I have been reading Charles Kingsley's "A Charm of Birds" in his *Lyse Idylls*, which has created a desire to hear the nightingale—a pleasure denied us Northerners. As I hope to spend the third week of May "tramping" about Surrey, could you tell me through the pages of your Magazine any likely places where I might hear Philomel?

*North Shields.*

J. DAWSON.

[We submitted our correspondent's inquiry to Mr. J. E. Harting, who kindly sends the following reply. We believe nightingales may still be heard in Kew Gardens. "Your correspondent should buy a copy of the late Louis Jennings's pleasant volume *Field Paths and Green Lanes; being country walks, chiefly in Surrey and Sussex*, published by Murray, and if he will follow the routes indicated in chap. xvii.—Reigate, Gatton Park, and Pilgrim's Way; and chap. xix.—Ewhurst, Albury and Chilworth, he will doubtless have many opportunities of hearing the nightingale, provided that the weather be propitious, and not windy. These birds like the still warm weather best, and are to be looked for in tangled thickets and copses rather than in open woods, and especially in proximity to streams with woody banks."]

## OFFICIAL NOTICES.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.**—The date of the Annual General Meeting of the Society has been altered to Wednesday, May 10th, when it will be held at the rooms of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, at 8 o'clock. An address will be given by the President-elect, and it is hoped that Sir Richard Temple and other prominent Selbornians will be present. The rooms of the Royal Society of British Artists now contain the Spring Exhibition of pictures, which will be open to members and their friends. Mr. J. M. Coward, assisted by some well-known artistes, has kindly undertaken to give a concert during the evening. The Council hopes that all members who may be in town will make a point of being present.

**EXCURSION TO SELBORNE, JUNE 24TH.**—Tickets may now be had of the Secretary, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. For the railway journey, 4s.; for luncheon, 2s. 6d.; for the ride, 4s. 6d. Tickets for the ride will be transferable. Two persons can take one between them and each ride one way. It is absolutely necessary for the efficient working of the excursion that early notice should be given to the Secretary by persons wishing to join. Applications should in every case be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The excursion is not restricted to members of the Society. Any person introduced by a Selbornian will be welcomed.

**BADGE.**—Many members have thought it desirable that they should have some badge which may be worn on field days, general meetings, conversaciones, &c. The Council have adopted the forget-me-not as a suitable token, and this has been woven into a design as the badge of the Selborne Society. The Council hopes that as many members as possible will order them at an early date, so that they may receive them in time for excursion and general meeting. Orders to be sent through local secretaries to Mr. Fullwood, Coomb House, Stanmore Road, Richmond, S.W., or in the case of members unattached to branches, to the Secretary, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. The price of the brooch will be 3s., and of the pin 1s. 6d.

A. J. WESTERN, *Secretary.*

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY.

THE object of the Selborne Society is to unite lovers of Nature for the following purposes :—

The protection from unnecessary destruction of Wild Birds, Animals and Plants ;

The protection of places and objects of Antiquarian Interest or Natural Beauty ;  
The promotion of the Study of Natural History.

The *minimum* Annual Subscription (which entitles the subscriber to a monthly copy of the Society's Magazine) is 2s. 6d.

All particulars as to membership may be obtained from the Secretary of the Selborne Society, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**J. L. Brain.**—(1) *Ramulina farinacea* ; (2) *Peltigera canina* (a lichen, not a fungus) ; (3) *Nectria cinnabarina*. It is difficult to answer your other question, except by saying that all such things are "of interest."

**W. J. S.**—It is impossible to guess in the absence of specimens ; but the stings of the same insects differ greatly in virulence at different times.

**S. P. H.**—Yes, there is some latitude in the use of the terms, and individual exceptions (as the pimpernel you send) often occur.

**Wackford.**—We are afraid there is no royal road to the knowledge which you seek ; the only way is to become well acquainted with the common objects, and then to obtain some recognised text book.

**E. J. Corke.**—It is Lamb's Lettuce.

**L. L.**—The Balsam Poplar (*Populus balsamifera*).

**E. H. C.**—Yes, the Angora and Persian cats are practically the same, though the latter has a longer tail and larger head. See Mr. Harrison Weir's *Our Cats*, reviewed in NATURE NOTES for September, 1890. We are not aware that "frogs are the common enemies of toads."

**F. G. S.**—It was the Blackthorn (which has been remarkably fine this year), not the Hawthorn, which you saw in full bloom on April 5th.

**M. A. S.**—Kindly send your name and address.

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

Queries on any points connected with Botany, Zoology, or other branches of Natural History, will be answered ; but the Editor cannot undertake to reply through the post, even when a stamp is enclosed for the purpose. Specimens sent for identification will be named, if sent carefully packed and in good condition, *and if sent to the Editor*, but we cannot undertake to return them.

We shall be glad to notice any books bearing upon Natural History in any of its branches, and to direct attention to magazine articles of the same kind, if these are sent to us. Publishers will confer a favour upon our readers if they will always state the *price* of any volumes they may send, in order that it may be quoted in the notice. This addition is much appreciated by our readers, and is desirable in the interest of the volumes themselves.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business, as well as the names of those wishing to join the proposed excursion to Selborne on June 24th, should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

No. 42.

JUNE, 1893.

VOL. IV.

---

### A VISIT TO SELBORNE.



IT had long been my desire to visit Selborne and see the home of Gilbert White, the church, the village, and all the surroundings of his interesting life. It was therefore with a keen sense of pleasure that I was able, this spring, to carry out that desire.

Starting from the Royal Anchor Hotel at Liphook, a charmingly quaint old hostelry, where a truly Selbornian spirit reigns, we were soon winding our way through the shades of Woolmer Forest. The pine trees and the yellow gorse filling the air with their rich spicy fragrance, drawn out by a brilliant sun, while a slight blue haze gave a fuller beauty to the lovely scenery around. Woolmer Forest is said to extend seven miles in length, and takes its name from Wolf's-Mere, pointing back to a time when no doubt wolves existed here; the local names of Cranmer and Hogmer have a similar origin, although cranes and wild boars have long ceased to exist in our island.

The prolonged drought did not seem to have affected Woolmer pond, which has an area of sixty-six acres, and is a favourite winter resort of many kinds of wild fowl. To the left we see a tree-crowned height, called Hollywater Clump; well-grown ancient hollies seem, indeed, to abound in this region, and doubtless give their name to the little hamlet we are passing through. We duly visited Blackmoor church, erected by Lord Selborne, to whose liberality also the vicarage, schools, and neat red-brick cottages for the villagers are due.

Through pleasant lanes, decked with flowering hawthorn, and banks of primroses, violets, and speedwell, we made our way for eight miles, till we drove into Selborne village. The great yew tree in the churchyard is indeed a marvellous patriarch,

measuring twenty-six feet round its massive trunk—so at least declared our guide, but Gilbert White gives its girth as being twenty-three to twenty-five feet; it would be interesting to know if three feet in a century is the usual rate of this tree's increase in size. One cannot but look with deep interest at a tree which may have numbered thirteen hundred years of existence,



and is still, apparently, in vigorous health. In the west wall of the church the masons have inserted small pieces of ironstone in the plaster between the courses of stone, giving a curious spotted effect to the wall.\*

---

[\* White thus refers to this in his fifth letter to Pennant: — “From a notion of rendering their work the more elegant, and giving it a finish, masons chip this stone into small fragments about the size of the head of a large nail, and then stick the pieces into the wet mortar, along the joints of their free-stone walls. This embellishment carries an odd appearance, and has occasioned strangers sometimes to ask us pleasantly, ‘whether we fastened our walls together with tenpenny nails.’”—Ed. *N.A.*]

After careful examination of all the points of interest in this ancient church, we went round the outside, and saw the last resting-place of Gilbert White. In a simple, grass-covered grave, with a plain, grey headstone, lies the good man whose reverent love of the Creator's handiwork has led to his name being held in affectionate remembrance by all true naturalists. Our next visit was to his house, where, by the great kindness and courtesy of its present owners, we were shown the various rooms, the private study, the ancient kitchen and hall, each in perfect order, evidently preserved with reverent care in their original condition.



Perhaps most delightful of all was our walk through the garden, where the fine old trees, lit up by the evening sun, threw their long shadows on the soft turf. The vivid tints of green, varied by the brown unopened buds of some of the later beeches in the Hanger, made a lovely picture. We were shown the ancient sundial, a venerable looking stone pillar, and the narrow brick path across the lawn by which Gilbert White was able on dewy mornings to reach, dry-shod, the little summer-house where he would sit in quietude, observing the habits of birds as they flew to and fro between the garden and the Hanger. The summerhouse, alas! has been pulled down, to the great regret of the present owner of "The Wakes."

The wych elm mentioned in the history of Selborne still exists in great beauty and vigour, a wonderful instance of root vitality. The original tree became hollow from extreme age,

and broke down with the weight of its own foliage; but after the fashion of olive trees abroad, the root has sent up a multitude of branches, which now form a tree of profuse foliage sixty feet across. It seems to have taken a new lease of life, and may again go on to a green old age. It was hard to say farewell to such a lovely spot; the ivy-clad house, with its touching associations; the peaceful garden, bathed in sunlight; the pleasant converse as we paced to and fro beneath the grand old trees, will ever remain amongst my happiest memories.

On our homeward drive we passed through the village of Greatham, and there I was glad to see numbers of sand martins, busily at work in a yellow sandstone quarry. Gilbert White speaks of several colonies of these birds in the sand-banks of Woolmer Forest, but does not happen to mention this one, which is close to the high road, and extensively populated by these interesting birds. Further on we came to the wide open heaths, where, at certain times in the year, the soldiers from Aldershot are encamped. They have left a trace of their presence in a certain bridge of most curious construction, made by them in their leisure time. It is thrown across a valley in the woods, and is made entirely of fir trunks, cut down near by, and braced together so as to form a firm substantial structure of picturesque appearance. The camp is quiet enough at this season, tenanted only by partridges and pheasants, which were running about quite at their ease, not at all disturbed by the sound of passing wheels.

Our pleasant day is nearly over, and as we drive up under the shade of the mighty chestnut which graces the front of our hotel, we feel we have had an ideal day of pure enjoyment, long to be remembered.

ELIZA BRIGHTWEN.

[For the two illustrations accompanying this paper we are indebted to the kindness of Mr. E. J. Appleby, the Librarian of the Bath Branch of the Selborne Society.—Ed. *N.N.*]

### GILBERT WHITE'S ANCESTORS.

[The Earl of Stamford has kindly sent us the following notes of that portion of his speech at the Annual Meeting of the Selborne Society which referred to the ancestry of Gilbert White. The facts have, we believe, not hitherto been published, and are antecedent to the genealogy given by Prof. Bell in his edition of *The Natural History of Selborne*.—Ed. *N.N.*]



FEEL that I scarcely have time to write a note or article for NATURE NOTES, but I will endeavour briefly to indicate the points on which I touched at the Annual Meeting.

(1) As to fresh sources of information as to Gilbert White, Dr. J. T. White, of Campden Hill, is a mine of wealth hitherto almost unworked. He distinctly remembers his father (Gilbert's

nephew) having told him that in the frontispiece of the quarto edition of the *Selborne* the figure coming up the hill was intended for Gilbert, and, though not exactly a portrait, was in general outline very like him. We have, then, an approximate likeness of Gilbert. He remembers, too, a saying that his own grandmother—Rebecca Luckin, a vigorous country girl—“brought all the health into the family.” The two bound volumes of MS. correspondence between Gilbert and Tom Mulso form the great treasure—hitherto, I believe, unexplored—in Dr. J. T. White’s possession. The full pedigree of the family, very carefully compiled and tested by Dr. J. T. White’s father, is also a valuable document.

(2) The early lineage of the Whites, as attested by this pedigree and by the monumental evidence in South Warnborough Church.

Apparently the Whites were originally settled at Farnham, whence Robert White migrated to South Warnborough, and was lord of the manor there in the middle of the 15th century. His wife was Alice Lynholme. He was succeeded by his son, Sir John, who married Alice, daughter of Robert Lord Hungerford. Sir John was succeeded by his son Robert, who married Margaret Gainsford, and died August 4th, 1513. A fine brass in South Warnborough Church is inscribed:—“Hic jacet Robertus Whyte armig filius Johñs Whyte militis quondam dñs istuis villæ qui obiit quarto die Augusti aº regni Henrici octavi quarto cujus aie ppietur Deus. Amen.”

Then came his son Robert, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Inglefield, and died 1521. Then succeeded his son, Sir Thomas, Sheriff of London, who married his kinswoman, Agnes White, sister of Dr. John White (of Farnham), who became Bishop of Winchester, and who made himself extremely objectionable to Queen Elizabeth by his steady adhesion to the unreformed religion. Dr. John White was imprisoned in the Tower, but was allowed to spend his last years with his sister at South Warnborough.

Strange to say, there was another Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor of London, 1553, and founder of St. John’s College, Oxford, who was almost contemporary. He died at Oxford, February 11th, 1566.

Sir Thomas’s monument at South Warnborough is a striking one, and there is a singular stateliness and pathos in the inscription:—

“Thomas and Agnes crye unto God and saye, We trust to see the goodness of God in the land of life. They had born xiii. sonnes and v. daughters. Thys sayde Sir Thomas Whyte, Knight, departed this present life the second of November and in the yeare of our Lord God 1560. Dame Agnes yelded unto God of the works of His hands the xv. day of January in the yeare of our Lorde God 1570. Lord Jhesu take our soules unto thy mercye. Sir Thomas departed in London and my Laydy in

Caunterbury the dayes and yeares above wryten. God save the quene."

I suspect that the last words must have been inserted to conciliate Queen Elizabeth, who probably regarded the family with suspicion.

Sir Thomas had a son called Richard, who married Ellen Kerton. He was succeeded by his son John, who migrated to Swan Hall, near Witney. He died 1623, and is buried at Cogges, near Witney. He was succeeded by his son, Sir Samson, who married Mary Soper. At this point Mr. Bell's pedigree of the White family begins.

In Plot's *Natural History of Oxfordshire* the arms always borne by the White family appear in the frontispiece, among those of other county families. The text, "We trust to see ye goodness of God in ye land of life," seems to have been a favourite one with the White family. It appears on another of the family monuments in South Warnborough Church.

STAMFORD.

## WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA.

### III.



UNDER the benign rays of the early spring sunshine all dormant nature seems this afternoon to be waking into active life once more. The blades of grass are losing their feeble downtrodden appearance, and are beginning to shoot upwards as if infused with fresh vigour; the young gums and wattles and ti-tree are putting forth new and tender shoots, while from the dark mass of sombre myrtles and lighter sassafras in the gully comes the soft coo of the wild pigeon. Let us take a quiet walk to the back of our little clearing, and try to make the acquaintance of such of Nature's children as shall chance to fall within our ken.

Here, lying within a yard of the rough deadwood fence, from under which it has probably crawled, is a large fat lizard with a short rounded tail. It is one of the stump-tailed species, and is so drowsy and lethargic after its long hybernating sleep that it takes no notice of our approach, nor indeed shows any signs of life whatever. We can detect no motion as of breathing in the throat or sides, and the body is of a death-like coldness to the touch. We give him a poke in the ribs with a small stick, and at this indignity he slowly, very slowly, raises and partly turns his heavy head, and hisses at us. Then, as if the effort had been more than exhausted nature could bear, his head sinks slowly back to its former position; and so we leave him, to drink in the warm rays which he loves, for he is a harmless creature, and although ruthlessly massacred when met with by



the bushman, who calls him, erroneously, iguana—or “goanner” for short—he has not as much mischief in him as a kitten. And here, on the side of this huge fallen tree, poking out his head from a crevice in the bark, is another lizard, one of the little brown fellows so common everywhere in the summer, running about inside the house as well as out of doors, and abounding on every log and stump. He is much more wide awake than his big relation whom we have just left, and slips back his sharp little head directly he notices our approach.

We remember, while digging in our garden patch one winter, unearthing one of this species with two distinct tails, a freak which we have never seen in one since. Another curiosity which rewarded our delving operations, was a specimen of the curious wireworm—not the larva of the click beetle, which is all too abundant, but a curious creature wound up like a watch-spring, fine as a horsehair, and feet long when uncoiled. They are generally found in wet ground, especially in the banks of rivers and creeks. And here let me explain to the uninitiated, that the word “creek,” in colonial parlance, does not signify an arm of the sea, but a small running stream of fresh water, a rivulet or brook. This little island, the garden of the south, is well supplied with such perennial streams, and so does not suffer from the desolating droughts which afflict the larger colonies.

Now here, upon the crinkled bark of this dead myrtle, is a curious-looking thing—a dark, roundish object, with numerous knobs and rugosities, looking very like a rough piece of bark itself. It is the so-called “elephant”—a large kind of weevil, with its long trunk and legs tucked under its odd-looking body, and still in the enjoyment of its winter sleep. We pick it from the tree and hold it in the hand, and after a minute or two the terminal joints of the legs begin to feebly move to and fro, but the head remains immovable, and as the legs are apparently incapable of further exertions at present, we deposit the sleepy monster on the knob of another myrtle in the full blaze of the afternoon sun, to see if its beneficent rays will move the frozen limbs to action. This effect seems to follow more rapidly than we should have expected, for on returning in about ten minutes to have another look at our torpid friend, he is nowhere to be seen; and as he would be rather a hard morsel for a small bird to tackle, we conclude that the lanky legs have again resumed work. This beetle, when in good working order, has a habit of “shamming dead” if touched, but he seemed too far gone when we found him to-day to play any tricks of that sort.

Here is a huge stringy-bark, one of the giants of the forest, of colossal girth, and whose head seems to tower almost to the skies. One of the primeval trees we should imagine it, the building up of that huge frame being the work, certainly, of hundreds, perhaps of thousands, of years. His thick coating of tough, woolly bark has been blackened and charred by bush

fires, and as we draw closer we observe a curious phenomenon. Pieces of this black bark are moving slowly about on the surface of the tree, as if endowed with life. Upon removing one of these for further examination, we discover that they are flat cases made of little pieces of bark, bitten off and cemented together by the caterpillar, now snugly ensconced inside. Very comfortable dwellings do these little artisans make, for they line their abodes with fine silk, and this of so good a quality that the cases are very tough indeed, and will resist a hard pull. These dark homes are also a capital concealment from enemies, for being exactly of the same colour as the bark of the tree itself, it is only when in motion that the larvæ can be detected, and then he must be swallowed, case and all, if swallowed at all, for no bird can extract him from that charred and lowly, but secure dwelling.

HAMILTON STUART DOVE.

*Table Cape, Tasmania, Sept. 16th, 1892.*

#### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY.

**T**HE Annual Meeting of the Selborne Society was held in the evening of May 10th at the Galleries of the Royal British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, and was followed by an interesting conversazione, which was attended by a large number of members and their friends.

Amongst those present were the Earl of Stamford, Mr. Holt White, Dr. William White, and other members of the "Selborne" White family, Dr. Dudley Buxton, Mrs. Buxton, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. A. Musgrave, Mrs. Brightwen, Mr. and Mrs. Otter, Prof. Hulme, Mr. Wakefield, Miss Buckton, Miss Hope, Mr. Britten, Mrs. Sidney Cooper, Mr. Fulwood, and many representatives of branches.

Mr. Musgrave, who was voted to the chair, announced that Sir John Lubbock had accepted the office of President in the place of the late Lord Tennyson. The Report, which is appended, having been read, the Chairman, with the object of saving time, dealt at once with the financial report, and regretting the outstanding amount of £70, pointed out that a mistake in returning 10 per cent. on the net, instead of the gross, receipts to the central fund had been made by the treasurers of branches; that there had been a temporary loss in advertisements, and a slight increase in the cost of publishing the Society's organ. He strongly appealed to the secretaries of the branches, and to the members generally, not to adhere to the minimum subscription which had been wisely fixed at half-a-crown, but to strive to provide about £90 more yearly, for reprinting valuable articles for wide

distribution, the further improvement of NATURE NOTES, and the payment of lecturers.

The progress of the Society had been necessarily slow, but it was very satisfactory, and many of the recent movements in favour of preservation and protection of natural and anti-quarian objects were due to the teaching of the Selbornians.

The Birds' Protection Society, of which the Duchess of Portland was chief patroness, and Mrs. Phillips the moving spirit, was actively carrying out work, scientifically advocated by the Selborne Society. Whilst being in entire sympathy with the Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising, he regretted that, the object being entirely within the scheme of the Selborne Society, steps had not been taken towards amalgamation, which meant not only economy, but strength in working, often frittered away in the multiplication of small societies. When Miss Frances Power Cobbe and a friend drove out, they always took with them a watering pot and sponge, to remove any aggressive advertisement of pills or soap they might meet with. Mr. Musgrave found that artisans in the North of England took more interest in natural history than those of the South, and gave some amusing instances of the ignorance of these subjects he had met with.

Mr. Musgrave added that the thanks of the meeting were due to Mr. J. L. Otter, for his services as honorary treasurer, and referred to his long connection with the Society, and continued interest in it. The Society was also deeply indebted to Mr. Britten, who gave his valuable services as Editor of NATURE NOTES.

The Earl of Stamford, who introduced himself as "the only son of the youngest daughter of the youngest son of Gilbert White's brother," gave some interesting particulars of the White family, which will be found at p. 104, and mentioned that much valuable material was in possession of Dr. John White, of Campden Hill, which had never been made public, such as an epitaph by Gilbert White on Thomas Holt of Rochford, Essex; a large bound book of letters to Tom Mulso, to whose sister he was attached, pedigrees, letters to his brother the vicar of Blackburn, &c.

Professor F. E. Hulme seconded the motion, which was carried, and gave as an instance of their new President's public spirit, that he bought up the land at Avebury, North Wilts, whereon ancient Druidical remains existed, which neighbouring farmers were gradually removing for building purposes. A vote of thanks was passed to the retiring officers.

Dr. Dudley Buxton proposed a vote of thanks, seconded by Mr. Otter, and carried, to the lenders of the collection of relics of White, which were contributed through the kindness of members of his family, and were on exhibition during the evening. These included:—a malacca cane with the White crest, rushlight holder, watch stand, green spectacles in case,

and magnifying glass, and a picture: Gilbert White's MS. Garden Kalendar, May 1st to November 16th, 1759—a careful record of garden work, with notes on the weather throughout the year: letter from Gilbert White to his brother at Blackburn, on family affairs and natural history items, August 12th, 1775: MS. of Letter III. to the Hon. Daines Barrington: Sermon preached by the Bishop of Peterborough, Friday, February 15th, 1750, with Gilbert White's autograph—an interesting record of early missionary work: MS., in his own handwriting, of one of Gilbert White's sermons. Dr. Buxton referred to the proposed excursion to Selborne, details of which will be found at p. 119.

Mr. R. Holt White, in replying, gave further interesting particulars regarding Gilbert White. Taking Lord Beaconsfield's definition of a great man as one who influenced his generation, he said Gilbert White was not one, but he had had an influence on the succeeding generation. He alluded to the common mistake that Gilbert White was vicar of Selborne, and mentioned that the family had frequently been applied to for a portrait, but that they had always been compelled to reply that no portrait of any kind was to be had.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of officers. The election of Sir John Lubbock was confirmed. The existing Vice-Presidents were re-elected, and in addition the Earl of Stamford, Dr. G. E. J. Greene, Dr. Dudley Buxton, and R. Holt White, Esq., were elected Vice-Presidents.

H. Aldom, Esq., J. Britten, Esq., *ex-officio*, Archibald Clarke, Esq., A. T. Craig, Esq., H. Barry Hyde, Esq., A. Holte Macpherson, Esq., and Mrs. Myles were re-elected members of Council, and in the places of those retiring; J. Allen, Esq., Miss Borrer, J. Fulwood, Esq., F. G. Heath, Esq., and R. M. Wattson, Esq., were elected.

Through the kindness of Dr. Dudley Buxton, an excellent concert under the direction of Mr. J. M. Coward was then proceeded with. The badges for officers and members of the Society were exhibited by Mr. Fulwood, and were much admired.

---

#### REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 30TH, 1893.

“By the death of Lord Tennyson—its first President—the Society shares in a special degree the sense of loss common to most English people.

“There has been an increase in the number of members, and the work of the Society progresses satisfactorily.

“The following new branches have been formed during the year: the Markwick branch for the neighbourhood of St. Leonard's Forest, in Sussex, of which the hon. secretary is Miss Borrer; the Croydon branch, of which the hon. secretary is Mr. E. A. Martin; and the Pinner Juvenile branch, of which the hon. secretary is Lady Watkin Williams. The Council continues to give special attention to the formation of branches, in the belief that local organisations of the Society are the best instruments for carrying on its work. It is expected that new branches will be formed at Bristol, Plymouth, Southgate, and Ferns (Co.

Wexford). The instructions for forming and working branches are being revised, and will shortly be ready for use.

“New and revised leaflets have been issued, and have met with general approval.

“The Council takes this opportunity of asking members to distribute prospectuses, leaflets and copies of NATURE NOTES, as, by such means, knowledge of the Society and of its principles is extended and new members are gained. The Council has received from Mrs. E. Phillips some thousands of copies of her excellent leaflet on the destruction of birds.

“The Society is much indebted to Mr. Britten for continuing to edit NATURE NOTES during the past year. The office of editor is not an easy one, and the Society is fortunate in the services of one possessing the skill and knowledge of Mr. Britten. A new arrangement has been made with Messrs. Bale for the supply and distribution of NATURE NOTES, by which it is expected that the Society will benefit financially. A Committee of the Council has been appointed to attend to matters connected with the Magazine.

*Financial Statement of the General Fund for the Year ending December 31st, 1892.*

Dr.				Cr.					
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Balance from 1891 ...	9	19	9	By Rent ... ..	20	0	0		
„ Subscriptions for 1892	108	19	8	„ Secretary ... ..	25	0	0		
„ Sale of “Nature Notes” to Branches ... ..	113	4	10½	„ Postage ... ..	12	0	8		
„ Sale of “Nature Notes” through Messrs. Soth- eran ... ..	13	18	3	„ Office and Miscellaneous Expenses ... ..	5	19	4		
„ Miscellaneous Receipts	4	3	5½	„ Subscriptions paid over to Branches ... ..	4	13	6		
„ Advertisements in “Nature Notes” ...	15	14	5	„ Messrs. Bale & Sons, General Account ...	24	10	9		
„ Contributions by Branches, namely:—				„ Messrs. Bale & Sons, Printing “Nature Notes” ... ..	250	4	11		
Rape of Lewes	1	3	0	„ Distribution and Postage of “Nature Notes” ...	22	19	5		
Richard Jefferies	0	4	6	„ Waterlow & Sons ...	5	5	0		
Nottingham ..	1	15	3						
Weald of Kent ..	1	0	0						
Atalanta ..	0	9	0						
Bolton ..	0	1	6						
Liverpool ..	2	17	6						
Brighton ..	0	11	4						
Bayswater ..	1	2	0						
Forth ..	0	10	8½						
Croydon ..	1	6	1½						
Cambridge ..	2	14	5						
Southampton ..	2	0	0						
Sutton ..	2	6	0						
Northern Heights	2	8	0						
Haslemere ..	0	9	10						
Clapton ..	1	0	0						
Dorking ..	1	11	11½						
			23	9	1				
„ Other Magazines sold to Branches, not paid for	10	18	1½						
„ Balance ... ..	70	5	11						
			<u>£370</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>				
							<u>£370</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>

“The Council wishes to make special mention of the work done by some of the branches. Early in the year the Lower Thames Valley branch organised a Field Club with the title of ‘The Selborne Field Club.’ It numbers amongst its members many competent naturalists. About twelve open-air meetings have been held. During the winter season this branch gave a conversazione, when a very interesting collection of microscopical specimens was exhibited, a series of lectures to which Professor Henslow, Professor F. W. Oliver, and others, contributed, and

a photographic exhibition, all of which were largely attended. The annual general meeting of this branch was presided over by the mayor of Richmond. A deputation of your Council was present, and addressed the meeting, as did also Sir R. Temple, the representative in Parliament of the Richmond division of Surrey.

"The Clapton branch, under the management of its able secretary, is organising a Field Club upon the lines of the Richmond Selborne Field Club. The Council is confident that this will be found a mean of strengthening the branch.

"The present year being the centenary of the death of Gilbert White, arrangements have been made for a visit to Selborne on Saturday, June 24th. The Council is glad to learn that several of the branches are intending to celebrate the anniversary locally, and would suggest that no better occasion could be found for calling public attention to the Society.

"The Council hopes that the Annual Meeting will open the way to a series of meetings in places accessible to members residing in London or its vicinity, and at which collections of special interest to members of the Selborne Society could be exhibited.

"The Council regrets that it is unable this year to present a satisfactory balance sheet. The expenses of the Society's Magazine have been unusually heavy, and there has been no compensating increase of receipts.

"The Council draws the attention of the secretaries of branches to the rule that the minimum contribution from each branch is one-tenth of its annual receipts."

## THE EXCURSION TO SELBORNE.



HE arrangements for the excursion on Midsummer Day have been completed. We hope that the gathering will be representative, and that Selbornians, and all who sympathise with them, will join in the commemoration. It is needless to tell the readers of *The Natural History of Selborne* anything about the charms of the country where Gilbert White lived and died; and they still remain much the same as they were a hundred years since. The house, indeed, has been altered, as will be seen by those who compare the illustration on p. 103 with that at p. 194 of our last year's volume; but the natural features of the landscape are unaltered. If the weather is favourable, the day can hardly fail to be one which will be marked with a white stone in the memories of those who take part in its observance.

Tickets for the excursion may now be had of the Secretary, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C., or of the local secretaries. For the railway, 4s.; for luncheon, 2s. 6d.; for the drive, 4s. 6d. Tickets for the drive will be transferable, if desired, for the return from Selborne to Alton.

It is absolutely necessary for the efficient working of the excursion that early notice should be given to the Secretaries by persons wishing to join, as no tickets can be issued after June 17th. Applications should in every case be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The excursion is not restricted to members of the Society. The official programme will be found on p. 119.

## SELBORNIANA.

**Brentford Aits saved.**—It has been an open secret for some time that the two islands above Kew Bridge, known locally as the Brentford Aits, but of which the true name appears, from a departmental document, to be Mattingshaw Twig, have been in the market. There is no need to enlarge upon the natural beauties of these islands, as readers of *NATURE NOTES*, and those acquainted with the river, are fully aware of the priceless value from a scenic point of view of their richly wooded surfaces. Formed originally in the bed of the Thames by the silt brought down by the river Brent, which enters the larger river just above, they appear to have gained in extent more than they have lost during the last hundred years. The length is about a quarter of a mile, and they comprise about four and a-half acres. The ceaseless wash of the tides has, however, endangered the safety of many of the lofty trees which now overhang the stream, and made some steps imperative to safeguard them, and the public using the stream. The Government have been unwilling to incur the considerable expense which would have been necessary before long if they had kept possession.

Offers by the Brentford Gas Works and a local boat builder to take over the land, and root up the trees, in the one case to use it as a storage depôt, and in the other for the erection of yards, have been entertained by the Government. Such a step would have been disastrous in every way. The Richmond Corporation is to be congratulated upon the public spirit which has led them to purchase and undertake the preservation of the islands and the trees upon them. We understand that the Government originally purchased them for £2,000. The first offer to the Corporation was for the sum of £1,500, which has been reduced to the terms accepted at the Council meeting held May 9th, for the sum of £400, payable by instalments within the next ten years, and subject to stipulations, the insertion of which will gratify every Selbornian, that no buildings be erected, and that the islands and the trees growing thereon be preserved from damage. There is no reasonable doubt that although not concerned in the immediate negotiations which have led to this happy result, the Selborne Society, through its magazine, and the local branch has formulated and directed the public opinion in the neighbourhood, through which alone corporate action could be taken. All this would have been ineffective, but for the recent inclusion of the royal village of Kew in the larger borough, by which Richmond became immediately interested in the fate of the Aits; for although known as the Brentford Aits they are in the parish of Kew, and were consequently transferred with it to Richmond. It is fitting that the names of the present Mayor of Richmond, Mr. Charles Burk, of the ex-Mayor, Mr. Skewes-Cox, and of Sir Richard Temple, Bart., M.P., all of them connected with the local branch of the Selborne Society, should be associated with this enterprising action of Richmond. That the islands will be safe under the control of the Corporation, the care that body takes of the smaller islands below Richmond Bridge, and the action taken by them, almost unanimously, to prevent the spoiling of Richmond by refusing permission to erect over-head wires, are sufficient guarantee. All Selbornians will unite in expressing gratitude for the preservation of one of the most beautiful spots on the Thames.

JOHN ALLEN.

[An article on the Aits, with an illustration, will be found in *NATURE NOTES* for 1891, p. 130.—ED. *N.V.*]

**A New Abomination.**—About three hundred acres of arable land in the neighbourhood of Hampton Hill and Feltham, and between those places and Twickenham, have recently been acquired by a London firm for the formation of a fruit farm and jam factory. Such an enterprise, except as it promotes the welfare of a rural neighbourhood, in no way concerns us, but for the desolating action taken by the promoters. A district of pleasant lanes and by-ways, hedges and foot-paths, by the felling of all the trees, the levelling of the hedge-rows, and the erection of interminable rows of corrugated iron fences, about seven feet high above the foot-ways, as level and regular as man can make them, has become a hideous blot on the country side. Not one road, but many, are affected by this thoughtless and cruel step. The residents, gentle and simple alike, have been

despoiled of shady walks, the nesting and roosting places of birds have been destroyed, and the unwilling wayfarer is condemned to pursue his way along bare, dusty roads, with metal reflection to cast a glare into his eyes and radiate the heat upon him. With a view only of the sky above him, and the long vista seeming endless, he feels as if in a huge tank. No words can express a sense of the enormity inflicted upon the unconsenting public, thus robbed of the beauties of trees, hedges and fields and the singing and movement of birds. We are unwilling to advertise the firm which has perpetrated such a piece of vandalism, and hope that it will not be a precedent for other short-sighted agriculturists who would, to secure partial freedom from the visits of fruit-eating birds, destroy the enemies of much worse pests, which they will be unable to exterminate or control.

**A Suggestion.**—Many of your readers might like to contribute to a scheme which will be a great boon to the pretty village of Selborne, and at the same time be a delightful tribute to the memory of Gilbert White, now brought before us by your proposed pilgrimage here on 24th of June. The scheme is this: to supply the village with the water from the famous "Well Head." The cost of this would come to something like £400. Substantial help from all lovers of Nature would be gratefully acknowledged.

ANNIE READ. ✓

*The Wakes, Selborne.*

**Lantern Slides** (p. 93).—I do not think it would be possible to photograph the birds, unless removed from their cases and placed in a suitable light, to which the owners would naturally object. It has occurred to me, however, that good lantern slides might be obtained by copying illustrations from books—asking permission of course where plates are copyright—and I am now engaged in this work myself, in order to provide illustrations for natural history lectures, which I hope may be given to our branch next season. A few hints by an expert on the chief characteristics and habits of our common English birds or animals, especially in presence of an illustration on the screen, would do much to enlist the sympathy and rouse the energy of young Selbornians to a study of natural history, and to make more use of the libraries which most branches now possess. If I succeed in getting together a decent set this summer I will send a list of the birds, which I shall be pleased to lend to distant members when not in use, or make duplicate slides from the negatives for the secretary of any branch at the mere cost of photographic material used.

E. J. APPLEBY.

*Bath.*

[We are glad to learn that "most branches now possess" a library, and trust that our correspondent's information on that head is accurate.—ED. *N.N.*]

THE Northern Heights Footpath Association are preparing to publish a second edition of the map mentioned at p. 51. They have also collected materials for a map of the district next to that covered by their former map. For both these ventures they will require funds. The sale of the first edition of the first map (much stimulated by the notice in NATURE NOTES), justifies the Association in believing that their work has been useful to the public, and that they have therefore some right to ask for additional help. Subscriptions should be sent to Miss Garlick, the treasurer of the Association, at 11, Well Road, Hampstead, N.W.

**Our Badge.**—Reference was made in our last issue to the badges which Mr. Fulwood has designed for the members of the Selborne Society. They are silver, decorated with true enamel, in the forms of pin, brooch, solitaire, and rosette, same size as brooch, for officers of the Society to be used at conversaciones and meetings; the pin or brooch may be worn at any time. These Badges will form very pretty presents, and Hon. Secs. and Local Committees may feel disposed to give them to juvenile members as prizes for the best collection of plants, &c. It has been found on various occasions, at field meetings, &c., that friends and members of the Selborne Society have come to the meeting place, but have been quite unknown to the members who have made the arrangements. The Badge will indicate at once who are members, and friendly intercourse will take place immediately. Orders should be sent





through local Secretaries to Mr. Fulwood, Coombe House, Richmond, S.W., or to the Secretary, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. The price of the brooch is 3s., solitaire 1s. 9d., pin 1s. 6d., to which 3d. for postage should be added to cover registration.

**Clapton, Lower Lee Valley Branch.**—The Rambling Club in connection with this branch commenced their field meetings on April 29th, jointly with the Selborne Field Club, by a social gathering and walk through Richmond and Petersham Parks. The second meeting was held on May 6th, when members met at Theydon Bois, being joined by representatives from the Lower Thames Valley and Northern Heights branches, and enjoyed a delightful ramble through this part of Epping Forest, a full report of which has appeared in the *Hackney Mercury*.

**Pinner Branch.**—A meeting was held at Clonard on April 18th, by kind invitation of Mrs. Skilbeck. An address was given by Mr. Bland Sutton, F.R.C.S., on "Teeth of Animals—their nature and uses."

**North Wexford.**—We are glad to learn that a branch of the Society, to be known as the "Ferns" branch, is about to be established in North Wexford. Dr. G. E. Greene, Ferns, is acting as hon. secretary.

---

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**In a Vicarage Garden.**—Some fifteen or sixteen years ago I met by the road side with a few plants of lady's smock (*Cardamine pratensis*) bearing double flowers. I took up a few and planted them on a small damp lawn twenty-five yards by twenty, in a retired part of my garden, and hoped to see the pretty blossoms in the following year, but was disappointed and thought no more about them. To my great surprise, last year but one I found that little lawn all at once beautiful with a great number of fair, large and vigorous blossoming stalks, the flowers not only double, but also proliferous, many of the flowers producing from their centre other smaller flowers on slender stalks. This year again the little lawn is pretty thickly enamelled with these beautiful flowers, and of course the grass is not to be mown until the blossoming time is over.

An explanation of this phenomenon may be proposed in the fact that it has been observed that the leaves of these double-flowering plants arch themselves over down to the ground, rooting and producing new plants. Possibly those I planted so long ago may have been too busy spreading themselves by layers every year to find any inclination to flower until two years ago, when they suddenly burst into flower. But the ways of plants are very mysterious, and past finding out. A similar phenomenon has taken place in my garden with wild wood anemones, of which I planted some a good many years ago on a moist shady bank, when they disappeared and were forgotten until two years ago, when they suddenly burst into flower in some abundance.

May I mention another interesting fact respecting wild flowers in this pretty vicarage garden. Years ago visiting Rydal Mount, there were pointed out to me a few plants of white Herb Robert, which Wordsworth had planted, and of which he had been fond. I successfully begged for one small plant, which I carried home and planted by a little shady waterfall, and now I have the white Herb Robert from the poet's garden growing in abundance in my own. Selbornians who have anything in the same line to offer in exchange are promised every attention.

F. A. MALLESON.

*The Vicarage, Broughton-in-Furness.*

**The Kingfisher** (p. 49).—Will you allow me to comfort Mr. A. T. Johnson over the supposed extinction of the kingfisher? The bird is by no means so rare as he seems to fear. They may still be seen frequently on the upper reaches of the Thames, and during the two last summers I have seen specimens repeatedly between Marlow and Wargrave, especially near Greenlands, and in the bushes

below Medmenham Abbey. My impression is that they are more plentiful than they were some years ago, when the home of my boyhood was in those lovely scenes.

A. C. ALMACK.

*The Vicarage, Bowes Park, N.*

**Notes from West Sussex.**—A few words from West Sussex, the home of the Richard Jefferies branch, may not be unwelcome as additional proof of the unusual earliness of dates, which all Selbornians must have enjoyed chronicling in their spring notes this year.

With us *Banksia* roses were out in March, and the wistaria on a south wall profusely blooming by Easter Day (April 2nd). I picked cowslips and bluebells on April 8th; they were then "in prosperity" (as our country phrase is), and almost over by May-day. The young thrushes were out and about by Easter, and the wryneck arrived three weeks before his time.

I append a list of birds and plants whose dates I noticed (adding for comparison the dates recorded in the *Naturalists' Diary*). By very small observation one may easily obtain interesting results.

- April 10. Lords and Ladies (*Arum maculatum*). (April 22.)
- „ 13. Wild cherry. (April 18.)
- „ „ Wood spurge. (April 25.)
- „ 17. May-blossom (garden). (May 13.)
- „ 18. Early purple orchis. (April 22.)
- „ 21. Woodruff (garden). (May 3.)
- „ 24. Laburnum (garden). (May 14.)
- „ 26. Wood sanicle. (May 12.)
- „ 27. Guelder rose (garden). (June 5.)
- „ 29. White campion. (May 20.)
- April 9. Nightingale first heard. (April 24.)
- „ 10. Saw swallow. (March 23.)
- „ 12. Heard wryneck. (May 1.)
- „ 13. Saw whitethroat. (April 13.)
- „ 16. Heard cuckoo. (April 2.)
- „ 19. Heard nightingale. (April 24.)
- May 3. Saw house-martin. (March 22.)

HILDA URLIN.

*Rustington, near Worthing, Sussex.*

**Birds at Sevenoaks.**—It may interest your readers to know that I saw a pair of swifts on April 21st this year; I have never before known them to arrive before the 28th of April, and generally it is May ere they come, often as late as the 4th or 5th. The nightingale sang in my garden strongly on the 19th of April. And now I have to add another curious fact. Although the swifts have come I have not seen either a swallow or a martin. Thrushes are plentiful, but the blackbird for some cause is somewhat scarce. Robins had a second nest here on the 5th of April. I hope that your readers have put out pans of water for the birds this very dry time; I have three, and they are much resorted to. The sparrows are a sore pest this year, eating off my primroses, &c., and they drive off my other birds. There are several tame Barbary doves flying about here, and the sparrows attack even these. I think the tits are among the best friends the gardener has. They seek for, find, and destroy so much insect life in the ova state.

HARRISON WEIR.

**A Stray Pigeon.**—Early in the month of February, 1892, a pigeon was observed flying about the back of my house, not going away, but occasionally alighting on the roof of the next house. At length he perched on the ledge of the upstairs window, and continued thus flitting to and fro for more than two hours. This was in the afternoon. At last he flew against the window of our back parlour, as if trying to come in; and watching him closely I observed that he appeared to be in a very exhausted state. Thereupon I opened one of the upstairs windows, and waited awhile, and on his again perching on the window-ledge I quietly went towards him and put my hand gently upon him. He let me do so without making any resistance—perhaps being unable to make any—and I took him in and held him in my hands until I could obtain some proper food for him, and a cage to put him in. He took the food eagerly, being evidently in

a half-starved condition. He never became perfectly tame, and would not let himself afterwards be caught by hand if he could avoid it, though now and then I contrived to surprise him, and managed to catch him. He was daily allowed out of his cage from breakfast-time to dusk, and would generally, when we were alone, come down on the table for crumbs which were always put for him at meal-times, but if any stranger happened to be present he would not come down. He never seemed willing to go out of the room, and try to escape, though the door was frequently left open when no one was in the room. His favourite perch was on the top of a picture-frame which projected a little way from the wall, being hung over another picture; and he would settle and go to sleep on the window-shutters, which did not quite reach to the top of the window. At length he became quite fat, and would come almost close to us when on the table, but avoided being touched. He remained with us fourteen months. Having been assured by several persons, some of whom had kept pigeons, that if we gave him his liberty (of which we were sorry to deprive him) he would come back again, the cage was hung up in the garden with the door open. For several days this was done without the bird attempting to leave the cage. But on the 22nd of April last a man coming suddenly close up to the cage, I believe frightened the poor bird; for he at once escaped, soared up above the houses, and flew away, and, to our great regret, we have seen him no more.

ROBERT SIMPSON.

*Wood Green.*

**Cleaning Birds.**—I should be glad to know what is the best way of cleaning birds. I have a German canary which I have repeatedly put into water and given baths, but it comes out just as black as when I put him in. M. V. W.

**Daily Flight of Rooks** (p. 57).—As to the daily flight of rooks from North London, in a southerly direction, there is little doubt that they are flying to the cultivated lands to the south of Richmond Park. Large numbers roost here, and in the winter season they may be seen on the grass. My curiosity was aroused as to the nature of their food, the popular idea being that they feed on grubs or earth worms of some sort. On examination I find they are in quest of the root of the tormentil. Although the greater part of this root is woody and dry, there are parts of it soft, resembling a pea, and of an astringent flavour. This particular part of the root the rooks appear to relish extremely, making great havoc among the grass to obtain it.

M. A. S.

**Land-Rail.**—Is that formerly well-known bird the land-rail or corn-grake disappearing from some parts of the country? I have not heard its harsh grating note in our fields and meadows since 1890. In Oxfordshire it is said that when these birds are more than usually noisy and numerous a hard winter will follow.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

W. H. WARNER.

**Curious Behaviour of a Great-Tit** (p. 96).—This was no doubt actuated by the bird's belief that his own image reflected in the glass window was his lost mate in person. A weasel lately made away with the wives of two fantail pigeons belonging to our dove-cote. The widowers, for some weeks past, sought consolation in the attic windows of the house. They sat on the window-sills all day long, cooing and bowing and flirting with their reflections in the glass. But for this all-engrossing occupation, I hardly know how the poor pigeons would have endured their bereavement. The noise of this empty wooing, which began at daybreak, and continued until evening, became at last unbearable. Two new brides were sought and found for the widowed birds, and the renewal of their domestic happiness has brought relief and quietness to ourselves.

E. V. B.

**Sparrow Tapping at Window.**—About six weeks ago we observed a hen-sparrow fluttering outside, and continually tapping against the panes of a small window overlooking an upstairs corridor. This was continued day after day, the bird coming as early as 6.30 a.m., and remaining until dusk. Our boys searched closely, but no nest could be found, and we concluded that it was a solitary bird. After some time one of our boys opened the little window, and placed a toy bird just within, which had the desired effect of frightening the sparrow, but she soon re-appeared at another small window close by, and con-

tinued the same strange behaviour. This window we also opened, and the bird left, but only to appear at a third window, also a small one, looking into a linen room, and there she began flying and tapping at the panes in the same unaccountable manner as before. This still goes on, and I am anxious, if possible, to have some explanation offered, as several persons to whom I have mentioned it speak mysteriously of "warnings," "ill-omens," &c., and therefore for their edification, as well as my own, I should be glad to hear the opinion of some naturalist. The tappings of our hen-sparrow are so loud and frequent as to awaken sleepers in a bed-room close by.

*Chipping Sodbury Vicarage.*

SARA W. HARVEY.

**Bird at Window** (p. 96).—This is a tolerably common occurrence. In the autumn of 1887, a robin which haunted these premises amused himself for three consecutive days by flying against, and fluttering up and down some large panes of glass in the window of an outhouse. This he repeated at intervals of a few minutes nearly the whole of the day. A hat and coat in the semblance of a man was hung up against the window, but this did not seem to deter him in the least. At last we put a stop to his amusement by whitewashing the insides of the panes. It was doubtless the reflection of his own neat little figure in the glass which attracted him. He possibly fancied he saw a rival there with whom to do battle—robins being very quarrelsome little birds, and always ready for a pugilistic encounter.

W. H. WARNER.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

**Spring Visitors.**—Our little feathered visitors from "over the sea" have made their appearance somewhat early this year. I noticed the following species on the dates named during my rambles about the neighbourhood. Some of them may possibly have arrived a few days before. Chiff-chaff, March 25th; willow wren, April 1st; redstart, April 7th; tree pipit, April 8th; chimney swallow, April 14th; whitethroat, April 15th; nightingale, April 15th; grasshopper-warbler, April 15th; blackcap, April 15th; cuckoo, April 15th; turtle dove, April 23rd; swift, May 3rd. Lepidoptera are coming out early this season, and vegetation is also very forward.

W. H. WARNER.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

**The Orleton Swifts.**—Four of the Orleton swifts arrived on April 27th, five days earlier than I have ever known them, and eight days before their usual time. May I ask Selbornians to look out for and note their custom of soaring out of sight shortly after sunset? The Cheddar pinks are in beautiful bloom now on the top of the brick wall of the garden. The seed was brought here from the Cheddar Cliffs years ago, and sown in the mortar between the bricks.

AUBREY EDWARDS.

**Nightingale near London.**—This charming songster may be enjoyed every season at Wanstead, Essex, within six and a quarter miles of Aldgate pump. This year nightingales have been in remarkably fine song. Four were heard during a walk through that part of Epping Forest lying between the Eagle pond and Haggard Lane waterworks. One fine bird sings in the first clump of trees on the left on passing the Eagle pond on towards Whip's Cross, whose song is so persistent that a few evenings ago, when I took a couple of friends with me close up to the bush whence the song proceeded, it continued quite unconcerned, though one of us made several attempts at imitation, thereby provoking ill-timed but irresistible laughter.

JOHN W. LOVE.

**Rooks in London** (pp. 79, 95).—Among the places in which rooks build in London may be mentioned a garden at the back of the houses in Hyde Park Place, east of the old burying ground of St. George's, Hanover Square. One of the houses is partly pulled down, and through the opening I could see three nests a few days ago, while standing on the gravel walk in the Park near the railings. Between this garden and the graves stands the mysterious hidden house set back from the rest. It has only a door to the street leading down a long passage between the red brick house and the terra cotta one, and few passers-by know of its existence. I am told that rooks began to build in the graveyard itself a very few years ago, but were supposed to have been scared by the building of the new chapel.

E. S. N.

**Migrants at Weston-super-Mare.**—The summer-like temperature of March and April, which brought to such early maturity the flowering shrubs and fruit blossoms, did not, I believe, draw to our shores earlier than usual the spring migrants. The swallow, last seen in this neighbourhood on November 11th, did not arrive much, if at all, before March 31st. The marvellous swift, screaming with joy, was here numerous on the evening of May 5th. The advent of the summer warblers agreed also more closely with the calendar than the appearance of the winged and wingless insects, which the great warmth of the spring of 1893 awakened so early. The drought has told hardly on the thrushes, making their chief food scarce, and a difficult task the rearing of their young. I see them eating with avidity the green ivy-berries. The mother of three, born in my garden at the end of the month, omitted the customary duty, owing to the dry weather, of lining the nest with clay.

T. P.

**A Carnivorous Caterpillar.**—Caterpillars usually live upon vegetable diet, but the greeny yellow caterpillar of the Dun Bar moth preys upon smaller caterpillars, twisting his fat green body round them in a fatal embrace, and then biting into the skin and sucking out the juice. The first time I remarked the operation going on I fancied it was an accident, but I have since found many indisputable cases of it.

- *Southampstead Park, Berks.*

EMMA ELIZABETH THOYTS.

**The Cuckoo.**—Every one is familiar with the cuckoo's song or cry, but it may not be generally known that while on the wing the bird utters a curious gurgling sound between its calls. What is the reason for this? Is it part of its song?

E. E. THOYTS.

**A Query.**—What bird or insect is it that at this season bites through the stalk of sycamore leaves, which in a garden near this town are littering the ground?

*St. Albans.*

EDWARD LIDDELL.

**Early May.**—Miss E. H. Hickey writes on April 24th, "To-day I have seen May in full bloom on Hampstead Heath;" on the same day we saw a bush in full flower in a hedge near Pangbourne, Berks.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES.

**Excursion to Selborne on Saturday, June 24th, 1893.**

*Train* leaves Waterloo at 10.15; Clapham Junction, 10.26; arriving at Alton, 12.5; conveyances will be in waiting (tickets transferable) for drive to Selborne—about five miles. Carriages at 6.30 for return to Alton. The last train leaves at 7.44.

*Lunch* at 1.30; Lord Selborne in the chair, supported by Lord Northbrook, the Earl of Stamford, and Sir John Lubbock.

*Archæology:* Mr. T. W. Shore of the Hampshire Field Club will conduct a party over the church and to other places of interest.

*Field Parties* will visit the Hanger, &c., under the guidance of various naturalists.

*The Wakes:* Mr. F. M. Read has most kindly offered to open his house and grounds for the inspection of members of the Selborne Society only, during the day. See also p. 112.

A. J. WESTERN, *Sec.*

At the Council meeting held on Wednesday, May 3rd, Mr. Archibald Clarke was appointed to represent the Selborne Society on the Organising Committee of the National Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising. Mr. Britten has also been placed on the Committee.

A. J. WESTERN, *Secretary.*

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**Strathmore.**—Purple Rock Cress (*Aubrietia deltoidea* or *A. purpurea*). The specimen was a good deal withered.

**W. B. G.**—We do not particularly require notes such as that you send, but any items of personal observation will be welcome.

**W. R. R.**—Many thanks, but the information is too late to be of service.

**F. B. D.**—We cannot undertake to return communications unless a stamped envelope is enclosed for the purpose, or to enter into correspondence as to the merits of verses which do not seem to us suitable for insertion.

**F. G. S.**—Yes, it is a white variety of the bluebell.

**Miss L.**—Unfortunately, owing to an unavoidable delay in opening the box, the specimens were indeterminate.

**E. L.**—It is impossible to determine the “fly” without seeing a specimen. In Rennie’s *Insect Miscellanies* a swarm of gnats is recorded so dense as to have appeared like smoke issuing from the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, giving rise to an alarm of fire.

**A. L. Champneys.**—The Smooth Snake (*Coronella levis*) is rare in England. Bell’s *British Reptiles*, or *Our Reptiles* by M. C. Cooke, would probably meet your requirements.

**A. L. C.**—(1) *Flowers of the Field* is good as far as it goes, but it is neither complete nor up to date. (2) Mr. W. F. Kirby says:—“There are plenty of books on British butterflies, by Coleman, Newman, Morris and others. For British Lepidoptera, Stanton’s *Manual*, for letterpress, and Morris’ *Moths*, or Wood’s *Index Entomologicus* for plates are the most complete; but for the larger moths only, Newman’s is one of the best.”

**Mr. Roden Noel’s Spring Poetry** (p. 61).—Miss Hickey writes: “The pieces or parts of pieces quoted by me are to be found as follows: (1) “A Walk in Spring,” *Beatrice and Other Poems*, 1868. (2) From “Blind and Deaf,” same volume. (3) From “Northern Spring,” *Songs of the Heights and Deepes*, 1885. (4) “The Secret of the Nightingale” is included in the *Selections* (published by Mr. Walter Scott). (5) “Returning Thanks,” *A Modern Faust and other Poems*, 1888.

**Max O’Leary.**—Yes, but we are compelled to restrict the number to six, and we hope common plants will not be sent.

**H. U.**—We are always glad of short notes, which many consider the most interesting portion of the Magazine.

**S. P. H.**—Yes, there is ample justification for your criticism.

**J. F. C.**—We did not understand our correspondent to condemn collecting for scientific purposes.

**Member of Selborne Society.**—Please send name and address.

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business, as well as the names of those wishing to join the proposed excursion to Selborne on June 24th, should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

The necessity of affording as much space as possible in this number for matter connected with Selborne and the Selborne Society has caused the omission of other articles, as well as of many reviews of books, natural history notes, and other communications. The Editor claims the indulgence of contributors and publishers for this unavoidable delay.

# Mature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

No. 43.

JULY, 1893.

VOL. IV.

---

### A LONDON FLOWER SHOW.

**T** was held in the heart of a district of many, many poor ; a district far enough from the West End, and yet having no claim to the name of East End. A district needing help and sympathy just as sorely as the East End needs them, and yet, curiously, as it were, leaped over by the help and sympathy bestowed upon the East End by the West End and other districts. A dull, depressing place, with thick air and ugly houses. No lovely display of rare orchids ; no splendour of form and colour and scent ; and yet what beauty and suggestion of beauty were there ! We had no rare flowers, nor common flowers cultivated into the kind of loveliness we associate with rarity. We had no exquisitely-dressed ladies, moving rhythmically about, with low, clear voices and graceful gestures. We had no music of a band, military or unmilitary. We were occupants of the covered-in playground of a Board School. The arches, at the back and at one side, had red blinds and yellow blinds ; one end was wall, and in front ran arches, two of which divided one section of the ground from another, or united these sections—according to one's point of view. Across the centre arch ran a line on which hung a good number of tiny flags and pennons, red and yellow, red and white, blue and white. Large plants in pots were arranged here and there, which had probably been hired for the occasion. The competitors and their friends were in the undecorated section of the playground : the other part was reserved for the "officials," *i.e.*, those who had arranged the show, and the lady who gave out the prizes, together with some parishioners, district visitors, and stranger guests. Behind the chairs of the folk I have called officials ran

a long stand, on which were arranged the flowers which had been sent in for competition.

Before the proceedings began I walked along the front of this stand, and looked at the flowers. They were a sight truly worth seeing, a sight of deep suggestion, of gladness and of pathos. Small variety was there. Fuchsias, geraniums, creeping-jennies, ferns and musks. Starved flowers one saw them to be, the best of them, even the creeping-jennies, which had a good deal of foliage though no blossom was to be seen. It was sorrowful to see the thinness of the fuchsias, trained as they and the musks were on sticks arranged in various patterns, the poor plants tied up with oddments of wool—blue, grey, any colour. The blossoms of the geraniums were wretched enough, and the first-prize fern—poor thing!—was wilted at the ends of some of its fronds. It was sorrowful in one aspect, with its vista of unfulfilled life; of bloom that might have deepened; of foliage that might have been lovely in its richness; of development that never now might be. But it was sweet also, for these flowers, amid all the disadvantages of poor soil, of dirt, and of darkness, had silently helped and comforted in more ways than one, in their dependence on the hands that had tended them for many a day, to whose owners the red was the fairest red and the green the loveliest green.

There were prizes for plants, and prizes for window-gardens; prizes for women, boys and girls. These prizes were in variety, too; kitchen tables (one small boy bravely carried off one of these in the absence of his mother, the prize-winner); chairs which went, I think, in pairs; trays with teapot, cups and saucers, &c., all complete; chair-bedsteads, and blankets. These for the matrons. For the boys and girls; dresses, boxes, bags, and bags that were furnished, too. I looked, after the show was over, into the bag of a small maiden, and saw comb and brush, handkerchiefs, and a piece of gold braid, together with something to which she delightedly drew my attention, "*and looking glasses, too!*"

There was plenty of noise all the while, to make up for the lack of music.

One of the first prizes was taken by an old woman who hobbled up to the table with a stick; and one of the prizes for girls fell to the share of a tiny child, who was lifted on to the table, and given her box and her prize flower. Three or four she looked, but I was told that she was older than that, only stunted in growth; "a little dwarf," they called her, the poor wee maiden!

The sister of one of the prize-winners advanced to receive his prize, and on being asked where her brother was, replied that he had stayed at home to mind the baby. I am afraid she had to listen to an expression of opinion as to the propriety of her having stayed at home instead.

There were eight competitors for the window-garden prizes. A gardener had gone round with the vicar to see these, and the



first prize had been adjudged to the owner and cultivator of what was described as not only a window-garden, but a garden spreading over a roof, forming a bower of greenness and brightness. This prize-taker was a young man of about nineteen.

Was it not well to see a sight like this? Better still to be one of the promoters and encouragers of window-gardening, and helpers and rewarders thereof\*—a patch of fair colour in the monotony of lives of toil, too often pleasureless toil; a hint of things lovely beyond the power of telling; a foretaste of good and beauty yet to be.

E. H. HICKEY.

### A VISIT TO SPOONBILLS.



IT is not often that the White Spoonbill, *Platalea leucorodia*, is now seen in England, for like many other frequenting birds, it has been deprived of its favourite haunts in consequence of the extensive draining operations carried out in late years. This has been especially the case in our eastern counties. The Spoonbill is mentioned by Sir Thomas Browne in 1668 as breeding in Norfolk and Suffolk; and within the last few years the discovery has been made that it formerly bred in Sussex and Middlesex.

The nearest nesting-place to our shores was, until 1882, the Horster Meer in Holland, about an hour's journey by rail from Amsterdam, in the direction of Utrecht. In that year the draining of the meer was undertaken, which was a signal of departure for the spoonbills, and we were very glad of an opportunity of paying them a visit during a short stay we were making at Amsterdam in the month of May.

Having a letter of introduction from Dr. Sclater to the Curator of the Zoological Gardens, we went to call upon him and to ask his advice and assistance. The curator himself was an old gentleman, and had not visited the Horster Meer, but he most kindly entered into our wishes, and sent for the sub-curator, who, on hearing our errand, was good enough to propose guiding us himself, and, as he spoke English well and had already made the expedition, nothing could have been more convenient. Accordingly he arranged with my father to meet us the next morning, May 23, at the station near the Amstel Hotel, to take the 11.15 train for a village called Vreeland, where there was a little station serving also for the village of Loena and called by both names.

\* The prizes given at this flower show cost, I was informed, about twenty pounds. But who can estimate the value of the time and thought so liberally spent upon it?

The 23rd was a beautiful summer morning, and we set out at the appointed time and duly arrived at Loena-Vreeland. Passing through the latter village, a cheerful little place amid very green meadows, we came to the bank of the little river Vecht, along which we walked on the towing path for a long distance. The vegetation along the edge of the stream consisted principally of reeds, and many pollard willows and small herbage forming a sort of hedge, and among them we heard the notes of the great reed warbler, which the Dutch call Karra-karra-kwiet, a name well expressing the sound of the first portion of its song. We could not see the bird. We now arrived at the small village of Overmeer, very near the lake, which was entirely concealed from us by the high tangled growth. Having had some luncheon at the little inn, our guide found a boy to show us the way, and we followed him some distance on a narrow path through the brushwood, till we came out on an open space, where some workmen were resting and taking their midday meal, on the very edge of the meer. The draining, however, had proceeded so far that the lake had practically disappeared, and the rough ground was covered with great tussocks of coarse herbage which the men were rooting up to burn. We were then joined by the engineer in charge, who told us that the spoonbills were still there, but that the nesting-place could not now be approached without a boat, as it was on an island formed by the water drained from the surrounding ditches. This was disappointing, as we had wished to find the eggs ourselves; however, as no boat was forthcoming, there was nothing to be done and we were told we should see the birds. While the engineer was speaking we had seen some peewits, a large moor buzzard and several black terns. Presently a pair of spoonbills came in sight, then two or three more pairs, and, at last, a little further on, an immense flight of perhaps three or four hundred, rose suddenly and silently from the willows, their snowy plumage glistening in the sun. They settled down some distance off, and we hoped to see them again and walked a little further over the rough ground, passing some deserted cormorants' nests which had been occupied the year before, but the spoonbills we beheld no more. We now returned by the way we came to the village of Overmeer, and, being rather tired with the walk, between four and five miles, we took a little row-boat on the Vecht. This boat, however, proved to be so leaky that the waterman, having done his best to bale out the water with an old wooden shoe, thought it best to put us ashore on the outskirts of the village, and procure another boat.

This was most fortunate, for while we were waiting two of the villagers came to see what had happened, and, hearing that we had been to see the spoonbills, informed our guide that they had some eggs taken a few days before from some outlying nests, which alone were accessible. So we followed them a short distance to their cottage; there they produced a large hand-

basin containing about a dozen good specimens, as well as three eggs of the marsh harrier and two of the heron. My father was glad to buy as many as he wanted of the spoonbill's, and we probably have the last laid at the Horster Meer, for it was expected that the next year it would be deserted.

The eggs we have are about the average size of a common hen's egg, but rougher in texture and not really white, mottled with rust colour and grey, especially at the larger end, but they are said to vary considerably both in form and colour. The flight of the spoonbill is very steady, and the legs and bill, both apparently black, stretched out perfectly straight before and behind present, with their brilliantly white plumage, a very striking appearance.

In the fourth edition of "Yarrell" (vol. iv.), Mr. Howard Saunders tells us that the spoonbills of the Horster Meer removed thence to the Naarden Meer, a tract of about 2,300 acres in extent, some fifteen miles from Amsterdam, where they were visited in 1884 by Mr. Alfred Crowley, but as the drainage of part of that meer had already been begun, the birds may have since quitted that neighbourhood. Mr. Harting has told us in the *Zoologist* for 1877 that, in a MS. survey of certain Sussex manors taken in 1570, mention is made of spoonbills, under the name of "shovelers," breeding in the woods called the Westwood and Haselette, near Goodwood Park, in that and former years; and in a subsequent communication (*Zool.*, 1884, p. 81) he adduced some interesting evidence of the previously unsuspected fact that in Henry the Eighth's time spoonbills nested in the heronry in the Bishop of London's park at Fulham.

M. BORRER.

## WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA.

### IV.



ONE of the first things to strike our notice on peering into the groves of small gums which adorn parts of our bush road, is the immensity of insect life supported by one small sapling. Each of them is a mine of wealth to the inquisitive entomologist, a source of never-ending delight, a study for a life-time. The stem, the branches, the twigs, the bark, the leaves, the tender shoots—all contribute their quota to the teeming population of these miniature but favoured eucalypti. Perhaps the feature which impresses us most strongly during our examination is the effect produced by the attacks of gall-flies upon the leaves and twigs of our ever-green beauties. Scarcely a leaf but shows the mark, large or small, of these alert and industrious insects; hardly a twig but is disfigured by knobs and bumps indicative of their attacks.

Many of the galls are mere little pimples upon the surface of the leaves, swellings not much larger than a pin's head; others rise to more like the size, and very like the colour, of small ripe apples and pears. Sometimes the whole of the leaf is studded so thickly with small protuberances that scarcely a bit of the natural surface is discernible; we have ourselves counted one hundred such swellings upon the quarter of a moderate-sized leaf. The large ones will often repose in solitary grandeur, their red and yellow cheeks showing off beautifully against the dark green of their support. Sometimes the leaf will be pierced too near the edge, and will then fail to close up at one end, forming a pretty cup. The inhabitants of these vegetable bladders are themselves very quaint looking. With a very flat body, quite black upon the upper surface and white and fluffy underneath, they scuttle and roll about in extreme panic upon being disturbed, and evince the greatest agility in eluding scientific observation.

Many of the twigs of our young trees are swollen from the attacks of the saw-fly, and the veins in some of the leaves are hard and knotty from the same cause. If we carefully slice off a piece from the top of one of these woody veins, we expose to view a series of cells, each of which contains a minute, yellow, fat, helpless-looking grub, very like a baby in a cradle. There are on some leaves of these gums, small oval reddish bodies, which, if pressed, exude a thick red liquid. They are probably a species of aphid in one stage of its metamorphosis, for the ants are constantly running up and down the stems of these saplings in search of honeydew, and nothing else in the way of aphides is visible.

At times one or other of the young trees is afflicted with a sort of smut, the twigs and many of the lower leaves being covered with fine black dust, and the whole tree presenting a drooping and forlorn appearance. This black substance is a fungus, which adheres to and grows in the honeydew dropped from the aphides which are living in the upper part, upon the lower leaves and branches; the breathing pores are thus choked up and the unhealthy condition of the plant is attested by its woe-begone look. The ravages of the small mining caterpillars are visible everywhere upon the broad leaves of these saplings. The attacks of one species will be marked by irregular white streaks, extending nearly the length of the leaf; others produce white patches, while others still fasten the leaves together with threads, and in this snug enclosure will eat away the top surface of both leaves.

There is a little, squat, dark-coloured spider, shaped very like a triangle, which lives in a curled-up corner of a leaf, and scuttles off very quickly, sideways, like a crab, on his home being broken into. There is a very remarkable isosceles triangle of a spider, whose body is quite a work of art; the ground-colour is terra-cotta, and this is inlaid with white, forming a

pattern like a mosaic. This spider has no regular abode, but stays very quietly upon a leaf, keeping the one position for hours, until an unfortunate insect settles close by, when it is instantly seized by the long fore-legs. We found a brown spider upon one of these same gums, sitting upon a clutch of eggs with the evident intention of hatching them out, like the domestic hen; and there is a large black species found everywhere in the spring while digging, which carries a bag of eggs almost as large as itself between its hind legs, and gets over the ground at a surprising pace with this heavy burden.

One very curious resident upon our gums, curious, not so much in itself, as in its work, is a very small brown larva, which lives in a little silken house, and eats the upper surface of the leaf alongside this dwelling. The strange part of the performance is the springing up of a miniature forest of brown threads all over the part where he has been feeding, and on the margin of it also, where the leaf is intact. The threads appear to be vegetable fibre, but how they are made to assume the vertical, and what purpose they serve, unless to assist the concealment of the larva, we have, as yet, been unable to discover. There is another small larva which constructs a circular wall upon the leaf, and, bringing down another leaf upon the top, securely fastens it there, and in this simple fortress enjoys perfect security.

Of birds, the honeyeaters seem the great frequenters of our young grove, coming thither probably for the numerous small insects which form part of their diet. Strange to say, however, they do not build there, always choosing in preference a clump of young ti-tree, where the cleverly-constructed nest of long soft strips of bark, often delicately lined with wallaby hair, is made secure between three or four stems about the thickness of one's finger. In this are laid two whitish eggs, spotted with pink upon the larger end, and so closely does the hen bird sit that she might be almost captured with the hand.

HAMILTON STUART DOVE.

*Table Cape, October 11th, 1892.*

## OUT OF DOORS.

BY THE EDITOR.



HE annual exodus this year, looked forward to as it doubtless is by many thousands, will perhaps be less keenly relished than is sometimes the case. In no previous season of the century, it may, we believe, be stated without fear of contradiction, has there been such a marvellously fine spring and early summer as that with which we have been favoured this year. Never within our memory has an out-of-door life been so possible, so delightful, so enjoyable, as it has

been during the early months of 1893. Never, in spite of drought, have the wild flowers, from the time of primroses and bluebells down to the wild roses and honeysuckle, been so early and so numerous as we have had them during the last months. One effect, and that a strange one, of this unusual period of sunshine is not likely to be regarded with favour by an important portion of the community; for it is said that the depression in the book-trade is attributable to the spell of fine weather. Be this as it may, those who are preparing to spend their summer holiday either at home or abroad, in country houses with pleasant gardens, away on the moors and fells, by the seaside, or further afield in the various continental tourist resorts, are certain to lay in a store of books which they at any rate *intend* to read: books of all kinds, novels and poems, travels and essays, and, we may hope, among them a certain number of volumes bearing more or less closely on the side of natural history which it is the office of the Selborne Society to develop and promote. To these we would commend two or three, the notice of which cannot be longer delayed.

Handsomest of these is the new edition of Mr. William Robinson's *English Flower Garden*, which Mr. John Murray issued early in the year, and which is, in our judgment, distinctly the most beautiful book on gardens which has come under our notice. To a thorough knowledge of his subject from a practical—that is to say, a cultural—point of view, Mr. Robinson unites a thorough appreciation of the artistic side of gardening, and a faculty for seizing the most striking features of well-ordered gardens and bringing them before his readers. No man has done more to emancipate the country dweller from the tyranny of fashion and of the professional gardener; to liberate him from the demon of “bedding out,” and the Mephistophelian glare of the scarlet geranium and the yellow calceolaria. The *cultus* of the lily and the sunflower may indeed claim another origin; but we who have lived through the period of the “ribbon border” and the formalism of “pattern” bedding, cannot be sufficiently grateful to Mr. Robinson for having stemmed and turned the tide of popular taste in a more rational direction. “Carpet-bedding”—that system by which at the cost of an infinity of trouble, time, and money, plants are degraded to producing an effect which might be more effectively and cheaply obtained by an arrangement of coloured chalks—is indeed still to be seen in our parks; and beds of the open-jam-tart order may yet be seen where better things might be expected, *e.g.*, on either side of the broad walk in Kew Gardens; but their reign is over, and the long interminable lines of blue, yellow and scarlet, which used to meet our gaze everywhere with wearisome monotony, have almost ceased to be. For this, and for very much more, Mr. Robinson is to be thanked.

For very much more: for the danger of your reformer is that he will begin by being destructive, and end there. Now it

is just as easy to pull down as it is difficult to build up; and Mr. Robinson would have had ample precedent had he contented himself, as many reformers have done, with destroying the faulty structure, leaving the erection of the new building to others. But this was not his way; and on the ruins of "bedding-out," and among the ashes of the bygone geraniums, calceolarias, and lobelias, he has laid the foundations of the "mixed border" and the "wild garden." He has restored, in fact, the best traditions of the English garden, which had come



BRANCH OF HAWTHORN.

down to us from the days of Bacon, Gerard and Parkinson, and which still happily lingered, waiting the time of their restoration, in many a country manor, and above all in the little flower-plots before the cottage door, where the early violets and aconites led the way to the daffodils, snowdrops and polyanthuses, and so on to the full pageant of Flora's lovely and fragrant train.

In this delightful *Flower Garden* the owner and the gardener may take equal interest. Mr. Robinson gives two-thirds of his book to an alphabetical enumeration and description of the best

flowers to grow; the first two hundred pages he devotes to telling us in a genial way what to have and what to avoid, how to design our beds and borders, what to put in them, what climbers, and shrubs, and trees, and bulbs to select, how to arrange for a sequence of flowers, so that we may not have a blaze of colour for four months or so and bare beds for the rest of the year. All this he illustrates with pencil as well as pen; he gives us visions of lovely houses and delightful gardens, and these are no unsubstantial presentments, but actual places "in their habit as they live;" he shows us the effects produced by flowers—often the commonest—growing in a simple and natural manner—of mulleins on a Surrey heath, of evening primroses by night, of Japanese anemones and summer snowflakes, and such "beautiful accidents" as this "colony of sweet cicely in shrubbery, with white harebells" (seemingly the too often



weedy and ineradicable *Campanula rapunculoides*) which, by Mr. Robinson's kindness we are enabled to reproduce, as well as another cut showing the treatment of an individual flower.

We would willingly dwell longer upon this charming and suggestive volume; but space is limited, and other books call for notice. We welcome another instalment of essays by "A Son of the Marshes," who might surely by this time reveal his identity. In *Forest Tithes* (Smith, Elder & Co.), we have more of those records of accurate and loving observation, carefully set down in straightforward readable English, which we are justified in expecting from this writer, who never disappoints his admirers. Here is a new sermon—would that all sermons appealed as forcibly to our sympathies!—on the old text "Eyes and no Eyes;" here we learn what to look for "In the Weald" and "Under



Green Leaves;" in "Longshore Memories" the writer takes us back once more to the North Kent marshes, where he acquired his power of seeing and of expressing in words what he saw; we have chapters dealing with individuals or groups, such as those on "British Reptiles," "The Otter," and "Small Deer;" and two story essays, "The Witch of Smoky Hollow" and "Little Jake"—the former marred by touches of *invraisemblance*, as when a "Sister of Mercy" is depicted as wearing a large crucifix "suspended by a golden chain;" the latter a short, simple and beautiful little narrative. Some London readers will be grateful to the author for his indication of "one day's good walk," starting from Dorking at 7 a.m. and going round by Ranmore Common, Shere, Abury, and Chilworth, and so back to Dorking again.



BURNHAM BEECHES.

Mr. Robinson's book is for the garden; *Forest Tithes* for the woods and fields: the third on our list, *The Beauties of Nature*, by the new President of the Selborne Society, Sir John Lubbock, takes a wider range, as its title seems to imply. It is a worthy companion to *The Pleasures of Life*, and we hope the companionship will soon be rendered more intimate by the production of a cheaper issue. Without the excellent illustrations, and in smaller type, a pocket edition might be brought out at the cost of a

shilling, and we can promise both author and publisher that at such a price the sale would be enormous.

Like those who listened to the Bellman, Sir John Lubbock's readers are presumably "all of them fond of quotations." No writer has so admirable a knack of bringing together a number of select passages from the most diverse writers in widely differing styles. This was manifest in the earlier work already referred to, and here it is, if anything, more remarkable. Seneca, Keble, Victor Hugo, W. R. Greg, Wordsworth, Kingsley, King Alfred, Cicero, Aristotle, Thoreau, Spenser, Hamerton, Jefferies, Humboldt, Darwin, Wallace, Belt, Patrin, Gray, Colvin, Bernardin de St. Pierre, Emerson, Shelley, the Song of Solomon, William Howitt—these, with many others incidentally referred to, are cited in the introductory chapter alone, and so dexterously are they dovetailed one into the other that the result is not that of a mere patchwork, but of a tapestry in which the various coloured—a word which we are sorry to see Sir John spells "colored"—threads blend into a harmonious whole. The book is admirably illustrated, as the accompanying example will show.

The fact that it is the busiest men who can always find time for more work has become an axiom, and in no one surely is this better exemplified than in the case of our new President, who combines various avocations, any one of which would suffice to keep a busy man employed, and yet finds time to devote to a wide range of natural history observations and to indulge in a course of reading of the extent of which a volume such as this gives some indication. How is it done? We remember in our youth having had held up to our admiration the example of a man who wrote "a large book" during the quarters of an hour which his wife kept him waiting for his dinner. Even in those early days we were somewhat sceptical as to the accuracy of this narrative; but it can only be by such rigorous economy of fragments of time that Sir John Lubbock can carry out his various enterprises. In this volume alone we have chapters on animal and vegetable life, on the woods and fields, the mountains and rivers, the sea and sky, all of them evidencing an amount of well-digested reading and personal observation at home and abroad which makes it impossible not to envy the possessor of a mind so comprehensive and appreciative. Certainly this handsome book will be a delightful out-of-doors companion wherever we may direct our steps this summer; and if we could put it in our pocket without materially adding to our encumbrances it would be even more widely used than it is certain to be in its present form.

---

## RELICS OF GILBERT WHITE.



SHORT account of some relics of Gilbert White, now in possession of the Rev. F. Gilbert White, vicar of Lensden, South Devon, may possibly be of interest to the readers of NATURE NOTES.

(1) A letter from Gilbert White to his sister-in-law, Mrs. John White of Blackburn. This I have copied as exactly as possible, without alteration of the spelling.

*“Selborne, April 17.*

“DEAR SISTER,—

“By both your last letters, for which I return you thanks, it plainly appears that my brother continues gradually to recover strength, and that air, exercise, and bathing are of singular service; and therefore I hope he will strive against irresolution, and summon up all his manhood to pursue the one and submit to the other, irksome as it may feel at times. You talk of Bath in this case: and those waters doubtless have done wonders; but brother Thomas says while the *cold* bath continues to be so serviceable he cannot see what more can be expected from *hot* ones, which, one should suppose, would rather relax. He thinks at present you had better pursue your home regimen. In town I saw Mr. Fielden, and your intended Curate; the former had lately seen my brother, who to his thinking was marvellously mended, and looked in the face almost as usual. Yesterday, if I mistake not, Mrs. Snooke entered into her 84th year. The late hot weather was of singular service to her, and relieved her from a cough, which had annoyed her the winter thro'. On Easter Monday Bro<sup>r</sup> and Sister Harry and several of their children are to go up to South Lambeth. They have just inoculated four of their children with singular success. My neighbour Yalden has just got a regular smart fit of the gout.

“My new parlor now dries at a great rate; and will be fit for use at Midsum<sup>r</sup>, but I shall not be able to compleat it this summer. I must not put on my upper paper 'til another year. With my best wishes and prayers for my brother's recovery, I remain

“Y<sup>r</sup> affectionate brother,

“GIL. WHITE.”

(2) A sermon of Gilbert White's, numbered by him 99, on the text 1 John iv. 20. According to the endorsements, it was preached by him on thirty-eight occasions between April 3, 1748 and 1792 (nine times at Selborne, and fourteen times at Farringdon). It then passed into the hands of his nephew, the Rev. Glyd White, who made a few alterations in it, substituted a new conclusion, and preached it at Brightwell, Oxon, in 1813. With some slight further alterations it was preached twice in that year by the Rev. Samson White, at Maidford and at Cold

Higham, Northants. Finally it was preached at Bussage, Gloucestershire, in 1852, with some further alterations by my grandfather, the Rev. F. H. White.

(3) The original water-colour sketch (11½ in. by 8 in.) of the Hermitage, with the inscription "S. H. Grimm fecit, 1777." From this was taken the somewhat reduced and distorted oval vignette which appears on the title page of the *Selborne*. The original of the vignette is now in possession of the Rev. Edmund Field, of Lancing College. Much has obviously been lost in the process of reduction.

STAMFORD.

### THE PLAGUE OF FIELD VOLES IN SCOTLAND.



THE Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to enquire into, and if possible devise means for combating, this evil, has recently been published, and contains much interesting information as well as valuable and important suggestions.

As is the case in former recorded instances of the sudden and alarming increase of field voles, or short-tailed field-mice, in Essex, Kent and elsewhere, large numbers of owls, particularly the short-eared or "woodcock owl," were attracted to the scene of devastation, and did excellent service in checking the plague. Through the senseless persecution of gamekeepers, collectors, &c., the woodcock owl rarely nowadays remains here during the summer to breed, even in those districts where it was formerly known to do so, but arrives and departs with the woodcock. Yet in the present instance, as the following extract from the Report will show, it has, owing to the unusual abundance of food, deviated in a remarkable manner from its usual custom. The Committee state that: "Nests in ordinary seasons are of comparatively rare occurrence in Great Britain; but in consequence of the vast multiplication of their favourite food, the vole, these owls have not only arrived in unusual numbers, but have remained and bred freely all over the district affected, laying from eight to thirteen eggs (though Prof. Newton, in his edition of Yarrell's *British Birds* mentions seven as an unusual number), and rearing more than one brood. The shepherd on Crooked-stone, near Cranford, counted fourteen nests on his ground. The small wood behind the farm-steading of Howpasley presented a remarkable appearance, the ground being densely covered with the 'pellets' or 'castings' of owls, composed of the fur and bones of voles. The fact of these owls remaining to breed means of course an immense increase in the quantity of field-mice destroyed by them, the numerous broods of young birds requiring an abundant and continuous

supply. The number of mice and rats killed by a single pair of the common white or barn owl, while rearing a family, is well nigh incredible. This has again and again been proved and pointed out by Mr. Norgate and other careful observers, who have spared neither trouble nor pains in investigating the matter by personal observation, in order that the pernicious practice of destroying owls might be put a stop to. The above-named gentleman, on examining more than thirty barn owls' nests, found the remains of only one bird—a blackbird—whereas one nest was supplied with twenty fresh rats all killed in one night. Other nests were supplied, some with rats only, some with mice only. *Zoologist* for 1881, p. 314."

The Report proceeds as follows: "The short-eared owl differs from most other owls in that he hunts in daylight, and his operations can be observed; but there is no doubt that the nocturnal species are equally useful to the farmer in destroying small rodents, and it would be difficult to condemn too severely the foolish and cruel action of those who allow or encourage the destruction of this useful and beautiful family of birds. It is with much satisfaction that the Committee record that many landowners and game preservers seem to have become convinced in late years that owls of all sorts are not only harmless to game but most beneficial to agriculturists, and have issued orders for the preservation of these birds.

"Next, and hardly second in merit, as a check upon voles and mice, comes the kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), and it is to be deplored that popular ignorance as to its food and habits is even greater than that which prevails in regard to owls. This bird, although possessing the long wings and dark eyes characteristic of a true falcon, is known to gamekeepers as a hawk—*noscitur a sociis*; its death-warrant is a standing order in most preserves, though here again there has been some improvement, and the destruction of the kestrel is forbidden on some estates. The food of this bird is known to consist almost exclusively of mice, grasshoppers, coleopterous insects, and their larvæ . . . Buzzards probably destroy large numbers of voles and mice, and are too heavy on the wing to do much injury to winged game; but they have become very scarce in Southern Scotland, owing to their destruction by gamekeepers." Here in East Anglia, and indeed in most parts of the country, these fine birds may be said to have been exterminated as a breeding species, though a few, especially of the rough-legged species, still occasionally make the fatal experiment of paying us a visit in the autumn.

The Committee, it appears, do not approve of the use of poison in dealing with the "vole plague," but among the various remedies suggested, great stress is laid on the preservation of owls of all sorts, buzzards, kestrels and the smaller sea-gulls, respecting which they say—"Strict injunctions ought to be given by landowners that these birds should not be destroyed. Their presence in full numbers, though inadequate to avert an

outbreak, would undoubtedly tend to mitigate it, and, as has been proved in the case of the short-eared owl, they have the faculty of multiplying abnormally in presence of an unusual supply of food. They are at all events most useful allies to man in combating attacks of ground vermin. The Committee further desire to deprecate in the strongest manner possible the use of the pole-trap for the capture of hawks. Besides the inhumanity of this device, it is indiscriminate, and harmless owls, kestrels and buzzards are just as likely to be taken by it as are the more mischievous species." Respecting that indefatigable little "farmer's friend," the common weasel, the following remarks occur:—"The Committee have no hesitation in recommending that weasels, which are persistent mouse-hunters, and do little damage to game, should not be molested, at least on moorlands and hill-pastures, where they can do little harm and much good." I have myself seen a weasel swim across a brook carrying a large field-vole in his mouth, and have found dead ones laid up in his retreat.

The destruction of owls (not to speak of kestrels) is still far too general, and by no means confined to Scotland; though why it is permitted is hard to understand. Two instances occurred only last summer to my knowledge, in each of which a whole family of young owls were done to death. In the first a nest of young barn owls were allowed to remain undisturbed till their plumage was considered to be sufficiently advanced, and then taken to the bird-stuffers to be killed and stuffed. In the other case a family of that beautiful bird, the long-eared owl, hatched in an East Suffolk fir plantation, were, I have reason to believe, all shot. This species, if protected (as indeed all the British owls *nominaly* are), would be far from uncommon in some parts of Suffolk, but the young have a habit which too often brings about their own destruction. After leaving the nest they sit still among the thick foliage of some fir, holly or other tree, where, if they did but keep silence, they would be comparatively safe; but as darkness comes on, hunger prompts them to call to their parents for food, and long into the night they utter from time to time their mournful wailing note, which borne on the gentle summer breeze may be heard to a long distance. Too often this cry proves to be their own death-knell, for by means of it they reveal their whereabouts not only to their anxious parents but also to their arch enemy, the keeper, who is thus enabled to follow up and murder the whole brood.

Though the "vole plague" has generally been confined to certain limits, yet throughout the country, rats and moles have of late years been far too numerous, and from the game preserver as well as the farmer owls of all sorts, kestrels, buzzards and weasels deserve the strictest protection for keeping down one of the worst enemies to game—the common brown rat.

G. T. ROPE.

---

---

## THE RESCUE OF OPEN SPACES.\*

THE most casual reader of either of the pamphlets noted below cannot but be struck by the immense usefulness of the work carried on by the Commons Preservation Society. The first is a detailed account of its operations throughout Great Britain; the second is a record of persistent energy, triumphant at last, in one locality alone. The work of the Commons Preservation Society may be classified under the following heads: (1) Threatened appropriation of open spaces under private Acts of Parliament. (2) Parliamentary proceedings. (3) Proceedings under the Commons and Enclosure Acts. (4) London open spaces. (5) Litigation to prevent arbitrary enclosure. It would be impossible here to attempt anything like an extended comment on the victories won or reverses sustained in these various departments, so a choice must be made of one or two instances. The rescue of St. Margaret's Parish Piece at Leicester from the attempt of the Select Vestry to acquire parliamentary powers to sell it for building land, points to the fact that large provincial towns need open spaces in their centres nearly as much as London, since facilities for escape into the country in such localities are no greater than we in London enjoy. The chief interest in the Society's work centres around the New Forest Ranges Act, in the demolition of which, after the Bill had become law, the Commons Preservation Society played no unimportant part; but that subject has already been fully discussed in these pages.

Another good piece of work is the now assured preservation as an open space of the Bethnal Green Poor's Land in East London. Owing to the lease of the land falling in it was decided, if possible, to build thereon a Poor Law Infirmary and a Free Library. The area between the Thames in the south and Victoria Park in the north is well nigh covered with an unbroken succession of dull and dingy dwellings, and the Charity Commissioners, to whom the Society referred the matter, wisely determined that the Bethnal Green Poor's Land should remain an open space, in accordance with the original intention, as expressed in the deed declaring the Trusts dated 1690. Throughout England and Scotland jealous guard has been kept over footpaths and commons—with varying success, but with little cause for discouragement. The sphere of operations does not appear to be extended to Ireland; but one would surely think that in the neighbourhood of Dublin and Belfast—in the case of the latter especially, with its rapidly increasing population—the Society would find plenty to do. We may note that Westerham is not in Sussex as stated, but in Kent, twenty miles from the City.

Of Mr. Hunter's pamphlet, giving in detail the circumstances of the splendid struggle which lasted thirteen years, and resulted in the rescue of Banstead Downs and Heath, we need only remark that if the lord of the manor had endeavoured to empty a tray of quicksilver with his fingers he would have found it an easier task than his industrious attempt to buy up all the commoners' rights in the hope of throwing the breezy downs of Banstead upon the metropolitan building estate market. London had got quite far enough when it had reached Sutton, in Surrey, and speculative builders may now console themselves with the unpleasant reflection that their progress southward in this direction is opposed by a barrier several miles deep.

ARCHIBALD CLARKE.

---

**The Excursion to Selborne.**—Owing to its occurrence so late in the month it is impossible to give any account of the excursion to Selborne in the present issue of NATURE NOTES. We hope next month to give a full report of the proceedings on this interesting and important occasion.

---

\* *Commons Preservation Society, Report of the Executive Committee of Proceedings during the years 1888-92, London.* Printed by Eyre & Spottiswoode, East Harding Street, Fetter Lane, E.C. 8vo. Price not stated.

*Another Chapter in the Rescue of London Commons. The Preservation of the Downs and Heaths of Banstead.* By Robert Hunter, Esq., of the Commons Preservation Society. Printed by Eyre & Spottiswoode, East Harding Street, London, E.C. 8vo. Price not stated.

## SELBORNIANA.

**An Appeal to Selbornians.**—Last year at this season we gave some "Hints for the Holidays," which appeared to us needed, and which we were glad to learn met with general acceptance. We have no intention of repeating them, although we would remind our readers of their existence, and suggest that their re-perusal might prove useful. But we will renew the appeal we then made on behalf of the Children's Country Holiday Fund, by means of which no fewer than 25,568 London children were sent last year into the country for a fortnight each, with most gratifying results. Space—or the want of it—will not allow us to do more than commend this most deserving charity to the warm support of Selbornians, and urge them to send for the report of the work during 1892 to the Secretary, Mr. Cyril Jackson, 10, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C. Fifteen shillings will ensure a fortnight's country holiday for one child, and we trust that many readers of NATURE NOTES will take this means of assuring to others the pleasure of life out of doors, which they themselves so greatly enjoy.

**Lantern Slides** (pp. 93, 114).—According to my promise in last month's NOTES, I now submit a list of birds which I have been able to copy from books by permission of the publishers, viz., from Pouchet's *Universe*, by permission of Messrs. Blackie & Sons:—

Magpie and nest.	Waterhen and nest.
Longtailed Titmouse and nest.	Reed Warbler and nest.
Wren and nest.	Swallow and nest.
Barn Owl and nest.	Golden Oriole and nest.
Goshawk and nest.	Redwing.
	Cuckoo killing Wrens.

And from Buckland's edition of White's *Selborne*, by permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. :—

Swallow.	Nightingale.
Swift.	Hoopoe.
Housemartin.	Bullfinch.
Wryneck.	Hawfinch.
Gold Crested Wren.	Butcher Bird.
Cuckoo.	Wheatear.

Blackcap.

From all these I have been able to prepare very fair lantern slides, and some of them have been coloured by the kindness of Mrs. Wheatcroft, the wife of the hon. local sec. of our branch. I hope to have some other British birds ready very shortly, and by the time the lecture season begins I shall be pleased to lend a selection of the birds, together with my lantern slides of Selborne, to any other branch, provided the executive will undertake to pay carriage both ways, promise not to let them be copied, and make known the source of the pictures, with due acknowledgment to the publishers for their courtesy, as these are the conditions under which I obtained permission to copy at all. The slides are of such density that they may be shown in the lantern or as transparencies on a proper stand on a table with an opal shaded lamp behind, or in a window; I find the latter a very popular and convenient way of showing transparencies when a lantern is not available, or for daylight meetings.

Bath.

E. J. APPLEBY.

**The "Osprey" again.**—A correspondent sends us the following letter :— "I purchased a hat at a London milliner's the other day, and on objecting to the 'osprey' was told that it was only an imitation, not the real osprey at all. I enclose two pieces; the grey I think is unquestionably genuine osprey, the other certainly does not look like the same, and I am inclined to believe that it is made from some finely split quill. If this is so, the outcry about the amount of osprey worn again is a false alarm, as this is the kind almost universally worn at present, as the other does not give the stiff erect effect required."

We forwarded the specimens to Mrs. Brightwen, who expressed her belief that both were "osprey," but forwarded them to a professional expert for his



opinion. The following reply was sent :—"The two pieces of feather received and returned are undoubtedly what milliners call osprey—the *egret* of naturalists. The short piece is the quill or stump of a long feather of the large egret, and cut into two or three lengths. The other is of a smaller and inferior bird, with the plume feather just developing. Being wild birds they are killed when the opportunity offers. If they were domesticated they would be allowed to live until the plume was more fully developed."

Another correspondent begs us to direct attention to the subject, but what more can be said? It is only too evident that the human "bird of prey" (see NATURE NOTES, 1892, p. 115) has hardened her heart against the dictates of humanity, and that her savage instincts are stronger than her instincts of pity.

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

**The Kingfisher** (pp. 49, 115).—I am pleased to find that my old friend, the Rev. A. C. Almack, can give such a good account of the kingfishers of the Thames. I can quite bear him out as regards the Cherwell and Isis; many have been reported to me in this neighbourhood since last October, and I have frequently seen them myself. The recuperative power of the species seems indeed quite astonishing. Hard winters reduce their numbers and bring them within reach of wanton shooters, yet in a couple of years they are once more quite common. A correspondent in NATURE NOTES recently lamented the diminution of their numbers in North Wales. I felt inclined at the time to ask if he had good grounds for believing them to have ever been abundant there. I have asked more than one North Welshman the question, and can learn very little about kingfishers, and in South Wales I have the evidence of my own eyes. Though I have been in the habit of prowling about by Welsh streams for the last thirty years, I have very rarely met with the bird. And the reason is, I think, not that they have been persecuted there more than elsewhere, but that swift streams do not answer their purpose so well as the slow rivers of England, either for the purposes of feeding or nesting. In the Alps, for example, I never saw a kingfisher but once, and that was on a bit of still water, an inlet off a rushing river. But it would be interesting to obtain some trustworthy evidence as to the Welsh kingfishers, and I hope some of your correspondents may be able to supply it.

*Oxford.*

W. WARDE FOWLER.

It may interest your readers to know that on different occasions in the last few years I have seen kingfishers in my garden in Edgbaston (which is a residential suburb), only a mile and a-half from the very centre of Birmingham, a small pool of water containing fish being the cause of their visits.

HARRIET PEYTON.

**Swallows.**—This evening (June 13th) while sitting in Kew Gardens, opposite Sion House, I saw a flight of swallows, about a hundred, alight in the long grass in the meadow where cattle were grazing. Presently one of the company came across the river into the Gardens, and skimmed about and went very low down, as if to see what sort of a place it was. He went back and returned with another swallow, and they did the same. Then those returned bringing a third one; they went a little away, then came back, seeming to be very unsettled and fatigued. The others in the field rose and fell and went into some bushes near, keeping very close together. To my great regret I had to leave this very pretty and interesting sight.

*Richmond, Surrey.*

MAYBELL G. FULLWOOD.

**The Land Rail and Early May** (pp. 117-119).—We have never been without land rails here in summer on the banks of the Thames; and this season, since the rain first came, the land has been full of them. I believe I saw the May in bloom earlier than Miss Hickey; and it has been more beautiful than ever this year.

*Buscot, Berks.*

OSWALD BIRCHALL.

**A Book for Botanists.**—One of the last articles written by the Rev. Percy Myles for NATURE NOTES was that at p. 171 of the volume for 1891, in which he described at length the *Biographical Index of British and Irish Botanists*, then preparing for publication by Messrs. Britten and Boulger. For many reasons, more especially because of the fulness of Mr. Myles's account, we do not purpose to speak in detail of the volume, but some who read the notice referred to may like to know that the book has just been published by Messrs. West, Newman & Co., of 54, Hatton Garden, E.C., price 6s. 6d. net.

---

### OFFICIAL NOTICES.

AT the meeting of the Council held on June 7th a vote of thanks to the members of the White family, who kindly lent the relics of Gilbert White which were exhibited at the annual general meeting, was passed.

In the place of Messrs. J. Allen and R. M. Wattson, who were elected members of Council at the annual meeting, Mr. R. H. Read and Mr. W. B. Gerish were elected representatives of the Lower Thames Valley and Clapton branches respectively.

The formation of two new branches was authorised—the Southgate District Branch (hon. sec., Selborne Boome, Esq.) and the Ferns Branch (hon. sec., Dr. G. E. J. Greene). Miss M. Dundas having resigned her office as hon. sec. of the Wensleydale Branch, a vote of thanks was given for her past services. The members of the branch who have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1893 are requested to forward them to the Secretary of the Society, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C.

The Council resolved that petitions on behalf of the Society should be presented to Parliament in favour of the Bills for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising and for the Better Protection of Wild Birds.

A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING will be held at 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, on Monday, July 17th, at five o'clock. At this meeting a proposal will be made that the minimum annual subscription of a member shall be increased, and that Rule 6 shall be altered accordingly. Other matters may be considered at this meeting.

A. J. WESTERN, *Secretary*.

---

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**H. P.**—It is a fungus (*Mitruha cucullata*).

**Strathmore.**—The specimen was hardly sufficient for determination. Can you send again?

**Felicitas.**—Your lines are scarcely Selbornian in spirit, and you give no address.

**M. E. C.**—Yes, it is the Great Knapweed (*Centaurea Scabiosa*), of which white varieties are occasionally found.

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

---

We have to regret the holding over of several articles, notes, and reviews, which will appear in our August number.

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

No. 44.

AUGUST, 1893.

VOL. IV.

### FLOWERS OF WINTER AND OF SPRING.



LAST November I sent to NATURE NOTES a short account of the birds which come to our garden during the winter months; and to-day I should like to speak about the flowers of winter and spring in this snow-bound valley.

Early in January we drove across the frozen Davos Lake in a hay sledge. Following the path which the wood-carts make, we passed the pool where men were cutting ice, and so came to the garden of frost flowers. Half a foot of snow lies upon the lake, and the crystals have grown here like flowers in a garden where the colours are varied and beautiful, ever shifting in the sun's rays. These children of the frozen mist are sometimes pointed, like tiny wings, when they will flutter to the slightest breath of wind. Again there are spiked stars, dancing all night beneath the moon. Sometimes they cling to the reeds like delicate blossoms; or else they float in the half-congealed pools of water, or they are frozen into the solid ice; and wherever the mist rises from the river's mouth, there you will find the flowers with their six petals, shining bright in the sunlight, settling on the blades of grass like butterflies whose wings are at rest.

During the last days of January we walked up a side-valley and along beside the stream. Here again the frost had played some pranks with the mist at night: for he caught the rising vapour and made a bridge from bank to bank across the water. It was a lovely cave of ice, and hung with great stalactites to which the frost-flowers clung, and there were besides ridges of thin ice with spaces of air in between. But here it was dangerous to walk, because you were for ever breaking through the

crust and scraping your ankle against the sharp little splinters. (Such are the charms of "cat-ice!")

I remember how we crossed many of these frozen bridges, and how the spears of ice rose from that polished field, and again, how the icicles hung down from their cold shelf. They were as fine and as long as the hair of an ice maiden. The stream was dammed in places, too, and broke its snowy banks and ran over the meadows, where again the frost held it; and the stones on the stream bed were coated with glittering ice, so that when the water rushed over them it beat strange tunes against their sides. But often that ice-music was more like a peal of muffled bells than anything else. So on one walk we crossed many bridges and could always hear the torrent groaning beneath us. It was pretty to see the alders fringed with rime, as fine as the down upon a moth's wing. Then a water-ouzel scudded past us up towards the glacier, and he brushed the crystals with his snowy breast. But the sun had set and the glacier fields high up were starting into sudden flame where the after-glow had awakened them, and down beyond the western mountain a mock-sun arose like a golden column from out the mist. It was too cold to linger any longer on those fascinating bridges of ice, and we turned our footsteps homewards.

March 4th.—March has come, and still the frost-flowers grow beside the lake, and three feet of snow cover those other flowers which made their buds in autumn and are only waiting for the sunlight and Föhn wind to free them from their load. For the heather buds and gentians have their eyes tightly closed, and anemones have laid their downy heads to sleep. They are all waiting now for the snow to disappear, when they will suddenly wake to the joy of springtime and will greet us with the delight of long-lost friends.

In April on a very hot bank the star gentian (*Gentiana verna*) has been bold enough to open, and beside him grows the yellow coltsfoot with moisture oozing from his stem. Heather banks are deepening in colour up in the ravine, and just above the level of the pines the spring anemone (*A. vernalis*) shakes his downy wings like a young bird, and bares his golden breast to the sun. This lilac anemone, or Pasque flower, grows always on those banks which are most exposed to the sun, and mingles with that ever-green arctostaphylos or bear-berry about whose honey the bees are so greedy. Then there are oxlips in the meadows, crocuses as white as snowfall, and soldanellas shaking their dainty bells, and grey violets with delicious fragrance, are wedged in the granite boulders and nod from the crevices of the rock to the primulas. The mountain sides are carpeted with polygala white and red, with cup gentians (*G. acaulis*) and potentillas and auriculas, and the tortoiseshell butterflies and clouded yellow are floating over them.

The Föhn wind is greatly responsible for this sudden awakening. He it was who first in March loosed the snow upon the

mountains and sent it thundering down into the gullies ; and he it was who gave the ring-thrush that liquid note of his. For the Föhn drove up to us from Italy, over fields and fields of snow, and at his voice the lazy pines stretched their branches, whilst the sap rose oncè again within them.

In May the alders break into blossom, and the spruce pines are crowned with crimson flowers. Chaffinches are calling to each other in the forest. Woodpeckers shout and laugh, and even a hoopoe has arrived, but he is only passing through. Golden-crested wrens and goldfinches stay with us, and the cuckoo comes to tell us about England. The larks are singing in the meadows, where there are patches of snow left from yesterday's storm.

One evening a swallow came through my open window and settled on the curtain pole quite comfortably, tucking his head under his wing. He awoke me in the morning with that sweet and fitful warbling of his ; but he would not stay with me, and when the sun was up he passed through the window and out into the valley, skimming over the crocus flowers in his rapid flight. Good-bye, then, dear swallow ! You will come again later—in June, perhaps.

May 17.—Snow is with us again, for May is not always a merry month in the high Alps. Snow and a wind which cuts your face till it smarts. There are frosts at night, and the poor soldanellas and auriculas are bowed to the ground. But the chaffinches continue to line their nests with the hair from the tails of Swiss horses (how hard must be the beds thus supplied !). The breeding season is here, and, in spite of snow or harsh winds, birds are singing in the forest. Never sang the thrush more persistently than when his throat was wet with snow ; and the woodpecker laughed at those mortals who arrayed themselves in muffler or grey veil to climb the forest paths—then his head was scarlet and he looked so handsome, and spring is spring, and comes but once a year ; it is the season for courtship. The woodpecker is not one to quake and shiver for a blast of wind or a mouthful of snow.

I would like to say more, but have already trespassed beyond the limits of NATURE NOTES. I have tried to tell of the winter among our mountains, and of that Spring which is very dear, though often sad. Is it the struggle of Nature, perhaps, which gives the beauty when it comes a deeper joy ? Is it because the air is so keen that the violet has such a powerful scent ?

C. M. SYMONDS.

*Davos Platz.*

---

## THE HARVEST MOUSE AT METAPONTUM.



IN my Notes on a Harvest Mouse in the May number, I stated, over-boldly perhaps, my belief that the mouse on certain coins of Metapontum is a representation of the harvest mouse (*Mus minutus*). The idea first occurred to me when once happening to see my pet mouse standing on the broad over-turned leaf of a green oat, the remembrance of the coin came to my mind, for the real mouse and the mouse of the coin were in exactly the same position and attitude.

This coin of Metapontum may be roughly dated about 450 b.c.—a time when the Greek cities round the Gulf of Tarentum were very prosperous; among them Metapontum specially owed her wealth to her fertile corn-lands. A large number of her varied and beautiful coins have been preserved to our day.

The coin I propose to comment on just from one limited point of view is No. 123 in the British Museum catalogue; it is about the size of a sixpence, but thicker. I only note in passing the beautiful head of Demeter on the obverse; on the reverse is a stalk of barley, the ear in high relief. Ear and stalk fill one diameter of the coin, the letters Μ Ε Τ Α are on the right; on the left is a barley leaf starting from the stalk a little below the ear; this leaf turns back, and on it stands a little mouse. The whole length of the mouse is about one-third that of the ear of corn; the length of this, not including the awns or "beard," is  $\frac{2}{5}$  in. It will be seen that the mouse is a very small object on the coin; I do not think stress is to be laid on the actual proportion of mouse to ear of corn.

Now the barley ear is so finely marked that the outer glumes can be traced round each corn and the roughness of the awns is distinctly marked by fine and regular indentations—indeed it is evidently such a transcript of nature that the species has been determined to be *Hordeum hexastichon* (see Imhoof and Blumer, *Animals and Plants on Classic Coins and Gems*, 1889). This is in favour of our attempt to identify the species to which the mouse on the same coin belongs, in so far as it shows that a very close copy of nature was not alien to the art of Greek coins.

It may here be remarked that the Metapontum coins furnish such a rich and varied series of natural objects, treated with minute detail, as to show that the designers were keen, appreciative, and practised observers of nature. The mouse in question stands on its leaf in such a natural attitude for that position as to make it highly probable that the artist had seen one just so placed. If so, the mouse must have been very light and small, and a grain feeder—all characters of *Mus minutus*. This, however, is a presumption, not an argument in favour of the identification.

The attitude of the little animal must now be considered. It is standing firmly on the leaf on its hind legs; the fore paws

do not rest on the leaf, the body is inclined forwards, it is not erect like a squirrel; this is just the position I have seen the harvest mouse take when eating, and not on the ground. Such conditions would be the artist's opportunity for watching so shy and lively a creature. The tail is raised, and curved like an S; the curve at the tip is very close and small, like a tendril; it almost touches the ear of corn which is obliquely above the mouse; the lower curve is part of a much larger circle. I observed that my own mouse generally tried to wind his tail round a support higher up than that on which he was standing.

As to the curves above mentioned, I can think of no more characteristic representation of a prehensile tail in use than this in its suggestion of suppleness, strength, and purpose. Fortunately for my argument we here come upon a diagnostic character of *Mus minutus*; this species is the only member of the mouse tribe in Europe which has a truly prehensile tail (see *Transactions of the Zoological Society*, 1888, p. 237).\*

Thus, as I believe, an artist, by means of trained hand and observing eye, so seized the points which the individual life before him made most salient, as to figure accurately a species 2,000 years before systematists gave it a name.

CONSTANCE GARLICK.

---

## SWALLOWS IN SCHOOL.



FOR several years two pairs of swallows have built their nests and reared their broods inside our schoolroom—one pair in the infants', and one in the school for older scholars. They always build at about the same height, though not in the same place, in the rafters of our old-fashioned building. The matter of site is not settled without survey and amicable discussion between the pair. Two or three places were carefully investigated this spring, before the one chosen was fixed upon. It is conveniently situated at the same level as the ventilator in the gable, through which they pass in and out. The matter of site having been settled, the happy pair indulged in a few vocal duets before proceeding to the serious business of house building. These were charming little performances, ending with a "chree, chree, chree." It was amusing to note that when they did not make a fair start they politely began again.

This year's nests have, of course, been built, and the broods hatched off (June 4th), and the old birds have small leisure now for music. The school children are not much disturbed by

---

\* The two species of *Dendromys* are the other examples; they belong to South Africa.

them, though I must confess at times to feeling a trifle less Selbornian than I ought when young eyes wander upwards at the birds instead of being directed horizontally at black-board. And discipline is not quite so exact as it ought to be at the exciting time when the young birds first show their trim white waistcoats above the edge of their mud-built parapet, and survey things and people below. The excitement increases as the young birds are encouraged to make their first flight. The inevitable last nervous one affords matter for a good deal of conjecture. Youthful naturalists are not wanting who assert that "the old un give him a push offer the nest;" but I am not positive.

Before the eggs are hatched they are not above helping with the singing, and the children take it as a matter of course. This good-natured assistance proves sometimes embarrassing, when prayer meetings are held in the schoolroom. They join very heartily in the hymns, and come in with a tremendous flourish at the close.

A year or two ago one of the poor little things met with a mishap and hurt its wing—probably through flying against a pane. It was perfectly tame, and did not struggle in the least when picked up. It used to perch on the rim round the front of my desk, and ride about the school on the collar of my coat, often creeping confidently on to my shoulder. But, alas! it was a cold early summer, and flies were scarce. It greedily snapped up those on the windows, grasping my fingers with its weak claws. The children assisted me in attempting to feed it, but our efforts were vain—either owing to lack of its natural food or to its unfortunate accident, our tiny friend's life came to a premature end, and it was found one morning dead. I keep a green place in my memory for it still.

*Swanton Motley, East Dereham.*

J. LEWTON BRAIN.

### GILBERT WHITE.\*

*Author of the Immortal "Natural History of Selborne."*

DIED JUNE 26, 1793.

CENTENARIES come and go,  
 Times for talk, and scenes of show,—  
 Heroes, conquerors, poets, sages,—  
 But thy book's perennial pages,  
 Gentle GILBERT, shall outlast  
 Many a Fame whose brazen blast  
 Tortures ears that would far rather  
 Close to their thrasonic blather,

\* From *Punch*, July 1st, 1893.



And in SELBORNE'S grassy hollows,  
 List the twitter of thy swallows !  
 Chronicler, afar from strife,  
 Of the quiet country life,  
 Naturalist as sage as simple,  
 While leaves whisper, and brooks dimple,  
 While bird-song and blossom-story  
 Still bewitch, thy gentle glory  
 Shall be the peculiar pleasure  
 Of all lovers of wise leisure.  
 Time's moss-growths hide not thy name  
 On the tablets of true fame.

---



---

WOOD NOTES TAMED.\*



THE title of this book is a most unfortunate one. It should have been called, not "Wood Notes Wild," but "Wood Notes *Tamed*." It is an attempt by a musical American gentleman, a very lovable character it would seem, to catch the wild notes of wild birds, and to crib, cabin, and confine them within the lines and spaces of our musical stave. They are chiefly the songs of American birds, and therefore I am unable to say how much of their wild nature still cleaves to them in their pitiable captivity, but wherever the song of an English bird is represented in this volume, as happens in the additional notes by Mr. Cheney's son, I am able to say with confidence that when put to the torture on our scale the life of the song vanishes at once. Nothing is left of it but a ghastly caricature, or at best in one or two cases a pretty musical phrase, which has not as much resemblance to the birds' song as a woollen sock has to the human foot.

I hope no musical Selbornian will ever be tempted to waste his time in any such attempt to put the voices of the birds to shame. Nothing can be gained by it either for natural history or for art. I do not think it is my nature to be over-positive about anything, but here is a point on which I will for once venture to say that I *know* I am right. Birds do not sing or converse on our musical scale, and any attempt to represent their songs in this way must be futile; at best it can only be a translation, as it were, into a different language. I should not write thus if I did not understand music; my knowledge and love of music is much older than my knowledge and love of birds.

Last winter, with the kind help of my friend Mr. Pyecraft,

---

\* *Wood Notes Wild*, by Samuel Pease Cheney. Boston, U.S.A.: Lea and Sheppard, 1892.

who was dissecting birds in the Oxford Museum, I was able to show the Oxford Natural History Society that though the musical mechanism of a bird is essentially the same as that of a clarinet or oboe, it is played on in a manner so entirely different that its music cannot be produced on our musical scale. As I write these very lines, the voice of a thrush comes in from my garden through the open door, and seems to say, "Tell them so; tell them so; it can't be tamed, it *sha'n't* be tamed." While reading this book I have listened to the black-cap, chiff-chaff, yellow hammer, tree pipit, and many others, and they all, with one consent, implore me to be loyal to their wood notes *wild*.

What Mr. Cheney really did, as the accounts of his procedure clearly show, was to listen to a bird's song patiently until it suggested to his mind a phrase or phrases of our artificial and artistic music. This may very well be so, as cases are on record where a bird's song has thus suggested the leading phrase of a great musical composition, as in the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony in C minor. But such phrases are not truly what the bird actually sings, and this explanation of Mr. Cheney's method quite accounts for certain absurdities in this volume, such as the "wild melody whirled out by a clothes rack," which is strongly suggestive of Wagner, or the reduction to our musical notation of sounds which are not really musical at all, such as the purring of a cat or the braying of an ass. Yet the book is an interesting one, in spite of the fact that it is based on a delusion; and it has one great merit, for it contains a pretty complete account, with quotations, of all that has recently been written on the subject of birds' songs, whether favourable or not to the point of view taken by the author.

W. WARDE FOWLER.

---

### MISS NORTH'S FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS.\*

It is a pity that Messrs. Macmillan did not place more confidence in the healthy taste of the public for the strong personal character and dry humour of Marianne North, and boldly publish her *Recollections of a Happy Life* in their natural order with an index and appendix, as we suggested in a former notice, instead of making the reader put down the first volume at page 38, take up these *Further Recollections*, and return after their conclusion to the year 1870. The supplementary volume contains fascinating impressions of persons, places, and things, seen in Spain, Italy, Syria, Egypt, Sicily and elsewhere, between the years 1859 and 1870. With varied knowledge, a good memory, and a dry odd way of regarding her fellow creatures, the authoress, carrying us from peak to plain, makes the well-known byeways of fresh interest by recalling the forgotten or unnoticed geological formation and its characteristic flora and fauna. In the towns and villages we are introduced to people of flesh and blood, become acquainted with them, live with them and the writer, panting under the southern sun, half-stifled in Sicilian quarries, or frozen on Mount Lebanon.

---

\* Some *Further Recollections of a Happy Life*, selected from the Journals of Marianne North. Macmillan & Co., 8s. 6d. net.

Mr. North was a good example of the talkative, peppery, jolly English squire, with a liking for well informed people, a taste for science and art, and, with the exception of German, a reckless disregard for foreign languages :—" Signor Direttore, j'ai voyagé con mia figlia in tutta la terra, and hang it all, tell him I never was so shamefully treated," cried this irascible M.P. to the agent of the Austrian Lloyd's Company at Corfu. He was, however, an excellent fellow-traveller, able to rough it if necessary, eager to fraternise with everybody, ready for anything, from a bath with the crocodiles, a quiet day's trout-fishing or a tent "at home" to the Governor of Safed.

Although Miss North began her flower painting in her youth (we have her two first finished pictures in our drawing room at Torquay), she was no doubt greatly influenced by Edward Lear, and was most anxious to paint landscapes and objects of architectural and archæological interest during these tours; she did not devote herself to botanical painting until two years after her father's death.

After this event, which really saddened her throughout life, she went to Mentone and there lingered, sketching until she felt able to proceed with her faithful Elizabeth to Sicily. The description of the daily life amidst the Moorish palaces, the valleys of almonds and vines, the temples at Girgenti and Syracuse, forms one of the most interesting parts of the book.



ALDERLEY,  
Miss North's home in Gloucestershire.

Miss North sets a fine example to men of many words, for whilst doing a mass of useful work she affected no knowledge of science or art, but rejoiced modestly in her gifts, bestowing them only to give pleasure to others. We venture to say, as her name has been mentioned lately in the Geographical Society, that this useful work of hers as an artist and an observant traveller is far more meritorious than the special pleading of the misogynist Fellows, who, in common with most men, obtain such intelligence as they possess from their mothers. Miss North would have undoubtedly been one of the Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society, and have derived intense amusement from the "fuss" made by one of the younger Fellows and his friends over the danger to the status of the Society through the admission of "women—ladies, if you like it better."

In conclusion, we advise our young Selbornian readers to follow the example of her, who was, as the women of Mount Hermon exclaimed (p. 193), "born in a garden," and ever to be ready to note the unwise destruction of trees and plants.

"We stayed next at Aranjuez, where our eyes were refreshed by the sight of green trees in the royal park, all the centre of Spain (where any irrigation exists) being given up to corn, and all trees cut down for fear of harbouring birds to eat the corn—killing Peter to rob Paul, as locusts and caterpillars have it all their own way" (p. 17). The young Selbornian should have no idle moment, but be constantly on the alert to observe a new plant or animal, to consider its ways and to learn what to search for in various districts. At Hermagor, in Carinthia, Miss North at once strove to obtain a flower of *Wulfenia carinthiaca* from its only European locality. When we were travelling with Miss North in Australia she always knew beforehand what she wanted, and could thus economise her valuable time for painting and research.

There was one peculiarity which is worth recording, and that was her power of attracting the leading experts in science, as well as humble folk, to her side. Mr. Lear's Egyptian Pilot well describes one whom all her friends always sadly mourn. "This Bint was unlike most other English Bintes, being firstly white and lively; secondly, she was gracious in manner and of kind disposition; thirdly, she attended to her father, whose days went in rejoicing that he had such a Bint; fourthly, she represented all things on paper, she drew all the temples of Nubia, all the sakkiahs and all the men and women and nearly all the palm trees; she was a valuable and remarkable Bint."

GEORGE A. AND THERESA MUSGRAVE.

## THE GILBERT WHITE CENTENARY.

It would have been difficult to convince Gilbert White that he was a great man. If one had told that "sweet-souled gentleman" that his book would become a classic, and that his memory would be cherished with an almost personal affection by countless thousands of the English-speaking race, he would probably have laughed at the prophecy, as Sarai laughed at the prophecy of the angel. But all that has come to pass in a hundred years, and it was but fitting that the centenary of the great naturalist's death should not be allowed to pass unmarked by those who most delight to honour his memory. It is seldom that the associations of a famous name are so completely centred in one spot as those of Gilbert White are centred at Selborne. The quiet Hampshire village was the home of his family and his birthplace; it was the scene for many years of his clerical ministrations; in its lanes and fields the materials for his book were gathered; and in its sheltered churchyard his bones were laid to rest. A pious pilgrimage to Selborne, therefore, seemed the most natural and appropriate celebration of the Master's centenary, and the fitness of the scheme was demonstrated by the numerous company who assembled at Selborne on June 24th.

Members of the Society and their friends left Waterloo for Alton by the 11.50 train, and on arrival at Alton a formidable line of brakes and carriages were ready waiting to convey the party across country to Selborne. It is matter for no small congratulation that the railway has not yet penetrated to Selborne to destroy its rural simplicity and charm, and on this particular Saturday the five-mile drive along the pleasant Hampshire lanes was one of the most enjoyable incidents of the day. At Selborne the rendezvous was the famous "Plestor," in the centre of which grew the "vast oak" mentioned by White as having been blown down in the great storm of 1703. The place of the oak is now occupied by a spreading sycamore of no mean dimensions, and beneath its shade the Selbornians found awaiting them a goodly detachment of the members of the Hampshire Field Club, and of other bodies. From the "Plestor" the party then took their way along the only street of the village, past the "Wakes," and on to a field in which a large marquee had been erected for luncheon. In the adjacent field a country fair was found to be in full swing—at least, as far as it could be without any people. It appeared, on enquiry, that some passing gipsies had noticed our tent; had learnt that it was erected for the entertainment of the Selborne Society, and

thinking that that august body was some benefit club, they erected their circus in the hope of turning an honest penny by affording us simple amusements.

The arrangements for the luncheon were admirable, and it is no small thing to provide for more than 200 people so far from any base of supplies. The Earl of Selborne presided, and he was supported by the Earl of Stamford, Mr. Darwin, Mr. Otter, Mr. Wakefield, Mr. Whitaker, Dr. Dudley Wilmot Buxton, and the Rev. H. D. Gordon. The celebration was honoured, too, with the presence of several members of the White family, including Mr. Rashleigh Holt White, and the Rev. G. White, Archdeacon of Queensland. The Earl of Northbrook and Sir John Lubbock were, unfortunately, unable to be present.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE, in proposing the memory of Gilbert White, gave a most interesting and suggestive appreciation of White's character and work. He pointed out that it was White's very modesty and simplicity of character which prevented the world from knowing much about him. The strongest note of White's character, however, was his love of God's creatures, especially for birds, and in that he reminded one of Melampus, the Greek, who learnt to understand the languages of the birds, and of St. Francis of Assisi, whom tradition asserts to have preached sermons to feathered congregations. Family letters, recently discovered, had let in a good deal of light upon White's private life and habits; and there was on record the testimony of Mr. Edward White, a nephew of the naturalist, to his uncle's humane manner of addressing his poor neighbours, which always assured them that they had in him a true friend. Further, it appeared that White's life was not one of the absolute leisure which many people supposed, but that it was passed in the diligent fulfilment of the duties of his holy office. Lord Selborne then quoted very aptly from "My Garden Acquaintance," the first essay in *My Study Windows*, wherein Lowell speaks so tenderly and eloquently of White's book, and gives it the happy title of "The Journal of Adam in Paradise." Lord Selborne also read some charming verses on White's grave which were written for his daughter by Lowell when he was stopping at Wolmer. It is greatly to be regretted that these verses are not published. Speaking finally of the suggested memorials to White, Lord Selborne urged that the best memorial was the book. White could surely say with Horace, "*Exegi monumentum ære perennius.*"

MR. DARWIN, in proposing success to the Selborne Society and its branches, pointed out how gratifying the growth of the Society has been, since it now numbered 3,000 members all over England. He further dwelt on the very high ideal which the Society set itself—the preservation of the beauties and amenities of the country not only for the gratification of the present generation, but for the gratification and enlightenment of future generations.

MR. OTTER, in responding, referred to the dangers that were to be feared from the ambitious collector without a conscience, whose only aim was to stock his collection with rare and valuable specimens, careless of the destruction he might cause. A proper and ever present restraint should be exercised by collectors, so as to preserve instead of exterminating rare species.

THE EARL OF STAMFORD next proposed "Prosperity to the Hampshire Field Club." He expressed the hope that the Selborne Society might become the centre of communication for the field-clubs throughout the country. As a connexion of the White family he had busied himself lately with collecting reminiscences of Gilbert White, and with diving into hitherto unexplored documents. Some of the results of his research threw a good deal of light on the character of Gilbert White. One old woman had thus described White:—"He used to walk about the lanes tap-tapping with his cane, and stopping every now and then to brush the dust from his shoes." This neatness of White he illustrated in another story relating to White as a Proctor at Oxford. Having caught an undergraduate lying in the gutter overcome with liquor, White called the offender before him next day and admonished him, adding, "Young man, I see there is some hope for you, for I observed that your clothes were neatly folded up and laid by your side." Another story told how White was dining at a farm-house, and how the housewife sprinkled his dish of bacon and cabbage with sugar—a proceeding which White protested against. The only answer to his remonstrance was, "Nothing can be too good for you, sir." Lord Stamford referred to the portraits of White, of which he has already written in NATURE NOTES, and concluded by saying that

he had found some most important correspondence of White, which he hoped soon to make public.

Mr. WHITAKER, in responding to the toast, observed that he, at least, was free from the besetting sin of the ambitious collector. His interests lay wholly with fossils, instead of with the living species, and, therefore, in collecting specimens wherever he could find them, he was doing a good service in preserving what might easily be lost altogether, or used to make the foundation of a road.

Dr. DUDLEY BUXTON having proposed the health of the White family,

Mr. RASHLEIGH HOLT WHITE pointed out that though White lived in a pre-scientific age he had, in his letter No. 35, in some degree anticipated Darwin's great monograph on earth-worms. White's methods of observation were those of a true scientific man. There could be no statue of Gilbert White because no likeness of him existed. Mr. Holt White said that both his father and grandfather had been applied to for pictures of Gilbert White, and in vain.

The Rev. H. D. GORDON proposed the health of the Earl of Selborne, and his lordship having responded, the formal proceedings of the day terminated.

As the carriages were not to return till 6.30 there was still ample time left for the party to visit the various points of interest in Selborne. First of these is the Hanger, the steep ascent of which fronted the luncheon tent. It requires no small degree of wind and energy to climb the Hanger by the famous zig-zag; but for the hardy spirits who attempt the ascent there is ample reward at the summit in the fine view which is obtained of the surrounding country. White in his poem on the Hanger refers to the zig-zag thus:—

“When spouting rains descend in torrent tides,  
See the torn zig-zag weep its channelled sides.”

Fortunately the centenary party did not see the zig-zag under these terrible conditions. And by the way, did Gilbert White himself devise the zig-zag? In one of his early letters he significantly remarks: “As we were cutting an inclining path up the Hanger.”

Another principal point of interest was “The Wakes,” the house which Gilbert White occupied, which was thrown open for the day by its present owner, Mr. Read. “The Wakes” abuts on the village street, almost opposite the Plestor. It has been much renovated and extended since Professor Bell lived there, but the back part of the building is practically as it was left by Gilbert White. The room in which he wrote and the room in which he died both remain unaltered; and the old sun-dial in the garden marked the flight of time for him as it does now for his successors. It is to be regretted that the relics of White which Professor Bell so assiduously collected should have been dispersed to a large extent at his death. Such relics would give a greatly enhanced interest to the old house.

Behind the Plestor stands the little square-towered church. An enormous yew-tree is growing between the wicket gate and the church porch. Its branches still spread wide, though some of its biggest limbs have broken away. The walls on either side of the altar of the church hold memorial tablets to Gilbert White and other members of the White family. There are also to be seen two stone sarcophagi which were disinterred by Professor Bell, and which contained two perfect skeletons. The age of these confirms the conclusions of archæologists, who recognise the architecture of the Church as that of the Norman restoration period. Gilbert White himself carried its existence back no further than Henry VII.'s time. Of the little cluster of graves within this secluded churchyard, Gilbert White's is one of the humblest and most obscure. It lies fifth from the north wall of the aisle, and is marked only by two simple stones, bearing the inscription “G. W., died 26th June, 1793.” The lettering is almost obliterated by moss and the wear of weather, and the mound between the stones bears no plant nor flower: but there is something about this very simplicity—pathetic though it be—that fits in with the character of him who sleeps beneath that mound.

The party drove back to Alton in time to catch the 7.44 train to town. The arrangements for the excursion were carried out without a hitch, and the celebration of the centenary can undoubtedly be pronounced an unqualified success.

## SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*British Forest Trees and their Sylvicultural Characteristics and Treatment*, by John Nisbet. (Macmillan & Co., pp. 352, 8vo, price 6s.)

Selbornians are, perhaps, naturally prone to prefer the forester to the agriculturist, as the former, even in his plantations, interferes less with wild nature than the man who trims and narrows the hedgerows, "clears" the land of "weeds," and sees to the purity of his seed-supply. If, however, our foresters were to adopt the recommendations made by Dr. Nisbet on the plea of strictly economical sylviculture, our woodlands would become as barren to the botanist as the best cultivated of farm lands. Dr. Nisbet strongly recommends closer planting and "the maintenance of close canopy" for the express purpose of killing off "weeds." He does not, however, advocate pure forest, or the cultivation of one species by itself, so that in the scientific future of our woods, if we have few weeds, we may yet have a variety of tree life. The learned forester's book contains a good deal as to the requirements, diseases and other dangers of our various forest trees that will interest both the land-owner and the tree-lover who may happen to be landless. G. S. B.

Messrs. Swan Sonnenschein and Co. have a considerable number of blocks of flowers—some good, others bad—which they utilise in various of their publications. Some of them appear in *Town Flowers*, a well-intentioned little twopenny book which they have just issued. It is heralded by a preface written by two dignitaries of the Established Church, who say that the writer "has had special opportunities of studying" flowers. If this be so, it is to be regretted that these opportunities have not been turned to greater advantage, for the little book is by no means satisfactory. Many of the plants in the list are unsuitable, and there are many mistakes, although the author's object is "to have corrected as far as possible" the "differences and errors" met with in "growers' catalogues;" and the information given regarding each plant, or group of plants, is so meagre as to be useless. Among the plants figured as "town flowers" is the *Victoria regia*!

As *The Field Naturalist's Handbook* (Cassell and Co., 8vo, pp. vi., 167, price 5s.) has reached a fifth edition, it would seem that many people must have found it of service. The "general hints" prefaced to the list for each month are useful, though somewhat meagre; but the lists themselves are very unsatisfactory. To take only the plants, we observe a number of misprints, such as *Eudorea* for *Udora*, which are simply inexcusable in a fifth edition; while a large number of species are included which have no claim whatever to appear in British lists, although they were inserted in our floras of fifty or more years since. Among these may be noted more than one *Potentilla*, *Geranium nodosum* ("Hertfordshire and Cumberland"), *Stellaria scapigera* (a form of *S. graminea*, not met with since George Don's time), *Ranunculus gramineus* ("dry mountain pastures"), *Achillea tomentosa*, *Epimedium alpinum*, and many more. These should certainly be eliminated; on the other hand, the somewhat numerous additions to our flora during the last fifty years find no place. Mr. Theodore Wood would do well to secure the services of some botanist to revise the list, which is too evidently the compilation of one not practically acquainted with the subject. The remarks on nomenclature seem to us based on misconception, and the honey-suckle certainly does not derive its Latin name *Lonicera* from "Adam *Lonic*."

We have more than once (NATURE NOTES, 1893, pp. 51, 89), noticed the excellent *Field-path Rambles* by Walker Miles, and are glad now to chronicle the appearance of the four series in a neat and compact pocket volume, which also contains a useful series of twenty-one maps, and is well worth the four shillings charged for it. West Kent, to which the book is devoted, may be easily and pleasantly explored by the aid of the practical directions laid down, and the pedestrian will find Mr. Miles an admirable companion on a stroll. We are glad to note that several series of rambles in other rural districts near London are in preparation, and that the maps may be had separately in a suitable case. We think the volume would be improved in appearance by the omission of the advertisements at the end, and the red border to the pages strikes us as more singular than pretty.

In *Workers without Wage* (Griffith and Farran, 8vo, pp. viii., 184. 2s. 6d.), Miss Edith Carrington has given us a capital series of chapters on "birds, beasts, and fishes," besides a great deal of information about worms, insects, spiders, reptiles, and the like. No better book could be found for a school prize, or for use as a reading-book by Bands of Mercy—those admirable societies for encouraging a love of animals among children, of which we hope very shortly to give some account in NATURE NOTES. Miss Carrington is on the side of the sparrow; and the whole animal creation, so far as they are dealt with in this volume, find in her a warm friend and enthusiastic advocate. But the book is by no means "gushing;" it is written plainly, simply, and with great sobriety, and is thus likely to appeal far more forcibly to folk generally than it would do if pitched in a higher key. It will take its place in every Selborne library, and we shall not be far wrong in predicting for it the wide circulation which it assuredly deserves. Each chapter ends with a suitable original poem, followed by a series of short and sensible questions and answers.

Many books, as usual, stand over for notice, among them *The Age of Disfigurement*, by Mr. Richardson Evans (Remington, 1s.), an admirable little volume, in which the claims of the National Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising are plainly and pleasantly set forth. We hope to notice this next month, but wish to call our readers' attention to it without delay. They will find in it an agreeable substitute for the "shilling shoeker" which too frequently accompanies holiday excursions. Miss Lucy Broadwood's volume of *English Country Songs* (Leadenhall Press, 6s.), of which some preliminary particulars were given in NATURE NOTES for March (p. 55), will also receive attention at an early date.

---

## SELBORNIANA.

**The Opening of Hampton Court Park and Bostall Wood.**—There are few of our readers who will not hail with pleasure the addition of two important open spaces to the list of metropolitan parks and commons. Through the persistent endeavours of the Mayor of Kingston-on-Thames and Mr. Alderman Gould and others of that town, the public at last have gained admission to Hampton Court Park, which was thrown open on the Whitsuntide Bank Holiday. We learn from the *Daily News* of May 23rd that many years ago the park used to be open, but few living can remember that time, and that since then till now the beautiful expanse of green meadow, with its clumps of stately trees, had been closed to all save those who could afford to pay the yearly fee of one guinea for the privilege of possessing a key. The same Bank Holiday witnessed the dedication to public enjoyment of a beautiful piece of woodland in the south-east of London. Bostall Wood, which adjoins the Heath of the same name, already under the management of the London County Council, is not far from the crowded suburbs of Woolwich and Plumstead. What would have been the fate in the near future of the sixty-one acres of larch and fir of which it consists, save for the energetic action of the Open Spaces Committee of the London County Council, it is not difficult to imagine. As befitting the occasion, the wood was declared open by the Chairman of the County Council, not in the presence of a few chance onlookers, but in the midst of an immense concourse, the assemblage of a procession that had reached more than a mile in length along the road from Woolwich and Plumstead. Our limits only leave us room to echo the hope expressed on that occasion, that each succeeding Whitsuntide Bank Holiday may be marked by similar accessions to the parks and commons in and around London.

ARCHIBALD CLARKE.

**Barbed Wire.**—The public are to be congratulated on the passing of the Barbed Wire Fences Bill, the Lords' amendments to which were yesterday agreed to by the Commons. The measure constitutes barbed wire which may probably be injurious to persons or animals lawfully using a thoroughfare a



nuisance to the highway, and enacts a procedure for its abatement or removal. So that within a few months, if the local authorities do their duty, people should be able to walk along a narrow country lane without risk to their clothes, and valuable horses should be spared the danger of injury to which they are now subject.—*Daily Chronicle*, July 19th.

**Artificial Edelweiss.**—Like the notches on an alpenstock, a sprig of edelweiss pressed between the leaves of a “Bædeker” is presumed to be an outward and visible sign of the owner’s intrepidity and endurance in mountaineering. Frequently, however, it is nothing of the sort. Tourists are saved the trouble of climbing for it by purchasing specimens grown and cultivated on suitable soil in Swiss cottage gardens. Some enterprising persons, however, presumably fearful of the possible extinction of the favourite mountain-flower, and deeply imbued with sympathy for the aims of the *Association pour la Protection des Plantes*, which is a specialised Swiss edition of our own Selborne Society, have hit upon an ingenious plan for supplying the express-train tourist (as distinguished from the Alpine climber) with unlimited specimens of edelweiss, which at the same time saves the trouble of growing and rearing them. The white woollen felted material of military coats, worn chiefly by Austrian soldiers, when cut into suitable strips, very much resembles the characteristic upper leaves of the plant, more particularly of course when the colour is somewhat mellowed by exposure and the natural process of wearing out the material. So that the happy thought has suggested itself of buying up quantities of these discarded military coats, and manufacturing from them edelweiss “wholesale, retail, and for exportation.” My attention was called to the matter in June of this year by a resident in Lucerne, who possibly was unable to dispose satisfactorily of his garden-stock, owing to the manufacturers in the rival method of production making the plant a drug in the market. I therefore bought a specimen, and on dissecting it with two mounted needles, found as my informant had stated. It appears that the strips of cloth are carefully cut out and skilfully grafted on a foundation of any weed that comes handy, which may have a superficial resemblance to the edelweiss in habit; the specimens are then pressed and dried, and the pious fraud is complete.

F. N. WILLIAMS.

**Gilbert White’s House.**—Will you inform me whether any photograph (platinotype or some permanent process suitable for framing) has ever been published of Gilbert White’s house at Selborne, and if so, by whom, and where it is obtainable?

C. O.

**Lodgings at Selborne.**—For the benefit of those who may wish to spend a few days at Selborne, I would like to mention that very comfortable and reasonable lodgings may be had in the village at Miss Phillips, Myrtle Cottage, with a very pleasant view of the Zig-zag and the Hanger Woods from the windows. Address Miss Phillips, Myrtle Cottage, Selborne, Alton.

A. MARTELLI.

**A Protest.**—We have more than once had occasion to complain of the appropriation, without acknowledgment, of the contents of NATURE NOTES by other periodicals. We are most willing that our pages should be quoted freely, but it is only courteous, not to say commonly honest, that the source of the citations should be acknowledged. Three times within the last few weeks *The Rural World* has reprinted communications from NATURE NOTES in such a manner as to appear as though originally sent for its own columns. *The Rural World* is an organ of that political party which has strong views as to the sacredness of the rights of property, and we shall be glad if it will carry its principles into practice.

By permission of His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, the Selborne Field Club (Lower Thames Valley Branch) will visit Syon House and grounds, Isleworth, on Wednesday, August 9th, to meet at Isleworth church at 2.45 p.m., near to the new lock, weir and foot bridge in course of construction. Members of the Selborne Society desirous of joining this party are requested to give an early intimation to Mr. John Allen, Hon. Sec., 8, Clarence Road, Kew, as but a limited number can be admitted.

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**A Wasps' Nest.**—A short time ago I spent a few days with some friends in Staffordshire, who have shooting rights over some three thousand acres of well-kept woods and lands. One day we had a drive to this shooting; my friend said to me, "Come here, and I will show you something worth seeing," and he took me to a very secluded spot, and there, hung on the branch of a yew tree, he pointed out a well-formed and well-made wasps' nest, about twelve inches round in the middle, tapering off to two or three inches at the bottom; the shape was something like a well-formed large turnip, and there it hung quietly and safely from the branch of the yew. The puzzle to us was how the wasps had so well and so dexterously hung their nest so prettily and firmly to the branch—perhaps some of your readers will enlighten us. My friend being anxious to get the nest, the keeper thought he could manage it by cutting off the branch when the wasps were at rest at night, in which I hoped he would succeed, as it would be an interesting object.

INA MELLOR.

**A Cuckoo.**—An adult cuckoo, that had flown straight into a dwelling house, was brought to me to-day for preservation, its captors not even knowing what bird it was; they thought it was a hawk. Its beautiful eyes seemed to appeal in a piteous way for mercy, and I eventually succeeded in persuading its captors to give it its liberty. The long-continued drought is very trying to these birds, which are never so happy as after a steady rain, when the budding foliage of the hedges glistens with rain drops, and the succulent herbage of the fields bends under the heavy moisture, which brings out the numerous species of larvæ upon which they principally feed. These have now—alas! for the poor birds—sought the more deep recesses of vegetation, thus depriving them of their sustenance.

*Hampstead.*

J. E. WHITING.

**Birds and the Drought.**—The long drought has made many of our garden birds quite exceptionally keen for fruit. The blackbirds never left the strawberry bed unless driven away, and blackbirds and thrushes "worked"—as they say here—the currants constantly. But the rooks—"crows," they call them—in the "garden-field," having finished the peas, actually grubbed up and ate the potato crop.

*Hulcote, Aylesbury.*

A. W. H.

**Owls and Rats.**—A pair of very sage-looking owls used to inhabit the belfry of our ancient parish church when I first came to Liss, several years ago, and they brought up a large family in there. I was accustomed to watch them, season after season, flying round the fields in front of my windows as soon as it began to get dusk, seeking food for their young. There is a large yew tree in the churchyard. It is not so fine a specimen as the one in Selborne Churchyard, but it is probably as old, for it was doubtless planted when St. Peter's Church was built. This tree, and a group of three oak trees in the corner of the field next my residence were the favourite halting places of the owls; perhaps they were spots from whence they took observations, for I often noticed them fly direct from the church to these trees, and then, in a little time, skirt the hedges, and skim the fields, hunting for small prey. We had few rats then, but alas, the owls departed—were driven away, I imagine. I was absent from Liss for several months, and found on my return the owls gone, and rats have ever since been fearfully on the increase. I use the word fearfully, because their numbers are truthfully very great. They walk about the garden paths of an evening, run up the ivy on the walls, and even enter the kitchen if the door is open, and my cats are not on guard. I do not poison them lest they should come in to die between the hollow walls of my dwelling house, and so prove worse pests when dead than alive; but I wish it were possible to get a pair of owls to take up their abode here.

*Berry Grove, Liss.*

HELEN WATNEY.

**A Plague of Earwigs.**—In some parts of North Kent, residents have been much annoyed with earwigs this summer, the insects freely visiting sitting rooms and bedrooms. It would seem as if they entered houses in search of moisture, the gardens and fields having been so dry for months past. Several persons have been anxious to ascertain how they get in, and on investigation I find good evidence that they usually enter at the windows during the twilight, these of course being generally open at this season. I have repeatedly noticed them in the act of re-adjusting their wings on a wall near a window, but they are seldom observed in the act of flying. If any readers of NATURE NOTES have ever found an earwig using the tail forceps as a weapon, I hope they will kindly note the fact; I have as yet failed to get an unquestionable instance.

J. R. S. CLIFFORD.

**Early emergence of the Privet Hawk Moth.**—As a proof of the earliness of the season, produced by the dryness and lack of moisture, I may note that an egg of the above hatched out on the 25th of May, which was found a few days before on a privet hedge, and must have been deposited at least a week previously, if not longer. In the usual way the moth does not emerge from the chrysalis till about the middle of June. I noticed that in this specimen the ecdyses or changes of skin were four, at intervals of about eight or nine days, the last occurring on July 6th. The caterpillar of *Sphinx ligustri* is very sensitive to noise, and ceases to eat if it hears a sound near; it has also a habit of carefully examining a leaf before it begins to nibble. It usually attains its full size in about two days, if the weather be warm.

J. R. S. CLIFFORD.

**London Birds.**—It would seem as if the few jackdaws left in London were following the example of the rooks and seeking new resting places. A few years ago more than a dozen pairs built in the gardens of Devonshire House, Piccadilly, but for some unknown reason they have this year entirely deserted the place. On the other hand there is an indication that other wild birds are ready to take up their residences with us. Wood pigeons are becoming quite common. Last year a pair built in Grosvenor Square, and sat closely for some time, but I did not see any young birds. This year a pair have built in the gardens behind the houses in Brook Street, but I am afraid that a large black cat—an expert tree climber—can account for the absence of any young ones. I was told by the keeper that a pair of wild magpies commenced to build in the Zoological Gardens this spring, but were disturbed by the Easter Monday visitors. On March 5th I noticed a flock of lapwings over Hyde Park, and a pair of blue tits have just reared a family in the hedge at the back of Spencer House in the Green Park.

FRED. W. ASHLEY.

**The Kingfisher.**—Mr. Warde Fowler, in his note (p. 139) on the still comparative frequency of this bird, in spite of hard winters and the gun, asks for evidence of the continued existence of Welsh kingfishers. The low water this summer made the river Ithon, a tributary of the Wye, favourable to the kingfisher, and I saw several there during the early part of June. I would mention in passing that this part of Radnorshire is a favourite breeding place of the curlew. The kingfisher is by no means uncommon in Somersetshire.

T. P.

*Weston-super-Mare.*

I may say that I have seen the kingfisher pretty often in certain districts in Cardiganshire, and occasionally in Montgomeryshire in the neighbourhood of Carno and Pontdolgch.

*Aberystwyth.*

G. R.

**A Late Cuckoo.**—On July 8th I found a young cuckoo (only two or three days old) in a pipit's (*Anthus pratensis*) nest, and three hard set eggs of the pipit were thrown out on the rocks beneath the nest. Is not it very unusual for a cuckoo to be hatched so late in the summer? I should be very glad of information on this point.

HARRIET PEYTON.

*Machynulleth, Montgomeryshire.*

**Jackdaws.**—Your readers may be interested in a curious incident of bird-life which I witnessed some years ago. A good many jackdaws used to live in

our garden, sometimes building their nests, to our inconvenience, in spouts or chimneys. One summer day we observed a solitary jackdaw sitting on the spouting at the edge of the roof, and uttering every minute or two a loud and dismal croak. We watched him for some time and tried to frighten him away, but in vain; there he stayed persistently the whole day. We joked a good deal about it, calling him the "cracked jackdaw," but we were very much surprised to find him still there next day and still constantly uttering his dreary and discordant note. This went on for several days, and my father was talking of shooting the bird, when another curious circumstance occurred. The stairs and landings at the top of our house are lighted by sky-lights of semi-opaque glass in the ceiling, with others in the roof above. One of us, passing under a sky-light, noticed something fluttering about over it, and thought it must be a bird. One of my brothers accordingly went up through the trap-door into the space under the roof, and there he found a jackdaw which must have got into the roof through the opening of a spout and been unable to find its way out again. He caught it, brought it down, and let it out through a window, when it was instantly joined by the solitary bird, and away they flew together! We saw and heard no more of the "cracked jackdaw." We have always thought the incident a very touching instance of a bird's devotion and constancy. Another pair of jackdaws took a particular fancy apparently to the chimney of an upstairs room which had the fire-place boarded up, and being determined to have their nest in it, they completely filled it with sticks from bottom to top and then laid their eggs. They must have spent a great amount of time and labour in doing it, showing perseverance worthy, we considered, of a better cause.

M. A. B.

**A Friendly Cat.**—The following curious instance of feline benevolence has recently come under my notice. An old tabby cat, aged about 14 years, has for the last five years taken the chickens of an old Bramah hen at her owner's cottage under her especial protection. As soon as the chickens are out of the egg she licks them carefully over, and she spends the whole day watching them and following them about. No other cat or dog dare approach. This year the Bramah was replaced by a younger hen who did not appreciate the cat's attentions, and would not allow her to come near. The cat, however, still comes as near as she can, and follows the chickens about everywhere until they are old enough to leave the hen.

*Lensden Vicarage.*

GILBERT WHITE.

**Bees' Nests.**—The enclosed were dug out of a vase of earth in the garden yesterday by the gardener, who imagines them to be the work of bumble bees, and states that he has seen these and other bees at work cutting the lids of the boxes out of rose leaves. We have never seen anything of the kind before, and think therefore they may be interesting to you. The gardener found them in perfectly dry earth, about three inches below the surface, in a compact mass (about twenty), and in, he thinks, a vertical position and perfectly fresh and green. He tells me he has been struck in watching the bees at work, not only with the rapidity with which the lids were cut, but also with the marvellous accuracy of their hexagonal shape. The vase is not close to any rose tree.

*St. Lawrence, Isle of Wight.*

C. S. B.

[Mr. W. F. Kirby says:—"Humble-bees form their nest in burrows in the ground, but many other bees do the same, and the nests sent herewith are probably those of the leaf-cutter bee, *Megachile centuncularis*."—ED. N. N.]

**Cat Worsted by Jackdaws.**—In the early morning of May 29th an exciting conflict was witnessed in our garden—one of the few haunts of birds still left in this part of Hampstead. A young jackdaw had fallen from its nest, and had attracted the attention of a marauding cat. The parents and neighbours of the young bird were, however, speedily alive to its danger. About a dozen had collected, and while one stood protectingly over it, the rest from their vantage ground on a neighbouring railing made such fierce and repeated sallies upon the enemy that there is little doubt which way the battle would have ended had not human

agency brought it to a more speedy conclusion. Blood testified to the efficiency of the birds' beaks as weapons. Little Jack is already a domestic pet.

*Roslyn, Hampstead, N.W.*

G. J. WOODD.

**A Talking Canary.**—I do not remember ever to have heard of a talking canary, and was therefore much interested recently, while staying in the little village of Churchill, Somerset, in hearing one. The bird belongs to a Mrs. Buckland, wife of a gardener living in Churchill. "Joey" came into her possession when only six weeks old, and she, being much alone in her house, naturally got into the habit of constantly talking to him. When about a year old he one day quite suddenly, to her extreme surprise and even alarm, began to talk, and has talked incessantly until the present day, he being now eight years old. His repertoire is not extensive, consisting, of course, merely of the remarks addressed to him by Mrs. Buckland—"Pretty Joey," "Kiss me," "Missus's pretty little Joey" and "I be missus's pretty little beauty, I be." He speaks in a beautifully clear, melodious trilling voice, all the words being perfectly distinct. He talked incessantly while I was in the room, interspersing his remarks with the usual canary's song. Mrs. Buckland has been offered considerable sums both for the bird, and for the loan of him for exhibition, but nothing would induce her to part with him. He has much local celebrity. I should be interested to hear if any of the readers of NATURE NOTES know of a similar case.

GERTRUDE M. YELD.

**Rare Migrants on the East Coast.**—Several rather uncommon visitants to this part of the Coast put in an appearance near here last month, at a large expanse of water called Breydon (one of the oldest "broads," but now a mere wide expanse of mud covered at high tide only, and a most excellent feeding ground for aquatic birds). They consisted of quite a score of black terns, a number of wimbrel, turnstones, knots, and smaller birds, nearly all in their summer dress. There were also to be seen several Arctic terns and some little stints. A cormorant put in an appearance for a short time.

*Great Yarmouth.*

W. B. GUISE.

**A Wren's Nest.**—Two or three summers ago a wren made her nest inside a letter-box fixed upon our front gate. She flew in and out through a small hole in the side of the box, laid ten eggs, and hatched them. Some time after I looked in again and they had all flown away. The next year another nest was made—we think it was the same bird which had returned—but, unfortunately, some boys in passing discovered it, and, by throwing stones inside, disturbed the poor little bird, who deserted it before she had laid any eggs. Another curious place for a nest was inside a green watering-pot, which I found in our orchard last week. The bird had hatched her eggs and flown.

*Barnwood, Gloucester.*

A. M. JAYNES.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES.

At the meeting of the Council held on July 5th, a vote of thanks was passed to Lord Selborne for presiding at the luncheon, and for his interesting speech on the occasion of the excursion to Selborne on June 24th; to the vicar of Selborne for throwing open his grounds, for affording the members the opportunity of visiting the church and churchyard, and for permitting the archaeological address to be given in the church; and to Mr. and Mrs. Read for so kindly receiving and entertaining the members of the Society, and for throwing open the house and grounds for their inspection.

The Council authorised the formation of a new branch at Cheltenham (hon. secretary, F. W. Butt, Esq.).

Various proposals for a memorial to Gilbert White having been discussed, the following resolution was carried:—

“While agreeing with Lord Selborne’s views as to the book being the best memorial, the Council are of opinion that it would be desirable to indicate the position of the grave by a monumental tablet on the outside wall of the church near the grave, and further express their approval of the proposal to bring the water to Selborne and to erect a drinking fountain in the form suggested by Mr. Wm. White.”

The following resolutions were passed at the Special General Meeting held at 9, Adam Street on July 17<sup>th</sup>:—

“That the minimum subscription entitling members to the magazine be raised to 5s. (This resolution shall not apply to existing members of the Society.)

“That this meeting recommends to the notice of Hon. Secs. the practice which obtains in some branches of admitting associates at a less subscription than that of a full member; such associates not being entitled to vote at meetings, hold office, or receive the magazine gratuitously.

“That this meeting wishes strongly to urge members to send such contributions as they are able to the Hon. Treasurer, for the “Magazine Fund,” to supply the deficiency of £70 in the Society’s account in publishing NATURE NOTES in 1892.”

A. J. WESTERN, *Secretary*.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. M.—The Winter Cherry (*Physalis Alkekengi*).

J. F. C.—The note is hardly of sufficient interest.

J. H.—Kindly observe our rule as to the sending of name and address with communications.

A. B.—See answer to J. H. The plant is the Sea Buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*).

F. G. V. P.—We had an appreciative article on Thoreau in NATURE NOTES for December, 1890, pp. 185-188.

L. F. M.—*Farselia incana* (also known as *Alyssum incanum*), an introduction of frequent occurrence, especially in clover fields.

G. P. C.—You will see that your suggestion has been acted upon.

A. H. J.—See answer to J. H. We know of no *useful* book of the kind you mention, but one is noticed at p. 153.

E. W. W.—Your verses are more suitable for primrose-time, and we will hold them over until then.

E. V. B.—It is certainly a fungus, and, had you seen the specimens, you would doubtless have recognised that the “flowers” had no claim to the title.

H. M. B.—We hope to publish an article on the interesting strawberries in our next issue.

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

No. 45.

SEPTEMBER, 1893.

VOL. IV.

---

### RELICS OF THE WHITE FAMILY.



VERY agreeable afternoon was spent at Lancing College, by a party of Selbornians, on July 15th. At the kind invitation of the Rev. Edmund Field, sometime chaplain of St. Mary and St. Nicholas College, about a dozen members of the White family arrived at Shoreham Station about noon, made their way through the corn-fields, and across the dark green tidal waters of the Adur, and ascended the breezy downs on which the College is built. They were entertained at luncheon in the antechamber of the great hall of the school, and by three o'clock several more friends had arrived from the neighbourhood, and the party assembled in Mr. Field's room to hear his lecture on the family relics which are now in his possession.

Some reference was first made to the family pedigree, and it was pointed out that through a lineal ancestress, who was daughter of Robert Lord Hungerford, Gilbert White was descended from the Courtenays, Le Despensers, and other great mediæval families. Then, passing down the line to Sir Samson White, Gilbert's great-grandfather, the lecturer mentioned that he was mayor of Oxford and cup-bearer at the coronation of Charles II. The cup which he received—according to custom—on that occasion, was bequeathed by him to the Corporation of Oxford, in whose possession it still remains. Sir Samson's court sword and small silver cup were then exhibited to the audience. Next, Mr. Field exhibited a portrait in oils of Gilbert White the elder, vicar of Selborne, and grandfather and godfather of the naturalist. John White, father of the naturalist, married Anne Holt, great-granddaughter of Benjamin Hyde, merchant, who received from Charles I.—probably in return for services rendered in facilitating some attempted escape—the

King's Ribbon of the Garter, which was handed down to posterity, and is now in possession of Mr. William White. This ribbon, which is now of a pale blue colour, was next exhibited, and a portrait of Benjamin Hyde was pointed out on the wall.

It was then mentioned that Gilbert White's sister Anne married Thomas Barker, of Lyndon Hall, Rutland. Many of the valuable papers from Lyndon are now in Mr. Field's possession, and a full account of them is given in the Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission for 1876. They include the patent of baronetcy, dated 1665, of Sir Abel Barker, and a warrant for ship money, signed by Laud and others. Two fine pictures from Lyndon attracted general attention—one of Sir Thomas Barker, the second baronet, and one of Sir John Duncombe, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Charles II. But pre-eminent among all the pictures which hung on the walls of the room, were two magnificent portraits by Vandyck, of Charles I. and Henrietta Maria. These were painted for Charles I., and presented by the king to Sir Hugh Stukeley, ancestor of the Lords Stawell. On the death of the last Lord Stawell, they came into the possession of Mr. Sainsbury, who lived at Marelands, Lord Stawell's house, and from him they passed to his niece, who married Edmund White, vicar of Newton Valence, and grandfather of Mr. Field.

Mr. Field, at the close of his most charming and interesting address, added a few words as to the character of Gilbert White, and "pointed the moral" gracefully and effectively. A relic of special interest, still used by Mr. Field, is the stool which Gilbert White used in his study, and on which doubtless he sat when he wrote the "Selborne." Evidently the naturalist enjoyed having free play for his arms; he had therefore sawn off the back of a carved chair, and had so turned it into a stool.

After a cordial expression of thanks to the host, and another visit to the antechamber of the great hall—where tea was prepared—the company separated, much delighted and interested with their visit.

STAMFORD.

---

### THE LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION OF WILD BIRDS' EGGS.

**T** is generally admitted that, notwithstanding the operation of the existing Acts for the Protection of Wild Birds, some of our rarer birds are becoming more and more scarce, and must, unless something further is done, at no distant time disappear altogether from our islands. The Acts of 1880-81 are good enough as far as they go, but they fail to accomplish completely the intention of their promoters, for the reason that their provisions extend only to the birds themselves, leaving the eggs absolutely unprotected. Now, there are



two evident methods, by either of which, if pushed to an extreme, any species of bird may be exterminated: one is the destruction of the birds themselves, and the other is the effectual prevention of the perpetuation of the species by the taking of the eggs. In cases where these eggs have a high market value, a temptation exists which is capable of affecting very seriously the wellbeing of the birds.

It will be fresh in the recollection of naturalists that some few years since a company was formed in the Midlands, having an agent appointed, whose office it was to visit the islands off the coast of Scotland, there to take what rare eggs he could find, and to distribute these amongst the members in proportion to their subscriptions. Fortunately the scheme was frustrated by the exposure it received in the public press; but here was a plan which, had it not been detected, would have resulted in the wholesale and possibly complete interference with the breeding of many species of rare birds. It is hardly to be supposed that other agencies of a similar though more discreet nature are not constantly at work, slowly but surely tending to diminish rare birds.

It is at least intelligible when the eggs are taken for such a purpose, but they are liable to many other less plausible dangers: as was shown in 1890, when a party of gentlemen landed on the island of Grasholm, in the Bristol Channel, and wantonly destroyed large numbers of hard-set eggs by throwing them at a target.

These and other instances were brought under the notice of the British Association at their meeting held at Cardiff in 1891, and resulted in the appointment of a Committee "to consider proposals for the legislative protection of wild birds' eggs." That Committee, consisting of the Rev. Canon Tristram, D.D., Prof. Newton, Prof. A. Leipner, Prof. Newton Parker, with Mr. Thomas H. Thomas, ex-President of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society, as Chairman, and Dr. Vachell, then President of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society, as Secretary, has since given the matter careful consideration. Two methods of affording protection to wild birds' eggs have been suggested, viz., that of scheduling the eggs of the species to be protected in a similar way to that by which the birds themselves are treated; and (2) enabling County Councils, with the approval of a Secretary of State, to reserve certain localities for a certain time in each year as places of refuge, where no eggs of wild birds might be taken.

The first method was rejected as certain to end in failure, in consequence of the well-recognised difficulty in identifying the eggs of many species, and especially those of sea birds. The second plan has already been tried with success in Australia, where the protected areas are termed "Sanctuaries." This was, after full consideration, adopted by the Committee, and strongly urged upon the supporters of the Bill in the House of Lords; and after due precautions had been inserted for the strict

limitation of the districts to such boundaries as could be shown to be the breeding places of the species desired to be protected, the amendments recommended by the Committee were finally adopted. It is distinctly not intended by the Bill to put a stop to the ordinary birds-nesting by boys—a practice which has frequently ended in encouraging a lasting taste for natural history—and it will be found that the Bill contains provisions for giving thorough publicity to the fact that an area is to be protected.

An Act which incorporated the views of the Committee has already passed through the House of Commons, and after considerable amendment has been read a third time in the House of Lords. The next stage requires its re-appearance in the House of Commons, where the amendments inserted in the House of Lords will have to be considered. These amendments may be taken as embodying the opinions of the Committee, and as a consequence the Committee not only approves of the Bill, but desires that it may become law. For this purpose it is necessary that the Bill should receive all possible support, and it is suggested that the various local Natural History Societies throughout the kingdom should at once endeavour to secure the co-operation of their borough and county members respectively in obtaining the acceptance by the House of Commons of the Bill as it now stands.

C. T. VACHELL.

---

## WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA.

### V.



THE little clearing in which our camp is pitched lies just on the verge of the plains, where the heavily-timbered brown soil gives place to a whitish sand, shunned by the selector and despised by the agriculturist. Here the country is somewhat park-like in character, being gently undulating, and possessing timber which, although dwarf in comparison with that rooted in the deep basaltic soils, is yet worthy of being placed with the old oaks and beeches of the mother-country. The gnarled and weather-beaten gums and peppermints are sufficiently far apart to enable the horseman to get about without much difficulty, and to see a considerable distance ahead, which is an impossibility in the "green bush." The wary rider will, however, always keep a tight rein, and his weather eye open, for the ground is strewn with the trunks of old trees and with limbs which have been torn by the gales from the living ones, and which are nearly hidden by the knee-high, and often waist-high, growth of heather and small scrub.

Another source of danger to the unwary traveller is the

number of holes which have been sunk by the prospectors (gold seekers), and those in search of other minerals; some of these are quite shallow, but we have come upon them twenty to thirty feet in depth, and grown over with young scrub so that the mouth is quite concealed, and the only indication of danger is the heap of sand and gravel, also grown over with native vegetation, which lies close to the brink of the pit. It must not be supposed, because the soil is poor, that these plains are therefore comparatively barren wastes. On the contrary, they possess a very abundant fauna and flora, differing greatly, as may be imagined, from that of the heavy forest lands. They may be fairly said to teem with life, both animal and vegetable, and have proved to be a truly happy hunting ground for the naturalist.

To begin with, the lordly kangaroo is occasionally met with, his majesty (for he may justly be termed the Australian king of beasts) preferring the open country to the dense bush, and finding the vegetation here more suitable to his palate. The heavy, clumsy-looking wombat also prefers to scrape out his roomy burrow about the edge of the plains, and the bandicoot (somewhat resembling a miniature kangaroo) rambles over them by night, digging here and there when his instinct tells him that some luscious morsel lies concealed beneath the surface. The wallaby (first cousin to the kangaroo) also browses here during the hours of darkness, when he has nothing better on hand, but his delight is in the tender grass of the settler. A paddock also of the young and succulent oat he will not despise. He roams at night with his relatives (for the wallaby is fond of society) over the badly-fenced domains of the "cockatoo" farmer, and the forage consumed by these dark-coated intruders would fatten a flock of sheep.

Of birds, hawks of various species greatly affect our open domain, and honeyeaters may be heard warbling in the peppermints; the tree-swallow may be seen taking his graceful sailing flight from gum to gum, and the vivid scarlet breast of the beautiful little robin gives a touch of colour to our rather sombre landscape.

Reptiles of course abound, the warm sandy soil being just the medium in which to take the sun-baths which seem to them so essential. Snakes, those of the black and tiger species, often attain a great size; iguanas, bloodsuckers, death-adders, and other delightful creatures are frequently encountered. The three last-named are all lizards, the iguana being the stump-tailed lizard, which grows to a considerable size, and is of very sluggish habits, often lying across the track and allowing one to step over it without exhibiting any intention of moving. The bloodsucker is a very lively creature, and may be often seen in the bush garden on the watch for insects. He has an enormous mouth, which he opens wide in a threatening manner when an attempt is made to catch him, but his tiny teeth can

hardly draw blood, except on a very tender skin. One sunny afternoon (but every afternoon is sunny in Tasmania) we came across one of these agile lizards perched on the top of a "blue-jumper's" nest, which is a mound formed by a dark-blue ant of large size, this insect being capable of biting and stinging severely. It has derived its name of "jumper" from the tactics adopted by the soldier-ants, which are on duty outside the nest; these fearless insects, on the approach of danger, make a series of short rapid jumps at the enemy, and if the latter be a human being his wisest course is to "clear" without delay. The blood-sucker, however, which was a big bloated one, seemed to relish the society of the warlike ones, for he lay at his ease on the top of the mound, and every time a sentinel on his beat passed within reach, out would shoot the long tongue and the soldier in a twinkling had gone to his doom. After this game had gone on some time, and the soldiers on duty began to look sparse, we stirred up the nest with a stick, thinking a reinforcement might be acceptable to our voracious friend; but directly he felt the jumpers swarming upon his body he seemed to realise that matters were getting too hot for him, and taking a dive into the scrub, disappeared.

Spiders, of many shapes and sizes, positively swarm upon our plains. The monarch of them is huge, black and hairy, and of extremely ferocious aspect. He is related to the great bird-eating spiders of tropical countries, and himself, to judge by his proportions, lives upon no mean prey. Where the ground is damp and not likely to crumble in, he excavates a dwelling with beautifully smooth walls, and to keep everything within snug and private, covers the entrance with a dome of thick close web. From this retreat it is difficult to dislodge the sable monster, but artifice will accomplish what force cannot. If a piece of stick be pushed gently into the opening and worked downwards, and then withdrawn, the angry tenant will rush up after it, with the evident wish of seeing it safely out of his abode. A walking-stick can then be inserted behind him so as to block the burrow and make retreat impossible, and lo! he is at our mercy and can be studied at leisure. The burrow takes a sloping direction at first and then falls perpendicularly, and is of considerable depth.

We have another spider on the plains, a dark-coloured, bloated looking creature, which throws a strong cable from one bush to another, and hangs a web under the cable. Another, and much smaller species, spins a very beautiful and complex web near the ground, and lives in the centre of it, in a case made of little odd bits of stuff woven together. This web, when viewed from above, has the appearance of a multitude of little squares, and when covered with beads of moisture the effect is very striking.

Aquatic life, too, there is on the plains, had we but the space to describe it. In the marshy patches at the foot of the slopes lives the noisy bull-frog, with his sonorous and far-reaching

note, sounding like "tonka-tonk." Here and there we may chance upon a tiny "creek" or brook, rippling merrily over the white quartz pebbles, and if we watch awhile where it broadens out into a shallow pool, we may catch sight of some of the little speckled native trout, enjoying themselves in the clear waters. Should we be inclined for a little angling there is some fun to be had among these same trout with a small hook and tiny worm, for they will bite furiously, and make a capital fry when we get back to camp, the flesh being very white and delicate. And so we will take leave of our natural park, with its abundant animal life, and its many and curious forms of plant life also, of which we may some day speak.

H. S. DOVE.

*Table Cape, Tasmania, March 12th, 1893.*

---

### QUEER STRAWBERRIES.



WHO cares for a strawberry that is not good to eat? Well, of course the eaters are in the majority, and being so they can afford to be magnanimous towards those harmless lunatics, as they may deem them, who take an interest in strawberries for reasons other than those connected with the palate. In any case those who look at a strawberry with the eyes of a naturalist have the advantage, in that they derive a double benefit. The gratification of intelligent curiosity is, in its way, every whit as important as, if not more so than, the tickling of the palate with grateful savours. The Editor of NATURE NOTES evidently shares my opinion, or he would not have asked me to inflict on the readers of this journal a note on strawberries that are not good to eat, which have been somewhat frequent during this hot summer.

Our forefathers knew of such, for whilst they spoke of the true form as *Fragaria fraga*, they also recognised a "*Fragaria non fragifera vel non vesca—Fragaria sterilis.*" But this was what we call the Barren Strawberry, *Potentilla Fragariastrum*, which, by the way, is certainly *not* barren, as the writer finds in his own garden several seedling plants, the parent of which was probably introduced with a specimen of the Lady Fern. But this does not concern us at present. We have to deal with a *Fragaria* which is truly "*fragifera,*" but scarcely "*vesca.*" Tradescant has the credit of having been the first to bring it into notice. He found it in a garden at "Plymouth," the proprietor of which was about to discard it as a cumberer of the ground. Tradescant was one of those harmless people above referred to; and he secured what was to him a treasure, and, in all probability, shared it with a man of the same turn of mind, named Parkinson. At any rate, Parkinson, *Paradisus*, (1629), p. 528, thus writes of it:—

“One Strawberry more I promised to shew you, which although it be a wilde kinde, and of no vse for meate, yet I would not let this discourse passe, without giuing you the knowledge of it. It is in leafe much like vnto the ordinary, but differeth in that the flower, if it haue any, is greene, or rather

FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.

FIG. 1.—Strawberry bearing leaves and shoots in place of carpels (pips).  
 FIG. 2.—A shoot from the same strawberry bearing a flower at its tip.

it beareth a small head of greene leaves, many set thick together like unto a double ruffe, in the midst whereof standeth the fruit, which when it is ripe, showeth to be soft and somewhat reddish, like unto a Strawberry, but with many small harmlesse prickles on them, which may be eaten and chewed in the mouth without any maner of offence, and is somewhat pleasant like a Straw-

berry: it is no great bearer, but those it doth beare, are set at the toppes of the stalks close together, pleasant to behold, and fit for a Gentlewoman to weare on her arm, &c., as a raritie in stead of a flower."

Some years after, Merrett, in his *Pinax* (1666), says he found it growing "in the woods of Hyde Park and Hampstead." The detailed history of this plant is given by Dr. Hogg in a foot-note to my *Vegetable Teratology* (p. 276); suffice it to add that it fell out of notice to such an extent that the distinguished pomologist just referred to spoke of it as a "botanical dodo," and many persons looked upon the plant in the same light as on the mythical Mrs. Harris. Some few years ago, when increased notice began to be paid to old-fashioned flowers, the "dodo" was re-discovered, and it may now be found in botanic gardens and in the gardens of the curious. In this variety the petals are green and leafy, and the "pips" develop in the shape of tiny green leaves projecting from the surface of the receptacle, which ultimately becomes fleshy and coloured as in an ordinary strawberry. I



THE PLYMOUTH STRAWBERRY.

have mentioned this "Plymouth strawberry" by way of introduction to the specimen figured on the opposite page.

In the construction of a flower there is a general plan or principle. We may differ in opinion as to what that plan is, how it comes about, and what is its precise significance; but that there is such a plan, modified according to circumstances—perhaps in direct consequence of them—no one doubts. Reduced to its simplest expression, we have in a flower a central "axis," from which all the other parts spring; that central axis is clearly the prolongation of the flower-stalk, which is, of course, nothing but a branch. The parts of the flower that spring from this axis—sepals, petals, stamens, and carpels—originate in the same way as the leaves, are arranged in the same manner, have at first the same structure, and very often are themselves developed as leaves. The term "metamorphosis" is apt to

mislead novices, and make them think that petals, stamens, &c., were at one time actually leaves which have become metamorphosed. The truth is that they are only potentially leaves, they have a common origin with leaves, and, up to a certain time, the same structure. In the strawberries of which mention has been made, the petals, stamens, and carpels (pips) are green and leafy, that is, they have to a certain extent retained their juvenile characteristics, and in the case where the receptacle gives off a little stalk with a flower at the end (see fig. 2), is it not just what we have a right to expect an "axis" to do? A naturalist likes to get hold of such strawberries, because they reveal to him the plan of construction, as above explained, and affords confirmation of the correctness of his speculations. To find we are right in our surmises—to see additional illustrations of our theories, to have borne in upon us additional suggestions to be worked out in the future—are not these sources of delight as grateful to us as is the flavour of "British Queen"—especially when the one does not exclude the other!

MAXWELL T. MASTERS.

---

#### A GRUESOME BARGAIN.



PROPOSAL has been sprung upon the public of the Richmond district by the Dysart Trustees—who claim to be lords of the manor of Petersham Common, the meadows below, and of most of the riverside between the banks and the park as far as Kingston—the far-reaching consequences of which are as difficult to realise as they would be disastrous to the sylvan beauties if carried out. The Trustees offer for sale to the Richmond Corporation a site near Kingston for an "isolation hospital" of about five acres of arable land, at the very respectable price of £1,000 an acre, *if*—and happily owing to the public-spirited action of some members of the Corporation it is a very large "if"—that body will join with them in an application to Parliament for an Act to extinguish all common rights over an area of between eight and nine acres, known as Petersham Wood, which lies south of the road from the Star and Garter Hotel to Petersham Vale. They further offer to transfer their rights over some low-lying and water-logged meadows, *if* the Corporation will contribute the very considerable amount of £3,000 towards the expenses of making a road across the Petersham meadows, past Ham House, and as far as One Tree, where the public road again impinges on the river. The trustees also make it a condition that the Corporation should lend their approval to the proposal to close to the public numerous footpaths around and about Ham House, which give access to the river banks, Twickenham Ferry, Teddington Lock, and foot



bridge, which would otherwise be inaccessible except from Richmond and Kingston. The scarcely concealed object of these proposals is to enclose the wood and utilise the river road for extensive building operations, which will altogether transform the character of the district, and rob London, and it may justly be claimed the nation itself, of one of the most beautiful views to be found in England.

If the principles of the Selborne Society and its allied associations mean anything, these proposals, which the deeds of the Trustees in the recent past indicate are seriously meant,\* should call forth the most strenuous opposition from its members, and from the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Societies. To cut down the trees forming Petersham Wood, and erect in their stead a line of villas, would, with their chimneys vomiting smoke, and the rattle and bustle of the tradesmen's carts, deprive that locality of its sylvan charms, and restful, soothing, natural beauties so grateful to the jaded nerves of visitors. The act of the Trustees in bringing forward this unconscionable scheme, with its gruesome bargain, will not be such a surprise to the public mind in view of their recent attempts upon Ham Common and foot-paths, and their criminal action against some humble men of Ham, who, in defence of their civil rights, ventured to oppose the lords of the manor, as the action of a few members of the Richmond Corporation, including the mayor, who, though members of the Selborne Society, have permitted the very sorry offers of the Trustees to weigh in their minds against the treasured rights of the public in these open spaces. The Fever Hospital and some water-logged meadows are a poor equivalent for a square mile of bricks and mortar, and the seclusion of the one open piece of woodland in this part of the suburbs.

Another unhappy part of these proposals is the threat of the trustees to build upon land which they claim to have under their control, and which would altogether spoil the view from Richmond Hill if the Corporation do not agree to them and endorse their action. The calculated meanness of this threat will, perhaps more than any other, stir up public indignation and resistance to these proposals. The trustees are reputed to be a very rich body, and it is difficult to find a sufficient motive for their irritating attempts against public rights, unless it be that by the terms of their trust their period of power is rapidly approaching extinction. No one credits the present Earl of Dysart with being a party to these proposals.

JOHN ALLEN.

---

\* Since the above was written we learn that the Trustees have caused large boards to be erected, offering the land in question on lease for building purposes.

## THE PROPOSED WHITE MEMORIAL.

WHEN at Selborne on June 24th, I was asked by a parishioner my opinion as to a memorial to Gilbert White. I said I thought that the proposed scheme for bringing water from the well head to the village would be most suitable and appropriate. But I thought that there ought to be also some more visible commemoration of the centenary. I very much object to the ordinary description of drinking fountain, but I thought that something sufficiently good and useful, without being ostentatious, might be devised, and I have now made a design for a drinking fountain of stone, surmounted by a small cross, with a panel for inscription in marble, in copper gilt, or in Pennant stone, and two texts: (1) "Welcome



to the Weary," (2) "Come ye to the Waters." Over the tablet is a panel with G. W. and the family coat-of-arms and crest, with motto, "Plus vigila" (Be more watchful). I enclose a sketch of my design. I cannot help thinking that something of this sort would meet with general approval, not only with the parishioners and visitors, but with the Selborne Society, and with the public at large. The material used for the pipe to convey the water ought to be well considered—seeing the recognised objections to iron or lead, even if cased with tin, and to glass lined, or enamelled pipe equally. The seat should be of oak plank. There might be a dog trough beneath, and a horse trough lower down to receive overflow, and a dip-well also.

30a, Wimpole Street, W.

WILLIAM WHITE.

## CANARIES AND CAGES.



SOME years ago, I think in the year 1863, there was a talking canary to be seen and heard at a little lonely turnpike cottage on the Lansdown Road, Bath. Visitors crowded to the spot in order to be present at the performance, which was covered by much such a programme as that which is described on p. 159; indeed had it not been for the lapse of time, I should have guessed that the same small actor had been again before the public, as I am almost sure his name was Joe, or Joey. "Pretty Dicky," "How-de-do?" "What's o'clock?" &c., were the whole repertoire, with some kindred phrases.

The canary is, I believe, a bird gifted with unusual powers of imitation, as indeed are the majority of songsters, most of which will adapt their song to the sounds with which they are surrounded. I distinctly recollect that, in my childish days, a canary which was kept, I think, by the cook—or at any rate in the kitchen—was in the habit of suspending its whole musical gamut for the sake of reproducing the notes of an old squeaky pump in the scullery, which refused to work without a rhythmic cadence; and I once knew a starling (unhappily, caged) whose vocabulary consisted of one word—that which he often heard his master, a farmer, say on coming home wearied out at night. "Tir-ed—tiredy *Ti-red*" was his sympathetic lisping echo; containing, perhaps, an allusion to his own state of mind with regard to his hopeless prison wires. Since coming to years of discretion I have had no further opportunity of gauging the talking powers of birds, having an overwhelming objection to caged birds of any kind on conscientious grounds.

In England, fashions and customs filter downwards; Lazarus copies that which he sees Dives do; and the example set by keeping birds in cages is a bad one, were it only for the fact that it encourages the spread of the thing. The mere buying of cages which it necessitates tends to keep afloat a trade which props itself upon that of the cruel bird-catcher; and the merchants who sell what are called "bird requisites" make it a system to offer prizes for caged birds at exhibitions and wild-bird shows which they get up for the purpose. The dealers do not hesitate to tell the ignorant that all birds sold by them are "born in cages." This excuse ought not to be in existence. For every well-cared-for canary a hundred suffer untold miseries. Only a few days ago I rescued one from a Bristol slum. Its tiny feet and legs were swollen, distorted, and inflamed—encrusted with filth and a mass of disease. Its whole body was devoured by vermin. The hind claws had twisted themselves up among the front ones, owing to overgrowth of the toe-nails; so that the poor little creature had nothing to stand on but a small pad, which Nature, coming to the rescue, had formed for it at the base of the leg.

After bathing, careful tending, and good feeding, the little thing is, with the wondrous cheerfulness of a bird, merry and well; but it is a piteous sight, and appeals to all humane folk to do what they can to suppress the enormity which has grown so familiar as to be scarcely heeded—that of caging a winged being. I know of fifty cases as bad in other ways, or worse, which I am forced to see but cannot relieve. They place the custom of caging birds before me as one which is, in itself, so grave an abuse as to leave no “lawful use” to be abrogated.

EDITH CARRINGTON.

[The note on the talking canary (p. 159) seems to have attracted considerable notice, as it has been reprinted in numerous periodicals. Mr. W. F. Kirby has directed our attention to an account of a talking canary at Norwood, published in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* for 1858 (3rd series, ii. 371). The writer, Mr. S. Leigh Sotheby, says :—“Constantly being talked to, the bird, when about three months old, astonished its mistress by repeating the endearing terms used in talking to it, such as ‘Kissie, kissie,’ with its significant sound. This went on, and from time to time the little bird repeated other words; and now, for hours together, except during the moulting season, astonishes us by ringing the changes, according to its own fancy, and as plain as any human voice can articulate them, on the several words—‘Dear, sweet Titchie’ (its name); ‘Kiss Minnie;’ ‘Kiss me then, dear Minnie;’ ‘Sweet pretty little Titchie;’ ‘Dear Titchie.’ It whistles also, very clearly, the first bar of ‘God save the Queen.’” Mr. Sotheby adds: “Our friend, Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins, who has heard the bird, tells me that about twenty years ago, a canary that spoke a few words was exhibited in Regent Street, the only other instance, I believe, publicly known.”—Ed. *N.N.*]

---

### THE AGE OF DISFIGUREMENT.\*



R. RICHARDSON EVANS, to whose energy we are largely indebted for the formation of the Society which aims at reforming the abuses of advertising, has published a neat little shilling volume bearing upon the subject, which is practical and suggestive, and moreover is so pleasantly and easily written that the reader who takes it up is not likely to put it down until he has at any rate glanced through its pages. By his moderation and common sense he will gain many adherents to his cause; he remembers the saying of St. Francis of Sales that “more flies are caught by honey than by vinegar,” and although a pleasant tartness is not wanting on occasion, *suaviter in modo* is never absent from his arguments.

As we note in another place, the Society above referred to is making headway, and will no doubt become still better known when it has a name of less portentous length; for no one can be expected to write or talk much about a body which cannot be referred to in less than nine words. The aims of the Society, as

---

\* *The Age of Disfigurement.* By Richardson Evans. London: Remington & Co., 8vo, pp. 112, 1s.

we have already pointed out,\* cannot fail to be approved by every Selbornian, and Mr. Richardson Evans' little book should be read by every member of the Selborne Society, and presented to free libraries up and down the country. We have not space to devote to a lengthy notice, but here are one or two extracts, which will give some idea of the character of the work.

After suggesting, among other remedies, the taxing of advertising posters, which is almost—if not quite—universal in continental countries, Mr. Evans says:—

The weapon from the vigorous use of which I should expect the best results lies ready to be grasped and wielded by every householder. The nuisance culminates in the effort to secure notoriety for certain varieties of commodities that are in general consumption. Those who are aggrieved have the remedy in their own hands. They have only to cease to use any article which is offensively advertised. By this blameless exercise of the right of discrimination they will not only discourage iniquity, but will save money; for, of course, the cost of wholesale puffing is included in the price, and there is hardly a case in which, by proper inquiry, a substitute of equal, perhaps identical quality, may not be procured at a reduction of 25 per cent. As the persons likely to act on this advice constitute the class to which, as a rule, the staring insincerities of the posters are addressed, the enterprising managers would very soon find that their unscrupulous zeal did not pay. Their conscience would at last be touched in its sensitive point.

This is, it must be confessed, a somewhat heroic remedy; but if it were adopted to any appreciable extent it could not fail to have an effect upon the soap, mustard and pill makers who are the chief offenders. Here is one of the many "instances" which Mr. Evans adduces in support of his arguments:—

Take a graveyard in the heart of a great town, which the exertions of the Kyrle Society, or of Lord Meath and his friends, assisted by local or corporate munificence, have rescued from neglect, and converted into a pretty garden. Some houses round have, perhaps, been acquired, and the sites added to this much desired open space. The result of the clearance is to bring into sunshine and prominence the walls and windows of other buildings, and the owners of these see their way to making a profit by letting them out to the constructors, or using them for drawing attention to their own existence. The result is, in any case, to destroy much of the picturesqueness; to place eyesores over the little vista of green that the taste of the gardener contrives. We spend some thousands of pounds in creating the little sylvan patch, and, for want of a bye-law, allow the worst feature of the city life to dominate all. If anyone imagines that this is not a transcript from fact let the doubter go to the gardens on the Thames Embankment (which cost who knows how many tens of thousands) and observe what the directors of two Railway Companies have done to add to their embellishment. The Charing Cross Station is not a thing of beauty, but it is a gratuitous and intolerable abuse that those who made it should take advantage of their own wrong, and wound the sight they have taken so little pains to please.

With the hideous advertisements which are now spreading over the face of the country Mr. Evans has no patience.

The erections in fields should not be allowed a moment's law. They are an abomination to everyone. The persons who have put them up will plead, no doubt, that in these days of agricultural depression, the poor struggling farmer ought not to be deprived of the extra shillings he earns by lending himself and his field to the powers of evil. I believe the same defence has been set up for those who send diseased meat to market. The juries have not admitted its force. It would be more manly to take at once to highway robbery. Yet we owe no small

---

\* NATURE NOTES, 1893, p. 81.

debt to the gentlemen who have been busy in placing these stations on the Railway Pilgrim's Way from Oxford (and everywhere else) to London. They have provided a *reductio ad absurdum* of the doctrine that "a man may do what he likes with his own." The deviser of sky signs gave the signal for revolt : to the specialist in field placards we are indebted for the final provocation that ensures the triumph of the Revolution.

A number of practical suggestions bring this interesting little volume to an appropriate conclusion.

### SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

ONE of the most recent additions to Messrs. Longmans' "Silver Library" is a new edition (the third) of Mr. George Milner's *Country Pleasures* (3s. 6d.)—a title which is amplified by the description, "the Chronicle of a Year, chiefly in a Garden." There is no need to commend at length a book which has already gone through two editions, and which is therefore presumably known to many readers of NATURE NOTES. But there may be some who, like ourselves, have until now been in ignorance of this delightful volume; these will thank us for bringing it to their notice. This charming garden—"large and old, extending over several acres, and having considerable variety in the shape of wood and water, orchard and lawn, dingle and meadow"—is situated at Moston, in Lancashire, and the year 1878 is that which is chronicled. The book is one more illustration of "eyes and no eyes." There must be very many up and down the country who have opportunities of observation equal to those enjoyed by Mr. Milner, and many, let us hope, who appreciate their gardens, but there are few who have enabled others to share their enjoyment. Aided by a large number of apt and by no means hackneyed quotations, Mr. Milner guides us through the year, pointing out to us the flowers as they expand, the birds as they build their nests; taking us for a holiday jaunt to the Lakes, in North Wales, or Arran, and thereby withdrawing us against our will from the Lancashire garden, which contains so much to observe and admire. It is as simple and true a record as Jefferies could have penned, and we can give no higher praise. Yet grateful acknowledgment must be made of the excellent index of contents, to which is added a very useful list of quotations.

We can find nothing to criticise save in the "miscellaneous notes," which occupy three pages at the end of the book, and which contain the few mistakes we have noticed. The Woodsorrel has small claim to be considered the Irish Shamrock; the Bluebell is *Campanula rotundifolia* (not *heterophylla*); the Bird's-foot, in the passage cited, is not *Ornithopus*, but *Lotus corniculatus*; and *Yarrellii* (not *Garrellii*), is the specific name of the Pied Wagtail. The mention of these slight blemishes shows how little there is to find fault with in this excellent book.

The Rev. F. A. Malleon sends us a copy of his *Holiday Studies of Wordsworth*, a nicely printed volume, containing pleasantly-written sketches of delightful places at home and abroad, with an intimation that the few remaining copies may be had from the author at Broughton-in-Furness, at the reduced price of 4s. post free.

The botanical visitor to Dorking, Haslemere, Guildford, and the neighbourhood will welcome the handy and compact little *Flora of South-west Surrey*, by Mr. S. F. Dunn, which has just been published by Messrs. West, Newman & Co. (3s. net.) It is very well done; the author is evidently well acquainted with the district, and the enumeration is free from those errors which sometimes disfigure local floras. Mr. Dunn's "principal object" has been to produce "a portable field-guide, suitable for the study of botany in South-west Surrey," and he may be congratulated on the success with which this object has been attained.

## SELBORNIANA.

**Starving Tortoises.**—I cannot refrain from drawing attention to the cruelty with which these inoffensive creatures are often treated with regard to their food. One constantly hears the remark, "We had a tortoise for a few months, but it died." Either from carelessness or ignorance the poor tortoise is hardly ever properly fed, and though it can endure privation for a longer time than most creatures, it must die miserably of starvation at last. The ordinary land-tortoise feeds on cabbage, sow-thistle, lettuce leaves and dandelion flowers, while some specimens will enjoy bread and milk as well. I have been carefully watching a tame one in my conservatory, and find that, day after day, he eats a lettuce nearly half his own size. If, then, he requires so much food to keep him in health and vigour, how miserable must be the condition of those kept without food, or those that are perhaps offered a dandelion flower once a week! The water-tortoises are equally ill-used, for often from lack of knowledge they are constantly offered vegetable diet which they cannot eat, their proper food being the live creatures they find in the water they live in. They are best fed in captivity by supplying them with little bits of raw meat, or remains of boiled cod or turbot. They are easily distinguished from the land-tortoises by their lively movements and by their being able to swim in water. Still they do not care to be always afloat, so there should be a piece of cork or some small island for them to rest upon when they are tired of swimming. Both the land and water species can be made very tame by kindness and attention. In a dim sort of way they appear to like companionship, for my tortoise will walk briskly up to the cage of a mongoose in my possession and remain for hours gazing at him as if pondering, in a stolid sort of way, what kind of a tortoise he may be. I have found him also trying to climb the wires of the recess where my ruffed lemurs are kept, and if removed he would return to the same place time after time. One would like to know what kind of thoughts, if any, pass through the brain of this curious animal. Through a glass door I can watch his movements in the conservatory, where the equal warmth, no doubt, makes the tortoise feel lively and happy, so that I am favourably circumstanced for observing his habits and manners. If each reader of this paper would kindly tell those who possess tortoises the kind of food they require, it would tend to do away with much unintentional cruelty, and thus carry out one of the special aims of our Society.

ELIZA BRIGHTWEN.

**The Abuses of Advertising.**—The paralysis of ordinary business in the House of Commons has made it impossible for the National Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising to take any parliamentary action. The interval is being utilised to revise and amend in the light of criticisms and suggestions received from many members, the draft bill which was submitted at the general meeting held in June last. It is comprehensive and perhaps drastic, and it may be thought expedient to proceed only with portions of it in the first instance, but there is every reason to hope that provisions asserting the principle of representative control and dealing effectually with the more flagrant abuses in the rural districts will meet with legislative sanction. Meanwhile it is very desirable that steps should be taken for the formation of local associations, where no bodies already exist interested in cognate subjects. Communications have been received from the Cockburn Society in Edinburgh and the Leicester Branch of the Kyrle Society, which suggest that for these important centres no special organisation is necessary. The frequent notices in the press show that the National Society is already becoming widely known, and that its object and general methods command almost unanimous approval. Members may do much to promote its ends by writing to local newspapers to draw attention to any particularly striking instances of disfigurement, and making them the text for commending the claims of the Society to support. It is hardly necessary to say that in the holiday season the opportunities of unobtrusive propagandism almost thrust themselves upon the attention of the sensitive traveller. As it is hoped to make the list of members a standing petition in favour of protection for the quiet eye, every recruit gained is a distinct step towards ultimate success. Amongst many others who have joined since the general meeting are E. W. Byrne, Esq., M.P., Sidney Colvin, Esq.,

The Lord Monteaule, Sir Alec Wilson, Ernest George, Esq., F.R.I.B.A., General Sir George Higginson, K.C.B., H. O. Arnold Forster, Esq., M.P., the Countess of Radnor, Sir Frederick Leighton, Charles McLaren, Esq., M.P., Sir J. E. Millais, and Edmund Gosse, Esq.

**Gilbert White's House** (p. 155).—Photographs of the above were sold some years ago at Mr. Maxwell's shop in Selborne village—I remember purchasing one there. Maxwell's still flourishes; it is the largest shop in the place, a grocery and drapery establishment combined, and there, in one of my pilgrimages to Gilbert White's grave, I discovered that Mr. Maxwell sold photographs of the old hallowed house. Should "G. O." not be able to procure one, I will unearth mine and send it to her to get copied. It was a photograph of the place in Mr. Bell's time, when but few alterations had, I believe, been made in it. I attended Mr. Bell's sale and purchased, amongst other things, a small round table which, it was said, had belonged to White. There was no written authority given with it, and I have always doubted its ever having been used by a very little man to write on, for it is too high to sit at comfortably. I have greater faith in the authenticity of a wee *glass spoon*, a sort of tea caddy spoon, and two tumblers, or glass mugs with handles.

*Berry Grove, Liss.*

HELEN WATNEY.

**A Plea for the Goldfinch.**—The goldfinch, which is one of the most beautiful of English birds, is in danger of extermination. I have been reading in Mr. A. H. Macpherson's book on *British Birds* that—"The goldfinch has been exterminated in many districts by the carelessness of our legislators, who neither enforce its protection efficiently during a too limited close season, nor trouble to prevent the grey-headed nestlings being caught out by a system of organised ruffianism as soon as they gather into small flocks in autumn. No reasonable person can doubt that the goldfinch should be protected from harm during the entire year, and the callous indifference with which the public continue to allow this beautiful finch to be exterminated is lamentable. The goldfinch nests in May in gardens and orchards, and builds in fruit trees, in hawthorn, ash, furze, sycamore, alder, horse-chestnut, fir, &c. The nest is usually a beautiful spherical structure of moss and fine bents, &c., but we once examined five little goldfinches rocking snugly in a nest in a small plum tree, composed wholly of dry grass and devoid of any kind of lining. Usually it is carefully lined with down and feathers. The earliest broods fly in June, but unfledged goldfinches may be found in their nests in September, two and even three broods being reared in a fine season." I hope that all members of the Selborne Society will do their utmost to protect the goldfinch and to prevent this beautiful bird being exterminated.

*Hasely Hall, Warwick.*

MAUD SAWYER.

**Extermination of Butcher's Broom.**—On August 9th, while rambling in Epping Forest, I met a labouring man laden with a bale of butcher's broom nearly as large as a truss of hay, and pulled up by the root. Asking what he was going to do with it, he told me it was used in Bermondsey for dressing leather. Whether this statement was fact or "flam," the destruction of an interesting and not too plentiful shrub was equally an accomplished fact, nor can it long exist in the Forest if plundered on this scale.

J. T. P.

**Gilbert White's Sermon** (p. 133).—The *Manchester Guardian* of July 24th summarises the Earl of Stamford's interesting note on this sermon, and adds, "Lord Stamford omits to mention that in 1863 this discourse, which had proved serviceable on so many occasions, was printed in the *Journal of Sacred Literature*. Possibly it is destined to yield still further aid to the clerical profession."

**Clapton (Lower Lea Valley) Branch.**—On Saturday, September 2nd, an excursion will be made to Waltham. Train leaves Liverpool Street at 2.15 p.m., and slips a carriage at Waltham Cross at 2.40. Third Class return ticket, 1s. 7d. Mr. W. B. Gerish has promised a paper entitled "Waltham—its Abbey and Cross."



## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**The Kingfisher** (p. 139).—I have met with an occasional bird skimming small rivulets in the neighbourhood of Rhyl, my experience coinciding with Mr. Warde Fowler's as to their being generally found in proximity to still water. So far as my observation goes, they have not by any means been numerous here during the last twenty years, and seem to be diminishing in number, but this impression may be due to the fact that I have not frequented their haunts as often as in former years.

*Rhyl.*

W. LESTER SMITH.

**Pear Tree blossoming in August.**—I send you a twig from a pear tree growing in the open air, which you will see bears upon it a spray of blossom and also a pear. The whole tree is covered in this manner with pears and blossoms, showing an effect of the warm rains after a long drought, which is also noticeable this month in some of the evergreens as well as the deciduous trees.

*Shute House, Weston-super-Mare.*

THOMAS POLE.

**Earwigs** (p. 157).—I have a small vegetable garden quite infested with earwigs, and I have adopted the following plan to capture them. I get two or three newspapers and fold them up in several loose folds. I then fasten these in different parts of the garden hedge, and in the course of ten or twelve days I shall have scores, and even hundreds of earwigs captured in different folds of the papers. I convey some of these to an ants' nest (I have several colonies of ants), and making a hole in the ground about two inches deep and almost perpendicular sides, so that the earwigs cannot easily escape, I open one of the main thoroughfares leading into the ants' city and send one or two earwigs in. These soon return, followed by hundreds of enraged ants; I then throw in ten or twelve earwigs, when a pitched battle between the ants and earwigs immediately takes place. In these combats I noticed the earwigs *using the tail forceps as a weapon*, for they will frequently spear and impale the ants on their sharp extremities. The ants are martial little fellows, for they will rush to the attack in the most determined and valiant manner, while the earwigs, though of heavier build, will decline the fight and make their escape as fast as their legs can carry them. They have no chance of defeating the ants, for reserves and reinforcements are constantly coming up to their assistance, and the earwigs are invariably overpowered by numbers thus verifying Napoleon's war dictum that "victory leans to the side of the big battalions." All the earwigs that cannot escape are killed, for the ants "give no quarter," and the slain are removed into the interior of the ants' city, no doubt to undergo the process of scalping. A piece of folded paper or linen cloth laid in the corners of the windows will catch any earwigs intended to enter the room in that way.

*Blackwater, Ennisorthy.*

J. T. BYRNE.

[We are not quite sure that Mr. Byrne's action will commend itself to all Selbornians, but it supplies the information for which Mr. Clifford asked.—Ed. *N.N.*]

The pinching of earwigs by the tail forceps is, I believe, not uncommon. A few years since my forefinger was severely pinched by a large specimen. I had pushed the finger into a nosegay to ascertain if there was enough water in the vase, and feeling a sharp prick, withdrew it quickly with the earwig hanging to the tip. The pain was severe for half an hour, but was relieved by hot water. A small blue mark remained for several days. I saw our man nipped sharply by an earwig that fell inside his collar when he was engaged in thinning grapes. It is generally supposed that our ears are naturally protected from the entrance of insects, earwigs especially, but there is no rule without an exception. I only know of one instance of an earwig getting into a person's ear; this was told me by a neighbour (a surgeon), who was applied to in the difficulty. He did not believe the boy's story, but to satisfy him put in oil—and forth came the earwig. It was a solitary instance in a long practice.

*Clifton.*

M. R. F. S.

**The Royal Buckhounds.**—Just as we are going to press we note a paragraph in various papers stating that in all probability the post of Master of the Buckhounds will be abolished at an early date. We trust the report is accurate.

**The Waste-paper Nuisance.**—Mr. Henry Holiday writes from Ambleside to the *Westminster Budget*, calling attention to this nuisance, of which we spoke last summer.\* “Some of the visitors to this beautiful country,” he says, “seem to regard it simply as a waste-paper basket. No doubt a free Briton has a legal right to tear up his correspondence and newspapers, &c., and scatter them where he pleases, and if any particular free Briton has no perception of beauty or love of it he may not be sensible of the mischief he is doing to others by indulging in this slatternly trick. It may be well, therefore, to explain to such Britons that scattered fragments of anything so conspicuous as white paper are a very ugly disfigurement of a beautiful landscape. There is another right possessed by every free Briton, that of conducting himself like a gentleman, and showing some consideration for the comfort and enjoyment of others; surely as high a privilege as that of strewing one’s correspondence on the rocks and roads. If this should meet the eye of Dr. A. M. E.—, of Wincanton, Bath, it is to be hoped he will think more before he again leaves his extensive correspondence about.”

---

### OFFICIAL NOTICES.

UP to August 14th the Secretary has only received £4 15s. towards the £70 owing to the Hon. Treasurer, and hopes that those members who did not notice the appeal on the cover of the August number will refer to it and send a donation. Those who have already sent donations are:—A. T. Craig, Mrs. Bedford, Mrs. Cave Brown Cave, Dr. Kimbell, T. King Sampson, C. H. Goodman, Surgeon-Major R. W. Woolcombe, Miss F. E. Partridge, Hon. Mrs. Boyle, Miss H. F. White, Mrs. E. Glover, the Misses Thorowgood, Mrs. Brightwen, Mrs. Simcox, Miss M. D. Warren, Mrs. R. F. Sturge.

A. J. WESTERN, *Hon. Sec.*

---

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. C.—Many thanks; but just now we have so much original matter standing over that we are unable to avail ourselves of your kind offer.

J. F.—*Bupleurum fruticosum*.

A. E. H. W.—The note is hardly of sufficient general interest.

E. S.—The Guelder Rose takes its name from Gueldres, whence it was probably introduced. It was in cultivation in the time of Gerard, who says “it is called in Dutch *Gheldersche Roose*, in English Gelders Rose.”

A. H. J.—There is no one book suited to your requirements, and a list of good works on every branch of British natural history would occupy more space than we can spare. You had better master one branch to begin with.

M. J. G.—The variegated elm is not uncommon.

C. D. B.—It is not overlooked, and we hope to notice it in our next issue. The crowded state of our pages explains the delay.

**Erratum.**—P. 157, line 23 from top, for “days,” read “months.”

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

---

\* NATURE NOTES, 1892, p. 124.

# Nature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

No. 46.

OCTOBER, 1893.

VOL. IV.

### A SELBORNIAN IN THE DIALS.



NATURALIST would hardly choose the streets of London as the most suitable place in which to pursue his studies, and even less would he expect to find the crowded neighbourhood to the north of Trafalgar Square a happy hunting ground. There even the ubiquitous sparrow is a rarity, and the whole district seems abandoned to dirt and wretchedness. But a young student might often spend an hour with less profit than by taking a stroll through what is known as the "Dials." Years ago, before the effacing hand of "improvements" had made itself felt in this part of London, the Dials teemed with shops filled with birds, beasts, and fishes, the collective contents of which would have formed a miniature Zoological Gardens. Even now, purged as the neighbourhood is of its most squalid bye-ways and alleys, the newly admitted sunshine and respectability have not driven away all traces of its natural-history proclivities. A few of such shops remain. There is only one devoted to aquaria, but that contains many things worthy of more than a passing glance. There are gold fish, of course, various in size and colour, some swimming in globes so small that it is only possible to get a distorted image of the animal within. The lively minnow is much in evidence; a few gudgeon, and perhaps a small jack about as long as a finger, completes the piscatorial specimens. The amphibians are better represented. The frog can be seen in stages varying from the tadpole to the philosophical-looking adult. A couple of toads are making themselves as comfortable as circumstances will permit in some wet moss. In a large bell jar are many good specimens of the great water newt, amongst which is to be noticed a solitary specimen of the palmated newt, easily distinguishable by its small size and webbed feet.

This pretty little animal is not so rare as is sometimes supposed. It makes an interesting pet, for the changes it undergoes before and after the breeding season are even more marked than in the other newts. Next is a globe containing several of the great water beetle, fierce and cannibalistic, and another jar contains a few of the much-sought-after diving spider. A viper treated as a rarity, for it bears a specially written ticket announcing that it was captured in the New Forest, occupies a small aquarium, whilst a similar vessel contains a mixed tangle of green snakes and slow-worms.

Passing along we come to a shop which makes a speciality of cats and pigeons, with just a few rabbits and a small assortment of the parrot family to fill up; and a door or two off is a fine reynard, who is probably as happy in his small cage as if he were struggling for life in order to give amusement to red-coated gentlemen and gentle-minded dames. Here, too, are a few hedgehogs, and fancy rats and mice in plenty. A young squirrel is spinning round in his wheel so rapidly that the eye can scarcely follow, but its action gives no idea of the natural grace of its movements when at liberty among the trees. A pair of marmosets huddled together look so miserable that one almost suspects that they realise they are under sentence of death, and that in a few days—unless they fall into the hands of a kind and thoughtful purchaser—they must sicken and die, as scores of their unfortunate race have done before.

But it is for its cage birds that the Dials is famous, and Sunday morning is its festival. Then the resident bird fanciers are reinforced by itinerant vendors, who trade from trucks and stalls in the cheaper kind of birds. Linnets and red-poles are their chief stock, but often birds with plumage unknown to naturalists, and colours that will not wash, are passed off to the unwary as valuable specimens of rare species. The sweetest songsters of our land can be bought here at all seasons, and at prices ranging from a few pence to many shillings, and in some cases even pounds. Blackbirds, thrushes, robins and chaffinches abound. The Wild Birds Protection Act prohibits the capture and sale of most wild birds from March to August, and this law, if stringently carried out, would prevent the sale of nearly all the migratory birds. But with few exceptions all the songsters, particularly nightingales and blackcaps, can be purchased here in the early spring, and it is quite clear, from the small army of bird catchers seen in the country around London, that there is a ready and profitable market for these and other birds. The mortality among the captured is enormous. One dealer admitted that out of the thirty nightingales he had last spring, twenty-seven died, and he did not seem to consider himself very unfortunate in this respect. To Selbornians such figures are inexpressibly sad, and one almost wonders of what materials are bird catchers made that they can inflict, without remorse, such suffering upon harmless birds.

To those who have sympathy with bird-life, who have watched birds in their native haunts, and listened to the marvellous melodies which must charm even the callous and unthinking, a walk through the Dials is fraught with pain. Here are dozens of goldfinches, beating to shreds their yellow wings in cages but a few inches square. Here are rows of skylarks to be bought for sixpence each, pining for the blue sky in which they shall never soar again. Many have given up the struggle, and with closed eye and ruffled plumage are waiting for the release which speedily will come. The temptation is great to empty pocket and purse in purchasing their liberty, but the knowledge that their places would be filled by new victims to-morrow restrains. And yet cannot something be done? Cannot one or two be saved? How much for that one with its head under its wing? It will not live an hour. And that one with feathers extended till it seems but a ball of fluff? It is dying fast. And that one in the corner—and the next, and the next? All will die before night. They are useless to you, give them to me, and then away to the nearest green open space. Will they live till we reach it? Open the basket, they will not attempt to fly away. But place one on the grass near that bush. It feels the free air of heaven around it. It lifts its head and sees no longer the dingy street and gazing crowd. It spreads its wings, and does not bruise them against prison bars. And then, how marvellous the change! The dull eye brightens, the disordered plumage becomes sleek, the dying wishes to live, and away it goes, back to its own place, to live its true life, and to give again to the listening world its sweet song of gladness and of hope.

FRED. W. ASHLEY.

---

## BRITISH WILD FLOWERS IN NEW ZEALAND.

**B**OTH from their methods of propagation and manner of arrival, the spread of British wild flowers in a new land is full of interest. Though rather warm for our mountain and alpine species, the climate of the southern portion of the North Island is admirably adapted for most British plants. As all the work about us is done on horseback, and therefore great distances traversed almost every day, there are good opportunities of noting their first arrival and subsequent spread.

The weeping willow is nearly an evergreen, losing its leaves late in June, and within a month the clinging brown scales burst with green at the tips. The pines never cease growing. I have seen the watercress in bloom in mid-winter; then, too, the air is

sweet with the scent of blossoming gorse, and when the dry wind blows from the warm north-west, the germander speedwell's blue flowers expand.

During our coldest months—May, June and July—there is a marked growth in the ryegrass, and a lesser in the cocksfoot and *Poa pratensis*. In a wet season I have seen two and even three crops of strawberries, and in a warm damp year the earlier varieties of apple fruit twice. Thirty years ago nearly the whole of Hawkes Bay was densely clad in fern, almost precisely similar to the bracken of Scotland, each year's crop, however, not withering away as at home, but remaining verdant for two or three seasons. As this growth was burnt off and eaten down by stock, grass seed was sown, and no doubt with it many British weeds have been imported.

The most conspicuous and beautiful of these introductions is the thistle—"Scotsman," as it is termed in the colonies. It is to be found everywhere, from a huge bush five feet high, to a feeble plant of a foot with half a-dozen blooms. I have even seen it blossoming forty feet in air—flourishing in the fork of a rotting forest tree. It blocks, with us, the summer sheep tracks, and it is curious to watch horses plucking off the prickly purple heads with their bared teeth, and then gingerly working the delicate morsels back to their grinders. I have seen the down lying in loose packed drifts a foot in depth, and especially on newly cleared forest lands. All day long, under a deep blue sky, over the huge felled logs, and in among the skeleton standing trees, hour after hour, the thistle down slowly sails. By the same means dandelion, sowthistle, and hawkweed have spread everywhere. I have noticed how much faster with us such plants spread from north to south than from south to north.

The first specimen of nipplewort I ever saw on the run appeared on its northern extremity, and about the same time I noticed a native groundsel on the south-east end. This latter was a very free seeder, yet the nipplewort, three years later, was here and there to be found in all parts, whereas the groundsel was still within a few hundred acres of its original habitat. Our summer winds blow from the dry hot north and north-west, whereas a breeze from the south is rare, and is almost invariably accompanied by rain, which of course drowns and clogs all feathery seeds. This very simple explanation accounts for the rapid spread of the one and the almost stationary position of the other.

Imported plants, like imported birds, are first seen singly, and then three or four years later in thousands. A single plant of "Fat Hen" will be seen in a ploughed field, and three years later this noxious weed will be choking all other growth. Now that the fern and bush are gone, many of the native weeds also give trouble.

In the wide shingly river beds of the South Island the gorse has spread to such an extent as to seriously threaten to alter the

courses of the rivers. Water is a very important agent in the dissemination of seeds, and musk and watercress have, in consequence, spread very rapidly throughout our brooks and smaller streams. Under other less favourable circumstances, plants of gorse may for years flourish, yet not spread, as on sheep camps, where I have seen single bushes remain for years pruned into cones by the nibbling sheep. Broom, too, spreads very rapidly, and sweet briar and blackberries, when they get hold of the ground, are very expensive to keep down, and impossible to extirpate. Indeed, from the way in which the latter thrives in New Zealand, it seems not impossible that after a few centuries it will develop into a sheep-catching plant; even now sheep eating the ripe berries, or walking past are entangled in the great hooked side shoots. In trying to escape their wool is twisted into a rope. They die, and the plant is stimulated to fresh exertions by the rotting carcase.

Many seeds are carried by sheep, such as white clover, trefoil and sheep sorrel. Horehound, which grows over roods of ground, on rich, dry, sandy sheep camps, is probably a garden escape. I have seen, too, the scented geranium growing wild along the road sides, and not long ago I read of a bushman discovering in an open part of the forest an acre of flowering narcissus.

In autumn the yellow or ruddy leaves of self-sown elms, sycamores, and rowans, contrast with the sombre pine green of the native bush. The appearance of some species, however, is very hard to account for. I found a clump of *Stellaria* growing on a shady bank on a neighbour's run six years ago. It is there still, but I have never seen or heard of it elsewhere in New Zealand.

In the same way in a little-frequented part of my own place, I once discovered a single plant of St. John's wort. I never—before or since—have seen this plant in the colony. Near the woolshed of a friend in Canterbury, who chiefly employs Scottish shepherds, a patch of heather has been growing and spreading for years. It is supposed to have dropped from the boots or clothes of a newly imported Highland shepherd, for seeds, under strange conditions and for long periods, retain their vitality.

One of my shepherds, who has a taste for botany, planted this year some of the stones taken from raisins for the Christmas pudding. They germinated, and were growing freely, until lately a sharp frost destroyed them. After an extensive fern fire, upon the burnt ground in spring, appear hundreds of thousands of plants of the mouse-ear chickweed. These fern lands have, of course, been fired before, but even then the appearance of this weed in so great quantity is strange, for the seed is furnished neither with apparatus for floating or clinging, nor do sheep, however hungry, feed upon it.

Shepherd's-purse, willow-herb, gowans, pimpernel, prunella, spotted medick, docks, nettles, plantains, and numerous other

weeds are to be found in our fields and gardens; and among grasses, *Poa annua*, ratstail, and sweet vernal, though never consciously sown, are spreading fast, where soil and climate suit.

After a fire has passed over felled bushland, I have noticed oats, rape, turnips and pumpkins flourishing luxuriantly; and this in country where there are two or three small gardens in sixty or seventy thousand acres, and where there is almost no agriculture.

It is remarkable, too, how some weeds have *not* made their appearance, such as ragweed, the marsh thistle, and the wild scarlet poppy of cornfields. Daisies, dog violets, primroses, cowslips, harebells, and blue hyacinths—the best known and loved of home flowers—have been planted in the gardens.

In all these ways is the flora of Britain establishing itself in New Zealand. I daresay it has done so in other of our colonial possessions too, for the spread of the British race ensures the spread of the British wild flowers.

H. GUTHRIE SMITH.

*Tutira Lake, Hawkes Bay,  
New Zealand.*

#### A SUGGESTION.

**I**T seems to me that the members of the Selborne Society have advantages offered them by this Magazine which are not sufficiently appreciated—I mean the assistance it might be to us in our study of natural history, to have more communication with each other through its pages. We might form an organised plan for amateur observations which, though less valuable than those of scientific men, are yet not without a certain value of their own even to science, and most certainly would add to our own interest and pleasure in life, and to our knowledge of natural history. The observations I would suggest may seem to be of a very simple nature, but are, perhaps, none the less valuable on that account.

If we stop to think, we may perhaps be surprised to find how little we actually know practically of the ways of the wild creatures living around us. For example, I remember once seeing a swallow-tail butterfly flitting, as I thought, in a vague aimless manner in the garden; happening to watch it more closely, I was surprised to see that its course was by no means so indefinite as I had supposed. It flew constantly round and round in a large circle, and so it appeared to pass its time for one or two days. Why it selected this special round I do not know, but it certainly opened my mind to the idea that even a butterfly may have more method in its proceedings than I had ever before supposed possible. A fact like this should have led me to follow up more



closely the knowledge I had already gained, and to be more ready to make similar observations in future.

I will now propose a few subjects that we might take as a beginning. Has any one of us ever selected some special bud on a tree in early spring, and carefully watched its course through the whole summer and autumn, and taken note of each stage of its progress—how many leaves it grew and how quickly, and whether it developed into a twig or only to one leaf and flower; or did we ever take a little weed, and watch its life history till winter, how many leaves and flowers it grew, and when it began to put out its branches; or have we ever followed the course of a bee from flower to flower, and perhaps traced it eventually to its hive or nest? Perhaps some few of us may have done such things, but not many I think; and to know a little, well, about one plant or insect will add to the pleasure and interest we feel in all of them. Perhaps better subjects than these may be suggested by your readers, but I am sure that on such lines as this we might find a useful development of amateur study of natural history.

LETITIA M. DIXON.

---



---

IN THE COUNTRY OF GILBERT WHITE.\*

GHOSTS of great men in London town  
 Confuse the brains of such as dream,  
 But here betwixt this hanging down  
 And this great moorland, waste and brown,  
 One only reigns supreme.

In Wolmer Forest, old and wide,  
 Along each sandy pine-girt glade  
 And lonesome heather-bordered ride,  
 A gentle presence haunts your side,  
 A gracious reverend shade.

And as you pass by Blackmoor grim  
 And stand at gaze on Temple height,  
 Methinks the fancy grows less dim:  
 Methinks you really talk with him  
 Who once was Gilbert White!

For yonder lies his own true love,  
 His little Selborne, dreaming still:  
 The shapely "Hanger" towers above,  
 Girt with its beautiful beech grove,  
 Like some old Grecian hill!

---

\* From *The Speaker*, June 17, 1893.

And there th' abrupt and comely "Nore"  
 Guards that wild world of bloom and bird  
 Where his clear patient sense of yore  
 Conned sights and sounds, which ne'er before  
 Sweet poets saw or heard.

And here, hard by, the nightingale  
 For the first time in springtide sang,  
 While Gilbert listened; here the pale  
 First blackthorn flowered, while down the gale  
 The cuckoo's mockeries rang!

And there rathe swallows would appear,  
 To whirl on high their first gavotte;  
 And there the last of the great deer  
 Fell on a winter midnight clear  
 'Neath a "night-hunter's" shot.

We know it all! Familiar, too,  
 Seems this quaint hamlet 'neath the steeps,—  
 House, "Pleystor," church, and churchyard yew,  
 And the plain headstone, hid from view,  
 Where their historian sleeps.

'Twas just a century gone by  
 They laid the simple cleric here:  
 Th' old world was in her agony,  
 And "Nature! Reason!" was the cry  
 In that historic year.

But O! another Nature 'twas  
 That ruled him with her magic touch,  
 A mistress of delightful laws,  
 Whom still we learn to love because  
 We love her servant much!

V. G. P.

### A GUIDE TO BRITISH FUNGI.\*



T this time of the year many lovers of nature are anticipating "fungus forays," and many more are bewailing the absence of some suitable little book of modest price which shall enable them to identify at least the commoner species of our large fungi. Scarcely any group of plants is so discouraging in its study to the beginner. In the first place they are so numerous in what are called species. In the second, these species are so extremely alike that their own

\* Guide to Sowerby's Models of British Fungi in the Department of Botany, British Museum (Natural History). By Worthington G. Smith, F.L.S. pp. 82, 93 figs., price 4d.

parents (the "critical fungologists") often do not know them. This is bad enough, but the beginner commonly (small blame to him) adds a third difficulty by trying to name every species he meets with. After he has wrestled with this and the specimens

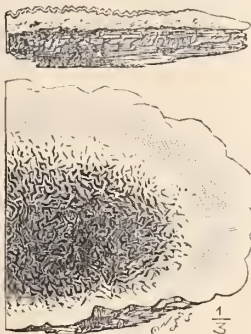


FLY AGARIC.  
*Agaricus muscarius.*  
(One-quarter natural size.)



*Boletus edulis.*  
(One-quarter natural size.)

have begun to decay, he remembers NATURE NOTES or some expert fungological friend, puts the mangled *débris* of his specimens into a "chip" box or match box, and sends them to be named. They arrive in a high condition, offering a pleasing illustration



DRY ROT.  
*Merulius lacrymans.*  
(One-third natural size.)

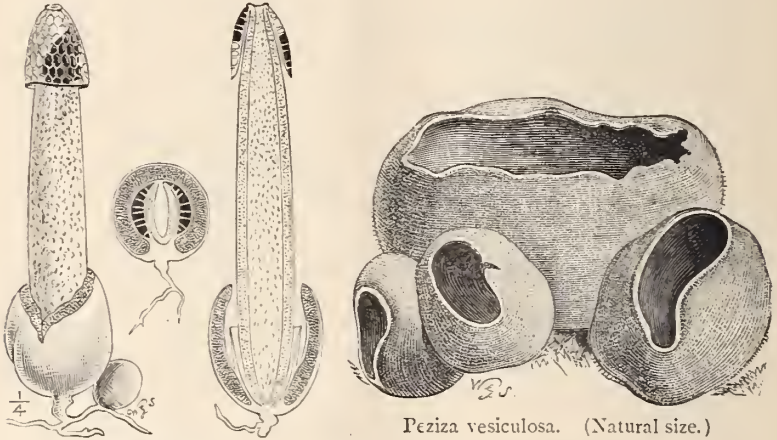


*Typhula phacorrhiza.*  
(One-half natural size.)

of what our ancestors called "the spontaneous generation of maggots in toadstools." To those who can so bridle their enthusiasm as to refrain from exercises of this kind, the following advice may be of service:—Expend fourpence in the acquisition

of the guide which is named at the foot of this paper; with the aid of its figures and descriptions look out for the species contained in it; and for the present disregard the others.

The advantages of such a course are these: The species are all easily studied without the aid of any magnifying power,



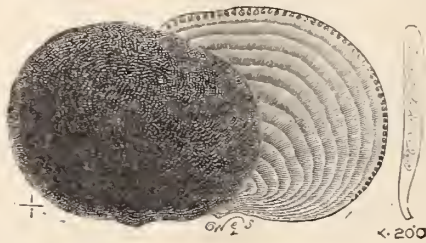
STINKHORN.

*Phallus impudicus.*

(One-quarter natural size.)

*Peziza vesiculosa.* (Natural size.)

though a common pocket lens is useful; next, they are fairly illustrative of all the groups that furnish large specimens, the *Hymenomyces*, *Gasteromyces*, *Discomyces*, *Pyrenomycetes*, *Tuberaceæ*, and *Myxomyces*. Farther, nearly all the common fungi are included, and with the help of the generic and sectional figures



*Hypoxylon concentricum* and section showing the perithecia. (Natural size.)  
 Ascus  $\times$  200.

and the plain descriptions, their recognition does not present any grave difficulty. If this advice be taken and the beginner succeed in making the acquaintance of a fair proportion of the species, he will have done much towards laying a foundation of a knowledge of fungi. If, on the other hand, he sets out

equipped with expensive books and the companionship of an expert, he will, in nine cases out of ten, do badly, because he will then learn too many species with comparatively little effort—he will be “crammed” in short—and in an astonishingly short time his recollection will have faded and the knowledge so gained be with “the snows of yester year.”

It is more or less by a fortunate accident that we have such a book. It is issued as a guide to the models made by Sowerby in the preparation of his “English Fungi” (1797-1809). Tradition says that Sowerby, on obtaining a specimen, first made a model of it in the round, and afterwards made his drawing from the model. Be this so or not, the models often appear to support the view from their more faithful outlines. After coming into the possession of the British Museum it was found necessary to restore many of them in the matter of colour, a work easily accomplished by Mr. Worthington Smith, since the Museum possess the original drawings made by Sowerby for his book, as well as the models. Mr. Worthington Smith took the opportunity of



FLOWERS OF TAN.

*Fuligo varians*. (Natural size.) Spores and threads  $\times 200$ .

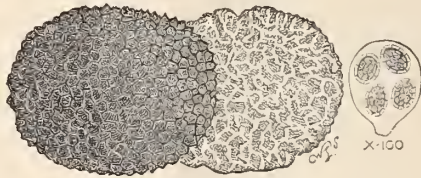
making this catalogue of them, with modern descriptions, and has furnished the beautiful illustrations of the genera and sub-genera. From each of the groups we are permitted to reproduce an illustration which will give an idea of their character. Considering the changes that have come over the classification of fungi since Sowerby prepared his great work, it is remarkable that a systematic account of his species should be so effectually illustrative of the larger fungi at the present day as to permit of the publication of a guide to them which is at the same time so excellent a guide to the study of fungi. One remarkable feature of the book is its cheapness, and last but not least, it possesses a practical index.

Of the figures of some of our commoner species, here reproduced by kind permission, *Agaricus muscarius*, *Boletus edulis*, *Merulius lacrymans* and *Typhula phacorrhiza* illustrate the *Hymenomycetes*; *Phallus impudicus* illustrates the *Gasteromycetes*; *Peziza vesiculosa* the *Discomycetes*; *Hypoxylon concentricum* the *Pyrenomycetes*; *Tuber aestivum* the *Tuberaceæ* or Truffle family; and *Fuligo varians*, “Flowers of Tan,” the *Myxomycetes*.

The following description will give an idea of the style of the work in which practical knowledge is admirably blended with technical instruction :—

“*TUBER ÆSTIVUM* Vitt. The British Truffle.—Hard and black at maturity, polygonally warted outside and mottled with white and yellowish-brown inside.

“It is usually subterranean, but is seldom found more than three or four inches beneath the surface; it is sometimes half exposed. It is generally about the size of a walnut, but may attain a diameter of three or more inches. In rare cases single specimens weigh two, three or four pounds. It is found in perfection from July to late autumn. It grows in copses, hedgerows, and open spaces in plantations gregariously with other species of *Tuber*, generally in plantations of beech, oak, or birch—rarely pine—on argillaceous or calcareous soil.



BRITISH TRUFFLE.

*Tuber aestivum*. (Natural size.) Ascus  $\times$  100.

“The odour of *T. aestivum* is potent and to some persons agreeable, and can sometimes be detected where truffles grow. Squirrels and pigs are fond of truffles, and scratch them up.

“Edible, but hard and indigestible.

“The truffle of France, used in *pâté de foie gras* and *poulard truffé*, is *Tuber melanosporum* Vitt. The truffle used in Italy is *T. magnatum*, which is garlic-scented. These species have not been recorded as British.”

I am glad to notice that one London Natural History Society recommends the *Guide* to its members as a companion for “fungus forays;” nothing more useful can be taken, nor has the British Museum issued any more practical hand-book.

GEORGE MURRAY.

[As the *Guide* is only to be obtained at the British Museum (Natural History), South Kensington, country members, and even some London ones, may find a difficulty in procuring it. We shall be glad in such cases to forward a copy by post on receipt of sixpence in stamps to defray cost of book (4d.) and postage; two copies will go by parcel post for 3d. Those wanting copies should write to Mr. Britten, British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S.W.]

## A VETERAN SELBORNIAN.



ON Sept. 1st there passed away from among us the oldest member, in one sense at least, of the Selborne Society, the Rev. Leonard Blomefield, in his ninety-fourth year. In another sense, too, he was a follower of Gilbert White. From boyhood he was fond of the study of Natural History, and whilst at Eton a school-fellow lent him White's *Natural History of Selborne*. This book so impressed the boy-naturalist that he copied the whole of it, with the exception of two or three chapters, with his own hand. The friend and fellow student at Cambridge of the late Charles Darwin, Leonard Jenyns (by which name he is best known to many), was instrumental in obtaining for that eminent naturalist his appointment on board the *Beagle*. For some thirty-years the Rev. Leonard Jenyns was the incumbent of a Cambridgeshire parish (Swaffham, Bulbeck), where he manifested much energy and devotion to his clerical duties, whilst his favourite scientific studies were by no means neglected, as his well-known publications, including *Fishes of the Voyage of the Beagle*, *A Manual of British Vertebrate Animals*, and *Observations on Natural History*, bear witness.

In the year 1850, Jenyns came to Bath, and in the year 1871 took the name of Blomefield in substitution for Jenyns on succeeding to certain family property. In 1855 he founded the Bath Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club, of which he became the first president. He afterwards read several admirable papers to the members, the last so recently as 1891. Mr. Blomefield presented to the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution his Herbarium, as well as a valuable collection of upwards of 2,000 volumes, known as the Jenyns Library. Elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society in 1822, he lived to be known as the "father" of that body.

When a branch of the Selborne Society was about to be established in Bath, Mr. Blomefield at once accepted the invitation to become one of its founders, and up to within a short time of his death took a lively interest in its welfare. One of his last papers was entitled "Records of a Rookery;" this he read to the members of the Bath Branch on May 14th, 1891, being then in his ninety-first year.

The last few years of Mr. Blomefield's life were passed in comparative seclusion. His mental vigour was remarkable even in his extreme old age, and up to within a very short period of his death he would carry on an animated conversation with his friends on any of his favourite subjects. He was an old life member of the British Association, and a F.G.S. In the "Chapters in my Life," published for private circulation in 1889, Mr. Blomefield observes that in his early days he resolved to have nothing to do with four things, viz., sporting, farming, politics, and magisterial business; and he kept his resolution to the end. A somewhat extraordinary confession for a naturalist,

contained in the same book, is that he never fired off a gun in his life. He was a generous supporter of scientific research, and did his utmost to encourage the study of Natural History and Science.

W. G. WHEATCROFT.

#### FOUR BOOKS OF VERSE.

WHETHER England is or is not at the present time a nest of singing birds is to some extent a matter of opinion. The ingenious writer who lately demonstrated that we had some seventy minor poets has much to answer for, but in the opinion of the verse-writers themselves he fell far short of the mark. There is a "Brotherhood of Poets," known to the initiated as the "B.O.P.," who have a magazine entirely devoted to their effusions, embellished with portraits and biographical (or autobiographical) sketches of the authors; yet with scarcely an exception, these are a long way outside Mr. H. D. Traill's select seventy, who are themselves for the most part considerably below the summit of Olympus.

Not having the list by us, we are not sure how many of the writers whose books are now before us appear among the seventy, but we are certain that the "B.O.P." does not reckon any of them in its fraternity. One, indeed, does not claim for himself the poet's laurel; his crown is woven of flowers from many gardens, and with rare reticence, he does not contribute a single blossom. Mr. R. Maynard Leonard's anthology, *The Dog in British Poetry* (David Nutt, 3s. 6d.), is beautifully printed and tastefully bound, and, judging from the reviews we have seen, has given rise to an unusual diversity of opinion. Some think an anthology of dogs in itself objectionable, if only because it is certain to be followed by a similar selection devoted to cats; others think it monotonous, and it certainly is not a book to read at a sitting. But it is also felt that the author has done his work well, and he certainly has brought together an extraordinary variety of verses, as various in style as they are unanimous in subject. The short preface is good, and the notes are excellent.

"It was never my intention," says Mr. Leonard, "to gather together a complete collection of even British poems about dogs." We do not quite understand in what sense the poems are supposed to be "even," but it is obvious that this remark disarms the critic who would complain of omissions; who misses the dogs who "delight to bark and bite" (which, indeed, is but a casual reference, though a familiar one), and the "faithful hound" who found the traveller. But when he adds his belief that he has "overlooked no poem bearing directly on dogs that is of any great importance,"—the construction here is somewhat faulty, but it works out all right—he challenges contradiction, which we proceed to supply by asking why Matthew Arnold's "Geist's Grave" is omitted, while "Kaiser Dead," hardly so fine a poem, finds a place. Nevertheless, in spite of the omission of poems we should have expected to find, and for which, it may be, the necessary permission to reprint could not be obtained, as well as of the inclusion of some which we could have spared, Mr. Leonard has given us an interesting as well as a beautiful volume, and Selbornians will do well to bear it in mind when Christmas comes round again.

Lord de Tabley has brought together, in a handsome volume, many of the *Poems, Dramatic and Lyrical* (Elkin Mathews, 7s. 6d.), which he published some years since, when he was the Hon. John Leicester Warren, a name by which he is better known in the two walks of literature and science, both frequented by him with diligence and success. Some new poems are added, but to those of us who remember them when they first appeared the old are better, and the selection here given is of the best.

For nearly twenty years Lord de Tabley has refrained from verse, although he has contributed to literature. There is much in this volume which will delight the nature lover, showing as it does the accuracy which characterised the author when he was one of the leading British botanists of the "critical" school.



Those who look at the bookplate which, somewhat oddly, appears in this volume, may not understand the conspicuous presence of a bramble and a dock, but these were the two groups of plants to which Mr. Warren paid particular attention. Here is a specimen of the author's verse :--

“ THE OCEAN WOOD.

- “ Gray woods within whose silent shade,  
The ocean voice is dimly known,  
Where undisturbed the violets fade,  
And roses perish overblown.
- “ Calm rests the wave against the beach,  
Calm rocks the wave-bird on its tide,  
And calmer in their heaven than each,  
The gleaming bands of sunset ride.
- “ Soon will the ripple move again :  
Soon will the shorelark flute its song :  
And in sweet emphasis of pain  
The rock-dove mourn the cliffs along.
- “ Sweet shall resound the curlew's wail,  
New sails come sweeping up the sea,  
But all the ships that ever sail,  
Will bring no comfort home to me.”

Mr. Ricketts's illustrations, with beautiful printing and a dainty cover, add to the attractions of this attractive book.

In *Poems Old and New* (Edward Arnold, 6s.) Canon Bell, as his title implies, has gathered favourite flowers from his old gardens, and, having added some new ones, presents us with the bouquet. For the most part they are quiet, thoughtful, meditative verses, Wordsworthian in feeling and expression, many of them inspired by lakeland scenery. From this it will be gathered that many are infused with a religious spirit, and this, indeed, breathes throughout the volume.

Canon Bell is, like his great master, an accurate interpreter of Nature in her relation to human feeling—witness the following poem on “ Spring,” which somewhat lengthy abstract must stand in place of a further notice of the book :—

- “ The cuckoo calls across the woods,  
In pauses of the shower,  
The daffodils and mary-buds  
Are breaking into flower.
- “ The lark soars o'er the growing wheat,  
Close to the gates of day ;  
The blackbird whistles clear and sweet  
In yonder hawthorn spray.
- “ Sweet airs adown the purple hills  
Play through the fragrant grass,  
And whisper to the little rills  
That warble as they pass.
- “ Anemones all wet with dew  
Are trembling in the breeze,  
And from sweet bells and buds of blue  
Come murmurous songs of bees.
- “ The hyacinth now scents the lanes,  
The primrose stars the grove,  
And nesting birds in sweetest strains  
Pour out their hearts in love.

- “ My heart is happy as the bird  
That makes the copses ring ;  
It sings, although no voice is heard,  
Because it feels the spring.
- “ Hope pulses through the restless blood,  
New life is in the air,  
Now stirs the sap within the bud,  
And all the world is fair.
- “ O blessed spring ! When leaves unfold,  
When hills and daisied sod,  
Shine like the sacred bush of old,  
And burn with fires of God,
- “ And sorrows go, and griefs depart,  
Because the world is gay,  
And troubles fall from off the heart  
That feels the coming May.”

It is perhaps hardly right to include in this notice Dr. Alexander H. Japp's *Circle of the Year*—a volume “ printed simply with the view of giving pleasure to friends,” of which “ no quotation or public notice whatever is desired.” But many of the sonnets and other poems have appeared in periodicals, and it may be hoped that before very long Dr. Japp will see the wisdom of making this volume more readily accessible. We would, however, rather see a selection than the whole made public, for some of the verses are distinctly less meritorious than others, and some commemorate folk of whom the world knows little. But among the sonnets especially are many fine and beautiful things, such as the series on “ Great Poets,” from which we may cite the following on Tennyson :—

- “ The soft, enchanting light that, wavering, lays  
A charm in English garden in the noon,  
When all is still, and but the goldcrest's tune  
Is heard in softer bursts about the ways :  
And all is wrapped in sweet and dreamy haze  
Born of the warmth, that is a welcome boon—  
More welcome when the birds shall waken soon  
And shake the censers of the limes and bays.  
While round shall rise the sound of work and stir—  
The voice of busy men in field and grove,  
All mellowed by the distance ; and the bells  
Send out their chime that ever softly tells  
How life beats out for each ; and sweet is love—  
Sweet as the coo of dove in yonder fir.”

This sonnet, we gather, has not hitherto appeared in print. Here is a seasonable one which has already been published :—

“ AN OCTOBER MORNING.

- “ Black rooks are scolding on the elm-tops green  
That gently sway, though scarce a wind doth stir,  
A blackbird sends his note from yonder fir,  
And robins' breasts match well the haws they glean.  
A wood-dove passes near me, with a sheen  
Of silvery radiance, and a sudden whirr  
Of rapid wings ; the gauzy gossamer  
On dewy bush shines fair. Above, serene  
Clear depths of azure sky ; and far withdrawn  
Grey shreds of cloud that linger on the verge  
Of dim horizon, telling still of dawn,  
Edged with a snowy whiteness like the surge  
Of summer seas. The air is crisp with frost,  
And larks and linnets pipe for summer lost.”
-

## SELBORNIANA.

James Russell Lowell on Selborne.—The following extract from Lord Selborne's speech at Selborne on June 24th is of interest on account of the lines by Mr. Russell Lowell, which, we believe, have not hitherto been published : "The late James Russell Lowell, one of the most eminent literary men of his country, said in the beginning of his book, *My Study Windows*, that White had had a great deal of influence upon his love for and observation of nature, and added :—'One of the most delightful books in my father's library was White's *Natural History of Selborne*. For me it has rather gained in charm with years. I used to read it without knowing the great pleasure I found in it ; but as I grow older I begin to detect some of the simple expedients of this natural magic. Open the book where you will it takes you out of doors. In simplicity of taste and natural refinement it reminds one of Walton, and in tenderness of Cowper. . . . The book has also the delightfulness of absolute leisure. Mr. White seems never to have had any harder work to do than to study the habits of his feathered fellow creatures, and watch his peaches ripening ; his volumes are a journal of Adam in Paradise. It is positive rest only to look at that garden.' He (Lord Selborne) could not do better than conclude this reference to so distinguished an author by reading some lines written by him for his daughter, Lady Sophia Palmer, in 1880, when he was his guest—

"To visit Selborne had been sweet  
No matter what the rest might be ;  
But some good genius led my feet  
Thither in such fit company,  
As trebled all its charms for me.

"With them to seek his headstone grey,  
The lover true to birds and trees,  
Added strange sunshine to the day.  
My eye a scene familiar sees,  
And Home ! is whispered by the breeze.

"My English blood its right reclaims ;  
In vain the sea its barrier rears ;  
Our pride is fed by England's fame,  
Ours is her glorious length of years ;  
Ours, too, her triumphs and her tears."

"Timothy."—It may be of interest to many of your readers to know something of the whereabouts of such "mortal remains" as are left of "Timothy," Gilbert White's favourite tortoise. His shell, which has something very characteristic about it, came into the possession of Mrs. Christopher, Gilbert White's great-niece, and was by her presented, some forty years ago, to the British Museum. It is now among the tortoises in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, distinguished only by the name of the donor. The authorities have, however, promised to see whether they cannot affix some mark to call attention to its history. It is to be found at present in the tortoise and crocodile room, case 38, bottom back row, and is the fourth from the end of the case. The stand bears the inscription "*Testudo iberica*, Mrs. Christopher." Four or five of the scales are wanting, otherwise "Timothy" is in good condition. The shell is about ten inches in length, dark in colour and well marked. Its present position is a very inconvenient one, but if lovers of *Selborne* make a point of asking to see him, the courteous authorities will doubtless give "Timothy" a more honourable place.

*Lensdon Vicarage, Ashburton.*

GILBERT WHITE.

Gilbert White's House (pp. 155, 178).—On the occasion of the centenary celebration, by the kindness of F. W. Read, Esq., Mr. Frost, of Market Street, Alton, was allowed to have a stand for the sale of such photographs on the lawn of "The Wakes." They were priced from 6d. to 6s. No doubt he would send a selection on approval.

K. A. W.

**Good News from Russia.**—News comes from Russia of the intervention of the authorities on behalf of nightingales. The police of Kiew found some birdcatchers, who were on their way to Moscow with six hundred nightingales in cages. The birdcatchers were captured and fined, and their little victims were taken to the Botanic Gardens and released. It is said they rose in the air in song, which was responded to by the other birds around.—*Athenæum*, July 1.

### NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Bird Tapping at Window** (pp. 96, 117).—I noticed this with regard to one of the beautiful little Australian robins (*Petroica multicolor*). He was evidently incensed at seeing his own reflection in one of the windows of my cottage, and forthwith laid siege to the offending pane with the utmost vigour and tenacity. His perseverance was truly admirable. Day after day (Sundays not excepted), and week after week, he was there, flying at the pane and pecking it with all his pigmy strength, until his poor little beak was quite blunted. We repeatedly drove him away, hurling chips and bits of mould and other harmless missiles after him, but it was of no avail. Several times he came inside, probably with a view to attacking the foe in the rear. On these occasions he would be captured, petted a little, and then put out at the front door, but in a few seconds he was again at the back window, attacking it with redoubled fury. At length the dauntless little warrior succumbed to the inevitable, viz., a charmer of his own species, who converted him to a more amiable frame of mind, and we trust they “lived happy ever afterwards,” for he troubled us no more.

*Waratah, Mt. Bischoff, Tasmania.*

HAMILTON STUART DOVE.

**Leaf-cutter Bee.**—The “Bees’ Nests” mentioned on page 158 were undoubtedly the leaf-constructed cells of this bee. I have in my garden a rose bush of the kind known as the “Seven Sisters,” and this has during May and June of the present year been greatly frequented by the Leaf-cutters. It is marvellous to see these little insects cutting out their ovals and circles from the rose leaves. They also resort to the laburnum and even the lilac for this purpose. The majority of the bees had their burrows in the mortar covering the top of the garden wall. One individual, however, took a fancy to a large flower pot, in which a Christmas rose and some lilies of the valley were growing, and having burrowed a short distance below the surface was observed soon after conveying pieces of rose leaves into the burrow. Five of the ingeniously constructed cells were afterwards taken from the pot. A name which I once heard applied to this bee, viz., “Scissor bee,” struck me as being by no means inappropriate. A good popular work on British wild bees is still a desideratum.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

W. H. WARNER.

**Dog and Kittens.**—A lady living at Dartford has a female dog and also a she cat. Not long ago the cat kitted, and a day or two after this the dog, observing the kittens, carried them off, one by one, into her own bed, washing and nursing them as though they were her own pups. The strangest part of the story is that the dog had not then or recently pupped. She had had several litters before, and no doubt her maternal instincts were strong. The *supposed*, but quite *unproved* natural antipathy between dog and cat was here quite at fault. The cat, however, asserted her rights, and, watching her opportunity, carried the kittens all back again by degrees. But the rival mothers did not fight about it.

ROBERT SIMPSON.

**A September Horse-chestnut.**—I think it may interest your readers to know that there is a Horse-chestnut tree with fresh flowers and some very fresh green leaves in a lane leading from Campden Hill Road towards Holland House. The tree has otherwise the colouring of late autumn, and has lost most of its leaves.

LOUISA E. ROSS.

**The Dogwood.**—*Apròpos* to the second blossoming of the pear tree recorded on p. 179, I should like to mention that during a ramble in this neighbourhood on August 29th I came upon several bushes of the dogwood in bloom, the

blossoms on the said bushes being accompanied with bunches of the purplish black berries. That semi-wild shrub the Tea-tree (*Lycium barbarum*) has also blossomed twice here during the very remarkable season we are now experiencing.

Fyfield, Abingdon.

W. H. WARNER.

**Butterflies and Moths.**—For the last month we have noticed a most extraordinary number of Red Admirals in our garden. They settle and feed on the rotten apples, four on one apple sometimes, and we have seen fourteen or fifteen all grouped together. They seem quite tame and hardly ever fly away, and will sometimes settle on our clothes. I wonder if others have noticed an extra quantity of these butterflies in other parts. We have also been visited by the Humming-bird Hawk-moth, which we have not noticed here before. Two of these moths appear every day, and with their long proboscis suck out the honey from every bloom of geranium and lobelia; they allow us to stand quite close to them, and while suspended over the flowers we can distinctly hear the humming noise made by the rapid vibration of their wings.

Oakley, Brill.

A. M. G.

**Note on Aphides.**—One evening last June I was walking about my garden when I noticed a flourishing nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*) which was plainly enough a plant in the wrong place, viz., among my potatoes. I was about to pull it up, but forbore because I saw the tender top part was covered with green aphides and that these were in a commotion. This was noteworthy, for aphides are not celebrated for devotion to exercise, saving suctorial.

So I bent down for closer study. They numbered roughly about a hundred; a few were winged. But they were perfectly normally motionless, and, thinking my eyes had deceived me, the nipplewort and its colony were again all but doomed. But once more the strange commotion took place and again I took fresh observations. In a short time *one* of the aphides gave a violent wriggle, and incontinently the whole body of them violently wriggled. They grasped the plant firmly with their legs and swung their little abdomens vehemently in horizontal plane for the space of about half a second. This occurred periodically with interspaces of rest of eight or ten seconds—one aphid (but not always the *same* one) apparently signalling and the others immediately obeying the signal.

I tried to persuade myself that the winged aphides were captains or overlookers of these gymnastics, or that other noticeably large ones were such, but further study failed to confirm this theory. The signal, command, example, or whatever it was, seemed to be given by any one, but was always promptly obeyed or followed. I watched this, to me, curious phenomenon for a few minutes, and was then called away and was not able to repeat my observations.

Swanton Morley, East Dereham.

J. LEWTON BRAIN.

**Extraordinary Behaviour of a Cat.**—As I was sitting on the lawn one day with my cat—a fine Persian—on my lap, I was startled by her making a frantic rush into the nearest bushes, and looking up I saw that the butcher had just entered the garden. On being questioned, he told me that this particular cat always behaved in this manner on his appearance, although he had never done anything to frighten it, and the other cats took no notice of him. Oddly enough, a few days after this occurrence, the Persian's kitten was with me, and acted in precisely the same manner, except that she clung round my neck, hiding her face in abject terror. Can any of your readers quote any similar case as having come under their notice, and if so, will they explain it?

Mountfield Vicarage, Hawkhurst.

E. H. CROFTS.

**Poisoning of Birds.**—A few days ago I heard of a curious case of poisoning of pet birds. A piece of rose bush, which was covered with aphid, was given to a bullfinch, and it died shortly after. Some was afterwards given to a linnæus—as it was not thought that that was the cause of the bullfinch's death—with the same result. The birds picked the flies off quite clean, and seemed very fond of them, and as both had been brought up by hand from the nest, it was thought that the birds, when wild, do not eat them. I should be glad to know if any reader has noticed a similar occurrence.

A. J. P.

## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

Up to September 23rd the Secretary has received £16 4s. 6d. towards the £70 owing to the Hon. Treasurer. Those who have sent donations since the last notice are Miss A. Fry, Mr. J. P. Kitchin, Mr. W. B. Roberts, Mrs. Farrow, Mr. T. J. Smith, Mrs. Morton-Sumner, Mrs. C. T. Ticehurst, the Earl of Stamford, Mrs. Turle, Mrs. Needham, K. A. W. (per Mrs. Myles), Rev. E. A. Tickell, Mr. R. A. Jones, Mr. H. Cecil, Rev. F. M. Millard, Miss C. M. Symonds, Dr. J. C. Thorowgood, Mr. C. A. Gisborne, Mr. E. Greenhough, Miss Horne, A. E. F., Mrs. Hyde Clarke, Mr. W. Whitwell, Mr. F. A. Hort and Mr. J. E. Cooper. Mrs. Simeon's name was erroneously printed last month as Simcox.

A. J. WESTERN, *Secretary*.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. G.—*Reseda fruticulosa*.

W. B. P.—Mr. C. O. Waterhouse has kindly named the galls as follows:—“All galls of Hymenoptera of the family *Cynipide*: (1) Artichoke gall of *Andricus gemma*; (2) Cherry gall of *Dryophanta folii*; (3) Silk button-gall of *Neuroterus numismalis*; (4) Spangle gall of *Neuroterus lenticularis*.”

H. G.—We do not think the experiment was Selbornian in spirit.

Miss A.—Avens (*Geum urbanum*).

W. W.—Mr. C. O. Waterhouse says: “A longicorn beetle; I cannot say more than that.”

P. P.—The lines are not quite suited to our pages.

E. B.—*Mimulus luteus*, a native of North America, has been naturalised for many years in several places in Great Britain and Ireland, and finds a place in our recent floras.

M. G.—The viviparous form is not uncommon.

F. S.—Hooker's *Student's Flora* (Macmillan, 10s. 6d.) is the best, or the illustrated edition of Bentham's *Handbook* (Lovell Reeve), but both presuppose a knowledge of ordinary botanical terms.

J. S. H.—You will find books on footpaths recommended in NATURE NOTES for March, p. 51, and May, p. 89. Please note that we cannot undertake to reply privately to questions.

L. D. L.—Yes, it is a form of *Saxifraga hypnoides*.

K. R.—It was no doubt the humming-bird hawkmoth, which has been seen this summer in many places. You will find a description and figure in the Rev. J. G. Wood's *Insects at Home*, p. 422, plate xiv.

Miss D. W.—Mr. George Murray says:—“The fungus is *Phallus impudicus*, the ‘stinkhorn,’ a great pest in gardens where it grows, especially among bushes and in hedges. Digging up the thread-like mycelium may do some good, but I have never heard of a successful case of extirpation. This nuisance is in some cases so great that people have to leave their houses at this time of year.” It is figured at p. 190.

M. L. S.—The Turkey Oak (*Quercus Cerris*).

A. H.—Mr. Antony Gepp, who has kindly examined the specimen, says “It is an immature moss, growing upon a bright green ‘protonema’ (a felt-work of fine filaments). It is the latter which presents the luminous appearance.”

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., not later than the 15th of the month. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business should not be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

# Mature Notes:

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

No. 47.

NOVEMBER, 1893.

VOL. IV.

---

### NOTES ON A NUTHATCH.



HIS garden is full of a great number and variety of birds, all more or less *protégés* of mine in the winter time; but I have never seen more than one pair of nuthatches, and that only within the last twelve months. The first time I became aware of the presence of a nuthatch in the garden was last summer. It happened in this wise.

Last year, when the strawberries were ripe, a squirrel made his appearance. Biding his time in a fir tree till he thought he was not observed, he used to descend into the strawberry bed, take a strawberry, and return again to his favourite tree to enjoy it; this he would do several times in succession, whilst I watched him unobserved. Thinking he must be very hungry to devour fruit in this eager way, I took compassion on him, and used to place some nuts daily at the foot of his own particular tree. These he soon found out, and took one by one up to the top of the fir tree to eat, in the same manner as he had taken the strawberries. He came to the garden every day for the nuts (not forgetting the strawberries as well) throughout the summer and autumn, but late in the latter season he disappeared, finding, doubtless, that there were then more nuts to be got in the woods. I continued, however, to put some nuts for him in the old place in case of his re-appearance, and though I never saw anything of the squirrel, the nuts disappeared each day, though there was no sign of his having been there, as there was not a single nutshell to be seen anywhere beneath the tree.

At first I thought it must be a mouse who took the nuts, but at last one day the mystery was cleared up, for I suddenly observed a nuthatch fly up to the roof of the house with a nut in his beak. This he struck deliberately, several times in succession, against the masonry of the chimney, until he had no doubt suf-

ficiently cracked it, when he flew away. After this he made his appearance on the lawn, and took some nuts that I had placed there for him, and gradually—by placing the nuts nearer and nearer to the house—I induced him to come up quite close to the windows for them. He one day appeared accompanied by another nuthatch, and the pair used to amuse us by carrying off the nuts, one after the other, as fast as they could fly away with them, returning for the next before they could possibly have had time to crack them, so they must have stored them up somewhere, to crack and eat at a more convenient season. Though the plumage of the pair seemed precisely similar, and I could detect no difference in appearance between the cock and hen, I always knew my first friend, because he was so much bolder than his mate, and when the winter set in he joined the other birds who came to be fed beneath the windows.

When there were no nuts left he did not disdain crumbs, and he was the only one of the small birds who ventured to drive away the sparrows. He used to rush at them sometimes in the most vicious way, while these usually only too bold birds would disperse in all directions before the onslaught of his terrible-looking beak. Then, left master of the situation, he would pick up three or four crumbs in his beak, and fly off with them, evidently to feed his more retiring companion who was in waiting not far off.

At last, it gradually dawned upon the nuthatch mind that the nuts and crumbs did not come there by accident, and that I had something to do with the matter. As soon as he had grasped this fact he threw away the last remnants of caution, and boldly took up his position every morning on a stick (intended as a support for a carnation) standing up in the flower-bed in front of the window, whilst I watched him therefrom. Then he used to utter a quaint little note, to draw my attention to the fact that he was there, and wait patiently till I put out the nuts for him, which he seized upon at once, carrying them off one by one; nor would he ever touch a single crumb as long as there was the least hope of getting any more nuts from me. So tame did he become that he used to catch them as I threw them out from the open window. At last, thinking what a long time it must take him to crack them, I used to crack them for him, throwing out the kernels only. This seemed to please him immensely; he instantly realised how much work this would save him, for he would always select the kernels in preference to any uncracked nuts, and on one occasion, when I had thrown out a nut without having cracked it, he would not touch it until he had satisfied himself that there was not a kernel to be found anywhere. As soon as he had finished carrying off his daily allowance of nuts, he would resort to the crumbs, but not before he had remained some little time on his stick, uttering the most discontented little cries, and looking at me with quite pathetic eyes, in the hope of inducing me to give him more nuts first.



In the spring both he and his mate disappeared. I suppose they were too busy building their nest to have time for such trifles as nuts, and I have not seen the hen since, though my old friend, the cock bird, suddenly appeared one day not long ago, when I was sitting in the garden. He perched on an apple tree, uttering his usual plaintive note, evidently to attract my attention, for he waited whilst I went into the house to fetch some nuts, and when I returned and placed them on the ground near me, he descended and carried off about a dozen kernels; whether he fed his mate or his young ones with them I do not know, but he could not possibly have eaten them all himself in so short a time. Since then he has again disappeared, but I daresay as soon as he has finished the work of rearing his young he will once more remember that nuts are sweet.

B. DOWNING.

*Sutton Waldron Rectory,  
Blandford, Dorset.*

THOMAS BARKER'S NOTE-BOOKS.



THOMAS BARKER, Gilbert White's brother-in-law, was a kindred spirit to the great naturalist, and a man of considerable powers of observation, some of his experiments seeming to anticipate later methods of research. He was born in 1722, his father being Samuel Barker, of Lyndon Hall, Rutlandshire, and his mother, Sarah Whiston, a daughter of the learned translator of *Josephus*. Being the eldest son, he succeeded his father at Lyndon, and resided there most of his life. He had only one son, Samuel, and the family is now extinct in the male line. Two of his note-books and two of his mother's are in the possession of my father, the Rev. F. Gilbert White, of Lensdon Vicarage, and I propose to give some short account of them.

Many of Thomas Barker's notes formed the groundwork of papers contributed by him to the *Philosophical Transactions*. Among those unpublished is a naturalist's calendar, which he seems to have begun as a mere boy, and continued to within two years of his death in 1802. A few extracts from various years will show its character, and afford points of comparison with Gilbert White's:—

- “ 1736 [THE FIRST ENTRY].
- |             |                             |       |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| “ March 28. | First swallows seen.        | S.    |
| „ 31.       | A flock of wild geese flew. | G. W. |
| April 6.    | The cuckow heard.           | G. W. |
| „ 8.        | The first martin observed.  | S.    |
| Mid.        | Cowslips flowered.          |       |
| „           | Oaks put out, &c.”          |       |

“ 1739.

“ In the spring, when the swallows, martins and swifts came, swifts were very common, who used to fly about later in the evening than either swallows or martins, and about May there were more swallows to be seen than martins. But now I do not know there has been a swift seen since June, and there are far more martins than swallows. Many swallows, which I reckon are young ones, have not now the two long feathers in their tails. I have not often seen martins so far from home as swallows.”

“ 1746.

“ April 10. First wasp seen. T.  
 „ 12. First swallows seen. S.  
 „ 21. The cuckow heard.  
 „ 22. First swift seen. S.  
 „ End. Plums flower'd, &c.”

“ 1756.

“ April 27. First swifts seen, but did not stay. I suspect these swifts were going to settle in some other place, for though they flew backward and forward as after flies, yet they kept in general moving off toward N.N.W., continued very high in the air, and I have seen none since by this time, May 1st.”

“ 1801 [LAST ENTRY].

“ April 19. First swallow.  
 „ 26. Nightingale heard.  
 „ 26. Cuckow heard.  
 May 1. Martins, but very few.  
 „ 12. Swifts.  
 Aug. beg. Swifts went away.  
 Oct. 4. Swallows went away.  
 The martins have been gone some time.”

The following notes are taken from various parts of Thomas Barker's note books:—

“ May 5, 1750. The yew tree in Selborne churchyard—  
 Girth at the root ... .. 18 ft. 11 in.  
 „ middle of body ... .. 22 ft. 6 in.  
 „ height of body ... .. 6 ft.  
 Topmost bough about... .. 35 ft.”

“ Aug. 7, 1753. The yew in Priors Dean Churchyard—  
 Girth at the middle of the body ... 21 ft. 11 in.  
 „ height of the body ... .. 7 ft.  
 Topmost bough about ... .. 45 ft.

“ The chesnut tree at Mardford—  
 Girth ... 17 ft. 3 in., afterward ... 17 ft. 10 in.

“ It is so irregular, it is difficult to measure exactly. Some loads of wood (perhaps 4) were blown off the top by the storm in 1703.”

“ July 24, 1747. A little before ten at night, a white stream—probably of a northern light—reached almost from one horizon to the other, from W. by S. to E. by N., passing over the neck and head of the Serpent, and just S. of the bright star in the Harp,

over Andromeda's head, and as low as Aries, but somewhat south of it. This remarkable stream had no considerable motion, but seemed to move rather towards the south, and by ten of the clock was much faded and shorter at the east end, and was quite gone before 10.25."

"Feb. 19, 1745-6. After a sharp frost of considerable length, when the ice and thawed snow had covered the water four and a-half or five inches thick, in the thaw when it was wasted to an inch or less, I pulled a piece of ice out of the water, and was surprised—as I drew it out—to see on the lower side, which had been so long quite covered with water, a spider alive and brisk, seeming to have lived under water (as they say swallows do under the sea in Sweden), for it plainly came up out of the water with the ice; nor could I see how it could get into that place since the frost."

"In 1767 I twice saw a spider fascinating a fly. The spider stood underneath its web, and a very little fly of the large winged kind, fluttered about above it, did not appear to be at all entangled, but flew about from place to place of the web, the spider still following, and placing itself just under it. The fly, though unconfined, would not leave the web, but still continued to fly about it, and by degrees seemed to affect to hover just over the spider; and at length laid itself down on the web, and suffered the spider to come and seize it without a struggle, which it did, and in a little time drew it through the web and carried it off."

Among his longer and more elaborate notes are some experiments on bees, which read curiously like an anticipation of those of Sir J. Lubbock; some elaborate experiments on the growth of mint; and notes on various plants and seeds.

Enough has perhaps been said to show that Thomas Barker was not unworthy of his close connection with his more illustrious brother-in-law, whom he survived by nine years. Thomas Barker came of a well-known Rutlandshire family, and it is to be hoped that some day the ancient "Barker Papers," in the possession of the Rev. Edmund Field—which have already been catalogued and described by the Government—will be published.

GILBERT WHITE.

**Generosity in a Dog.**—A striking instance of this is to be found in the behaviour of our beautiful black retriever. A thin, starved-looking dog who lives opposite our house, comes regularly every day to "Ashley's" kennel, and he saves daily half his food for his visitor, watching him with a complacent countenance whilst he devours it. One week in consequence of our absence from home, "Ashley" ran short of food, but still he saved part of his meagre pittance for his humble friend. Besides this, all the cats about the place come and feed out of "Ashley's" dish whenever they choose, and he freely lets them do so, not because he has more than he can eat, as witness his conduct during our absence, but from a natural unselfishness and kindness of heart.

G. S. HENSLOW.

## A COUPLE OF SPIDERS.



EVERY year there come to my garden one or two spiders with backs striped yellow and black like zebras; they make large geometrical webs and squat in the middle of them. Their body is somewhat larger than my thumb-nail, and, of course, they have the regulation number of legs and so forth. Often when passing through underwoods I have intensely resented having my face inscribed like an ellipse in one of these circular webs with my nose accurately pointing out the common centre where the owner of the circle presided in prior possession. I used once to think that I ran considerable risk in these encounters; the glare of the keen little eyes looked dangerous, and the formidable jaws promised poison. Moreover, I had seen them in Italy so large that they thought nothing of spinning up a locust or even a mantis four inches in length, so I was afraid they might look upon my nose merely as a ordinary meal, at any rate as far as the first bite was concerned. Never was there a greater mistake. I suppose they can see out of those bright eyes of theirs, but I never could get any proof of the fact; they contemplate the outer world with the unruffled demeanour of a philosopher, and nothing I could do before their eyes ever disturbed their serenity. They seem to judge of all things in heaven and earth by the feel of their web, and the nose of a human mortal is generally advanced with a force too great for negotiation. When they are not in the centre of their web, I have held flies under their very noses in vain. Flies may walk between their legs and under their jaws with perfect security; without a web they do not attack anything, and in their web they follow the rule of hitting people of their own size or under. Hence, beyond the unpleasantness of the feel of a spider's web, nothing need be apprehended from walking into the spider's parlour.

I found the ways of my eight-legged friends so entertaining in the garden that I determined to bring them under closer observation in my own room. I provided myself with a milliner's box having a glass top, bored air-holes in the side, and imprisoned my first captive, much to her disgust. She sulked at first for a day or two, evidently not expecting ever to find food in so forsaken a hole; but when my captive flies began to buzz against her in their attempts to escape, she determined to make the best of a bad job. It was a very irregular circle she inscribed in the parallelogram, but, like *Mercutio's* wound, it served. Studying the habits of the flies, I discovered where the bluebottles slept at night, and thenceforward my spider lived in bloated prosperity. I am bound to say, however, that her experience of plenty did not convince her of my wisdom in selecting a site for a web, for one day I inadvertently left the box open and she at once abandoned the house of bondage and plenty, leaving me an uneasy sense of possibly finding her under

my pillow. After a couple of days I found her with a perfectly correct web in a corner of my library, where she was not likely to meet with more than two flies a year. She was thin, and doubtless hankered after the flesh-pots of Egypt, though determined not to return to bondage.

Before this, I had discovered a radical defect in my régime. I had never seen spiders drinking, and must have had some vague idea of the blood of their victims sufficing. Fortunately for my captive I was always trying some experiment or other on her; she did not acknowledge it, but this curiosity was a blessing in disguise. At any rate, one day I squirted a little jet of water at her from a pipette, just to see what she would do. To my surprise she lowered herself down to the pool on the floor of the box and gulped it up with spasmodic eagerness. I apologised handsomely for my ignorant neglect, and thenceforward she had a good suck at the pipette every day; never, however, without trying to spin up for good and all the source of the beneficent supply. She never learned to discriminate between movement and life, and to her dying day was always ready with a fruitless web for glass pipettes and buzzing tuning-forks. I suppose in their native state the beads of dew and rain on their webs give them enough to drink; but even there they never say no to a friendly invitation to "take a drop" from the end of a straw. I often amused myself by putting strange creatures into her web, such as ants and garden-bugs. In Italy I have seen the most interesting encounters between ants and spiders, not always to the disadvantage of the former. For instance, one large black ant whom I had introduced into a web got so enraged that he walked literally into the spider's parlour, turned out the occupant, and dragged out his whole store of flies, some four or five in number. I never could find an ant big enough to incommode my pet, but snails were a great puzzle both to her and to themselves. The fluid ejected by a distressed garden-bug has a peculiar chemical effect upon the web in which he is being spun up, and moreover is decidedly unpleasant in taste to the spider, as the latter makes evident by going to the wall and rubbing on it her widely open jaws. The same effect is produced by the innocent looking aphid. It is a curious illustration of the proverb, "One man's meat is another man's poison," that the milch-cow of the ant should be the bugbear of the spider.

Before very long my spider lost her appetite and grew to an unwieldy size; the web also lost its stickiness. I knew that these signs meant an impending nest, and had great hopes of a brood of pets to come. Sure enough the nest appeared one morning in all its completeness, a marvellous work for a single night; I had expected her to take a week over the building of it. I pulled one to pieces and found that, inside the rough outer web, the compact cone of eggs was wrapped up in a coating formed by a continuous silky thread apparently about a hundred yards in length. It is an exquisitely soft material, and bore unwinding to its full

extent without once breaking. I began to think I had hopped on a grand commercial discovery, and, indeed, considering how freely my pets provided me with nests, I am not at all sure that something could not be made out of it yet. However, the first lot of eggs, like all the rest, had not been impregnated and came to nought. I never found a male of the species, though I had great hopes of one. It was somewhat smaller in body than mine and much more lively, so it was caught and introduced into the same box with the other. There was quarrelling and fighting enough to set up half a dozen families, and knowing that female spiders were wont to bully their lords my hopes rose; but when one fine morning I discovered *two nests* in the box, I had to put up with my disappointment. Space being so limited, these two had to be content with a common web, and it was the funniest thing in the world to watch them fight for a half-way fly. Spinoza was once thought very silly for laughing himself sick over a tournament of spiders, but I must confess to being wholly at one with that philosopher on that point at least. They did not appear ever to hurt each other much until one tragic day. They had been for some time without food and were ravenous. A fly got into the web between them and both charged upon it. After the usual skirmish the smaller one was driven back, and retired in high dudgeon to nurse her wrath. She waited until her successful rival was completely absorbed in the juicy meal, and then suddenly took a gigantic resolve. This was nothing less than to spin up both eater and eaten together in one web. It was a trick they had often tried on each other before, but it was always a case of diamond cut diamond. This time, however, the larger one was so intent on her meal that she did not notice the spinning until she was fairly in the toils; even then I thought she would escape as she had always done; but the little one, redoubling her efforts when she felt her advantage, had her completely tied up in a twinkling, and then a scientific bite or two in the right place finished the tragedy before I had time to interfere. The proud victor made huge efforts to devour this companion of hers, half as large again as herself, but could not manage more than her own bulk.

Whether it was in consequence of this cannibalism or not, I cannot say, but the survivor never throve after it. She first became listless, and then her legs began to drop off one by one. With four legs left she could still spin up a fly, and that to her was the main end of existence. When, however, she was reduced to three, it was her minimum for a steady hold on the web. I was beginning to wonder what she would do if she dwindled down to a pendulum on two hooks, when she solved the problem by ceasing to struggle against fate. On the whole they lived rather longer under my care than they would have done in the garden, and I think they were fairly happy, in spite of my numerous experiments. They were great fun while they lasted, but when they died the spider season was over, and the next year other

hobbies took their place. They have left many questions about themselves unanswered, but they have caused me to feel a deeper permanent interest in all their tribe. Spiders to me are lovely yet:

I only have relinquished one delight,  
To live beneath their more habitual sway.

Cape Town.

F. C. KOLBE.

## SOME BIRD BOOKS.

*Ornithology in Relation to Horticulture and Agriculture*, by various writers. Edited by John Watson. (W. H. Allen & Co.) 4s. 6d. I heartily recommend this little book to the attention of Selbornians, and I am confident that, were he alive now, Gilbert White would do the same. Anyone who reads his book carefully will find that he had a strong conviction that the study of natural history should be turned to practical account. The Selborne Society cannot do better work than in encouraging and organising the collection of facts calculated to throw light on such questions as are discussed in this book; it cannot live and prosper on sentiment alone. It braces the energies of the naturalist, and acts on him like a wholesome tonic, if he can feel that he is gathering some knowledge which is not only interesting to himself but likely to be useful to his country. Facts are what is wanted—actual recorded facts bearing on the amount of good or harm done by birds and other animals to the crops which are the food of man.

The book before us is entirely devoted to the food of certain species of birds, and in that large field of observation it can only be reckoned as a beginning. The subject is a very difficult one, and, as Mr. Wood showed us in *The Farmer's Friends and Foes*, an ornithologist who would handle it properly should also be an entomologist. But everyone may observe and collect facts for himself, even without any extensive knowledge to start with. He should not attempt to reason on his facts, or he will be sure to arrive at misleading conclusions, but after some time they may be submitted to a recognised authority, and will be sure to be found useful. He will find this volume a convenient guide to start with; at the same time it will show him that facts must be more widely and *systematically* collected if they are to lead to safe conclusions. I notice, for example, that in the case against the sparrow, one or two writers do not seem to take into account the difference between various parts of the country in respect of the density of the sparrow population. I am far from being an advocate of the sparrow, but I am pretty sure that any wholesale destruction of the species throughout the country would be a misfortune. I might, by the way, suggest to Selbornians one very simple question on which they might bring a large amount of evidence to bear with very little trouble. During future summers let every member observe and record the number of martins that may within his observation be evicted from their nests by sparrows; in this way we should gather some valuable facts together.

I will not go in detail into the chapters of the book; as they are by several hands, and of very different value, it would be a little invidious to do so. I will content myself with the remark that the paper on the Rook by Mr. O. V. Aplin is a model of what such a paper should be, viz., at once readable and interesting, and well stored with facts. Mr. Aplin does not waste words, nor indulge in shallow sentiment, but in the true spirit of Gilbert White he likes to make sure of his facts, and to record them in a straightforward and simple way.

*Birds in a Village*, by W. H. Hudson. (Chapman & Hall.) 7s. 6d. Mr. Hudson, who has already delighted naturalists, both professional and amateur, with two books on the birds and beasts of South America, has now collected some papers about the inhabitants of English fields and lanes. They are written in a charming style, are full of thought and fancy as well as fact, and are none the less worth reading because their writer does not seem to be quite as much at home here as on the Pampas. The first and longest, which gives the volume its name, is a

very delightful study of the birds in all their relations to human beings, whether friends or enemies. No one can read this paper without feeling that Mr. Hudson has a streak of poetry in him, and that the framing of a prose sentence is to him what the making of a verse is to a poet. It is rarely that we find the feeling of an artist so admirably combined with observation and knowledge.

The next paper, "Exotic Birds for Britain," will perhaps appeal more forcibly to those who believe our most beautiful species to be fast becoming extinct, than it does to one who, like myself, is unable to accept this doctrine. Seeing no real reason to believe that kingfisher, goldfinch, or woodpecker is likely to fail us (see p. 97), I should hesitate to welcome exotic birds whose conduct in this country we could not foretell with certainty. Then follow several short chapters, of which the two best are, to my thinking, "Chanticleer" and "In a Garden." I will not anticipate the reader's pleasure by telling him what these are all about. The book is one to be bought, for it will be found possible to read it many times over with pleasure and profit. I will only add that I am glad to see from his last paper that Mr. Hudson knows and admires Courthope's "Paradise of Birds," a poem which every true Selbournian should know almost by heart.

*A Dictionary of Birds*, by Professor Newton (and other writers). Parts 1 and 2. We have here the first half of an expansion of the series of articles contributed by Professor Newton to the last edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. When completed, the work will cover the whole vast field of ornithology, and will probably be the most useful and accurate compendium of the subject in any language. I am quite incompetent to criticise it, and NATURE NOTES is not the periodical for such a criticism, but I am certain that it should be on the shelves of every library of natural history, and that every ornithologist should have it on his own shelf if he can afford it. Fortunately Messrs. Black have been able to publish this immense mass of information at a very cheap price. There are to be four parts, each costing 7s. 6d. Everyone who buys it will be grateful to the veteran zoologist and his fellow-workers, both English and American, for articles written so lucidly that even the most difficult subjects are brought within the reach of an amateur's intelligence—if, that is, he be willing to forego for a while the ordinary "book about birds," and brace his mind with a little real study.

*The Birds of London*, by H. K. Swann. (Swan, Sonnenschein & Co.) 2s. This seems to be a useful little handbook of the birds that may be looked for in London and the neighbourhood. It is largely based on Mr. Harting's excellent *Birds of Middlesex*, which will soon be thirty years old, and I think it can hardly be said that it shows any great advance on that valuable work. It is, however, a convenient little volume, and can be carried easily in the pocket by anyone who rambles about London suburbs in search of birds.

W. WARDE FOWLER.

## GILBERT WHITE'S SELBORNE PLANTS.



UNDER this heading I have published in the *Journal of Botany* for October a list of the plants observed by White at Selborne. That periodical is seen by very few of the readers of NATURE NOTES, and as this should be regarded as the home of all information connected with White, I reprint here the introductory matter which tells, among other things, how the interesting information came into my hands. For the complete list the *Journal of Botany* must be consulted.

"Among the omissions from our *Bibliographical List of British and Irish Botanists*, none is less justifiable than that of Gilbert White. Yet at the time we did not think his Letter xli. to Barrington, dealing with the 'more rare' plants of Selborne,



entitled his name to inclusion, although we certainly admitted other names who had no greater claim than such a letter gives. We had not then noted that Mr. Bell, in his edition of *Selborne* (ii. 369, 1877), said that he possessed a catalogue of Selborne plants 'in the handwriting of Gilbert White,' which he embodied in the list which he gave.

"By the kindness of the Rev. Canon Gordon, its fortunate possessor, I have lately seen a copy of Hudson's *Flora Anglica* (1762), which shows conclusively that White was well acquainted with the plants of his locality. The book has White's autograph on the flyleaf, with the date 1765. Facing the title is the following note in White's hand: 'The plants marked thus  $\times$  have all been found within the parish of Selborne in the county of Southampton.' He evidently used the book a great deal, for there are several corrections of references, figures, &c., by him, which are not found in the printed list of errata. But the only MS. notes other than these are the words 'the candle rush' added to *Juncus conglomeratus* (p. 129); an entry of *Blackstonia* on p. 88—'Gentiana corollis octofidis, foliis perfoliatis: vid. p. 146'; and the addition to *Prunus Avium* of the names 'vulg. mery: Fr. merise.'

"The volume afterwards came into the possession of 'T. Rutger, Clowance,' who employed it as White had done, indicating the plants he found by a circle. There is no entry of this in the book, but Miss Agnes Martelli infers it from the fact that *Erica ciliaris* is among the plants thus marked, and I find further confirmation in the marking of the 'naked oats or pilcorn,' which are characteristic of Cornish cultivation. Rutger, as a later entry testifies, presented the book to Mr. Philip Beal in 1846. It subsequently came into the hands of a Plymouth bookseller, from whom Canon Gordon purchased it shortly after the White centenary on June 24th.

"The enumeration contains 439 species, and is not therefore exhaustive, although it must be remembered that in 1762 our list was much less extensive than it is at present. One additional plant—*Vaccinium Oxycoccus*—I find in Mr. Bell's list already referred to on White's authority, raising the number to 440."

JAMES BRITTEN.

**Dog and Moorhen.**—A year or two ago I witnessed a strange and curious sight at my country home by the side of the Thames. In the garden, on the lawn, I saw my brother's little dog, a fox terrier, with all the sporting propensities of its race, playing with a moorhen! Sometimes she playfully caught a wing, sometimes a leg, in her mouth, sometime she pawed it and jumped towards it; the moorhen seemed to be enjoying itself thoroughly, flying towards the dog and pecking at her. All this was genuine play without the shadow of a doubt; for ten minutes the game went on, and it might have continued longer, only we called the dog away, and then the moorhen flew off and was no more seen. Have any of your readers ever experienced anything so remarkable?

C. R.

## FEATHERED WOMEN.

[Overcrowded as our pages are, we cannot omit this important letter, which Mr. W. H. Hudson communicated to the *Times* of October 17th, and to which that paper devotes an admirable leader which we shall, if possible, reprint next month. forcible as the words of both are, they are in no way exaggerated; and it is impossible not to feel disheartened and almost hopeless when one sees how little the women of the age are affected either by sentiment or sarcasm.—Ed. *N.V.*]

IN a letter from Professor Newton denouncing the bird-wearing fashion, which appeared in your columns seventeen years ago (January 28, 1876), the writer predicted that the continuance of such a mode would inevitably cause the extinction of many of the most beautiful species on the earth. We know that it has continued down to the present time, in spite of prophecies and protests, of ridicule, of all that individuals and associations have been able to do to arrest it. Many of those who have been trying to save the birds have doubtless ere now experienced the feeling which caused Ruskin to throw down his pen in anger and sickness of heart when engaged in writing *Love's Meinie*. Small wonder that he could not proceed with such a work when he looked about him to see all women, even his worshippers, decorated with the remains of slaughtered songsters! I have not the courage to quote here the Cambridge professor's words, which you, sir, printed, but his prophecy has not proved a false one. In the American ornithological journals we read the lists of bright-plumaged species which are on the verge of extinction; and besides these, which were lately abundant but are now represented by a few scattered and harried individuals, there are many others fast becoming so rare that they may be considered as practically lost to the avi-fauna of that region. All the world over, where birds have a bright-coloured plumage, the same destructive war has been waged, with a result that may be imagined when we remember that for twenty-five years the fashion has been universal, and that it was estimated nine years ago that twenty to thirty millions of birds were annually imported by this country to supply the home demand.

Since last autumn many of us have been rejoicing in the belief that bird-wearing was at last going out. So marked was the decline that many of the best millinery establishments at the West End and in country towns ceased to supply birds. Another sign of the falling off was the very low prices at which even the finest examples were offered at drapers' and milliners' shops in the poorer and unfashionable districts of London. In some of the thoroughfares where Saturday evening markets are held, I saw trays and baskets full of tropical birds exposed—tanagers, orioles, kingfishers, trogons, humming birds, &c.—from twopence to fourpence-halfpenny per bird. They were indeed cheap—so cheap that even the ragged girl from the neighbouring slums could decorate her battered hat, like any fine lady, with some bright-winged bird of the tropics. The change was attributed to that better feeling so long desired; to the literature which the Selborne, Bird Protection, and other Societies had been industriously disseminating; and to the increased regard for bird life which comes with increased knowledge. Is it possible any longer to cherish such a belief when we see the feathers displayed in the windows of milliners and drapers in London and every country and seaside town at the present moment; when we read in all the ladies' journals that wings are to be "all the rage" during the coming winter; and when almost every second woman one sees in the streets flaunts an aigrette of heron's plumes on her bonnet? Of these aigrettes formed of "ospreys," it may be mentioned that they consist of the slender decomposed dorsal feathers of the white herons or egrets; that they are the bird's nuptial ornaments, consequently are only to be obtained during the breeding season, when the death of the parent bird involves the death by starvation of the young in the nest. For the sake of the few ornamental feathers yielded by each bird killed, the white herons have been entirely exterminated in Florida, their great breeding district in North America, and the massacre has since gone on in South America, Africa, India, and Australia—the birds being slaughtered wholesale in the heronries. According to Lord Lilford, in his beautifully-illustrated *Birds of the British Islands*, the thoughtless fashion for these feathers has caused the almost entire extermination of more than one

species. About the cruelty of killing these birds when they are engaged in incubation and rearing their young nothing need be said here. Doubtless it is very great, so that men who live, so to speak, in a rougher world, and are harder than women, are sickened at the thought of it; but it is really a very small matter, scarcely worthy of mention, compared with the crime and monstrous outrage of deliberately exterminating species such as the snowy egrets, birds of paradise, and numberless others, that are being done to death. For these are not of the commoner types, universally distributed, and mostly of modest colouring, which would not be greatly missed after their places, left vacant, had been occupied by others; the kinds now being destroyed cannot be replaced, not in a thousand years, nor ever; they are nature's most brilliant living gems and give her greatest lustre. A dead and stuffed bird may be an object of scientific interest to a man; without the life and motion proper to it it cannot well be an object of beauty; but if it were beautiful beyond all other objects, the thought of its cost—of the ruthless war of destruction waged against bird life, and the irreparable loss to nature—would serve to make it appear ugly to the eye and hateful to look at; and no man who has given any thought to the subject, who has any love of nature in his soul, can see a woman decorated with dead birds, or their wings, or nuptial plumes, without a feeling of repugnance for the wearer, however beautiful or charming she may be.

Why then do women, who have received sufficient enlightenment on this subject during the last few years, still refuse to give up a fashion which degrades them? It is Herbert Spencer's idea that women do not progress side by side with men, that they lag very far behind, and intellectually, especially on the side of the æsthetic faculties, occupy a position about midway between the civilised man of our era and the pure savage. There is an illustration in this week's *Punch* in which one of Mr. Du Maurier's vulgar, fat, well-dressed women is seen entering a shop, and to the obsequious shopman's inquiry of "What can I have the pleasure of serving you with, madam?" the stout lady replies, "Wings." The satirist entitles his picture "A large order." And those who adopt H. Spencer's explanation would regard it as an equally "large order" to ask that women should have the feeling for nature that men have—that they should be expected to sacrifice the ornament of a pair of bright wings or a spray of egret's nuptial feathers merely to preserve the existence of a species of bird. On that large and somewhat delicate question I offer no opinion; and some of our sisters may find comfort in the reflection that Herbert Spencer is not omniscient. What we regard as beyond doubt is that progress is a law of our being—that we all, men and women, whether abreast or men first and women far behind, are continually advancing. A slow advance, true, but not to be doubted if we look on ourselves as in very truth descendants of the low-browed prognathous cannibals of the earlier stone ages. Holding such a doctrine, it becomes only reasonable to believe that the time will come when the destructive madness of the present day will be impossible, when a woman will be as much above wearing "murderous millinery" as she is now, in Europe, above wearing the savage ornaments with which the naked red woman of Venezuela decorates herself, or the necklace of human ears (captured from the enemy) which a Mexican lady is said to have exhibited in a ballroom. But what an impoverished nature and earth future generations will inherit from us! God's footstool, yes, but with all the shining golden threads picked out of its embroidery. Some knowledge will survive among our remote descendants of the wonderful and brilliant forms of bird life that are now passing away—the unimaginable beauty and grace that they would have known how to appreciate, and with it some knowledge of how it was destroyed in the space of two or three decades for the gratification of a detestable vanity. They will, I fancy, think less kindly of their cultured, Ruskin-reading 19th century ancestors than of those very much more distant progenitors who had some shocking customs but spoilt nothing. At all events, the old cannibals had no immeasurable past and future to exist in as we have, and no soul-growths to boast of, and did not sin against the light.

W. H. HUDSON.

## SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*Illustrated Guide to British Mosses, with Keys to the Genera and Species.* By the Rev. H. G. Jameson, M.A. pp. 80, 59 plates. Price 7s. 6d. post free, cloth, 1893. Published by the author at 6, College Road, Eastbourne.

Last November we ventured to lay before the readers of NATURE NOTES a few remarks upon the literature dealing with the British mosses. One of the books then recommended was the Rev. H. G. Jameson's *Key to the Genera and Species of British Mosses*: its great merit being that it afforded a speedy and simple means of referring even barren specimens to their proper genus and species. As Mr. Jameson pointed out, the methods adopted by his predecessors failed by attaching too much importance to the structure of the fruit, so that the beginner was apt to be left "quite at a loss with regard to such common and easily distinguished mosses as *Thuidium tamariscinum*, the *Hylocomiums*, *Anium undulatum*, &c., which will probably be among the first he gathers, and none of which are likely to be in fruit." Accordingly he drew up his key upon lines better adapted to the requirements of a beginner. But not contented with his first venture, he set himself to work to improve upon it, and has now published the result of his labours in this *Illustrated Guide to British Mosses*. In our little article of last year we lamented that "adequate illustrations whereby 'the beginner' may check the determinations" at which he shall arrive were only to be met with in books of considerable cost. This difficulty Mr. Jameson has overcome by making drawings "direct from nature by means of the camera lucida," and lithographing them with his own hand, so that every species is correctly figured, and throughout to a uniform scale of magnitude. Thus "the figures shew at a glance, not merely their shape, but their comparative size," a matter of great convenience. There are 59 plates in all, containing upwards of 2,400 figures. The original key has "been thoroughly revised, and in great part re-written." Hints are given under each genus as to how the student may avoid the various mistakes which he is liable to make. The book opens with an introduction of seven short chapters, of which six treat in a lucid manner of the structure of the various parts of the moss-plant and are illustrated by seven plates, and the seventh describes the apparatus necessary for the examination of specimens and how to use it. We are convinced that when once the student has made himself well acquainted with the teaching conveyed by the introductory chapters, he need have but little fear of failure in employing the key for the discrimination of the specimens which he may collect.

A. G.

We have so often recommended Mrs. Brightwen's books, that we cannot say more in their praise. Yet the appearance of an *editio de luxe* (price 5s.) of *Wild Nature* must not pass unrecorded in these pages, and we therefore borrow from *The Sun* this very appreciative notice:—"Mr. T. Fisher Unwin is publishing a new edition (the fifth) of Mrs. Brightwen's *Wild Nature Won by Kindness*, and to any readers of *The Sun* who are unfamiliar with this perfectly charming little work, I would say, 'add it to your library without delay.' In an age busy with social and political dissensions, Mrs. Brightwen remains like some gentle spirit of the last generation, upon whom the mantle of Gilbert White has very tenderly descended. Her pretty home at Stanmore is filled with pets. When the spring comes she knows every nest around her garden paths, and on more than one occasion she has brought up a brood of deserted nestlings by her own hand. All these gracious characteristics are fully mirrored in her volume, which is also adorned by many illustrations from her pencil. It is good to feel that the genius of the country side is not yet scared away by the hammering of the jerry builder, and Mrs. Brightwen's volume is a delightful example of a class of work which one fears may grow rarer as the life of commerce extends into our villages. It is a book made for the pure pleasure of its record, and from first page to last it is just charming."

We must confess to a feeling of great disappointment with regard to *The Nature Lover*, a new quarterly magazine published by Mr. Elliot Stock. The titles of two of the papers, "Gentle Izaak the Humbug," and "Timber, by Sam

Bucus the Elder," indicate the kind of "humour" which the articles under these headings and other contributions affect. There are readable papers in the number, but in these days a shilling is a large sum to give for thirty-six pages of any but the best literature, and *The Nature Lover* does not provide this.

Dr. A. H. Japp's *Hours in My Garden* (Hogg, 6s.) is one of those chatty books which, although containing nothing new, give us some hours' pleasant reading and are always sure of a public. Birds and flowers, woods, ponds, streams and their inhabitants, afford ample topics for Dr. Japp's discourse, and he shows an appreciative knowledge of many good books. But the volume is greatly marred—we had almost said spoiled—by the introduction of a miscellaneous selection of illustrations, which have apparently done duty before in various publications, and are here inharmoniously brought together. The volume would be greatly improved by their absence.

Mr. John Priestman has brought together—not, we think, for the first time—the various references to birds in the Bible, and publishes them in a little volume entitled *God's Birds* (Burns and Oates, 2s. 6d.). The author's comments are often interesting, sometimes fanciful, and there are curious terms of expression here and there, as when certain lines are said "to palpitate with the poetry of piety." If, as we think, the pages are reprinted without alteration from a magazine, some indication of this should have been given.

---

## SELBORNIANA.

**British Wild Birds at Shows.**—The exhibition of British wild birds at horticultural and other shows should be condemned and discouraged in every possible way. I feel this very strongly, and it is my rule to refuse all subscriptions to any local exhibition unless cage birds, other than canaries, are excluded from the list. I hold it cruelty to keep any wild bird whatsoever confined within the narrow limits of a cage, thus denying them the use of the wings with which Nature has provided them. It is certain that tolerance of the trade of bird-catching hastens the doom of extermination, which it is to be feared awaits all our loveliest species of English birds. Last month, at a Fanciers' Association show in a town near London, prizes were awarded for three special exhibits—a kingfisher, a nightingale, and a spotted woodpecker. The president of the Association was good enough to listen to my appeal, which I farther strengthened by forwarding to him a copy of the October number of *NATURE NOTES*, and calling his attention to Mr. F. W. Ashley's eloquent and touching protest. This gentleman says in his reply, "I have read the article you point out, and having been often among the bird shops in London, I can endorse every word of it. I have written to the secretary of the show, and have urged him to do away with the class of British Birds." It would prove a serious check upon a widespread form of cruelty, if all your readers would do their utmost, when opportunities offer, to discourage and prevent the trapping of wild birds for the purpose either of exhibition or of life-imprisonment.

ELEANOR VERE C. BOYLE.

*Elrick House, Aberdeenshire.*

**Canaries and Cages** (p. 173).—Having kept and bred these birds for several years, I should like to say a few words in reply to Miss E. Carrington's article. In the first place I do not understand her objection to seeing them caged. Canaries could not possibly live wild in the British climate. Has Miss Carrington ever visited any of the large canary shows in England, where some of the most beautiful specimens are to be seen? Birds perfect in form and colour, artificially bred for generations, perfectly happy in their cages, and an endless source of pleasure to their owners; but birds that would assuredly die in a few days out of doors. Then again, with regard to the hapless specimen alluded to: deformed feet are constantly met with in young canaries when they leave the nest (by no means the result of cruelty or neglect from their owners,

but a defect they are hatched with), and if it cannot be cured the little thing should be destroyed. Evidently the one in question was by some mistake allowed to live. I cannot see the objection to birds as pets. I consider they have a very humanizing effect upon the character, and where the love of them exists, it should be encouraged and fostered. It calls forth our powers of observation, and all the better side of our nature. Not long since I was talking to a canary fancier, a man in a humble station of life, who had bred some beautiful specimens, and was justly proud of them. He told me a year or two previously he had lost all his birds by an epidemic common amongst canaries; but he added, "My friends clubbed together and started me again." They were all working men, in a busy crowded city; and I could not help being struck with the unselfish kindly feeling their mutual hobby had called forth. Their chief pleasure in their leisure hours appeared to be the tending and caring for these birds. How much better this than frequenting the public house! With some few exceptions, I consider birds make charming pets, and I shall ever believe they were given to us by God for our pleasure and our study.

JULIA BRINKLEY.

**The Hilly Fields, Brockley.**—Mr. Walter Derham writes to the *Standard* that "the protracted negotiations for the purchase of the forty-five acres which form this open space—the finest site for a park round London"—have been brought to a successful termination, and that the London County Council has completed the contracts for the purchase of forty-one acres. So soon as the two thousand eight hundred pounds still needed to make up the total purchase money of forty-three thousand pounds has been provided, the Council will proceed with the purchase of the remaining four acres, the terms for the acquisition of which have long since been settled."

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Extraordinary Behaviour of Cats** (p. 199).—I can parallel the case cited by one that has lately come under my own observation, concerning the transmission of impressions of cats to their offspring. A cat recently kitted upon our premises, and brought up two kittens. During this time there arose a remarkable and apparently causeless enmity between herself and an old tom cat, already domiciled in the family. Any casual meeting between them was signalised by growlings and scoldings of the most violent description, and of these the kittens were nearly always interested spectators. The mother's aversion appears fully inherited by them, and they never by chance meet the other cat without setting up their little backs and spitting at him, though so far as I know he has never injured them personally, and indeed appears usually to shun the sight of them. This seems to me the more remarkable, as in all other respects the kittens are absolutely fearless, regarding all human beings as friends, and perfectly unconscious of danger to themselves from any sort of cause. For this reason I am disposed to think that animals—at least, cats—are perfectly capable of communicating early lessons of this kind to their offspring, and that such impressions cannot be accounted for by any mere theory of heredity, since one of the kittens at least has a very decided character of her own, quite distinct in many respects from that of her mother, or even from her brother of the same litter.

M. A. BIGGS.

**English Wild Flowers in Japan.**—The perusal of the interesting account of the introduction of English wild flowers into New Zealand (p. 183), reminds me of a similar case to which my attention was called while travelling in Japan. When railways were first introduced into that country, it was found advantageous to sow grass-seed imported from England upon the embankments, with the view of binding together the loose soil which would otherwise be washed away during the heavy rains which prevail in Japan. Owing to the general

absence of pasture, we look in vain, even in that flowery land, for our rich meadows enamelled with flowers. This loss has been in some degree retrieved by the growth of some of our familiar wild flowers hitherto aliens to the far East, but which find a congenial home in the moist climate of Japan. Daisies, buttercup and dandelions, regarded by us at home as homely flowers, may now be seen on the railway embankments and will probably ere long spread farther afield. Such reminders of our native land are pleasanter subjects for contemplation than railways and telegraphs, or the aping of our costume by the modern Japanese.

FRANK DILLON.

**Young Martins.**—In consequence of the late drought a martin's nest crumbled to pieces. Consequently the young birds fell out on to a ledge on the wall below. They were quite neglected by their parents, but a hen sparrow, whose maternal instincts appear to have been strongly developed, perceiving the untoward event, used to come and feed them, apparently with caterpillars. When bread crumbs were put on the ledge she fed them with the crumbs. She used to try to teach them to fly by holding a big crumb in her bill, and after showing it to them would fly to a neighbouring tree to persuade them to follow; but perhaps young martins cannot fly so soon as sparrows, for she never succeeded in her efforts. The great drought continuing too long, the young martins all succumbed to it and died.

G. S. HENSLOW.

**An Ingenious Rabbit.**—A tame white rabbit kept in a covered place on a lawn tried to escape by burrowing under the wooden walls of its prison. Having succeeded once, its owner placed some heavy stones outside all round the hutch. Bunny burrowed a second time; but unfortunately not being aware of the new obstruction, the stones fell upon its leg and broke it. He proved, however, to have a true surgeon's instinct, for as the broken member began to unite, the rabbit by constantly stretching its leg, has caused the fractured ends so to unite that the leg is now as nearly straight as it was at first.

G. S. HENSLOW.

**Bird Queries.**—I want to ask if bullfinches have ever been known to eat their young? Two bullfinches built in an aviary and hatched one young bird, which, however, disappeared immediately out of the nest for twenty-eight hours, when it was found on the ground quite two feet away from the perpendicular of the nest. It was replaced in the nest by me, but less than two hours after had again disappeared and not a trace of it has been found since in the fortnight that intervenes. The bullfinches had the aviary to themselves with the exception of one hen chaffinch, with whom they were on friendly, though distant, terms. Nothing else had access to the aviary except myself and one or two mice, and I want to know *who* eat the bullfinch? While I am writing, may I also ask if anyone can tell me the name of a bird that sings through the night from eleven o'clock, or later, and sings on still through the dawn all through spring and the early summer? I do not quite know how to describe the song, which has a strangely penetrating note—beginning soft as if from the far, far distance—crescendo, accelerando! till the trees close by seem to stir and open their leaves to the song, and did the bird not *immediately* start again in the far distance I should think the bird to be close at hand. Some nights it is an ecstasy of song, but it varies much in this, though the notes are at no time very varied. I think (if I may hope not to be taken too literally) I shall best describe the note in question if I characterise it as peculiarly *scintillating*—it is moonlight on dancing waters converted into sound. I shall be disappointed if I am told it is a nightingale, because I live in Devon, and besides I know it is neither nightingale, blackbird, thrush, nor cuckoo.

JACEY.

**Cat Killing a Squirrel.**—I live in the midst of a big garden filled with fruit trees and shrubs. As no one ever disturbs them, living creatures are numerous and confident. My special delight has been a squirrel, who played about the garden last year and again this. Some weeks ago an evil-looking stranger, a yellow cat, appeared on the scene to disturb our Eden. On one occasion she chased my little friend into an apple tree. I rushed out from my study and drove her off;

the squirrel taking a flying leap into a small larch a little way off and from thence another into an apple tree hard by. A few days later I noticed the squirrel on the lawn some distance in front of the trees. I looked for the enemy, but she was not visible. Looking up a little while later I saw *her*, but the squirrel I saw not. She was running off with something brown in her mouth which I took to be the squirrel. A bird (a thrush, I think) was flying at her head screaming with anger, evidently trying to make her drop her burden. I ran out, but the cat was gone. For several weeks after that I saw no squirrel, but just lately another (and possibly the same one) has appeared; and this morning I saw three, one quite a young one, gathering beech nuts under the trees at the top of my garden. The yellow cat has also disappeared since I pursued her one day and threw my stick at her. Would a cat be able to tackle a squirrel?

*Lichborough Rectory, Weedon, Northants.*

C. BROWNING.

**Butterflies and Moths** (p. 199).—We have been charmed by an unusual number of humming-bird hawk-moths this summer. We generally see one in ordinary summers, but this year three or four at a time have hovered over a bed of petunias, and one, I imagine the same one, for I noticed it day after day, seemed to have defective sight, for it would only go to white or nearly white flowers.

*North Moreton, Wallingford.*

M. S. Y.

During the second week in September red admirals simply swarmed here. Of the humming-bird hawk-moth I have only seen two specimens this year, the first early in September, and the second flew in at the open door of my office on October 10th.

*Andover.*

ERNEST F. ATKINS.

[The Rev. C. Browning writes from Lichborough, Weedon, that red admirals and humming-bird moths have been abundant there, the latter very tame.]

**A Monster Minnow.**—Some time in September, 1888, in bright, fine weather, I was on the banks of the Nodder, a tributary of the Hampshire Avon about two miles above Wilton, where the stream joins the main river, trying to catch some dace, for which the stream is noted. For some cause unexplained nothing but minnows came to try my lure. After replacing several, it struck me that I could make a few contented in a small pool I had lately constructed in my garden at Ealing, consequently consigned some half dozen to a bait can and deposited them in the outdoor aquarium. In due course all died but one; the single specimen lived and thrived, and was often admired. All went well until Saturday, July 30th, when I noticed her on the top of the water, evidently ill. On July 31st I found her dead, nearly five years after leaving her native stream. I immediately took a pair of dividers and found she was  $4\frac{8}{10}$  of an inch in length. On seeking an interview with Dr. Gunther at the Natural History Museum, he was much interested. After carefully comparing it with existing specimens he decided that my pet was  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch longer than any minnow the museum contained, and now it forms part of the national collection.

*Fennymer, Ealing.*

THOS. SIMPSON.

**Swallows.**—Can any one tell me whether it is a habit of swallows to depart in batches? A large number left us on August 18th, leaving a few late broods behind, which last left on October 2nd, leaving about half a dozen still here.

*North Moreton, Wallingford.*

M. S. Y.

**A Friendly Robin.**—There lived many years ago in Abergavenny two maiden ladies, sisters of Esquire Jones of Pyle. A robin took a great fancy to them, and whenever they walked out in the country it would accompany them the whole way and return with them. One of the sisters was a greater favourite than the other. If she went out the robin would accompany her at once. If it happened to be the second sister, it would wait to see whether the favourite was coming, if not, Bob would go with the other sister, the favourite. The sisters after a time went to live in Clifton, and were in great grief at leaving Bobby behind, but he would not allow himself to be caught. On the way to Chepstow they were surprised to see Bobby flying along by the side of the coach. Arriving there,



the sisters regretted to think Bobby might get into trouble, and perhaps be killed, being a stranger in that quarter. But looking up when on the passage, they saw, to their surprise, Bobby perched on the mast of the boat. He accompanied them all the way to Clifton, and next morning he was pecking as usual at their window. He took up his abode in the neighbourhood, and continued, till he died, attending upon them in their walks.

*Bartestree, Hereford.*

PETER LEWIS.

**Tomtits.**—A pair of tomtits this summer built their nest on a lamp-post in one of the principal roads in Dartford, Kent, and were allowed, unmolested, to bring off their large brood of little ones. The nest was afterwards destroyed, but appeared to be protected as public property during the process of incubation and rearing the brood.

ROBERT SIMPSON.

**The Viper** (*Vipera berus*).—Will any readers kindly give me what information they may possess respecting the distribution of this reptile in Cornwall? The loan of spirit examples showing any characteristic departure from the typical form in colour or arrangement of scales from any British locality is solicited.

203, *Ebury Street, Eaton Square, S.W.*

GEO. E. MASON.

**Tortoises** (p. 177).—I kept the usual European land tortoises for years, and fed them on cabbage leaves, lettuce, marrows and all sorts of succulent plants. I kept mine in a cool-green house, and they used to get into the earth (I had a border for plants inside the house), about November, and hide themselves, never putting in an appearance before April. They are very long lived. A relative of mine had one which disappeared once upon a time for a great many years, and was afterwards found by a labourer in the park, who informed the old squire he had discovered a "creature with a stone back." The tortoise was brought back to the gardens, and lived on one of the terraces quite fifty years. It was really quite tame; knew my cousin's voice, and would come to him when called.

*Berry Grove, Liss.*

HELEN WATNEY.

**Swallows and Martins.**—May I ask space for a question and a statement respecting these birds? My question, I fear, will seem to some to be founded on a delusion; if so let it be exposed, for here it is. In watching swallows (not martins) late in the year, it has more than once appeared to me that the latest stayers are short-tailed birds. A few years ago I saw several in this parish in October flying over a small park when snow was lying on the ground—an early fall. These appeared to me to be short-tailed, as do those that I have seen of late. On this I wish to found my question, assuming that my eyes have not deceived me; are these (supposed) short-tailed birds females, or (as I used to think, and am still inclined to believe) young birds? In either case it would be a fact worth notice. On the latter hypothesis it would seem to show that young swallows, born in England, find their way over the sea, if we may not say by instinct, yet without the help of their elders.

It was thought not long ago that house martins were diminishing in number, and I think many persons could point to houses which they once frequented, and have now deserted. Here is a consoling fact on the other side. In a village not far from Norwich, a house was built not many years ago, with a frontage of, as I believe, just thirty feet. The martins' nests on that new house have been a sight. Last year I counted, I think, between twenty and thirty, and this year forty, including one half finished. Burglarious sparrows had, I fear, invaded one, judging by a long untidy straw hanging out. All these were on the front of the house, which has a south aspect, and no doubt convenient eaves. But I think I remember one or more nests not attached to the wall, but stuck on to an earlier nest.

*Otham Parsonage, Maidstone.*

F. M. MILLARD.

**Wasps' Nests.**—We have received a number of letters on this subject, and are sorry that we have no space to insert them. Those of our readers who are interested in the matter would do well to consult Dr. Ormerod's *British Social Wasps* (Longmans, 1868), in which the various species and their nests are discussed in much detail. It may be worth while to mention that we have seven species of true social wasps in England; three of which (*Vespa vulgaris*, *germanica* and *rufa*) generally build their nests in the ground, and the remaining

four (*V. arborea*, *sylvestris*, *norvegica* or *britannica*, and *Crabro*) usually build in trees. They are all much alike, except the last species, *V. Crabro*, the hornet, which is more than twice as large as the others, and is reddish-brown and yellow instead of black and yellow. It generally builds in hollow trees, but not unfrequently under the eaves of houses.

---



---

### OFFICIAL NOTICE.

The fund towards clearing off the debt of £70 owing to the Hon. Treasurer now amounts to £24 14s. 6d. Those who have sent donations since the last notice are: Miss T. B. Waterston, Mr. E. R. Stable, Miss Temple, Mrs. Bourne, Rev. J. S. Gale, Miss A. E. F. Barlow, Mrs. Bowman, Miss Albright, Mrs. Armitage and Miss Blagg. A. J. WESTERN, *Sec.*

---



---

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. B. H.—We do not insert anonymous communications.

W. R.—Caper Spurge (*Euphorbia Lathyris*).

J. S. G.—*Nostoc commune*.

J. R. S. C.—Mr. W. F. Kirby says:—"Agrees best with Ashmead's figure of *Ceroplastes floridensis*, but I do not vouch for the accuracy of the name. This is a species infesting oranges in Florida, but *Coccide* are easily carried from country to country, and some of the orange species will also attack orchids."

W. B.—The Wood Wasp or Horntail (*Sirex gigas*).

Miss W.—It is a viviparous form of a Fescue grass, so far as we can judge from the specimen.

E. E.—It is very difficult to preserve the larger fungi satisfactorily.

R. F. M'C.—Knaggs's "Lepidopterist's Guide" (1s).

F. J.—Not up to our standard.

Leafield.—Yes, it is *Dytiscus marginalis*.

E. W. W.—The verses came too late for insertion.

Miss M.—*British Seaweeds*, by S. F. Gray (Lovell Reeve).

F. C.—(1) *Parmelia Borreri*; (2) *Eurhynchium praelongum*; (3) *Hypnum Patentic*, mixed with No. 2; (4) *Leucobryum glaucum*.

Jacey.—No doubt it was the Humming-bird Hawk-moth.

An Erratum.—The obvious though stupid slip by which we wrote "Olympus" for "Parnassus" at line 15 of p. 194 has produced the following graceful protest from a valued correspondent:—

"Why toil we up the dizzy mount  
Where dwell the gods of ancient Greece?  
Why have we left the sacred fount  
Of Hippocrene, why left the peace  
Of that Parnassian hill which towers,  
Above us on its lower slopes  
To seek the mount which bears the bowers  
Of gods—it is beyond men's hopes!  
The Olympian nods, and why should he,  
Whose lightnings blaze in NATURE NOTES,  
Not make an effort once to see  
That in his own eye there be motes?"

Contributions for any number should reach the Editor, JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., *not later than the 15th of the month*. The Editor cannot undertake to insert any communication in the number for the month following, in cases where this rule is not complied with.

When it is particularly requested, MSS. not accepted will be returned, if stamps sufficient to pay the postage are sent for that purpose. In every case contributions must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

It is particularly requested that subscriptions and letters connected with business should *not* be forwarded to the Editor, but to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C. Editorial communications, specimens, and books for review should be addressed to Mr. BRITTEN, as above.

# Mature Notes :

## The Selborne Society's Magazine.

---

---

No. 48.

DECEMBER, 1893.

VOL. IV.

---

---

### A CHRISTMAS GREETING.

“ If GOD so clothe the Grass . . . . ”

A BLADE of Grass

This Christmas-tide I send to thee ;  
A greeting shall it bear, for me,  
This slender blade. It seems to be  
Not much, perchance, to prize or see ;  
Speechless, yet speaks it powerfully—  
A blade of Grass.

A blade of Grass.

Though fiercely winds of winter blew,  
And later frosts in silence slew  
The flowers that in the meadows grew,  
I found unharmed in form or hue,  
'Mid withered leaves, for me—for you  
This blade of Grass.

A blade of Grass.

May not my tiny emblem show,  
That in the sunshine or the snow,  
It ever looks to Heaven, as though  
Its source of Life it sought to know,  
And thitherward it strives to grow,  
This blade of Grass.

A blade of Grass.

God clothed it thus in tender green,  
And mantled Earth in living sheen.  
This vestment thread, this Christmas E'en,  
Conveys to thee no message mean.  
'Tis this—“ Thou'rt more to GOD, I ween,  
Than blades of Grass.”

EDMUND J. BAILLIE.

## "WITH THE BIRDS."



ALL through September it seemed as though some evil fate had befallen our merry little feathered friends! So glad of heart were they in the spring! full of the joy of love and hope. Then followed the proud moment when the young ones were brought by the parent birds to be fed on our lawn on the softest and whitest of crumbs, as befitted their infant digestions. From winter frost to summer heat, the joyous bird life and song around us gladdened our hearts, and then, when domestic cares were ended, the little friends' visits became fewer and shorter, and we feared for the busy merry little lives. But now, with the first touch of frost, with the falling leaves and autumn winds, here they come!

The old sunflowers look most untidy on their tall stems, and we had just issued the order for their demolition, having saved all the seed necessary, when chink! chink! chink! and who would have the heart to study appearances, when they afford food and entertainment for our pretty chaffinches? and there a little mite of a blue-tit suddenly settles on a stray plant of hemp, with its funny buzzing call, and, daintily helping itself to a seed, flies off to the railing on which to crack it. There was no doubt where the rooks were; the hot spring and summer months brought a plague of white cockchafer grubs, which were eating the roots of the grass in the dried-up fields, and at last the farmers are beginning to realise the fact that the rooks are their best friends, in helping to rid them of this unexpected pest.

Has anyone noticed the unwonted sweetness of the young robin's song this autumn? For the last four or five weeks, in returning from late afternoon walks or drives, the beauty of the sunset has gained an added charm from the silvery notes that greeted us from every hedgerow and tree, reminding us of those beautiful spring evenings when the joy of hope was in the heart, and all the world was young.

The fly-catchers, as usual, left us early; we have so many of them, and watch them constantly, apparently throwing themselves into the air to catch the coveted fly, and then returning to their perch; so that for a week or two something seemed missing. The trout stream that ripples down near the house has been sadly dry this summer; perhaps that is why we missed the water-ouzels that cheered us in the bright hours of winter sunshine by their sweet trills; I heard of them, however, down by the river, so doubtless they are safe. The nuthatches, too, who were frequent guests at our winter bird parties, entirely disappeared during the summer—possibly more attractive food tempted them elsewhere; or do they migrate?

More and more do the swallows interest us every year, and this year has been unusually adapted to the observation of outdoor life. Many an hour I have sat amongst my bird friends—

chaffinches, hedge-sparrows, robins, and sparrows, coming close to me, and even the blackbirds coming at our call for soaked bread; the swallows the while skimming past and overhead, too busy with their own joyous existence to take fright at us; indeed, so constant has our companionship been, that they accept us as part of the place, and pursue their swift, unerring course as though no human beings desecrated their bird paradise. This year we watched the swallows from week to week, from their arrival in the sunny days of April, to the sunny day in autumn, when, noiselessly and unseen, they left us. For days beforehand they had perched on a sunny roof, telling tales of English summers and foreign winters in their sweet chatter, and now—where are they? It was a great amusement to watch the return of the young swallows from their first flights; they perched in a row on the ledge under the eaves, and one by one, in due order, hopped into the nest and tightly packed themselves in, when they were speedily refreshed by gnats brought by the attentive parent bird. They are gone now—young and old—and the house seems for a time deserted. But even as I write, a blue tit comes to the window, a blackbird in fine feather struts over the lawn, and a handsome nuthatch looks in at us, as though it had been here every day. And so the winter is bringing back the old friends, and the summer season will be duly opened by the return of the swallows! In an interesting article in the *Daily News*, which appeared on the 17th of October, on the migration of birds, the writer thus accounts for the “quiet time” in the early autumn or late summer. He has been speaking of swallows, and thus concludes his article: “We think of birds like these as migrants, but it is now known that almost all birds move more or less in the autumn; that rooks and crows, blackbirds and thrushes, starlings and jackdaws, even our own familiar robins, cross the sea in crowds before the setting in of winter.”

Which of our birds will take the place of the swallows in sounding the alarm at the approach of a sparrow-hawk? This year seems to have favoured the increase of sparrow-hawks, and it has always been the swallows who gave the alarm; with quick, excited screams of terror and defiance, they combine against the common enemy, and darting around and above him, so bewilder and scare him, that he is driven back to his haunts over yonder hill. But what a panic does a visit from a sparrow-hawk cause in the bird world! and truly one cannot wonder. In May this year we found a handsome bird lying on the ground below one of the windows, to all appearances dead, having stunned itself by dashing against the thick plate glass (our birds, big and little, have an unreasonable habit of doing this, and to the amusement of our friends we are obliged to put “danger signals,” in the shape of Christmas cards, envelopes, tracts, or anything that comes to hand, in the windows). We picked up the hawk, and wrapping it in flannel, gave it water to drink, by dropping it on its beak, and presently it showed signs of life. Of

course, we ought to have detained it a few weeks, till the season of fledgelings was over; but the bird's handsome plumage, amber eye, and absolute fearlessness, made us restore freedom with animation. At the moment, too, we scarcely realised the full gravity of the situation, and so we let it fly. It flew off to a flight of stone steps, where it perched, and regarded me—as the water carrier—with a fixed, reproachful gaze. I followed it, expecting it to flutter away at my approach, but it calmly accepted the situation, and putting its beak in the saucer, drank "like any Christian!" and flew away to a tall chestnut tree. The sequel is pathetic, as the week following, we picked up apparently the same bird, in exactly the same place—this time quite dead—its zeal having wholly outrun its discretion and resulted in a broken neck; it was a handsome bird, measuring fourteen inches long. The day before this tragedy, a bonny little finch had made its way through a small opening at the top of the same window, and fallen dead on the carpet below. The room was only unoccupied for a few minutes, and we thought the poor frightened little bird must have been escaping from the sparrow-hawk, and died of fright before it realised its safety.

The wagtails here are both numerous and handsome; there is ivy for them to build in, sunny roofs for them to strut on, and water to bathe in. What could a wagtail want more? The other day we noticed a wagtail pecking round the grass where a young bullock was grazing. Once they seemed to touch each other—so close was the wagtail to the bullock's mouth. A human footstep was heard in the lane, and off flew the bird; alas! for the reflection on human nature! And indeed, when one reflects on the cruelty and ignorance of mankind, and *womankind*, the ferocity of sparrow-hawks and other birds of prey, and the crafty cunning of cats, one can but rejoice that so many of our feathered friends survive.

In Miss Yonge's charming book, *An Old Woman's Outlook*, she mentions the fact that in hard winters, blackbirds and thrushes do not care for crumbs; but we find that crumbs *soaked in water* are an unfailing attraction, alike in frost and drought. The way in which the parent blackbird loaded his beak, and then flew off to his nest with triumphant screams, was worthy of record. By way of experiment we planted a currant bush close to the feeding ground, and let the red clusters of fruit remain until for very ripeness they fell off; not one was touched by the blackbirds, or any other bird, the diet of soaked bread evidently being appreciated, and agreeing with both young and old birds—possibly being the nearest in consistency to their natural food of worms, &c. It may also be of interest to many to know that during the hard frost and drought the soaked bread was equally attractive to the rooks, and although we put out divers kinds of seeds, they never touched one, but cleared the ground of soaked bread with almost alarming rapidity.

Once on the subject of birds, it is difficult to know when to

stop, but an end comes to all things; let the parting suggestion be, that there would be less need for the outcry against the cruel thoughtlessness of our bird-wearing womenkind, did they make *friends* of, instead of personal adornment of, the birds. A quotation from the late Richard Jefferies forms a fitting close to this chat about birds; he is speaking of an arable field in autumn, with a design of birds' feet on it. "For fifty or sixty yards the path was worked with an inextricable design; it was a pity to step on it and blot out the design of those little feet. Their hearts so happy, their eyes so observant, the earth so bountiful to them, with its supply of food, and the late warmth of the autumn sun lighting up their life. They know and feel the different loveliness of the seasons as much as we do. Every one must have noticed their joyousness in spring; they are quiet, but so very very busy in the height of summer; as autumn comes on they obviously delight in the occasional hours of warmth. The marks of their little feet are almost sacred, a joyous life has been there—do not obliterate it. It is so delightful to know that something is happy."

*Chagford, S. Devon.*

HELEN J. ORMEROD.

### MY FEATHERED LADY.

WHERE'ER of old my Lady went  
 All art, all nature seemed to be  
 Attuned in soft accompaniment  
 To sing her praise to me.  
 With her all gentleness would move;  
 Her smile was life, her look was love.  
 Within her bonnet shone the rose,  
 A lily sheltered at her breast,  
 But now where'er my Lady goes  
 No human heart can rest;  
 The very stones beneath her feet  
 Cry "Murder! Murder!" down the street.  
 For in her bonnet is the plume  
 That waves above her head, to tell  
 She has, within her soul, no room  
 For Pity's self to dwell;  
 That she can see, unmoved of pain,  
 Homes plundered, babes and mothers slain.  
 Lo! in the hall of dance and song,  
 The maiden, clad with snowy grace;  
 No more she glides like light along,  
 How changed and slow her pace;  
 Knee-deep she seems to wade through death  
 Of white-winged creatures cast beneath!

There at the altar kneels the bride,  
 Pure joy and spotless womanhood.  
 Ah, pluck that dainty veil aside!  
 Her hair is red with blood!  
 Hark! through the hymn of praise, a cry  
 Of birds in bridal dress that die.

Beside the infant's cot there stands  
 A mother robed for evening rout,  
 The fury in her jewelled hands  
 Would cast her own child out!  
 She has but killed, for fan and lace,  
 A heron's offspring in its place.

There in the land of sun and flowers  
 With orange scent upon the air,  
 When Egrets build their bridal bowers,  
 They take them plumes to wear,  
 Such plumes as with true love in sight,  
 Will tell the fluttering heart's delight.

They mate, and happy is the breast  
 That feels one day its softness stirred  
 By that new life within the nest,  
 Loud calls the parent bird;  
 The very savage in the wood  
 Must share the joyance of the brood.

But hands, whom Fashion arms with greed  
 And hearts made cruel by the Chace,  
 These know our English ladies need  
 Some little borrowed grace.  
 The merchant unto murder dooms  
 A whole bird-nation for its plumes.

Fierce shouts are heard, and up there springs  
 A palpitating cloud of sound,  
 The shadows of ten thousand wings  
 Move trembling on the ground,  
 And seem in silence to entreat  
 For mercy, round the murderers' feet.

Gun answers gun, the cloud that rose  
 Lies warm and wounded underneath,  
 In all the heart's appalling throes  
 Of agony and death;  
 From quivering flesh the ruffians tear  
 The feathers for my Lady's hair.

There falls a hush upon the wood  
 Where gun made echo unto gun,  
 But still the branches drip with blood,  
 And, fainting for the sun,  
 Unfed, unsheltered now by breast,  
 The children perish in the nest.



Wings, meant for flight, that could not fly  
 Are rotting, high above, in air ;  
 Beneath, the carrion bodies lie  
 Whose fault was being fair.  
 And Vanity that wrought this doom  
 Goes dancing off with egret-plume.

O English mother, maid, or bride,  
 Who seek for Fashion's feathered grace,  
 Come in your beauty and your pride  
 And gaze upon the place :  
 Then say if Love can wear again  
 For Pity's sake, such plumes of pain.

H. D. RAWNSLEY.

SQUIRRELS WON BY KINDNESS.



ABOUT ten years ago we began taming the wild squirrels which exist in great numbers in the woods around this house. We put Barcelona nuts in a small basket hung outside the dining-room window, and every day a handful thrown on the ground served to attract the notice of the little animals. In a very short time the squirrels ventured to approach, timidly at first, to pick up their favourite food ; they would scratch up the nuts and rush away to some quiet spot out of sight. Generations of the graceful little rodents have been trained to come nearer and nearer to the window, until they are now so delightfully tame that I feel induced to suggest to others the means of enjoying the pleasure we find in watching our daily visitors from the woods.

My first act before breakfast is to place a handful of nuts on a small table which stands in the room close to a bay window. Hardly have I done so, when in come the squirrels, sliding up to the window and leaping on to the table to enjoy the nuts. They will take nuts gently from our hands, and sitting up in the graceful position a squirrel adopts when quite at ease—its tail curved over its back, and its tiny paws holding the nut—they crack them and fling away the shells in careless fashion. A scrimmage sometimes takes place when several come in together. One bolder spirit will chase another round the room until both spring out at the window, and dart across the lawn. At length, the nuts on the table being eaten or carried away, the squirrels, well knowing where the supply is kept, descend to the floor and hop leisurely to a cupboard, where on the first shelf is a box full of Barcelonas. The little animals spring on to the shelf and help themselves. This they are allowed to do for a little while, as we like to watch their proceedings ; but I make a protest

presently and close the cupboard door when I find my entire store of nuts is being transferred to the garden and planted all over the lawn; for the squirrels bury nuts for future use, although I am very doubtful whether they do really dig them up again.

On cold mornings, when the windows cannot be opened, it is touching to see the little furry heads peep in, waiting patiently for their daily meal. This they eventually share with several very tame nuthatches, these birds seeming very glad of nuts as well as fat during the winter months.

The only drawback to having wild squirrels tamed is the distraction they cause when a class of children is being taught in the dining-room! Sydney Smith says that "A sparrow fluttering about the church is an antagonist which the most profound theologian in Europe is wholly unable to overcome;" and certainly the apparition of a bright-eyed squirrel popping up at each window in succession is enough to drive a teacher to despair. Nothing less than an abundant shower of nuts will bribe the little intruders to keep quiet for a time.

I have given these simple details because I think that possibly many of the readers of NATURE NOTES may like to encourage these charming little animals when they learn how easily, by a little patient kindness, they may be attracted from the woods to become household pets of their own free will, which is, to my mind, so much more enjoyable than keeping captive animals or birds. It should, perhaps, be added that great quietness and calm are needed while the first advances are being made, and that a loud voice or a quick gesture will undo a week's work in taming.

ELIZA BRIGHTWEN.

---

#### NOTES FROM A FLORIDA DIARY.



CTOBER 2nd, 1892.—V. and I drove over from Oakland to "Mallow," starting at about 5.30 in the morning. V. drove us in a buggy with pair of half-broken Texas ponies, a coloured man riding before to show the way. It is through forest the whole journey—no real roads, but just tracks made by wagons through interminable sand, sometimes more than a foot deep. The trees are principally pine and "black jack"—the latter being a species of oak, very undurable, and seldom growing into anything worthy of the name of tree. What scrub there is, is formed of palmettoes, which grow in hundreds everywhere. The pines and black jacks are hung from every branch with "Spanish moss," a curious *Tillandsia* hanging in long festoons, sometimes four or five feet from the boughs, and very characteristic of the sub-tropical scenery. It is the wrong time of year for wild flowers, nevertheless we

passed lovely orchids, large scarlet and yellow lilies, coreopsis, blue and red salvias, Virginian creepers, and "vines" of all kinds. The roads being only tracks through the forest are often quite hidden under water, or have fallen pines stretched right across them. When this is the case we turn aside into the scrub, and drive straight ahead, over stumps and gopher-holes, till I wonder the buggy is not overturned. Even in the track we have to pass so close to the tree trunks that in many of them notches are cut to allow the hub of the wheels to pass.

October 26th.—Carl brought me two "orange-dogs," larvæ of a large swallow-tail butterfly measuring about six inches across the wings. They are smaller than I should have thought, in comparison with the size of the perfect insect. They have eye-like spots behind the head much as the English elephant hawk-moth larva has, and are mottled brown, and olive green, with blue spots. Yesterday we found two new "blood-suckers" in the grove. They were eating butterflies, and were on a favourite sweet-scented plant which had quite a heap of rejected butterflies' wings on the ground under it. M. P. said her brother told her there were no worms in British Columbia. There are none here (away from the margins of lakes) and consequently no surface-soil, only dry sand, which is turned up, and over, by ants, sand-wasps and flies of different kinds.

October 27th.—Drove over to call at Joycelands. Mr. J. showed us his garden, all made—including lawn—in five years. Everything out here grows so fast; he showed me two eucalyptus trees he had grown from seeds, and which in three years had reached the height of 35 and 36 feet. Amongst other things he had arrowroot and sago plants, gumquats, camphor, and citron trees. One citron, which we brought home, is nine inches long and twelve round; like a large lemon but with a very rough skin.

October 28th.—The "orange-dogs" have "whips" like our puss-moth larva has, only whereas the puss-moth's whips are situated on the extreme end of the larva, and are hidden in a visible green sheath, the orange-dogs' are just above the head, and can be drawn in quite out of sight. They are also below the eye-like marks, and so have the appearance of a forked, red tongue, shot out of a supposed mouth. When the caterpillar protrudes them, it at the same time gives out a smell very like that of the stink-horn fungus. I have had them in a cardboard box, but this morning had to move them into a wooden one, as during the night they eat a large hole in the side of the former and both crawled out into the room.

By-the-by, Florida cats will generally refuse fish, quail, or dead hawks, that is, with the exception of the little insect hawk, which they do not seem to mind. They, however, eat large numbers of lizards and grasshoppers, and play with the big locusts like an English cat would with a mouse. Also they catch numbers of the tomato moths, which are large, measuring

three or four inches across, have pink or yellow stripes, and a proboscis twice the length of their bodies.

Some of the girls out here keep orange sticks hanging up in their rooms, and it is the custom for each of their admirers to give them a bow of different coloured ribbon to tie on a thorn. Some girls have each thorn on their sticks tied with a different bow.

November 2nd.—There are no sparrows here, and although the Florida "stink sparrow" is a small brown bird, it is not at all the same as our little English friends. We saw one to-day. They have a scent so exactly like that of the quail, that the dogs are invariably taken in by it; and as the birds also have a habit of hopping along the ground in the long grass, the hounds often point them, thinking they are quail. The sporting dogs here are all called "smell dogs," pointers being "whip-tailed smell dogs" and setters, spaniels, or long-haired ones, "feather-tailed smell dogs." We have found several brown caterpillars living in cases composed of bits of dead leaves and sticks, very much like caddis-worms. These cases are fastened hanging from the mid-rib of a leaf (generally a live-oak), and the caterpillar crawls out to eat when hungry; sticking to the one leaf till that is finished, and then moving, case and all, to another. I do not think we shall ever be able to keep them, as the leaves shrivel as soon as gathered, which fact upsets the caterpillar very much.

Another striking bird is the turkey-buzzard, a most useful scavenger in such a hot country, and so valued on this account, that a fine of \$5 is imposed on anybody found killing one. It is a large bird, with much red flesh about its head, and having a curious way of turning up the tips of its wings when flying, or rather hovering in the air. Their instinct is wonderful. They will stand round a "bogged" horse, or follow sick cattle for days waiting for them to die, and will entirely demolish a dead calf in a few hours.

November 16th.—It is very curious to see the stumps being burnt on freshly cleared land. The trees are cut down so as to leave about three feet of trunk out of the ground; holes are dug at the roots of each, in which a fire is lit. Passing such a clearing at night, and seeing the fire flaming up out of the ground in every direction, reminds one very much of Doré's picture of the heretics' graves.

Rabbits here do not burrow, but are in their habits much like English hares. Owing to this, no doubt, their feet are quite altered in shape, being pointed, instead of spread out for digging. They are called "cotton-tails." There is a nest of three young ones just in front of the house. They are not in a hole, but lying in a hollow under a clump of grass.

June 1st, 1893.—Have been through one of the hammocks. No words can describe the luxuriant beauty of the vegetation, which in most places is quite impenetrable. Cabbage-palmettoes

rise far far above everything else, their trunks covered with hare's foot ferns, and trails of scarlet bignonia, or as it is there called, "trumpet vine." The most conspicuous trees, however, are the magnolias, their glossy green leaves and beautiful blossoms marking them at a great distance. They flower with such profusion that the perfume becomes too powerful to be pleasant, even in the open air. Their branches are loaded with epiphytes, orchids, air-plants, the never-ending Spanish moss, and rope-like lianas swaying backwards and forwards in the air. There is a curious nest that seems very common in all the hammocks, yet no one knows what bird builds it, and nothing seems to have ever been found in any of them. We found a good disused one to-day, suspended in a trail of *Tillandsia*, which I kept to take back to England. It is the size of a big orange, woven entirely of palmettoe fibres, nearly round, and with *two* entrance holes, side by side, towards the front, which holes are inclined to protrude like the neck of a bottle.

The red-throated humming birds are now fairly common, but their nests are almost impossible to find. G.'s house is covered with bignonia, wax plant, scarlet honeysuckle and passion flower, and there the little birds are seen to perfection, their hum betraying their whereabouts at once. Last week G. caught one in the butterfly net for us to see. I held it in my hand—such a tiny thing—its colours exquisite. We only kept it a moment, and then let it fly again; and this afternoon I hear it humming round the gardenia bushes and oleanders in front of the house.

W. M. E. FOWLER.

---



---

## POEMS AND ORCHARD SONGS.\*

THOSE who think that the outside of a book should show some accordance with its contents will find their views carried out in these volumes. Whether this is intentional we do not know: but the thoughtful, serious, and sometimes ascetic poems of Mr. Benson are aptly coated in light grey paper boards, and lettered in sober black; Mr. Norman Gale's lighter verses appear in a vesture of apple green, with an indication of his favourite cherries about the title; and Mr. F. B. Doveton's commonplace binding only too accurately foreshadows what is to be found within its covers.

Neither Mr. Benson nor Mr. Norman Gale are strangers to the readers of *NATURE NOTES*. We were fortunate enough to obtain, by the kindness of the author, a copy of the privately printed volume containing, among other good

---

\* *Poems*, by Arthur Christopher Benson. (London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane. Fcap 8vo, pp. 192, 5s. net.)

*Orchard Songs*, by Norman Gale. (Same publishers, fcap 8vo, pp. 112, 5s. net.)

*Songs Grave and Gay*, by F. B. Doveton. (London: Horace Cox, 8vo, pp. 267.)

things, the sonnet on Gilbert White which was reproduced in these pages,\* and which we are glad to find in the book now before us; and we are glad to find that the appreciation which we published† of the earlier work is more than justified by this volume of *Poems*. Mr. Norman Gale's *Country Muse* was noticed at p. 32, and already his orchard has yielded another crop of fruit. The names of their publishers are sufficient guarantee that the two volumes are beautifully printed and "turned out."

In a short preface, which makes us anxious to know more of his prose, Mr. Benson directs us to that "large region of simple facts and quiet experiences" of which he seems to us a singularly true exponent. "The almond-tree blooms, the rook strides over the new-turned furrow, and the streams hurry through the meadows with a singular indifference to the promises of Socialism and the mysteries of Home Rule;" and in these, and in things like these, which Mr. Benson portrays with pre-Raphaelite accuracy, he finds matter for thoughtful reflection—perhaps a little *too* thoughtful at times in relation to the subject which calls it forth. As we said when noticing his earlier volume, he does not draw his inspiration from the ordinary subjects of a poet's attentions; the mole, the beetle and the toad among animals, and the knapweed, the fritillary, and (not so happily) the dandelion among plants, are types of his selection. He describes the various aspects of Nature with keen appreciation; and the following poem, which should shortly be seasonable, shows the accuracy of his delineations:—

"HIDDEN LIFE.

"The turf is marble underfoot,  
The fountain drips with icy spears;  
And round about the cedar's root  
The hungry blackbird pecks and peers.

"The mud that rose beside the wheel  
In liquid flake, stands stiff and hard;  
Unbroken lies the dinted heel,  
With icy streaks the rut is barred.

"Behind the knotted black tree-tops  
The solemn sunset waning burns,  
The pheasant mutters in the copse  
And patters through the crackling ferns.

"Yet down below the frozen rind  
The silent waters creep and meet;  
The roots press downwards unconfined,  
Where deeper burns the vital heat.

"As when the summer sky is clear,  
And heat is winking on the hill,  
The swimmer rests beside the weir  
To feel the fresh luxurious chill,

"So earth lies still beneath the night,  
And takes no thought of wintry woe,  
She shudders with a keen delight  
And nestles in her robe of snow."

Mr. Norman Gale's verses are more concerned with the external aspect of things, and his reflections are more simple and obvious. His notes are sweet and true, but they have not the depth of Mr. Benson's, and there is less variety in his utterances. Whether he is writing about milkmaids, birds, trees (especially cherry trees), or flowers, there is a bright sunny feeling about his verses, such as one feels on a Spring day when the leaves and blossoms have had time to unfold, but before their freshness has begun to deepen into summer hues. Warwickshire and the Cotswolds are the places of his delight, and his Selbornian

\* p. 83.

† p. 88.

spirit finds vent, not only in the charming poem, too long to quote, called "One Shilling Each," and beginning:

"How shall a man or woman pass unstirred?  
A shilling these! One shilling, cage and bird!"

and going on to narrate his delight at purchasing and setting free, "redstart, yellowhammer, finch;" but in such verses as these—a little marred though they be by the last line:

"GOING SOUTH.

"It is ever so far away  
For the swallow to fly;  
And she peeped for an English thatch  
At a round of sky!

"But the elders have told her tales  
Of the sister blues;  
And she starts at the wink of dawn  
On her windy cruise.

"She can tell her path in the void,  
Though her native sod  
Was here in a Warwickshire lane,  
For her pilot's God."

It is only verses which appeal to Selbornians that we notice in these pages, and this excuses us for saying much about Mr. Doveton's *Songs*. There is very little nature in them, and scarcely more art, although we find that fatal fluency which fills "the fourpenny box" with an unfailling flood of commonplace verse. The influence of Tennyson is manifest throughout, except of course in the "gay" songs, which we are glad not to be obliged to notice. We cannot think "the river's rim" a usual habitat of the daffodil (p. 125); the "imperial iris flaunting its flag of gold" does not "guard the brook" in April (p. 88); and the "maiden cloaked and furred," who told Mr. Doveton that she was going "for holly green and *mistletoe* to deck the kirk at morn" (p. 64), must have been playing on his credulity.

OLD-WORLD LORE.

THE approaching close of another year brings with it to most, if not all of us, a consciousness that "we have left undone the things that we ought to have done," and that we fully intended to do. The editor of NATURE NOTES is no exception to this rule; rather, he is a sad example of the evils of procrastination. Month by month he has apologised for the omission of articles, notes, reviews and the like; month by month has brought him more material of every kind, thus ensuring an accumulation of arrears; and now at the end of the year he finds a sheaf of interesting communications still unpublished, a pile of interesting books unnoticed.

The publishers have fortunately yielded to our plea for an extra four pages as a kind of Christmas-box to the readers of NATURE NOTES, and we propose to devote this for the most part to a notice of the volumes—some of them too long neglected—which we have received. Over many we should like to linger; indeed, the desire to notice them at length has been the cause of the delay in noticing them at all. But at a season of book-giving, even a small indication where to choose is useful, and this we can at any rate supply.

Those to whom the study of old customs and associations is a matter of interest—and their number is large—will find a storehouse of such lore in *English Folk-Rhymes*, compiled by Mr. G. F. Northall, and published by Messrs. Kegan, Paul & Co. (10s. 6d.) This handsome volume, which has been in preparation for many years, is a classified collection of rhymes relating to places, persons and things; to

days and times and seasons ; to birds, beasts and fishes ; and indeed to the thousand-and-one subjects which come into ordinary conversation and everyday life. Few will have suspected that England was so rich in material of this kind, and yet everyone who opens the book, even if no student of folk-lore, will come across many rhymes and sayings which were familiar to him in his childhood, although since then he may never have met with or thought of them. The list of works quoted shows the industry which Mr. Northall has devoted to his task ; his mode of citing these works has the advantage of brevity, but otherwise is not as convenient as it might have been, necessitating as it does constant reference to the explanatory list.

Perhaps to our readers the rhymes and legends connected with animals and plants will be among the most interesting. The animal kingdom has furnished subjects for a number of traditional verses. Crows, cuckoos, the curlew, the owl, the pigeon, the ring-dove, robin and wren, are principal among birds. Various superstitions connected with the ash leaf, bay leaf, butterdock, clover, evergreen, grass, hemp seed, rosemary and thyme, eggs, apples, water, nuts, the cuckoo, garters and stockings, shoes, &c., are of considerable interest. Charms and spells for an adder bite, the ague, bleeding, bruises and sprains, cramp, St. Vitus's dance, sciatica, tooth-ache, &c., are probably little known to most of those who suffer from these ailments. A work of this kind is of course never complete ; but Mr. Northall has certainly brought together a larger collection of folk-rhymes than any previous writer. We should have expected to find a section devoted to riddles, and one or two publications seem to have been overlooked, e.g., the English Dialect Society's *Dictionary of English Plant-names*, in which the author will find several plant-rhymes not included in his collection. Here and there we find rhymes included which have hardly the true ring, such as that on the mandrake quoted from the *Popular Educator*, and Mr. Northall is a little too prone to regard Dr. Brewer and Mr. Dyer as classical authorities ; we doubt, too, whether some of the verses cited from Murray's *Handbooks* should be considered genuine folk-rhymes. His notes are commendably brief and to the point, but we should have been glad of a preface, of which there is not a word, and still more so of an index, for which the "table of contents," is a very inefficient substitute.

The student of folk-song will find a treat in the very handsome and singularly cheap (6s.) volume of *English County Songs* (Leadenhall Press), a preliminary notice of which was communicated to NATURE NOTES (p. 55) by one of the authors, Miss Lucy Broadwood, who, with Mr. J. A. Fuller Maitland, has brought together this most interesting collection. We hope that many a Christmas fire-side will be brightened by these sweet and simple strains, associated as they are with a suitable piano accompaniment. We have children's game-songs, like "Green Gravel," here attributed to Lancashire, but quite as common in Cheshire ; songs for certain popular feasts or celebrations, such as the souling song from Shropshire, May songs from Hertfordshire and Essex—there is a very pretty Cheshire May song which we should like to have seen included ; peace-egging songs from Lancashire, and a sword-dance song from Yorkshire ; the traditional ballad, typified by the Worcestershire "Sweet William" and the Staffordshire "Lord Robert ;" and several versions of well-known folk-songs. Brief but interesting notes supply information as to the sources from which the words and music are derived, and it is satisfactory to notice how large a number have been taken down from the lips of the people. We are glad to find an extremely beautiful canon, "Now, Robin, lend to me thy Bow," which is accredited to Rutlandshire on what seems to us insufficient evidence. This was popular in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, and Chappell (*Popular Music*, i., 79) says it was at the time of the publication of his book (which is not dated), "still popular in some parts of the country," and was written down for him in Leicestershire.

Another handsome book, taking us back yet further into the past, is Mr. Robert Steele's *Medieval Lore* (Elliot Stock, 7s. 6d.), further described in its title as "an epitome of the science, geography, animal and plant folk-lore and myth of the Middle Age ; being classified gleanings from the *Encyclopedia of Bartholomew Anglicus* on the Properties of Things." Mr. William Morris, in a short but admirable preface, justifies after his manner, and with much clearness, the period which not so long ago we were wont to call "the Dark Ages"—a period the ignorance of which, as he truly says, "was one of the natural defects of the qualities of the learned men and keen critics of the eighteenth and early part of



the nineteenth century." "The reader, before he can enjoy it"—we cannot do better than make Mr. Morris's words our own—"must cast away the exploded theory of the invincible and wilful ignorance of the days when it was written; the people of that time were eagerly desirous for knowledge, and their teachers were mostly single-hearted and intelligent men, of a diligence and laboriousness almost past belief." The author was an English Franciscan, who wrote in the middle of the thirteenth century, probably before 1260; it was translated into French in 1372, and into Dutch, Spanish, and English in 1397. The book was thus a product of the century which, according to Mr. Frederick Harrison, "was in nothing one-sided and in nothing discordant. There was one common end, one ritual, one worship, one sacred language, one church, a single code of manners, a uniform scheme of society, a common system of education, an accepted type of beauty, a universal art, something like a recognised standard of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True."\*

The curious contemporary beliefs regarding various branches of the subjects mentioned in the title are set forth in simple forcible language with a directness which sometimes raises a smile. We have only space for one extract—that in which the author describes the cat:—"He is in youth swift, pliant, and merry, and leapeth and reseth [rusheth] on everything that is tofore him: and is led by a straw, and playeth therewith: and is a right, heavy beast in age and full sleepy, and lieth slyly in wait for mice: and is aware where they be more by smell than by sight, and hunteth and reseth on them in privy places: and when he taketh a mouse he playeth therewith, and eateth him after the play. In time of love is hard fighting for wives, and one scratcheth and rendeth the other grievously with biting and with claws. And he maketh a ruthless noise and gshatful when one proffereth to fight with another: and unneth [hardly] is hurt when he is thrown down off an high place. And when he hath a fair skin, he is as it were proud thereof, and goeth fast about: and when his skin is burnt, then he hideth at home, and is oft for his fair skin taken of the skinner, and slain and flayed."

There are notes on the authors quoted by Bartholomew, also a bibliography, a glossary, and an excellent index, so that nothing is wanting to make the work a valuable addition to any library.

Mr. Elliot Stock also sends us another old-world book in the shape of Mr. R. C. Hope's *Legendary Lore of the Holy Wells of England* (7s. 6d.). Mr. Hope is well known as a worker in the history of the bygone times, and in this, "the first systematic attempt" to bring together the traditionary lore connected with wells, rivers, springs and lakes, he brings to our notice a very varied and interesting collection of facts. Works of this kind are, from their nature, always more or less incomplete, and we think it would have been well if Mr. Hope had brought his information a little more up to date. Which of the customs narrated by him still hold a place in popular observance? The Derbyshire "well-dressings" certainly do; yet he quotes no more recent account of the Buxton festival than one published in 1846 in "a local newspaper," and of the still more famous one at Tissington a scarcely more recent description is given. The day or season of many of these observances (Buxton, Barlow, and others) is not mentioned. Mr. Hope is, to say the least of it, by no means definite in his references: "a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*," for example, is very inadequate, and so are "Penrith Observer" and "Denham Tracts." And he might surely have ascertained for himself something about St. Gore's Well in Kensington Gardens, of which he writes: "This well is said to be still visited by the faithful, who believe in the virtues of its waters," and have told us more about so once-popular a resort as Bagnigge Wells than "two springs discovered 1767—the one chalybeate, the other aperient." The book is, however, a very interesting one.

---

\* *Fortnightly Review*, Sept., 1891.

## SOME CHRISTMAS BOOKS.

MESSRS. MACMILLAN send out as a Christmas book a new edition of an old favourite—Miss Mitford's *Our Village*, beautifully illustrated by Hugh Thomson. We have more than once noticed reprints of portions of this work, which seems to have obtained in recent years a new popularity; and we have now before us the three-volume edition, in the elegant binding of sixty years ago, which we read



The Hedge hog

and delighted in many years since. Indeed, if we have a criticism to make on Messrs. Macmillan's beautiful volume, it is on the absence of some indication that it is not a complete work. The introduction by Mrs. Richmond Ritchie adds a charm to the book, and if *Our Village* cannot be ranked as high as *Cranford*, the pioneer of the elegant series of books which has since appeared under that name, it is more Selborman in tone, and in its quiet, simple, true descriptions of country delights and associations. It is pleasant to find that Miss Mitford knew her *Selborne*;

she speaks of the delight of "rambling with Mr. White over his own parish of Selborne, and forming a friendship with the fields and coppices, as well as with the birds, mice and squirrels who inhabit them," and in a footnote speaks of *Selborne* as "one of the most fascinating books ever written." By the kindness of the publishers we are enabled to give a specimen of the illustrations.

Although in some senses more suitable for a summer prize, we hope that many schoolmasters will choose Mr. Furneaux's *The Out-Door World, or Young Collector's Handbook* (Longmans, 7s. 6d.) as a Christmas reward for such of their pupils as show any taste for natural history. Its cover and edges blaze with gilding, its pages swarm with illustrations, there are numerous coloured plates, and the letterpress, so far as we can judge from a somewhat hurried inspection, is nearly all that can be desired. Perhaps the division is a little unequal: "animal life" has 320 pages; "the vegetable world" about 70; while "minerals and fossils" have to be content with 10 between them, and no pictures save of geological hammers. We should like to have seen a little gentle disparagement of "collecting," save as means to an end; but perhaps it is hardly reasonable to expect this in a "collector's handbook." A good many of the cuts are old friends from very various sources, and some of them might have been dispensed with, while the coloured plates of wild flowers should be improved or omitted—indeed the botanical section would be the better for revision. But the object of a book like this is to stimulate observation, and to prepare the way for more systematic study, and this Mr. Furneaux has attained.

Messrs. Longmans have added to their "Silver Library"—an admirable collection in all save the binding, which clothes Cardinal Newman and Mr. Rider Haggard in precisely similar dress—Richard Jefferies' *Wood Magic*, with a delightful frontispiece by our valued contributor "E. V. B." We do not know what children think of this book, in which toads, grasshoppers, thrushes, weasels, squirrels, and the like tell their stories, but many "of a larger growth" will find much to delight them in its pleasant pages. A reprint, however, cannot claim extended notice in the present overcrowded state of our shelves.

A new book by the "Son of the Marshes" is always welcome to many, though some are beginning to fear lest the defects of over-production should be manifest in the work of this most prolific writer. We have no space in which to notice *With the Woodlanders and by the Tide* (Blackwood, 6s.), but this mention of it will serve as a reminder to Christmas-boxers, and a fuller notice will follow at as early a date as possible.

---

## SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

WE note with satisfaction that Messrs. Macmillan have brought out a cheap edition (1s. paper, 1s. 6d. cloth) of Sir John Lubbock's *Beauties of Nature*. We noticed this pleasant book at p. 131, on its first appearance, and only call attention to it now with a view of securing for it a new circle of readers. Even those who do not accept Sir John's ingenious theories about plants and animals cannot fail to enjoy his appreciative comments on "the wonders of the world we live in."

We have received the first part (1s. net) of what is likely to be an important addition to our popular works of reference. *The Royal Natural History*, which Messrs. Warne have just begun to issue, is under the editorship of Mr. Lyddeker, whose name is sufficient guarantee for the accuracy and thoroughness of the work. Each part is to contain two coloured plates, very numerous illustrations, and 96 pages. We hope to say more of the book during its progress. Meanwhile our readers should send for a prospectus.

The Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising, which has not yet been able to hit upon some less formidable name, has resolved upon publishing

a quarterly sixpenny magazine, called *A Beautiful World*, the first number of which is before us. It is to be devoted mainly to matters connected with the Society—its aims, progress, &c. The present number also contains a sonnet by Mr. Alfred Austin, and a pleasant little essay by Mrs. Waterhouse, on the title of the Magazine. We wish every success to this new venture, and welcome it as a fellow-worker in our field. *A Beautiful World* is issued by the publishers of this Journal.

### PICTURES FOR SCHOOLS.

We have from time to time been asked to recommend pictures for schools, and have too long delayed saying a good word for those issued by the Fitzroy Picture Society, 20, Fitzroy Street, W. The aim of this body—a small group of well-known decorative artists—is to provide pictures of good size, bold outline, and bright but not vulgar colouring, which may suitably occupy some of the wall space which abounds in our large schools. The pictures are to be placed at some height upon the wall, otherwise their intended efforts will not be realised.

The series are for the most part of religious or scriptural subjects, but the set of "The Four Seasons," by Mr. Heywood Sumner, may be commended to Selbornians. The accompanying sketch will give some idea of the style of treatment adopted: the four contrast very pleasingly with each other in style and colour.



The elder-blossom in "Summer," even at a distance, is somewhat too solid for our taste, and we are sorry that Mr. Sumner should have placed in the garden the comparatively recently introduced Californian yellow columbine, instead of the handsomer and more characteristic species which has been familiar in our borders for centuries. The size of the pictures is 33 in. by 17 in. lengthwise, and the price 2s. 6d. each.

The Art for Schools Association, which is just now holding its annual picture show at its rooms, 29, Queen Square, has issued this year a handsome chromolithograph of the handsome purple *Clematis Jackmanni*. We have before spoken (NATURE NOTES, 1891, p. 216), of the usefulness of pictures of this class for schools, and the present, from its bold yet graceful design, and its full colouring, is at least as suitable as any of those we then recommended. The price of the picture is 2s. to subscribers, 3s. to non-subscribers; its size, 30 in. by 22 in.

## PESTS OF THE HOUSEHOLD.\*

SINCE the days of Gilbert White much more interest has been felt by people in general respecting the natural objects around them, and many books have been devoted to popular natural history. There is no need to go very far afield, and Mr. Butler has given us here a series of articles (reprinted from *Knowledge*), on the commonest of the numerous ants, wasps, moths, cockroaches, crickets, flies, gnats, bugs, &c., which are (or *may*) be found in any house in town or country.

Mr. Butler quotes Gilbert White sometimes, as, for instance, as regards the chirping of the field-cricket; but since his time, the increase of cultivation has rendered the field-cricket a really scarce insect in England, and probably few observers are likely to have the pleasure of hearing it, unless they visit the Continent, where it is still common, and sometimes destructive. Mr. Butler thinks that the house-cricket is likewise disappearing before its silent and more objectionable relative, the cockroach.

Most of the insects which infest our houses are importations from abroad; among others, the cockroach, the house-ant, and the bed-bug. The author devotes considerable space to the last-named insect, and is inclined to think that no poison is instilled into the wound. This is a doubtful point; and we may mention that when we have been unfortunate enough to fall in the way of the insect, we have found that the subsequent swelling and inflammation were much reduced if not entirely prevented by slightly scarifying and squeezing the punctured part.

Gnats and mosquitoes are now recognised by entomologists as identical, and though less offensive insects than bugs, are probably far more annoying when numerous. But there are many species, some more virulent than others; and the same species probably differs much in virulence in different seasons or under different circumstances. We are fortunately seldom much exposed to the attacks of gnats in England, and, as Mr. Butler remarks:

“In the days when every house had its water-butt, and when stagnant ponds abounded on every side, often in close proximity to human dwellings, the conditions were so much the more favourable for the multiplication of gnats, and wherever such conditions now obtain, the insects are still likely to be both numerous and troublesome. But the extensive abolition of the water-butt, the introduction of closed and indoor cisterns, and the better drainage of the land, have all tended to throw hindrances in the way of the *Culicida*, and have helped to reduce their numbers in our own country, whatever may be the case elsewhere. There is evidence enough of this in literature. Enormous swarms of gnats, of one kind or another, seem formerly to have been a not unusual experience, though such a thing now scarcely ever occurs here.”

It is not always in hot countries that the swarms of gnats or mosquitoes are troublesome. All travellers describe Lapland as terribly infested with them; while the hero of the Esthonian epic, the Kalevipoeg, had the utmost difficulty in forcing his way through the swarms which infested the cavern he was traversing on his way to Hades.

Mr. Butler describes very clearly the structure and habits of the insects which he discusses. Here and there we think a little further explanation might be desirable, as, for instance, when describing the leg of a cockroach as typical of that of insects in general, he might have noted that the trochanter is sometimes double, as in the sawflies and some other families of Hymenoptera.

The earwig is one of those insects to which our author has paid particular attention, and he gives very elaborate directions for expanding the beautiful wing of the insect, which is seldom seen unfolded in a state of nature. Probably the insect flies about at night, if at all. The following paragraph respecting the earwig, though its substance is frequently quoted, may find a place here:—

“The earwig is one of those insects whose metamorphosis is incomplete, like the cockroach and cricket. The eggs are little, oval, yellow things; they may sometimes be found under stones, &c. De Geer has left an account of a mother

---

\* *Our Household Insects*. An account of the insect-pests found in dwelling-houses, by Edward A. Butler, B.A., B.Sc. (London: Longman, 8vo, pp. vi., 344, plates and woodcuts. Price 6s.)

earwig which he found with a batch of eggs, which implies that these insects, contrary to the general practice, show maternal solicitude. He placed the eggs in a jar, scattered them over the surface of some earth it contained, and then put the mother in. She immediately set to work, picking up the eggs with her jaws, and conveyed them all to the same spot, where she remained jealously guarding her treasure till the young were hatched, and even then the cares of maternity were not over, for the young ones clustered round their mother, running in and out between her legs and under her body, like chickens under the mother hen." But the sequel of all this maternal care was the death of the mother earwig, who was then devoured by her progeny."

There are many interesting subjects in Mr. Butler's book, but it is impossible to touch upon them all in our limited space. The plates and numerous woodcuts scattered through the text are fairly well executed, and contribute much to the attractive appearance of the book.

---

### SELBORNIANA.

**A Royal Example.**—The opportunity he has had of seeing on their way to Marlborough House a consignment of new hats for the Princess of Wales and her daughters (for they wear the same shape) enables the London correspondent of the *Liverpool Post* to contribute one particular example to the great feather controversy. They are of the half alpine shape now coming into fashion—black, with black velvet and black silk ribbons and feathers. The Princesses wear feathers, but they are those of birds which must be shot for human consumption. One of the neatest contained a black cock's tail feathers, while the feather from a black Spanish cock's tail decked another.

**National Trust.**—Yet another Society has been formed in the interests of those objects which Selbornians want to protect. The full title of this is "National Trust for Places of Historical Interest with Natural Beauty;" and the provisional council already includes a number of names distinguished in art, science, literature and social rank. Among them we notice that of our valued correspondent, the Rev. Canon Rawsley, who will, we doubt not, supply the readers of NATURE NOTES with fuller information as to the Trust at some future period.

**Caged Canaries** (pp. 173, 215).—Could the practice of caging birds be limited to those born within the bars, it would of course be robbed of a good deal of its immediate harm. But unfortunately it cannot. Example is a very subtle thing, and spreads like leaven. The sight of any bird in any cage tends to keep afloat a barbarous traffic—that of the bird-catcher and bird-fancier; the seed and "bird speciality" seller and the cage maker give an impetus to these, and it is to their interest, so long as the public will buy cages, &c., to see that the trade in wild birds does not decline. The sight also continues to keep the eye familiar with what any merciful person would feel a thrill of horror at observing if he saw it for the first time—that of a winged creature cooped up so as to be debarred from flying. It is only because we have grown accustomed to such enormities that we can bear to see them. It makes no difference to the moral standpoint that the race has been for many generations a captive one. The thing is not less mistaken in itself on this account; because others began a wrong will not excuse us in continuing it. As well might one say that there would be right on the side of those who wished to go on enslaving the African tribes on the pretext that they had become domesticated on an alien soil. That is the argument tested in its full development. I yield in fondness for birds to no one; my love for them is such that I cannot endure to see them under conditions other than those which are their right by birth; I would *win* their society, not *enforce* it. I have also the good of my own species at heart, and I think it very questionable whether the sight of any creature in a cage has aught but a demoralising effect. It appears to me a disgrace to a civilised age. A little unselfishness, reverence, and self-denial in the mode of showing admiration and affection for the works of God would better become the loftiest among them. It is incumbent on all who really have the progress of humanity as their aim to look beyond

the momentary consequences of their actions, and to note their effect on the great family of which they are members. Any kind-hearted person who could see the miserable little canaries which I am obliged to pass as they drag out their wretched lives in dingy windows of dirty streets, undergoing, by the dozen, every sort of neglect and distress, would hesitate before defending the keeping of them as a *universal custom*. And it is in this way that the thoughtful—those who wish to do good in their generation—are learning to look at things. There is actually a superstition among the ignorant that the smaller the cage you keep a bird in the better, “because it is more snug!” and they act accordingly. The bird shows of which your correspondent speaks seldom draw the line at canaries. An exhibition of the kind to which she alludes has just taken place in London, at which the piteous spectacle of a caged swallow was to be seen, besides caged nightingales, and a redstart—birds of passage to whom the mere fact of curbing the passionate desire to migrate is a martyrdom in itself, so earnest and overpowering it. These and their like are the cruelties to which keeping up bird-caging as a national habit tends, and I would earnestly recommend this view to those who are concerned, and rightly, at the terrible diminution of bird life at home and abroad.

EDITH CARRINGTON.

**Are Women Entirely to Blame?**—I have been much grieved to see that the destruction of birds for the adornment (?) of millinery still goes on, and also that wings are to be the fashion this winter. It seems to me that laying all the blame on women for *wearing* feathers does not go to the root of the matter. What is to be said for the men, who for the *sake of profit* make a trade of slaughtering birds? It is they who make money out of it, not women. I know many women who would not think of wearing feathers that had been obtained by cruel means, but they are told over and over again in the shops that the wings are made up from feathers of birds killed for food, and also that the aigrettes now sold are made of vegetable fibre, and that they would be throwing numbers of workers out of work if they left off buying feathers. What are they to believe? I think it is time to give up the sneers about women being less civilised than men. Their sphere has until recent years been so limited that they have been kept in ignorance of many trade arrangements, but now that they are taking a more active share in the work of the world outside of the home, they are often “sickened” to find out how shamefully and cruelly many things are managed.

M. T.

**The Great Orme's Head.**—Mr. Tracy Turnerelli has published a characteristic letter on “the too probable total effacement” of this mountain, from which we extract the following:—“A project to run an electric railroad over the mountain, from bottom to top, from side to side, is now being publicly discussed for the mere profit of greedy speculators and the further attraction of riotous howling trippers, who have already half ruined Llandudno itself. This railroad once established, as a natural inevitable consequence, hotels, houses, taverns and drinking booths! *ad infinitum!* will cover the Grand Old Orme, and then—Ichabod! to it *in toto*. Can nothing be done to prevent this barbarous sacrilege? I am entreated from a hundred quarters to make the endeavour, and although at eighty years of age I had hoped to retire from public life, I yield to this collective entreaty.”

**“The Field Club.”**—On and after January next *The Field Club* will cease to exist as an independent magazine, arrangements having been made for its incorporation in NATURE NOTES.

An interesting lecture on Gilbert White, entitled “Glimpses of a Popular Naturalist,” was given before the Eastbourne Natural History Society on November 17, by Mr. Thomas Bradfield.

We learn without much regret of the death of the *Nature Lover*, the first and only issue of which was noticed at p. 214.

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Nuthatches** (p. 201).—Few birds are more interesting, or greater favourites with those who have watched them, than nuthatches; and many readers will be grateful for Mrs. Downing's paper. I may say, I hope without any breach of confidence, that several years ago I received a letter from the Rev. J. C. Atkinson, describing his own experiences with nuthatches. These were very similar to Mrs. Downing's; for he too had shot nuts for them "as a boy shoots a marble," and the nuthatches caught them in the air. One plan of his was to fix nuts on the trunk of a tree, with hammer and tacks. The nuthatches got to know the sound, so much so that if Mr. Atkinson wanted to show them to visitors, he had only to tap the tree with his hammer, and they would come round. I think he also said that at one house they learned to come for nuts nailed on the window-ledge. I have myself had them come close under a window for maize put out for fowls. There is one sentence in Mrs. Downing's paper, about which, if I may venture to say so, further information would be very acceptable. "This [nut] he struck deliberately, several times in succession against the masonry of the chimney, until he had no doubt sufficiently cracked it." Now a nuthatch's ordinary method has been described for us by our master, Gilbert White, in his one hundredth letter; the nuthatch "picks an irregular ragged hole with its bill: but as this artist has no paws to hold the nut firm while he pierces it" [White had just before spoken of the squirrel and mouse] "like an adroit workman he fixes it, as it were, in a vice in some cleft of a tree, or in some crevice; when standing over it, he perforates the stubborn shell." I speak, of course, under correction, but I would respectfully express a doubt whether a nuthatch could crack the "stubborn shell" of a sound nut by striking it even against stone. Somewhat curiously, I happen to remember once reading what professed to be a description of a thrush's manner of breaking a snail's shell. "He places it between two stones, and hammers it with his bill till he breaks it." I need not say that this is what a thrush (ordinarily at any rate) does not do; for he holds the snail in his beak, and easily breaks the thin shell by banging it on a stone. But what is easy with a snail-shell will be found by experiment very difficult with a nutshell; and many no doubt could by their own observation confirm the accuracy of White's description of the nuthatch's usual way of going to work.

*Otham, Maidstone.*

F. M. MILLARD.

**Earwigs** (pp. 157, 179).—I have more than once seen earwigs attempt to use their tail forceps as weapons. One, which we caught on purpose, succeeded in pinching my brother's finger, though the pinch was so slight that he hardly felt it.

EVELYN TALBOT PONSONBY.

**Late Flowers at Hindhead.**—The following is a list of garden and wild flowers which I have noticed about Hindhead during this month (October), some in large, some in small quantities. In our garden we have had white and yellow broom, weigela, auricula, the large perennial oriental poppy, an annual poppy (*Papaver umbrosum*), Iceland poppies, dahlias, pansies, phlox, spiderwort, pinks, perennial lupin, white campanula, a blue campanula (*latifolia*) also abundance of mignonette, and of the white sweet-scented candytuft. In the lanes, &c., I see Herb Robert and another geranium, the common red campion, the white lychnis (*L. vespertina*), a stork's bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), a small stellaria, and the common red dead nettle, bramble flowers, &c. A great deal of gorse is in flower, and a profusion of it coming on. There is still an extraordinary abundance as well as a great variety of fungi. Mushrooms were plentiful until the middle of the month. I hear of dishes of raspberries, and of strawberries being gathered in gardens near Haslemere. At Willesden Green a lime tree put on a fresh suit of leaves in September.

*Hindhead.*

E. C. W.

**Late Swallows.**—Yesterday, November 5th, I saw a number of swallows busily working in a field here, near the farm buildings. They flew very low, and so near to me that I had a full view of them. They had no appearance of young birds, but were well grown and in full plumage. Previously, I have seen



none since October 2nd. On October 10th, a gold-crested wren flew in at the window, and remained quietly perched on the sash, making no effort to escape, and finally allowing himself to be caught and turned out of the window. They are very rarely seen here.

*Neston, Cheshire.*

MARY RATHMORE.

**Bird Queries** (pp. 217, 218).—The night-singing bird whose name your correspondent Jacey is anxious to know is evidently the sedge warbler, a most persevering little nocturnal songster during the spring and summer months. In answer to M. S. Y.'s query as to the habit of swallows departing in batches, I believe it is the usual thing for them to do so. The main body of the hirundines departed from this neighbourhood about the third week in September, but stragglers were to be seen up till October 7th. The short-tailed and late-staying swallows mentioned by F. M. Millard were undoubtedly young birds, which do not assume the distinctly forked tail of the adult until after the first moult, and are also always, I believe, the last to wing their way to the sunny south.

*Fyfield, Abingdon.*

W. II. WARNER.

**Water-rats.**—Taking a walk through the lovely lanes that surround Totteridge, and passing down an alley path just by Totteridge Church, I came upon a pond covered with weed, with several curious-looking balls upon its surface which drew my attention. Stooping down to get a closer inspection of it I was quite startled to hear a splash, and looking in the direction of the sound I saw a fine water-rat swimming rapidly across the pond. I therefore drew back, and taking up a position where I could not be seen, waited. I had not long to wait. They soon came back, and I had a most profitable hour, learning more than a dozen books could have done in a year's study. I first noticed that they are entirely vegetable eaters, for they were eating the leaves and other decaying matter lying on the banks. They in eating sit on their haunches like the squirrel, using their front paws like a monkey. I also noticed that the opening of the nest is invariably under the water.

E. J. HIGHAM.

**A Turkey Dance.**—A few days ago we were much amused, in passing a field in which were some young turkeys, to see them getting up a dance. First two young "Toons" bowed politely to each other, then passed on with stately tread, skipped into the air twice in the most ludicrous manner, turned and repeated the same performance. Several others then joined, but we had to catch a train, and were obliged reluctantly to deny ourselves the amusement of seeing any more "figures." A labourer tells us he has seen young strong birds do it, but this sight was quite new to us, though we have lived in the country many years.

*North Moreton Vicarage, Wallingford.*

M. S. YOUNG.

**A Friendly Landrail.**—As the landrail is generally considered a shy and timid bird, I think the following account of one may be interesting. During the month of July last I had noticed one in a field near the house, and went daily to watch it, leaning on the gate within a stone's throw of it, when it would walk about and look at me with quite a mutual interest! It remained there for about three weeks, and one morning I was giving orders in the kitchen when I heard two loud taps on the window-pane, and looking towards it I saw the landrail sitting on the window ledge; it gazed at me for about a quarter of a minute and then flew away, and I neither saw nor heard anything of it in the field from that time. Perhaps it came to say "good-bye," instinctively knowing that I took such an interest in it. The bird was a very fine specimen. The field lay to the north and the kitchen window looks south, and is some distance from the field.

*The Vicarage, Mydrim.*

ALICE A. BRITTEN.

**Dogs Communicating.**—A friend of mine has two dogs, a retriever and a half-bred collie and staghound, a most extraordinarily intelligent animal. The retriever is so deaf that at a distance she can hear no word of command. On one occasion my friend had been walking along a straight road attended by both dogs. The retriever, Dora, had gone forward some distance so as to be quite out of reach of her voice, the collie was nearer to her; she wished to turn back, so said

to the collie, "Glen, go and fetch Dora." She darted off, rushed close past the retriever and turned round in front of her. She at once without the slightest hesitation turned also, and followed my friend. I can vouch for the truth of this statement, because I have seen Glen do as I have described.

Weybridge.

Z. P. SMITH.

**Climate and Trees.**—As an instance of the effect of climate upon naturally deciduous trees, I may mention that in a bush garden in the Calder district, Table Cape, on the north-west coast of this island, there is an apricot tree which kept several dozen of its leaves quite fresh and green through last winter, and on through the summer, so that those branches on which the leaves are growing are really evergreen. The tree is a young one, about three years old, from a Melbourne nursery, and is placed against the north or sunny wall of a wooden house. Apple trees, also, in the same district retain many of their leaves in a green condition far into the winter, evidencing the great mildness of the climate.

Waratah, Mt. Bischoff, Tasmania.

H. S. DOVE.

### OFFICIAL NOTICE.

UP to November 14th subscriptions amounting to £36 8s. have been received for the fund towards clearing off the debt of £70 owing to the Hon. Treasurer. Those who have sent donations since the last notice are:—Miss Aentz, Miss Bailey, Miss Blackwell, Miss Budge, Mrs. Blunt, Mrs. Binyon, T. A. A., Mrs. Clayton, Mrs. Currie, Mrs. Carter, Miss Cowley, Miss Farmer, Mrs. Geldart, Mrs. Geoghegan, Mrs. Grove Grady, Miss Graham, Mrs. Payne, Hon. Sec., Rape of Lewes Branch, Mr. F. W. Ashley, Miss Lemmon, Mrs. Crum, Mrs. Holme, Mr. H. Barry Hyde, Mr. E. G. Doncaster, Mrs. Edghill, and Miss H. M. Dods.

A. J. WESTERN, Sec.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We regret the delay in issuing this number, which has been caused by the Index, which has been prepared by the Editor under unusual pressure. We were indebted for help in this work last year to one of our contributors, but this year no such assistance has been forthcoming.

**J. L. B.**—(1) *Cladosporium* sp.; (2 and 3) yes; (4) *Cladonia sylvatica*; (5) "Oak spangles," the gall of *Neuroteris lenticularis*.

**A. Gray.**—You have not complied with Rules 1 and 5 (see below), and your specimens arrived in an offensive state.

**T. A. G.**—Please send name and address, in accordance with Rule 1.

**A Correspondent** from Fentimam Road, S.W., appends no name to his communication.

**C. J.**—Yes, *Cystopteris fragilis*.

**ANON.**—The curious balls, known as "Moorballs," are formed of a fresh-water alga, *Conferva agagropila* (= *Cladophora Sauteri*).

WE must request those who favour us with their communications to observe the following rules. We cannot undertake to notice the contributions of any who fail to comply with them.

1. All communications for NATURE NOTES to be authenticated with name and address, not necessarily for publication.

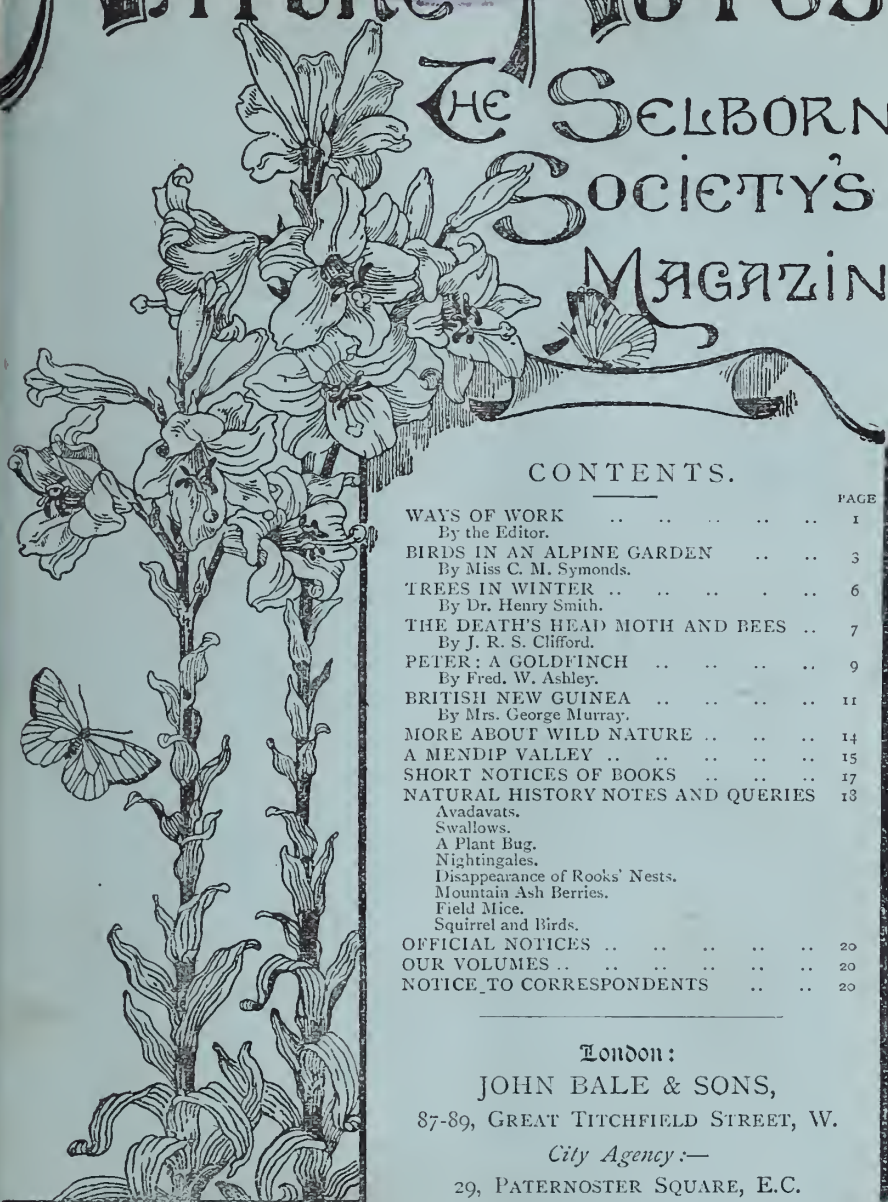
2. The return of an unaccepted contribution can only be guaranteed when it is accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.

3. All communications for any number must be in the Editor's hands by the 15th of the preceding month.

4. Communications for NATURE NOTES should be addressed to the Editor, JAMES BRITTON, F.L.S., 18, West Square, London, S.E., as should specimens for naming, books for review, &c.

5. Letters connected with the Selborne Society, as well as all enquiries and subscriptions, should be addressed to the SECRETARY OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY, J. A. WESTERN, Esq., 9, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C.

# NATURE NOTES, THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
WAYS OF WORK .. .. .	1
By the Editor.	
BIRDS IN AN ALPINE GARDEN .. .. .	3
By Miss C. M. Symonds.	
TREES IN WINTER .. .. .	6
By Dr. Henry Smith.	
THE DEATH'S HEAD MOTH AND BEES .. .. .	7
By J. R. S. Clifford.	
PETER: A GOLDFINCH .. .. .	9
By Fred. W. Ashley.	
BRITISH NEW GUINEA .. .. .	11
By Mrs. George Murray.	
MORE ABOUT WILD NATURE .. .. .	14
A MENDIP VALLEY .. .. .	15
SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS .. .. .	17
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES .. .. .	18
Avadavats.	
Swallows.	
A Plant Bug.	
Nightingales.	
Disappearance of Rooks' Nests.	
Mountain Ash Berries.	
Field Mice.	
Squirrel and Birds.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. .. .	20
OUR VOLUMES .. .. .	20
NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	20

London:

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agency:—

29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

# GAY & BIRD'S PUBLICATIONS.

*Thick royal 8vo, pp. 512, coloured frontispiece and over 100 woodcuts, cloth, 10s. 6d. nett.*

## AMERICAN FISHES,

A Popular Treatise upon the Game and Food Fishes of North America,

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO HABITS AND METHODS OF CAPTURE.

By G. BROWN GOODE,

*Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, late U.S. Commissioner to the International Fisheries' Exhibitions in Berlin and London; author of "Game Fishes of the United States," &c.*

## A HISTORY OF PERU,

By CLEMENTS R. MARKHAM.

*Demy 8vo, 25 full-page illustrations and 5 Maps, cloth, 10s. 6d.*

*Athenæum*, October 29.—“Few people possess better qualifications than Mr. Markham for writing a history of Peru . . . We congratulate Mr. Markham upon his excellent sketches of the better class of society in Peru, its scenery and its antiquities. There is a swing and a dash about his style which impresses the reader and bears him irresistibly along.”

*Oblong 8vo, handsomely bound in bevelled cloth gilt, gilt top, 6s.*

## OUR COMMON BIRDS AND HOW TO KNOW THEM,

By JOHN B. GRANT.

BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY-FOUR FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS.

This work is a handbook for the study and classification of birds. The author gives in the body of the book descriptions of the plumage, size and shape, migrations, nest building, flying and other habits, the song, &c., of ninety of the more common birds to be met with in the United States, many of which are to be found in the British Isles.

A distinct literary quality is imparted to the descriptions, which makes the book one for the library as well as a companion in out-of-door rambles, by the author's quotations from Thoreau, Burroughs and other painters of nature, and by his references to legends, superstitions and the like, that are associated with certain birds.

*Nature Notes*.—“A very pretty book, is very cheap, and will, we hope, find a hearty welcome.”

## JAPANESE GIRLS & WOMEN,

By ALICE MABEL BACON.

*Crown 8vo, pp. 346, cloth, 5s.*

*Daily Telegraph*.—“The chapters she has penned are delightful . . . Her book ought to be popular and well read for a long time to come.”

*Queen*.—“There are pages, nay, whole chapters of the book, that simply charm . . . I hope to find space for a fuller account of a book which I have read with quite unusual interest and pleasure.”

*Crown 8vo, pp. 240, and 14 plates, cloth, 6s.*

## THE OYSTER,

A Popular Summary of a Scientific Study.

By W. K. BROOKS, *Professor of Animal Morphology in Johns Hopkins University.*

## LANGUAGES FRENCH, GERMAN, SPANISH, ITALIAN,

Actually spoken and mastered in Ten Weeks, without leaving your homes, by DR. ROSENTHAL'S MEISTERSCHAFT SYSTEM. 550th Thousand. Pupils taught as if actually in the presence of the teacher.

All subscribers, 15s. for parts, of three lessons **MASTERED** each language receive 15 each, in a neat paper box.

SEND FOR CIRCULARS STATING LANGUAGE REQUIRED.

## IN 10 WEEKS.

AMERICAN BOOKS are a Speciality with us. Catalogue gratis.

LONDON: GAY & BIRD, 27, KING WILLIAM STREET, STRAND.

Just Published. 106pp. Imperial 16mo, Cloth Lettered, 3s. 6d.

---

# LA VITA NUOVA,

BY

**DANTE ALIGHIERI,**

*WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS IN ENGLISH,*

**By N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.,**

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of Music; author of "An Italian Conversation Grammar," &c.*

---

London :

HACHETTE & CO., 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS.

E. TURNBULL, 66, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.

---

**AGENT FOR**

"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."  
&c., &c.

**J. I. BAXTER,**

Advertising Agent,

**29, Paternoster Square, E.C.**

.....

Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs

# EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE,

Government and General Publishers,

ALSO AGENTS TO THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT.

## ENGLISH ARMY LISTS AND COMMISSION REGISTERS, 1661-1714.

Edited by CHARLES DALTON, F.R.G.S., Editor of the *Waterloo Roll Call*, &c. -Vol. 1. 1661-1685. 25s.

"This is a book which all lovers of history will welcome as filling a gap in our records. . . . An admirable index nominum has been added. Mr. Dalton's book, produced as a labour of love, is of permanent value, and we shall look with interest for the appearance of his second volume."—*Army and Navy Gazette*.

"Students of history in general, and of military history in particular, owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Charles Dalton for digesting and printing the English Army Lists and Commission Registers that are to be found in the public records. . . . The book forms a most valuable addition to the books of record evidence, and will be welcome to every earnest student of history."—*Scotsman*.

"A laborious contribution to the history of the British Army."—*Times*.

**STATE TRIALS.** New Series. Vol. 4, 10s. Edited by Mr. J.-P. WALLIS, under the Direction of the State Trials Committee. The Volume will contain several noteworthy Chartist trials between the years 1839 and 1843, including Frost's trial for high treason and the trials of Feargus O'Connor and Thomas Cooper. Among other trials of interest are those of Oxford, Francis, and Bean for shooting at the Queen, and of Lord Cardigan before the House of Peers for his duel with Captain Tuckett.  
*[Ready early in January.]*

**KEW BULLETIN.** A Monthly Record issued by the Director of the Royal Gardens, Kew, containing valuable Notes on Economic Produce and Plants. Largely increasing circulation. Subscription for 12 months, including postage, 6s. 6d.; Volume for 1887, in boards, by post, 2s. 7d.; 1888, 2s. 8d.; 1889, 2s. 8d.; 1890, 3s. 2d.; 1891, 3s. 4d.

**KEW BULLETIN, 1893.** Monthly 4d. Appendices 4d. Subscription for the year including postage 6s. 6d.

**THE NEW ZEALAND OFFICIAL HANDBOOK, 1892.** Contains a Graphic Description of the Islands, giving the Geographical and Geological Features; the Political History; also Chapters on the Climate, Temperature, and Rainfall, upon Agriculture, Fisheries, Education, Labour Market, &c., and Statistical Information on all Subjects. 1s. 6d.

**AORANGI; or, the Heart of the Southern Alps, New Zealand.** By MALCOLM ROSS. 1s.

**NEW ZEALAND'S LONE LANDS.** Being Brief Notes of a Visit to the Outlying Islands of the Colony. By RO. CARRICK. 1s.

**A ROMANCE OF LAKE WAKATIPU: a Legend of the Lakes.** Being Episodes of Early Goldfields Life in New Zealand, with Itinerant, Statistical, Historical, and other Notes. By RO. CARRICK. 1s.

**THE ARYAN MAORI.** By EDWARD TREGEAR. Demy 8vo. 2s. 6d.

**INTRODUCTORY CLASS-BOOK OF BOTANY** for Use in New Zealand Schools. By G. M. THOMSON, F.L.S. Part I., Structural; Part II.; Systematic. Cloth, 2s. 6d.

**THE ICERYA PURCHASI AND ITS CURE (VEDALIA CARDINALES).** Compiled in the General Crown Lands Department, New Zealand. 6d.

**FOREST FLORA OF NEW ZEALAND.** By T. KIRK, F.L.S., late Chief Conservator of State Forests, N.Z., &c. Numerous Plates. Fcap. folio, cloth, 12s. 6d.

**INDIGENOUS GRASSES OF NEW ZEALAND.** By JOHN BUCHANAN. Full-page Illustrations. Imp. 4to, half morocco, 15s. Royal 8vo, 5s.

**ORANGE CULTURE IN NEW ZEALAND.** By G. C. ALDERTON. Demy 8vo, cloth, 2s.

**MANUAL OF BIRDS OF NEW ZEALAND.** By WALTER L. BULLER, C.M.G., Sc.D., F.R.S. Numerous Plates. Royal 8vo. 10s.

**HANDBOOK OF NEW ZEALAND FISHES.** By R. A. A. SHERRIN. Demy 8vo, cloth, 2s.

**TROUT IN NEW ZEALAND.** Where to go, and how to catch them. By W. H. SPACKMAN, B.A., President of the Canterbury Anglers' Society. Cloth, 2s. 6d.

EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE. London: East Harding Street.

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE CENTENARY OF GILBERT WHITE ..	21
By Dudley W. Buxton, M.D.	
WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA.—I. .. .. .	22
By Hamilton Stuart Dove, F.Z.S.	
SIR RICHARD OWEN AND HIS BIRDS ..	24
By James Startin.	
BIRD LIFE ON A NEW ZEALAND RUN ..	25
By H. Guthrie Smith.	
SEEDLINGS .. .. .	28
By the Editor.	
TWO BOOKS OF VERSE .. .. .	31
THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS .. .. .	33
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	34
Flowers of Avon at Aldworth.	
A Battue of Sea Birds.	
A Motto.	
Kew Ait.	
Butterflies in Danger.	
Feeding the Birds.	
Preservation of Birds in New Zealand.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES ..	36
Disappearance of Rooks' Nests.	
A Robin Query.	
Welsh Plant Names.	
Birds at a Lighthouse.	
Squirrels and Birds.	
Sparrow and Kingfisher.	
Domestication of Wood Pigeons.	
Wild Life in Tasmania.	
The Death's Head Moth and Bees.	
Magpies Flocking.	
Cockchafer.	
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	40

London:

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agent:—

J. I. BAXTER,  
29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by

JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

# JOHN BALE & SONS

Printers of the following Journals, &c. :—

*Brain—British Gynæcological Journal—Celebrities of the Day—Churchman's Magazine—Englishwoman's Review—Journal of the British Dental Association—Library—Odontological Society's Transactions—Ophthalmological Review—Nature Notes—Nurses' Journal—Rational Dress Society's Gazette, &c., &c.,*

ARE PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE

## CONTRACTS FOR PRINTING,

AND TO QUOTE

REASONABLE AND INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

For every Description of Work.

---

PAMPHLETS, MAGAZINES AND BOOK PRINTING.

---

Prices Current, Catalogues and Commercial Work.

---

CLIENTS WAITED UPON FOR INSTRUCTIONS UPON RECEIPT OF POST CARD.

---

**87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET,  
OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.**



Just Published. 106pp. Imperial 16mo, Cloth Lettered, 2s. 6d.

---

# LA VITA NUOVA,

BY

DANTE ALIGHIERI,

WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS IN ENGLISH,

By N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.,

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of Music; author of "An Italian Conversation Grammar," &c.*

---

London :

HACHETTE & CO., 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS.

E. TURNBULL, 66, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.

---

**AGENT FOR**

"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."  
&c., &c.

**J. I. BAXTER,**

Advertising Agent,

29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

\*\*\*\*\*

Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs

# CONTRIBUTION TO OUR KNOWLEDGE OF SEEDLINGS,

By SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, Bart.

2 vols., demy 8vo, 36s. net.

*Nature*.—"One of the most substantial and important contributions to botanical literature that have ever emanated from the press. It must continue to be a standard book of reference for generations."

*Natural Science*.—"The two good-sized volumes contain the results of a vast amount of work. Seeds of almost every natural order have been germinated, and the seeds and seedlings, and process of germination, described."

*Gardening World*.—"The writers on seedlings, seeds, &c., have been very numerous, but their works are small compared with the great work under notice. This work is the most extensive and exhaustive that has ever been written by an English author, and will no doubt continue to be so for many years to come. . . . The work cannot fail to be of service or interest to botanists, physiologists, and naturalists generally in various spheres of intellectual research, while working in the laboratory, the class-room, or otherwise."

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & Co., Ltd.,

LONDON: PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING CROSS ROAD.

---

Now Ready. Third Edition. Demy 8vo, 260 pp., cloth, gilt lettered, 5s.

## AN ITALIAN CONVERSATION GRAMMAR

COMPRISING THE MOST IMPORTANT RULES OF ITALIAN GRAMMAR WITH  
NUMEROUS EXAMPLES AND EXERCISES THEREON; ENGLISH-ITALIAN

DIALOGUES; AND EXTRACTS IN ITALIAN-POETRY,

FOLLOWED BY

A SHORT GUIDE TO ITALIAN COMPOSITION.

ALSO AN ENGLISH-ITALIAN AND ITALIAN-ENGLISH VOCABULARY.

BY N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of Music,  
and Italian Examiner to the Staff College, the Royal Military Academy,  
Woolwich, and the Society of Arts.*

LIBRAIRIE HACHETTE & C<sup>IE</sup>.

LONDON: 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS, W.C.

PARIS; 79, BOULEVARD SAINT-GERMAIN.

BOSTON, U.S.: CARL SCHÖENHOF.

---

Fcap 8vo, 74pp., cloth, gilt lettered, gilt edges, One Shilling.

## NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY

BY

HENRY SUTHERLAND,

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO

COLONEL SHADWELL H. CLERKE

*Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England.*

JOHN BALE & SONS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, W.

*John Bale and Sons, Printers, 87-89, Gt. Titchfield Street, London, W.*

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A POET OF EARLY SPRING .. .. .	41
By the Editor.	
WHITE OF SELBORNE .. .. .	43
HORSE CHESTNUT BUDS .. .. .	46
By Bessy Holland.	
"THE DEATH OF CORTES" .. .. .	47
THE LAST OF THE KINGFISHERS .. .. .	49
By A. T. Johnson.	
WINTER ACONITES .. .. .	51
By Richard F. Towndrow.	
FOOTPATHS .. .. .	51
FIELD PHILOSOPHY .. .. .	52
By the Rev. John Gerard.	
SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS .. .. .	53
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	55
The Excursion to Selborne.	
The Birds of New Zealand.	
Bird Catchers.	
Lantern Slides.	
Folk Songs.	
A Plea for the Skylark.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES .. .. .	57
Daily flight of Rooks.	
Memory in Birds.	
Cockchafers.	
Squirrel Mobbed by Birds.	
Natterjack Toad.	
Birds and Lighthouses.	
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	59
BRANCHES OF THE SELBORNE SOCIETY .. .. .	60

London:  
**JOHN BALE & SONS,**  
 87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.  
*City Agent:—*  
**J. I. BAXTER,**  
 29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE E.C.

Edited by  
**JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.**

# JOHN BALE & SONS

Printers of the following Journals, &c.:—

*Brain—British Gynæcological Journal—Celebrities of the Day—Churchman's Magazine—Englishwoman's Review—Journal of the British Dental Association—Library—Odontological Society's Transactions—Ophthalmological Review—Nature Notes—Nurses' Journal—Rational Dress Society's Gazette, &c., &c.,*

ARE PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE

## CONTRACTS FOR PRINTING,

AND TO QUOTE

REASONABLE AND INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

For every Description of Work.

---

PAMPHLETS, MAGAZINES AND BOOK PRINTING.

---

Prices Current, Catalogues and Commercial Work.

---

CLIENTS WAITED UPON FOR INSTRUCTIONS UPON RECEIPT OF POST CARD.

---

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET,  
OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

Now Ready. Third Edition. Demy 8vo, 260 pp., cloth, gilt lettered, 5s.

# AN ITALIAN CONVERSATION GRAMMAR

COMPRISING THE MOST IMPORTANT RULES OF ITALIAN GRAMMAR WITH  
NUMEROUS EXAMPLES AND EXERCISES THEREON; ENGLISH-ITALIAN  
DIALOGUES; AND EXTRACTS IN ITALIAN POETRY,  
FOLLOWED BY  
A SHORT GUIDE TO ITALIAN COMPOSITION.  
ALSO AN ENGLISH-ITALIAN AND ITALIAN-ENGLISH VOCABULARY.

BY N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of Music,  
and Italian Examiner to the Staff College, the Royal Military Academy,  
Woolwich, and the Society of Arts.*

LIBRAIRIE HACHETTE & C<sup>IE</sup>.

LONDON: 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS, W.C.

PARIS; 79, BOULEVARD SAINT-GERMAIN.

BOSTON, U.S.: CARL SCHOENHOF.

---

**AGENT FOR**

"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."  
&c., &c.

**J. I. BAXTER,**

Advertising Agent,

29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

\*\*\*\*\*

Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs

**NEW BOOKS PUBLISHED BY GURNEY & JACKSON.**

This day is published, 8vo cloth, 492 pp., with 174 Illustrations and a Map, £1 1s.

**WILD SPAIN :**

RECORDS OF SPORT WITH RIFLE, ROD AND GUN, NATURAL HISTORY  
AND EXPLORATION.

By ABEL CHAPMAN, F.Z.S.,

Author of "Bird-Life of the Borders."

And WALTER J. BUCK, C.M.Z.S., of Jerez.

(A limited number of Copies on Large Paper, royal 8vo, at Two Guineas.)

8vo, cloth, 448 pp., with 16 Illustrations and a Map, 15s.

**FUR-BEARING ANIMALS IN NATURE AND IN COMMERCE.**

By HENRY POLAND, F.Z.S.

"Mr. Poland's novel and valuable work will be found of interest to all who avail themselves of the stores of warm and beautiful material for clothing and enrichment of dress supplied by the fur-bearing animals of the world. To those who are in any way connected with the fur-trading industry the book will become indispensable."—*Morning Post*, September 10, 1892.

8vo, cloth, 400 pages, with 14 Illustrations, 12s. 6d.

**ODOROGRAPHIA,**

*A Natural History of Raw Materials and Drugs used in the Perfume Industry,  
Intended to serve Growers, Manufacturers and Consumers.*

By J. CH. SAWER, F.L.S.

Nearly forty different kinds of scent-producing materials are described, chief among which are the following:—The plants from which the odour of the rose is obtained, violets, vanilla, cinnamon, cassia, cloves, heliotrope, camphor, musk, lavender, patchouli, and citrine odours.

**GURNEY & JACKSON, 1, PATERNOSTER ROW.**

(MR. VAN VOORST'S SUCCESSORS.)

Just Published. 106pp. Imperial 16mo, Cloth Lettered, 2s. 6d.

**LA VITA NUOVA,**

BY

**DANTE ALIGHIERI,**

*WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS IN ENGLISH,*

By N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.,

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of  
Music; author of "An Italian Conversation Grammar," &c.*

London :

HACHETTE & CO., 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS.

E. TURNBULL, 66, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MR. RODEN NOEL'S SPRING POETRY ..	61
By Miss E. H. Hickey.	
WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA, II. . . . .	64
By Hamilton Stuart Dove, F.Z.S.	
ANTICIPATIONS .. .. .	66
By M.R.G.B.	
INSECT-COLLECTING .. .. .	67
By the Hon. Mrs. Boyle.	
SPORT WITHOUT A GUN .. .. .	69
By Ernest Ingersoll.	
BEAST AND MAN IN INDIA .. .. .	71
By J. J. Platel, B.A.	
LIFE IN THE FIELDS .. .. .	74
SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS .. .. .	75
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	76
Protection of Wild Birds.	
A Plea for the Primroses.	
Barbed Wire.	
A Salutory Lesson.	
Why Multiply Societies?	
Thrushes and Drink.	
A Choice Combination.	
Lantern Slides.	
Pinner Branch.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES ..	78
An Early Wood Pigeon.	
Natterjack Toad.	
The Sparrow once more.	
Horse Chestnut Buds.	
A Census of London Rookeries.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. .. .	79
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	80

London:  
 JOHN BALE & SONS,  
 87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.  
 City Agent:—  
 J. I. BAXTER,  
 29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
 JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

# CASSELL & COMPANY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

SECOND EDITION. Now Ready, fcap. 4to, cloth, 3s. 6d.

**BETLES, BUTTERFLIES, MOTHS, AND OTHER INSECTS.** With 12 Coloured Plates.

CHEAP EDITION. Price 2s. 6d.

**THE FIELD NATURALIST'S HANDBOOK.** By Revs. J. G. Wood and THEODORE WOOD.

CHEAP EDITION. Price 3s. 6d.

**NATURE'S WONDER-WORKERS:** Being some Short Life-Histories in the Insect World. By KATE R. LOVELL. Illustrated.

CHEAP EDITION. Cloth, 5s.

**THE LIFE OF THE REV. J. G. WOOD.** By his Son, the Rev. THEODORE WOOD. With Portrait.

SECOND EDITION. Price 5s.

**BIRDS' NESTS, EGGS, AND EGG COLLECTING.** By R. KEARTON. Illustrated with 16 Coloured Plates of Eggs.

**CASSELL & COMPANY, Limited, Ludgate Hill, London.**

---

Demy 8vo, Cloth, 2s. 6d.

## **MY GARDENER :** **A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK FOR THE MILLION.**

By H. W. WARD, F.R.H.S.,  
HEAD-GARDENER TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF RADNOR.

"The book is replete with valuable cultural notes indispensable to the millions who are now turning to gardening as a source of pleasure and profit."—GARDENERS' CHRONICLE.

"No more valuable addition than this work could be made to the library of anyone who is at all interested in gardening."—IRISH FARMING WORLD.

"Clear, sensible, and full of instruction. We know of no better book to put into the hands of the owners of small gardens who are anxious to make the best of their opportunities, whether in the cultivation of flowers, vegetables or fruit."—TIMES.

"As a practical handbook for the million it has no superior on the subject."—BELL'S WEEKLY MESSENGER.

"This is the best work on gardening which we have come across for a long period . . . and certainly deserves a place in every gardener's library or bookcase."—RURAL WORLD.

EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE, East Harding Street, London, E.C.

---

# **JOHNSTON'S** **CORN FLOUR.**

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.



# JOHN BALE & SONS

Printers of the following Journals, &c.:—

*Brain—British Gynæcological Journal—Celebrities of the Day—Churchman's Magazine—Englishwoman's Review—Journal of the British Dental Association—Library—Odontological Society's Transactions—Ophthalmological Review—Nature Notes—Nurses' Journal—Rational Dress Society's Gazette, &c., &c.,*

ARE PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE

## CONTRACTS FOR PRINTING,

AND TO QUOTE

REASONABLE AND INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

For every Description of Work.

PAMPHLETS, MAGAZINES AND BOOK PRINTING.

Prices Current, Catalogues and Commercial Work.

CLIENTS WAITED UPON FOR INSTRUCTIONS UPON RECEIPT OF POST CARD.

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET,  
OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

AGENT FOR  
"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Library Review."  
"Ophthalmic Review."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."

## J. I. BAXTER,

Advertising Agent,

29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

\*\*\*\*\*

Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

Now Ready. Third Edition. Demy 8vo, 260 pp., cloth, gilt lettered, 5s.

# AN ITALIAN CONVERSATION GRAMMAR

COMPRISING THE MOST IMPORTANT RULES OF ITALIAN GRAMMAR WITH  
NUMEROUS EXAMPLES AND EXERCISES THEREON ; ENGLISH-ITALIAN  
DIALOGUES ; AND EXTRACTS IN ITALIAN POETRY,  
FOLLOWED BY  
A SHORT GUIDE TO ITALIAN COMPOSITION.  
ALSO AN ENGLISH-ITALIAN AND ITALIAN-ENGLISH VOCABULARY.

BY N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of Music,  
and Italian Examiner to the Staff College, the Royal Military Academy,  
Woolwich, and the Society of Arts.*

LIBRAIRIE HACHETTE & C<sup>IE</sup>.

LONDON : 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS, W.C.

PARIS ; 79, BOULEVARD SAINT-GERMAIN.

BOSTON, U.S. : CARL SCHOENHOF.

---

Just Published. 106pp. Imperial 16mo, Cloth Lettered, 2s. 6d.

# LA VITA NUOVA,

BY

DANTE ALIGHIERI,

WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS IN ENGLISH,

By N. PERINI, F.R.A.S.,

*Professor of Italian at King's College, London, and at the Royal College of  
Music ; author of "An Italian Conversation Grammar," &c.*

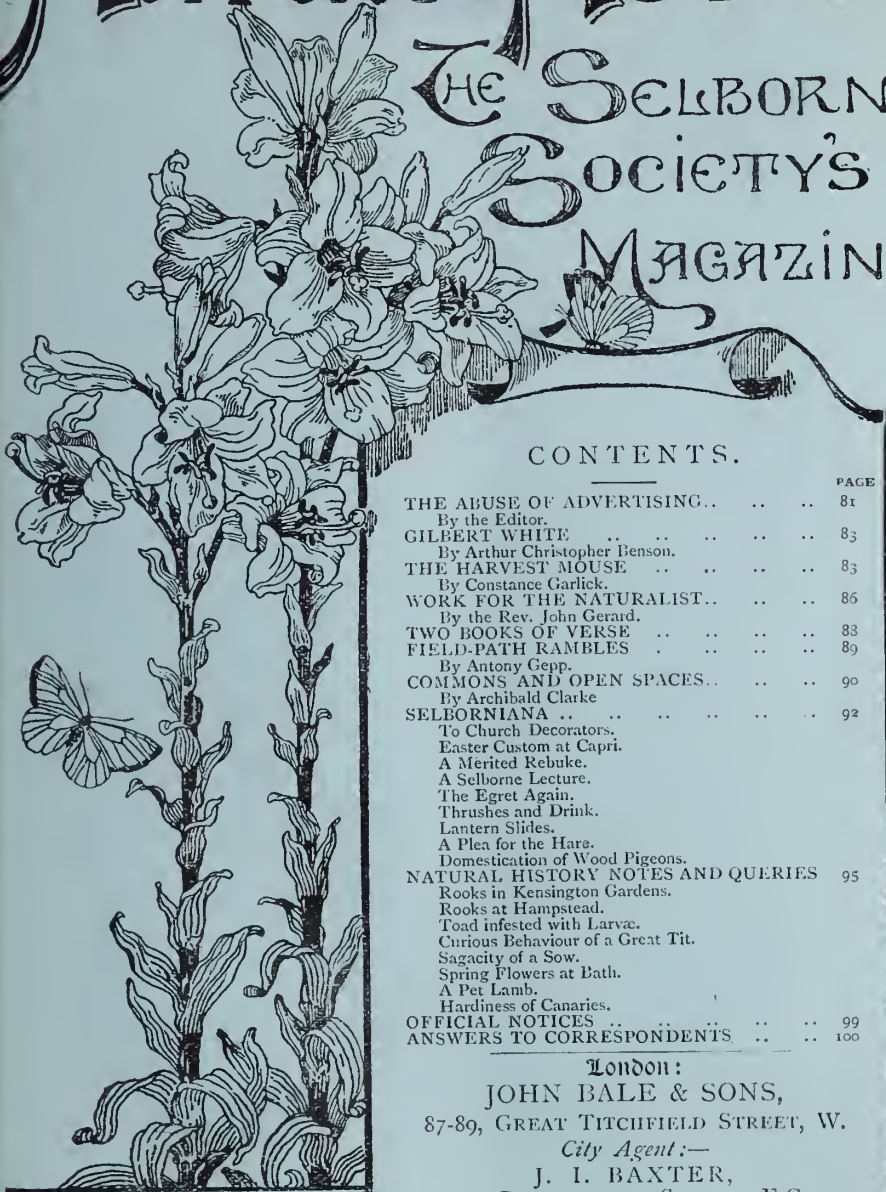
---

London :

HACHETTE & CO., 18, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS.

E. TURNBULL, 66, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.

# NATURE NOTES, THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE ABUSE OF ADVERTISING.. ..	81
By the Editor.	
GILBERT WHITE .. ..	83
By Arthur Christopher Benson.	
THE HARVEST MOUSE .. ..	83
By Constance Garlick.	
WORK FOR THE NATURALIST.. ..	86
By the Rev. John Gerard.	
TWO BOOKS OF VERSE .. ..	88
FIELD-PATH RAMBLES .. ..	89
By Antony Gepp.	
COMMONS AND OPEN SPACES.. ..	90
By Archibald Clarke	
SELBORNIANA .. ..	92
To Church Decorators.	
Easter Custom at Capri.	
A Merited Rebuke.	
A Selborne Lecture.	
The Egret Again.	
Thrushes and Drink.	
Lantern Slides.	
A Plea for the Hare.	
Domestication of Wood Pigeons.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES .. ..	95
Rooks in Kensington Gardens.	
Rooks at Hampstead.	
Toad infested with Larvæ.	
Curious Behaviour of a Great Tit.	
Sagacity of a Sow.	
Spring Flowers at Bath.	
A Pet Lamb.	
Hardiness of Canaries.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. ..	99
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. ..	100

London:

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agent:—

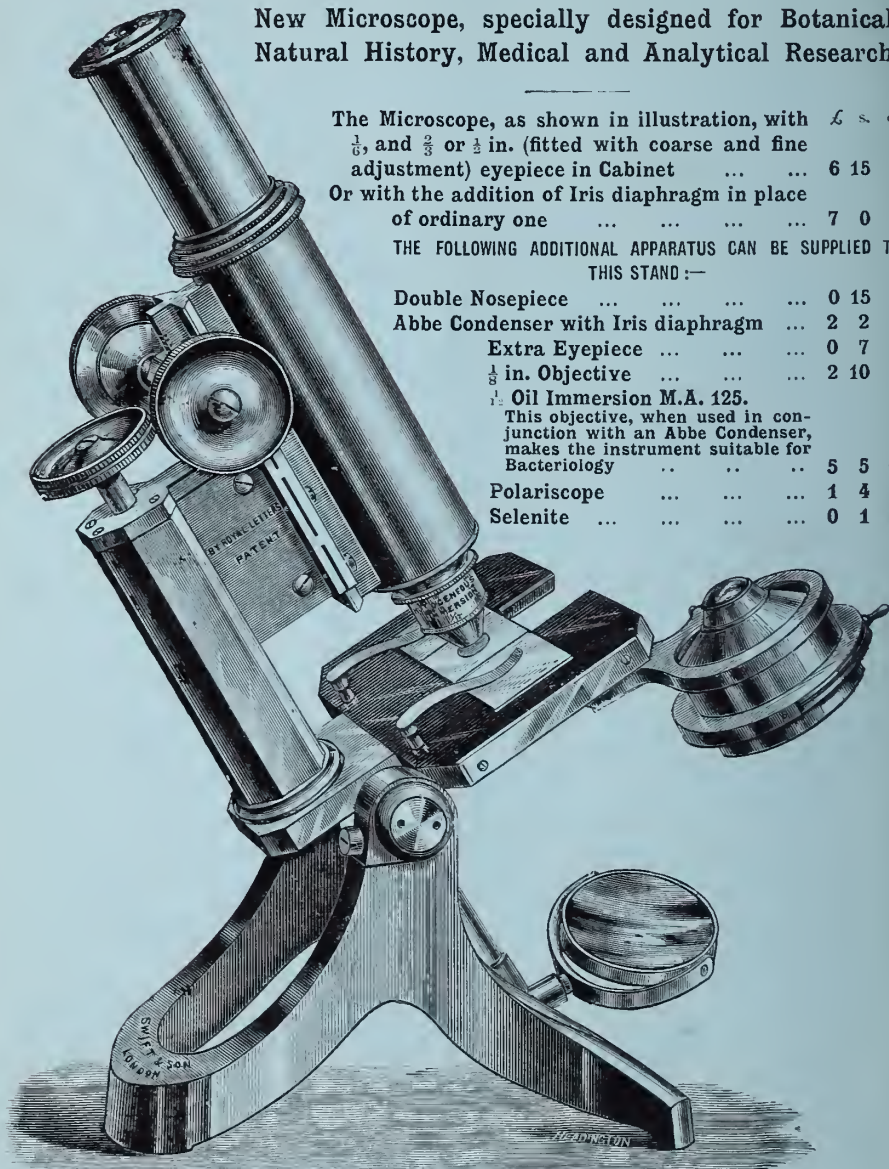
J. I. BAXTER,  
29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

# JAMES SWIFT & SON,

Opticians to the Scientific Department, H.M.S. Home  
and Foreign Government.

New Microscope, specially designed for Botanical,  
Natural History, Medical and Analytical Research.



The Microscope, as shown in illustration, with £ s. d.  
 $\frac{1}{8}$ , and  $\frac{2}{8}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (fitted with coarse and fine  
 adjustment) eyepiece in Cabinet ... .. 6 15 0  
 Or with the addition of Iris diaphragm in place  
 of ordinary one ... .. 7 0 0

THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL APPARATUS CAN BE SUPPLIED TO  
THIS STAND:—

Double Nosepiece ... ..	0 15 0
Abbe Condenser with Iris diaphragm ... ..	2 2 0
Extra Eyepiece ... ..	0 7 6
$\frac{1}{8}$ in. Objective ... ..	2 10 0
$\frac{1}{2}$ Oil Immersion M.A. 125. This objective, when used in con- junction with an Abbe Condenser, makes the instrument suitable for Bacteriology ... ..	5 5 0
Polariscope ... ..	1 4 0
Selenite ... ..	0 1 6

Fully Descriptive Pamphlet, free on application.

University Optical Works, 81, Tottenham Court Road, W.

# City of London Truss Society,

35, FINSBURY SQUARE.

PATRON—H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.

The EIGHTY-SIXTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL will take place at the ALBION TAVERN, Aldersgate-street, on TUESDAY, 16th MAY, 1893,

The Right Hon. the LORD MAYOR

in the chair,

supported by the Sheriffs, &c.

Dinner on table at Six for Half-past Six p.m. precisely.

## PRELIMINARY LIST OF STEWARDS.

The Right Hon. Lord EBURY, P.C., President.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Strafford, V.P.	Maddick, E. D., Esq.
The Right Hon. the Earl of Wharnccliffe.	Marriage, James, Esq., C.C.
The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells, V.P.	Mocatta, F. D., Esq.
The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Derry, V.P.	Nash, Rev. J. J. G., M.A.
Baker, Rev. Prebendary, D.D.	Norbury, John, Esq., Treasurer and Trustee.
Barham, C., Esq., C.C.	Norton, H. E., Esq.
Bartlett, Thomas, Esq.	Nunn, John Hancock, Esq.
Benham, Rev. Canon, B.D.	Palmer, W. R., Esq.
Brooke, C. E., Esq.	Patten, Robert John, Esq.
Crowden, R. H., Esq.	Pitman, W. H., Esq.
Crowther-Beynon, Rev. S. B., M.A.	Renals, Joseph, Esq., Alderman and Sheriff.
Devereux, the Rev. N. J., M.A.	Robinson, Rev. A. Dalgarno, M.A.
Dimsdale, J. C., Esq., Alderman (Trustee).	Rothschild, Alfred de, Esq., V.P.
Dingle, W. A., Esq., M.D.	Ryley, Beresford, Esq., M.D.
Dyer, Watson, Esq.	Salt, J. C., Esq. (Trustee), Lloyds Bank, Ltd., Society's Bankers.
Field, W. H., Esq.	Sharratt, F., Esq.
Flint, E., Esq., A.R.I.B.A.	Taunton, W. K., Esq.
Gingell, W. H., Esq.	Truscott, Alderman Sir Francis Wyatt.
Griffith, S. C., Esq., M.D.	Truscott, George Wyatt, Esq., C.C.
Hilhouse, Thomas, Esq.	White, Rev. L. B., D.D., V.P.
Hohly, G., Esq.	Whitehead, B., Jun., Esq., B.A.
Langton, John, Esq., F.R.C.S.	Whittington, the Rev. Prebendary, M.A.
Laurie, W. H., Esq.	Whittington, Thomas, Esq.
Lavington, W. J., Esq.	Wilkin, W. H., Esq., Alderman and Sheriff.
Lyon, Alfred, Esq. (Trustee).	

This Charity claims support from the fact that over 483,600 of the suffering poor of both sexes and all ages have been already relieved (9,609 in 1892).

The Committee earnestly hope for special and increased contributions to be announced at the forthcoming 86th Annual Festival, in view of the great expense entailed by the much needed enlargement of the Society's premises, for the better accommodation of the ever-increasing number of patients seeking relief from the Charity. A separate entrance for female patients is part of the new plan, and has long been desired.

SUBSCRIPTIONS and DONATIONS in aid will be thankfully received by any of the above Stewards; or by the Secretary of the Institution, 35, Finsbury-square.

JOHN WHITTINGTON, Secretary.

17th April, 1893.

"PICTURES AND PAINTERS OF 1893," an Illustrated Guide to the Royal Academy and the other chief picture exhibitions, being the *Fine Art Supplement* of "THE STRAND MAGAZINE" and "THE PICTURE MAGAZINE," and containing 112 pages of pictures, with portraits of artists beautifully reproduced on tinted papers in a variety of colours, will be published as early as possible in May. Price 1s.

THE  
**STRAND MAGAZINE,**

Edited by GEORGE NEWNES,  
Is the best Illustrated and has the largest circulation of any 6d. Magazine in the World.

Weekly, **TIT-BITS,** 1d.

Edited by GEORGE NEWNES,  
Is the most interesting Penny Paper published.  
£5,000 has been paid by *Tit-Bits* for Insurance Claims.

THE  
**PICTURE MAGAZINE**

(Companion to the STRAND MAGAZINE).

Monthly, Price 6d.

Nothing but Pictures. About 250 Illustrations in each issue, containing :—  
Old Prints and Pictures,  
Autographs,  
Pictures of Places, Fine Art Pictures,  
Comic Pictures, Portraits,  
Pictures for Children,  
Miscellaneous Pictures, &c.

GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8, 9, 10, & 11, Southampton St., & Exeter St., Strand, London, W.C.

NEW VOLUME BY "A SON OF THE MARSHES."

Now ready. Crown 8vo. 5s.

**FOREST TITHES;**

*And other Studies from Nature.*

By the Author of "Woodland, Moor, and Stream," &c.

Edited by J. A. OWEN.

London: SMITH, ELDER & Co., 15, Waterloo Place.

**The London Botanical Field Class.**

ESTABLISHED 1891.

DIRECTOR - PROFESSOR G. S. BOULGER, F.L.S., F.G.S.

The third Course will consist of Seven Field Excursions, as follows:—

1. MAY 27. Addington Hills and Croyhamhurst.
2. JUNE 10. Epping Lower Forest (Hornbeam forest and ponds).
3. JUNE 17. Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath (a suburban common).
4. JULY 1. Hayes and Keston (sandy common and marsh).
5. JULY 8. Rickmansworth and the Banks of the Colne.
6. JULY 15. Ranmer (Dorking) (chalk hills).
7. JULY 22. Kew Gardens (classification of British flowering plants).

TICKETS FOR THE COURSE OF SEVEN EXCURSIONS, 10/6.

For full particulars and all information, address the Hon. Sec., c/o the *Educational Reviewer*, 2, Creed Lane, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

**JOHNSTON'S  
CORN FLOUR.**

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

Advertisements for "Nature Notes" should be sent to

J. I. BAXTER, Advertising Agent, 29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A VISIT TO SELBORNE .. .. .	101
By Mrs. Brightwen.	
GILBERT WHITE'S ANCESTORS .. .. .	104
By the Earl of Stamford.	
WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA .. .. .	106
By Hamilton Stuart Dove, F.Z.S.	
ANNUAL MEETING OF SELBORNE SOCIETY	108
THE EXCURSION TO SELBORNE .. .. .	112
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	113
Brentford Aits Saved.	
A New Abomination.	
A Suggestion.	
Lantern Slides.	
Our Badge.	
Clapton, Lower Lee Valley Branch.	
Pinner Branch.	
North Wexford.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES	115
In a Vicarage Garden.	
The Kingfisher.	
Notes from West Sussex.	
Birds at Sevenoaks.	
A Stray Pigeon.	
Daily Flight of Rooks.	
Land-Rail.	
Curious Behaviour of a Great Tit.	
Bird at Window.	
Spring Visitors.	
The Orleton Swifts.	
Nightingale near London.	
Rooks in London.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. .. .	119
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	120

London :

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agent:—

J. I. BAXTER,  
29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

# JAMES SWIFT & SON,

Opticians to the Scientific Department, H.M.S. Home  
and Foreign Government.

New Microscope, specially designed for Botanical,  
Natural History, Medical and Analytical Research



The Microscope, as shown in illustration, with £ s. d.  
 $\frac{1}{8}$ , and  $\frac{2}{8}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (fitted with coarse and fine  
 adjustment) eyepiece in Cabinet ... .. 6 15 0  
 Or with the addition of Iris diaphragm in place  
 of ordinary one ... .. 7 0 0

THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL APPARATUS CAN BE SUPPLIED TO  
THIS STAND:—

Double Nosepiece ... ..	0 15 0
Abbe Condenser with Iris diaphragm ...	2 2 0
Extra Eyepiece ... ..	0 7 6
$\frac{1}{8}$ in. Objective ... ..	2 10 0
$\frac{1}{2}$ Oil Immersion M.A. 125. This objective, when used in con- junction with an Abbe Condenser, makes the instrument suitable for Bacteriology ... ..	5 5 0
Polariscope ... ..	1 4 0
Selenite ... ..	0 1 6

Fully Descriptive Pamphlet, free on application.

University Optical Works, 81, Tottenham Court Road, W.



# DAVID NUTT, 270-271, Strand.

## FOR THE TOURIST SEASON.

**Gremlí's Flora of Switzerland** for Tourists and Field Botanists.  
Translated by L. W. PAITSON. Crown 8vo. 480 pp. Limp cloth, 7/6 net.

**Swan's Phonetic Series** of thoroughly practical phrases and vocabularies for the use of Travellers and Students, with the exact pronunciation represented on a new system.

\* \* Received with universal favour by Press and Public. Thousands of copies sold in two years. Already issued:

**Colloquial French.** Third edition. 128 pp. 1/-

**Colloquial German.** 142 pp. 1/6.

**Colloquial Italian.** 108 pp. 1/6.

\* \* These volumes, in addition to words and phrases indispensable to the Traveller, contain a great deal of useful information relating to the countries dealt with.

**R. Jäschke's Conversation Dictionaries** for Tourists. I. English-French. 400 pp. 32mo. Cloth, 2/6. II. English-German. 400 pp. Cloth, 2/6.

### For all lovers of the East-Anglian Broad Region.

**On English Lagoons.** By P. H. EMERSON, Author of "A Son of the Fens," &c. Demy 8vo. 300 pp. With cuts. Fancy cloth. Ready June 15.

In addition to the ordinary issue, 100 copies will be pulled in small 4to. size on Dutch hand-made paper, and illustrated by photo-gravures from photographs taken by the Author. These copies, signed and numbered, should be applied for at once.

\* \* Mr. Emerson's volume is the record of a year's wherrying, fishing, and shooting in the Broad region, and gives a minute, faithful, and sympathetic picture of the natural life and features of the region.

---

In 4 Vols., royal 8vo., cloth gilt, gilt top, price £3.

**The Flowering Plants, Grasses, Sedges & Ferns of Great Britain,**

*And their Allies, the Club-Mosses, Pepperworts and Horsetails,*

BY ANNE PRATT.

New Edition containing 328 Plates re-coloured from Samples gathered when fully in bloom.

N.B.—The Fourth Volume, viz.: "THE GRASSES, SEDGES AND FERNS OF GREAT BRITAIN, AND THEIR ALLIES," may be had separate, in cloth gilt, price 15/-.

FREDERICK WARNE & Co., BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

# Messrs. MACMILLAN & Co.'s

## BOOKS FOR THE COUNTRY.

**FORTY YEARS IN A MOORLAND PARISH.** By Rev. Canon Atkinson, D.C.L. With maps and illustrations. Extra crown 8vo. 8/6 net. Illustrated edition, 12/- net.

**WALKS, TALKS, TRAVELS, & EXPLOITS OF TWO SCHOOLBOYS.** By the same Author. With illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**PLAYHOURS AND HALF-HOLIDAYS.** By the same Author. New edition. Illustrated by Coleman. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**WHITE'S SELBORNE.** With Notes by Frank Buckland, and a chapter on Antiquities by Lord Selborne. Illustrated by P. H. Delamotte. Crown 8vo. 6/-

**TALES OF THE BIRDS.** By W. Warde Fowler. With illustrations by Bryan Hook. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**A YEAR WITH THE BIRDS.** By the same Author. With illustrations by Bryan Hook. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**FLOWERS, FRUITS, AND LEAVES.** By Sir John Lubbock, Bart., F.R.S. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 4/6.

**ON BRITISH WILD FLOWERS, IN RELATION TO INSECTS.** By the same Author. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 4 6.

**THE ORIGIN AND METAMORPHOSES OF INSECTS.** By the same Author. With numerous illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**AN OLD WOMAN'S OUTLOOK IN A HAMPSHIRE VILLAGE.** By Charlotte M. Yonge. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

*ACADEMY.*—"Miss Yonge is at her best in the word pictures of the downs, woods, and lanes of her home; while her reminiscences of social life, and of the improvement which has in the last fifty years overtaken village life, are most interesting and valuable. . . . This *Outlook*, with its intense love of birds and flowers, and its careful study of human life in the country, will charm all who are like minded, and, as the authoress hopes, assist others to make the most of their surroundings, so as to find no country walk devoid of the homely delights that sustain and lift up the spirit."

**THE HERB OF THE FIELD.** By the same Author. Reprinted from "Chapters on Flowers" in the *Magazine for the Young*. Revised and corrected. Crown 8vo. 5/-

**MADAME HOW AND LADY WHY; or First Lessons in Earth Lore** for Children. By Charles Kingsley. With numerous illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**GLAUCUS; or the Wonders of the Sea-shore.** By the same Author. With coloured illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3/6.

**HANDBOOK OF FIELD AND GENERAL ORNITHOLOGY.** By Elliott Coues, M.A., M.D., Ph.D., Member of the National Academy of Sciences, etc. Profusely illustrated. 8vo. 10/- net.

*NATURE.*—"We know of no volume likely to be more useful to the student who wishes to become acquainted with birds. . . . No other manual that we are acquainted with exactly takes its place or contains such a well-arranged mass of useful and generally correct information on this subject."

**THE STUDENT'S FLORA OF THE BRITISH ISLANDS.** By Sir J. D. Hooker, K.C.S.I. Globe 8vo. 10/6.

MACMILLAN & CO., LONDON.

---

*Advertisements for "Nature Notes" should be sent to*

J. I. BAXTER, Advertising Agent, 29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

*John Bale and Sons, Printers, 87-89, Gt. Titchfield Street, London, W.*

# NATURE NOTES, THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A LONDON FLOWER SHOW .. .. .	121
By Miss E. H. Hickey.	
A VISIT TO SPOONBILLS .. .. .	123
By Miss M. Borrer.	
WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA. IV... .. .	125
By Hamilton Stuart Dove, F.Z.S.	
OUT OF DOORS .. .. .	127
By the Editor.	
RELIQS OF GILBERT WHITE .. .. .	133
By the Earl of Stamford.	
THE PLAGUE OF FIELD VOLES IN SCOT- LAND .. .. .	134
By G. T. Rope.	
THE RESCUE OF OPEN SPACES .. .. .	157
By Archibald Clarke.	
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	138
An Appeal to Selbornians, Lantern Slides, The Osprey again.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES ..	139
The Kingfisher, Swallows, Land Rails and Early May. A Book for Botanists.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. .. .	140
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	140

London:  
JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

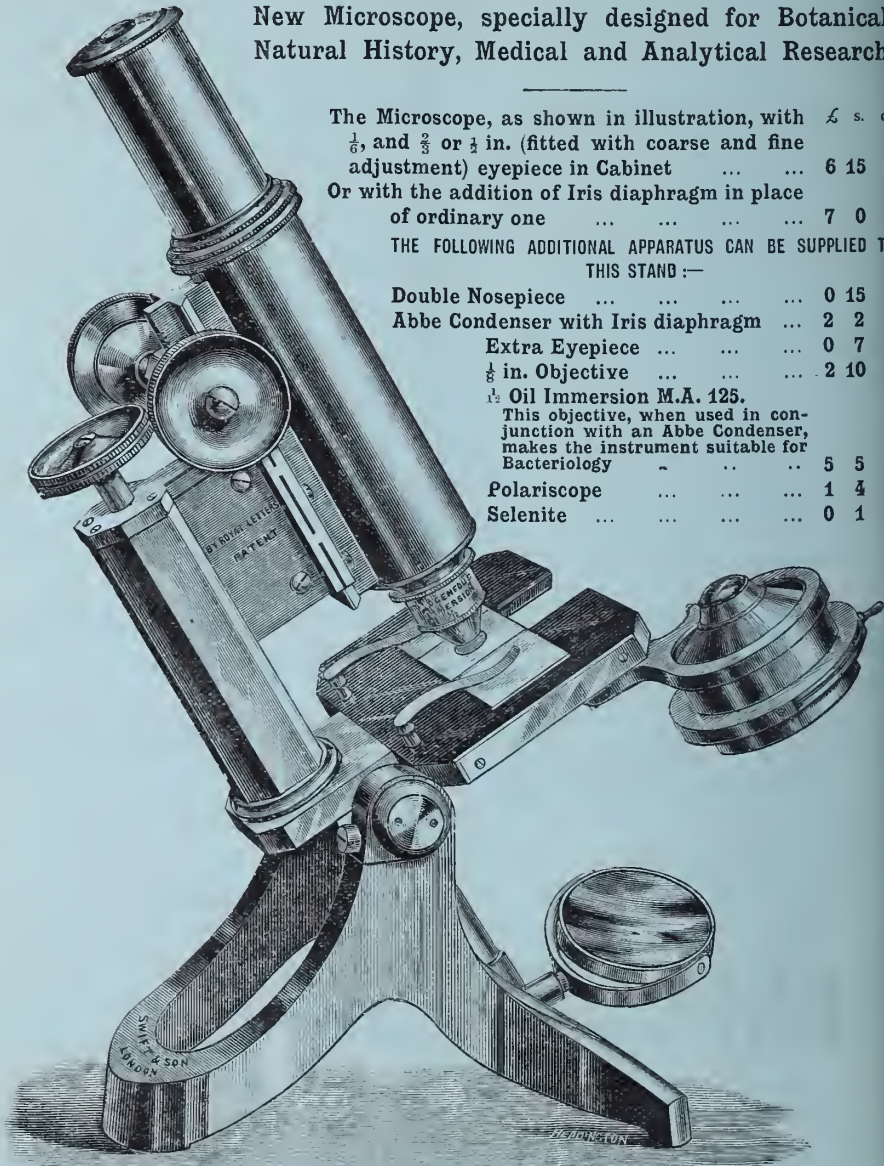
City Agent:—  
J. I. BAXTER,  
29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

# JAMES SWIFT & SON,

Opticians to the Scientific Department, B.M.S. Home  
and Foreign Government.

New Microscope, specially designed for Botanical,  
Natural History, Medical and Analytical Research



The Microscope, as shown in illustration, with £ s. d.  
 $\frac{1}{6}$ , and  $\frac{2}{3}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (fitted with coarse and fine  
 adjustment) eyepiece in Cabinet ... .. 6 15 0  
 Or with the addition of Iris diaphragm in place  
 of ordinary one ... .. 7 0 0

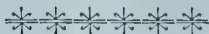
THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL APPARATUS CAN BE SUPPLIED TO  
THIS STAND:—

Double Nosepiece ... ..	0 15 0
Abbe Condenser with Iris diaphragm ...	2 2 0
Extra Eyepiece ... ..	0 7 6
$\frac{1}{8}$ in. Objective ... ..	2 10 0
$\frac{1}{4}$ Oil Immersion M.A. 125. This objective, when used in con- junction with an Abbe Condenser, makes the instrument suitable for Bacteriology ... ..	5 5 0
Polariscope ... ..	1 4 0
Selenite ... ..	0 1 6

Fully Descriptive Pamphlet, free on application.

University Optical Works, 81, Tottenham Court Road, W.

# JOHN BALE & SONS, *Medical Printers and Publishers.*



## INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

GIVEN WHERE DESIRED, FOR

### Illustrating, Printing, Binding & Publishing.

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED. REFERENCES GIVEN.

WORKS ILLUSTRATED BY

### WOOD ENGRAVING, PROCESS BLOCKS, LITHOGRAPHIC PLATES OR COLLOTYPE.

---

#### PRINTERS OF:

BRAIN.  
BRITISH GYNÆCOLOGICAL JOURNAL.  
CELEBRITIES OF THE DAY.  
CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.  
ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW.  
JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH DENTAL  
ASSOCIATION.  
LIBRARY.

OPHTHALMIC REVIEW.  
ODONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S TRANSACTIONS.  
NATURE NOTES.  
NURSES' JOURNAL.  
RATIONAL DRESS SOCIETY'S GAZETTE.  
SHEFFIELD MEDICAL JOURNAL.  
&c., &c.

---

**AGENT FOR**  
"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Library Review."  
"Ophthalmic Review."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."

## J. I. BAXTER,

Advertising Agent,

29, Paternoster Square, E.C.



Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

# BOOKS FOR SELBORNIANs.

## THE LIBRARY EDITION.

2 vols, demy 8vo, £1 11s. 6d.

**THE NATURAL HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF SELBORNE**, in the County of Southampton. By the late Rev. GILBERT WHITE. Edited by THOMAS BELL, F.R.S., F.L.S., F.G.S., &c., Professor of Zoology in King's College, London. With Steel Plate and other Illustrations, comprising: Front View of the Wakes, West portion of the Village, South View of Church with Vicarage, Garden View of Gilbert White's House, Cottage at Dorton, The Plestor, etc., etc., with an Appendix on the Roman-British Antiquities of Selborne, by LORD SELBORNE. (A few copies on large paper, price £3 3s.)

**BRITISH WILD FLOWERS.** Illustrated by JOHN E. SOWERBY. Described with an introduction and a Key to the Natural Orders by C. P. JOHNSON. Re-issue, super royal 8vo, with 1780 Illustrations on 89 Plates, £3 3s.

This work gives, in one large volume, a characteristic figure, coloured by hand, of each species of indigenous plant, with a short description of its habit, habitat, height, and time of flowering.

**AN ILLUSTRATED MANUAL OF BRITISH BIRDS.** By HOWARD SAUNDERS, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., Editor of the Third and Fourth Volumes of "Yarrell's History of British Birds," Fourth Edition. One Volume, 750 pages, demy 8vo, with 367 fine Woodcuts and Three Maps, £1 1s.

"Excellent alike in style and matter, it ought to be in the hands of every lover of birds, and should take the place of several inferior books on the subject now before the public."—ANNALS OF NATURAL HISTORY.

**BIRD-LIFE OF THE BORDERS:** Records of Wild Sport and Natural History on Moorland and Sea. By ABEL CHAPMAN. Demy 8vo, 300 pages, with Fifty Illustrations by the Author, 12s. 6d.

"Mr. Chapman is a naturalist of Gilbert White's school in the keenness and accuracy of his perceptions. He sees things for himself and takes nothing upon trust. Every lover of a country life will delight in his vivid sketches of sporting experience and wild life on the moors."—SATURDAY REVIEW.

"Will enchant all who are fond of birds. Sympathy with all living creatures, careful observation, with cautious deductions, and strong love for the bleak moors and wild scenery of the Cheviots—such are the characteristics of this most interesting book. The illustrations add a great charm to a book redolent of wild life and careful observation."—ACADEMY.

**WEEDS AND WILD FLOWERS:** Their Uses, Legends, and Literature. By LADY WILKINSON. Illustrated by Twelve Plates tastefully painted in Water-colours and Twenty-six Woodcuts. Post 8vo, cloth, gilt edges, 10s. 5d.

**THE ORNITHOLOGY OF SHAKESPEARE,** Critically examined, Explained, and Illustrated. By J. E. HARTING, F.L.S., F.Z.S. With Thirty-four Wood Engravings, 8vo, 12s. 6d.

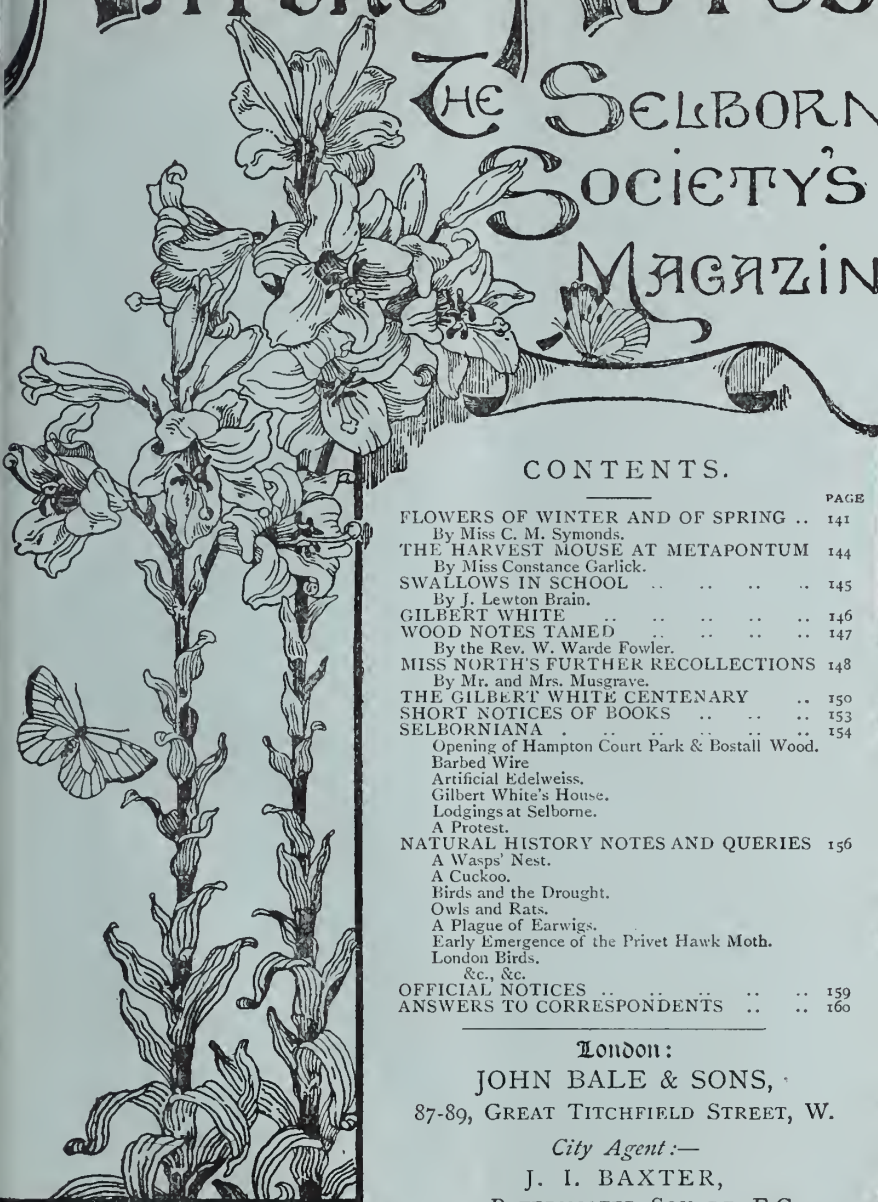
**BRITISH POISONOUS PLANTS.** Illustrated by JOHN E. SOWERBY. Described by CHARLES JOHNSON, Botanical Lecturer at Guy's Hospital, and C. PIERPOINT JOHNSON. Second Edition, containing the principal Poisonous Fungi. Post 8vo, with 32 Coloured Plates, 9s. 6d.

**GURNEY AND JACKSON, 1, PATERNOSTER ROW**

(Successors to Mr. Van Voorst).

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE



### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
FLOWERS OF WINTER AND OF SPRING ..	141
By Miss C. M. Symonds.	
THE HARVEST MOUSE AT METAPONTUM ..	144
By Miss Constance Garlick.	
SWALLOWS IN SCHOOL .. .. .	145
By J. Lewton Brain.	
GILBERT WHITE .. .. .	146
WOOD NOTES TAMED .. .. .	147
By the Rev. W. Warde Fowler.	
MISS NORTH'S FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS ..	148
By Mr. and Mrs. Musgrave.	
THE GILBERT WHITE CENTENARY ..	150
SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS .. .. .	153
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	154
Opening of Hampton Court Park & Bostall Wood.	
Barbed Wire	
Artificial Edelweiss.	
Gilbert White's House.	
Lodgings at Selborne.	
A Protest.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES ..	156
A Wasps' Nest.	
A Cuckoo.	
Birds and the Drought.	
Owls and Rats.	
A Plague of Earwigs.	
Early Emergence of the Privet Hawk Moth.	
London Birds.	
&c., &c.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. .. .	159
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	160

London :

JOHN BALE & SONS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agent :—

J. I. BAXTER,

29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

Appeal to  
Members of the Selborne Society.

---

*There being a debt of £70 owing to the Treasurer, as shown by the account appearing in the June number of NATURE NOTES, I have been requested by the Council to appeal to all members of the Selborne Society to send special donations, varying from 1s. to £1, to the Secretary, A. J. WESTERN, ESQ., 9, ADAM STREET, ADELPHI, W.C., so that it may be cleared off. I have sent him £1 myself, and have no doubt that this appeal will meet with a generous response. We shall then not have to ask our present members to increase their annual subscriptions.*

ALFRED T. CRAIG.

26, Theobald's Road,  
Gray's Inn.  
July, 1893.



Crown 16mo, 75pp., in Crimson Cloth, Price One Shilling;  
free by post 13d.

---

THE  
**SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY**

*Compiled by a Clergyman of the Church of England.*

CONTAINING—

The Mass [Sarum Rite], Vespers, Benediction and Compline or Night Prayers.

---

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

---

**AGENT FOR**  
"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Ophthalmic Review."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."

**J. I. BAXTER,**  
Advertising Agent,  
29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

.....  
Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

---

THE PRACTICAL CABINET MAKER.

**J. T. CROCKETT,**

MAKER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF

ENTOMOLOGICAL CABINETS AND APPARATUS.

*Store and Book Boxes fitted with Camphor Cells. Setting Boards, Oval or Flat, etc. Cabinets of every description kept in Stock.*

**SPECIAL INSECT CABINETS,**

With Drawers fitted with Glass Tops and Bottoms, to show upper and under side without removing insects.

STORE BOXES SPECIALLY MADE FOR CONTINENTAL SETTING, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR BEETLES.

*All best work. Lowest possible terms for cash. Prices on application. Estimates given. The trade supplied. Established since 1847.*

Show Rooms—7a, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.  
(Seven doors from Oxford Circus).

FACTORIES—34, RIDING HOUSE STREET AND OGLE STREET, W.

*The Largest Stock of Cabinets and Boxes to select from.*

---

**JOHNSTON'S**  
**CORN FLOUR.**

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

NOW READY AT ALL BOOKSELLERS AND BOOKSTALLS.

Price ONE SHILLING, by post 1/2.

# THE AGE OF DISFIGUREMENT,

BY

RICHARDSON EVANS.

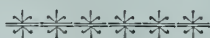
Practical Proposals for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising.

REMINGTON & Co., LTD., LONDON & SYDNEY.

---

## JOHN BALE & SONS

*General Printers and Publishers.*



INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

GIVEN WHERE DESIRED, FOR

Illustrating, Printing, Binding & Publishing.

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED.

WORKS ILLUSTRATED BY

WOOD ENGRAVING, PROCESS BLOCKS,  
LITHOGRAPHIC PLATES OR COLLOTYPE.

Very satisfactory results in Illustrating can now be given by Process blocks, which can be produced from either Outline Diagrams, finished Pen and Ink Sketches, Pencil Sketches, Photographs, or Wash Drawings, and can be reduced to any size required.

---

PRINTERS OF:

BRAIN.  
BRITISH GYNÆCOLOGICAL JOURNAL.  
CELEBRITIES OF THE DAY.  
CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.  
ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW.  
JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH DENTAL  
ASSOCIATION.  
LIBRARY.

OPHTHALMIC REVIEW.  
ODONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S TRANSACTIONS.  
NATURE NOTES.  
NURSES' JOURNAL.  
RATIONAL DRESS SOCIETY'S GAZETTE.  
SHEFFIELD MEDICAL JOURNAL.  
&c., &c.

---

Typing of Balance Sheets and Tables, Legal and General Copying, Medical and Scientific MS., Prompt Books, and Actors' Parts at reasonable rates.

TRANSLATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN ANY LANGUAGE, AND  
TYPE-WRITTEN COPIES SUPPLIED.

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
RELICS OF THE WHITE FAMILY .. .. .	161
By the Earl of Stamford.	
THE LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION OF WILD BIRDS' EGGS .. .. .	162
By C. T. Vachell, M.D.	
WILD LIFE IN TASMANIA .. .. .	164
By H. S. Dove, F.Z.S.	
QUEER STRAWBERRIES .. .. .	167
By Maxwell T. Masters, M.D., F.R.S.	
A GRUESOME BARGAIN .. .. .	170
By John Allen.	
THE PROPOSED WHITE MEMORIAL .. .. .	172
By William White, F.S.A.	
CANARIES AND CAGES .. .. .	173
By Edith Carrington.	
THE AGE OF DISFIGUREMENT .. .. .	174
SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS .. .. .	176
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	177
Starving Tortoises.	
The Abuses of Advertising.	
Gilbert White's House.	
A Plea for the Goldfinch.	
Extermination of Butcher's Broom.	
Gilbert White's Sermon.	
Clapton (Lower Lea Valley) Branch.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES .. .. .	179
The Kingfisher.	
Pear Tree blossoming in August.	
Earwigs.	
&c., &c.	
OFFICIAL NOTICES .. .. .	180
TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	180

London:  
**JOHN BALE & SONS,**  
 87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.  
*City Agent:—*  
**J. I. BAXTER,**  
 29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
**JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.**

If you do not already possess

# EVERYBODY'S

	SOLD.
BOOK OF JOKES ... ..	125,000
SCRAP BOOK OF CURIOUS FACTS ... ..	75,000
BOOK OF SHORT POEMS ... ..	50,000
BOOK OF CORRECT CONDUCT ... ..	25,000
GUIDE TO MUSIC. Just Out ... ..	25,000
BOOK OF PROVERBS ... ..	50,000
BOOK OF OUTDOOR GAMES ... ..	35,000
BOOK OF INDOOR GAMES ... ..	30,000
BOOK OF EPITAPHS ... ..	25,000
PIRATED POEMS ... ..	20,000
SPARKS FROM A FLINT ... ..	10,000
BOOK OF IRISH WIT AND HUMOUR ... ..	50,000
BOOK OF ENGLISH WIT AND HUMOUR... ..	50,000
BOOK OF SCOTCH WIT AND HUMOUR ... ..	50,000

*(The three last can be obtained in 1 vol., price 2/6, Leather).*

**YOU SHOULD GET THEM AT ONCE!**

These Books are uniform with

## EVERYBODY'S POCKET CYCLOPÆDIA,

Of which 600,000 copies have been sold.

**THE CHEAPEST & BEST BOOKS IN THE MARKET.**

Cloth, 6d.      Leather, 1s.

If you think these Books to be worth their money and all we claim for them, please recommend them to your friends.

*To be obtained of all Booksellers, or post free from the  
Publishers,*

**SAXON & CO.,**  
23, BOUVERIE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Crown 16mo, 75pp., in Crimson Cloth, Price One Shilling; free by post 13d.

THE

# SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY

*Compiled by a Clergyman of the Church of England.*

CONTAINING—

The Mass [Sarum Rite], Vespers, Benediction and Compline or Night Prayers.

JOHN BALE & SONS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

**AGENT FOR**

"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Ophthalmic Review."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."

## J. I. BAXTER,

Advertising Agent,

29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

THE PRACTICAL CABINET MAKER.

**J. T. CROCKETT,**

MAKER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF

ENTOMOLOGICAL CABINETS AND APPARATUS.

*Store and Book Boxes fitted with Camphor Cells. Setting Boards, Oval or Flat, etc. Cabinets of every description kept in Stock.*

**SPECIAL INSECT CABINETS,**

With Drawers fitted with Glass Tops and Bottoms, to show upper and under side without removing insects.

STORE BOXES SPECIALLY MADE FOR CONTINENTAL SETTING, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR BEETLES.

*All best work. Lowest possible terms for cash. Prices on application. Estimates given. The trade supplied. Established since 1847.*

Show Rooms—7a, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.  
(Seven doors from Oxford Circus).

FACTORIES—34, RIDING HOUSE STREET AND OGLE STREET, W.

*The Largest Stock of Cabinets and Boxes to select from.*

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

Now Ready. 44pp. Crown 8vo. One Shilling. Post Free, 13d.

# A SPLENDID LIE,

A New and Original Drama  
IN FIVE ACTS,  
By LOUISA BIGG.

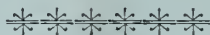
London:

JOHN BALE & SONS, 87-89, Great Titchfield Street, Oxford Street, W.

---

## JOHN BALE & SONS,

*General Printers and Publishers.*



INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

GIVEN WHERE DESIRED, FOR

Illustrating, Printing, Binding & Publishing.

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED.

WORKS ILLUSTRATED BY

WOOD ENGRAVING, PROCESS BLOCKS,  
LITHOGRAPHIC PLATES OR COLLOTYPE.

Very satisfactory results in Illustrating can now be given by Process blocks, which can be produced from either Outline Diagrams, finished Pen and Ink Sketches, Pencil Sketches, Photographs, or Wash Drawings, and can be reduced to any size required.

---

PRINTERS OF:

BRAIN.

BRITISH GYNÆCOLOGICAL JOURNAL.

CELEBRITIES OF THE DAY.

CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW.

JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH DENTAL  
ASSOCIATION.

LIBRARY.

OPHTHALMIC REVIEW.

ODONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S TRANSACTIONS.

NATURE NOTES.

NURSES' JOURNAL.

RATIONAL DRESS SOCIETY'S GAZETTE.

SHEFFIELD MEDICAL JOURNAL.

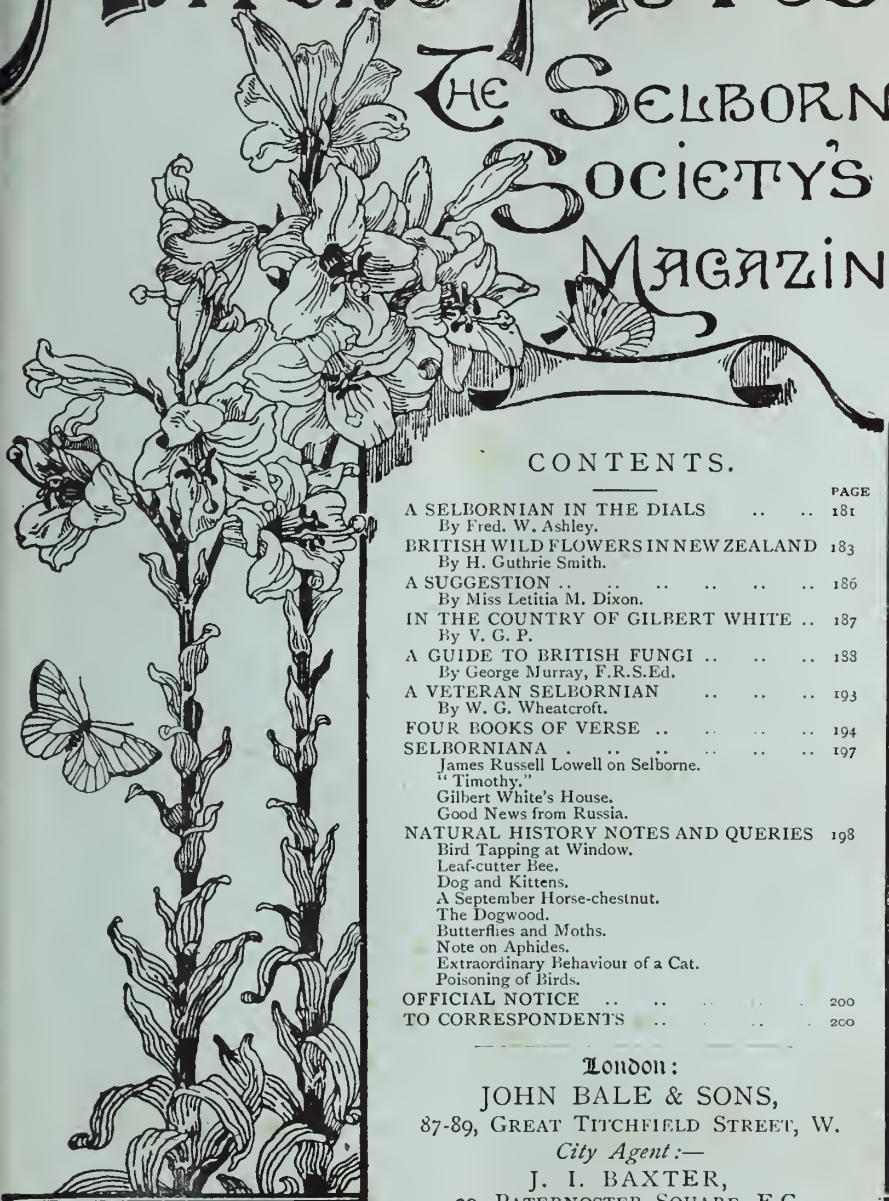
&c., &c.

---

Typing of Balance Sheets and Tables, Legal and General Copying, Medical and Scientific MS., Prompt Books, and Actors' Parts at reasonable rates.

TRANSLATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN ANY LANGUAGE, AND  
TYPE-WRITTEN COPIES SUPPLIED.

# NATURE NOTES, THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A SELBORNIAN IN THE DIALS .. .. .	181
By Fred. W. Ashley.	
BRITISH WILD FLOWERS IN NEW ZEALAND	183
By H. Guthrie Smith.	
A SUGGESTION .. .. .	186
By Miss Letitia M. Dixon.	
IN THE COUNTRY OF GILBERT WHITE ..	187
By V. G. P.	
A GUIDE TO BRITISH FUNGI .. .. .	188
By George Murray, F.R.S.Ed.	
A VETERAN SELBORNIAN .. .. .	193
By W. G. Wheatcroft.	
FOUR BOOKS OF VERSE .. .. .	194
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	197
James Russell Lowell on Selborne.	
"Timothy."	
Gilbert White's House,	
Good News from Russia.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES	198
Bird Tapping at Window.	
Leaf-cutter Bee.	
Dog and Kittens.	
A September Horse-chestnut.	
The Dogwood.	
Butterflies and Moths.	
Note on Aphides.	
Extraordinary Behaviour of a Cat.	
Poisoning of Birds.	
OFFICIAL NOTICE .. .. .	200
TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	200

London :

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agent :—

J. I. BAXTER,  
29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

In a few days, with 546 Illustrations, including 16 Coloured Plates.  
Crown 8vo, 7s. 6d., gilt edges.

# THE OUTDOOR WORLD

OR, THE YOUNG COLLECTOR'S HANDBOOK.

By **W. FURNEAUX, F.R.G.S.**

## PART I.—ANIMAL LIFE.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| CHAP.<br>I. Ponds and Streams.            | CHAP.<br>VI. Reptiles and Reptile Hunt-<br>ing. |
| II. Insects and Insect Hunting.           | VII. British Birds.                             |
| III. The Sea-shore.                       | VIII. British Mammals.                          |
| IV. Snails and Slugs.                     |   |
| V. Spiders, Centipedes and<br>Millepedes. |   |

## PART II.—THE VEGETABLE WORLD.

- |                         |                              |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| CHAP.<br>IX. Sea-weeds. | CHAP.<br>XIII. Wild Flowers. |
| X. Fungi.               | XIV. Grasses.                |
| XI. Mosses.             | XV. Our Forest Trees.        |
| XII. Ferns.             |                              |

## PART III.—THE MINERAL WORLD.

CHAP. XVI. Minerals and Fossils.

**London: LONGMANS, GREEN & Co.**

Crown 16mo, 75pp., in Crimson Cloth, Price One Shilling;  
free by post 13d.

## THE SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY

*Compiled by a Clergyman of the Church of England.*

CONTAINING—

The Mass [Sarum Rite], Vespers, Benediction and Compline or Night Prayers.

JOHN BALE & SONS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

## THE PRACTICAL CABINET MAKER.

**J. T. CROCKETT,**

MAKER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF

ENTOMOLOGICAL CABINETS AND APPARATUS.

*Store and Book Boxes fitted with Camphor Cells. Setting Boards, Oval or Flat, etc. Cabinets of every description kept in Stock.*

**SPECIAL INSECT CABINETS,**

With Drawers fitted with Glass Tops and Bottoms, to show upper and under side without removing insects.

STORE BOXES SPECIALLY MADE FOR CONTINENTAL SETTING, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR BEETLES.

*All best work. Lowest possible terms for cash. Prices on application. Estimates given. The trade supplied.*

Established since 1847.

Show Rooms—7a, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.

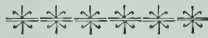
(Seven doors from Oxford Circus).

FACTORIES—30, RIDING HOUSE STREET AND OGLE STREET, W.

*The Largest Stock of Cabinets and Boxes to select from.*



# JOHN BALE & SONS, *General Printers and Publishers.*



## INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES

GIVEN WHERE DESIRED, FOR

### Illustrating, Printing, Binding & Publishing.

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED.

WORKS ILLUSTRATED BY

### WOOD ENGRAVING, PROCESS BLOCKS, LITHOGRAPHIC PLATES OR COLLOTYPE.

Very satisfactory results in Illustrating can now be given by Process blocks, which can be produced from either Outline Diagrams, finished Pen and Ink Sketches, Pencil Sketches, Photographs, or Wash Drawings, and can be reduced to any size required.

---

#### PRINTERS OF:

BRAIN.  
BRITISH GYNÆCOLOGICAL JOURNAL.  
CELEBRITIES OF THE DAY.  
CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.  
ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW.  
JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH DENTAL  
ASSOCIATION.  
LIBRARY.

OPHTHALMIC REVIEW.  
ODONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S TRANSACTIONS.  
NATURE NOTES.  
NURSES' JOURNAL.  
RATIONAL DRESS SOCIETY'S GAZETTE.  
SHEFFIELD MEDICAL JOURNAL.  
&c., &c.

---

Typing of Balance Sheets and Tables, Legal and General Copying, Medical and Scientific MS., Prompt Books, and Actors' Parts at reasonable rates.

---

TRANSLATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN ANY LANGUAGE, AND TYPE-WRITTEN COPIES SUPPLIED.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

# THE NATURE LOVER

*And Literary Review.*

**Edited by H. DURRANT.**

---

This Magazine aims at traversing in part the field of Nature, pure and simple, and as companion, and not supplanter, of its more exclusively scientific contemporaries. Especial attention will be devoted to reviews of kindred literature, while a series of Nature Classics will also be given, including Gilbert White, Jefferies, Thoreau, &c. The magazine will be printed in the best style on finest toned paper.

The Contents of No. 1 will be as follows: "Izaak Walton"; "Sketches of a Voyage to Nova Scotia": No 1—"From the Old to the New"; "In a Fir Wood"; "Sweet Violets"; "Shakespeare's Wild Flowers"; "Grace as distinguished in Trees"; "When the Leaves Fall"; "Timber"; "To the Nightingale" (*Poem*); Reviews, Correspondence, &c. There will also be a corner devoted to literary competitions, with prizes, of which particulars will be given.

Published quarterly. No. 1 ready September 25th, 1893, price One Shilling: post free, 1s. 1d. Annual Subscription, including postage, Four Shillings. All business communications, advertisements, or subscriptions, should be sent to **H. K. SWANN**, 369, Euston Road, London, N.W.

*The NATURE LOVER may be ordered through any Bookseller or Newsagent in the United Kingdom.*

---

LONDON: ELIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

Now Ready. 44pp. Crown 8vo. One Shilling. Post Free, 13d.

---

## A SPLENDID LIE,

A New and Original Drama

IN FIVE ACTS,

By **LOUISA BIGG.**

---

London:

**JOHN BALE & SONS**, 87-89, Great Titchfield Street, Oxford Street, W.

---

**AGENT FOR**

"Nature Notes."  
"University Extension Journal."  
"Ophthalmic Review."  
"Church Missionary Intelligencer."  
"Life and Work."  
"Church of Scotland Mission Record."  
"Morning Rays."  
"Free Church Monthly."  
"Youth."  
"United Presbyterian Missionary Record."

**J. I. BAXTER,**

Advertising Agent,

29, Paternoster Square, E.C.

.....

Advertisements inserted in  
"NATURE NOTES," and generally in  
Magazines and Newspapers.

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
NOTES ON A NUTHATCH.. .. .	201
By Mrs. Downing.	
THOMAS BARKER'S NOTE BOOKS .. .. .	203
By the Ven. Archdeacon Gilbert White.	
A COUPLE OF SPIDERS .. .. .	206
By the Rev. F. C. Kolbe, D.D.	
SOME BIRD BOOKS .. .. .	209
By W. Warde Fowler, M.A.	
GILBERT WHITE'S SELBORNE PLANTS .. .. .	210
By James Britten, F.L.S.	
FEATHERED WOMEN .. .. .	212
By W. H. Hudson, F.Z.S.	
SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS .. .. .	214
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	215
Canaries and Cages.	
British Wild Birds at Shows.	
The Hilly Fields, Brockley.	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES .. .. .	216
Extraordinary Behaviour of a Cat.	
English Wild Flowers in Japan.	
A Young Martin.	
An Ingenious Rabbit.	
Bird Queries.	
Cat Killing a Squirrel.	
Butterflies and Moths.	
A Monster Minnow.	
Red Admirals.	
Swallows.	
A Friendly Robin.	
&c., &c.	
OFFICIAL NOTICE .. .. .	220
TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	220

London:

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
 87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.  
*City Agent* :—  
 J. I. BAXTER,  
 29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
 JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

If you do not already possess

# EVERYBODY'S

	SOLD.
Book of Jokes ... ..	125,000
Scrap Book of Curious Facts ... ..	75,000
Book of Short Poems ... ..	50,000
Book of Correct Conduct ... ..	25,000
Guide to Music. Just out ... ..	50,000
Book of Proverbs ... ..	50,000
Book of Outdoor Games ... ..	35,000
Book of Indoor Games ... ..	30,000
Book of Epitaphs ... ..	25,000
Pirated Poems ... ..	20,000
Sparks from a Flint ... ..	10,000
Book of Irish Wit and Humour ... ..	50,000
Book of English Wit and Humour ... ..	50,000
Book of Scotch Wit and Humour... ..	50,000
Acting Charades. First Edition ... ..	25,000
Letter Writer. " " .. ..	50,000

**YOU SHOULD GET THEM AT ONCE!**

These Books are uniform with

## EVERYBODY'S POCKET CYCLOPÆDIA,

Of which 600,000 copies have been sold.

**THE CHEAPEST & BEST BOOKS IN THE MARKET.**

Cloth, 6d.      Leather, 1s.

A Book that is **INDISPENSABLE** to all who write.

### **THE WRITING DESK BOOK.**

320 pp., Blue Cloth, 1s.

Answers all Questions that arise while writing.

Contains 15,000 Synonyms and Antonyms. Forms of Address in three Languages.

If you think these Books to be worth their money and all we claim for them, please recommend them to your friends.

*To be obtained of all Booksellers, or post free from the Publishers,*

**SAXON & CO.,**  
23, BOUVERIE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

THE PRACTICAL CABINET MAKER.

**J. T. CROCKETT,**

MAKER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF

ENTOMOLOGICAL CABINETS AND APPARATUS.

*Store and Book Boxes fitted with Camphor Cells. Setting Boards, Oval or Flat, etc. Cabinets of every description kept in Stock.*

**SPECIAL INSECT CABINETS,**

With Drawers fitted with Glass Tops and Bottoms, to show upper and under side without removing insects.

STORE BOXES SPECIALLY MADE FOR CONTINENTAL SETTING, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR BEETLES.

*All best work. Lowest possible terms for cash. Prices on application. Estimates given. The trade supplied.*

Established since 1847.

Show Rooms—7a, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.

(Seven doors from Oxford Circus).

FACTORIES—34, RIDING HOUSE STREET AND OGLE STREET, W.

*The Largest Stock of Cabinets and Boxes to select from.*

---

# JOHN BALE & SONS,

*General Printers and Publishers.*

**INCLUSIVE ESTIMATES**

GIVEN WHERE DESIRED, FOR

**Illustrating, Printing, Binding & Publishing.**

SPECIMENS SUBMITTED.

WORKS ILLUSTRATED BY

**WOOD ENGRAVING, PROCESS BLOCKS, LITHOGRAPHIC PLATES OR COLLOTYPES.**

Very satisfactory results in Illustrating can now be given by Process blocks, which can be produced from either Outline Diagrams, finished Pen and Ink Sketches, Pencil Sketches, Photographs, or Wash Drawings, and can be reduced to any size required.

**PRINTERS OF:**

BRAIN.

BRITISH GYNÆCOLOGICAL JOURNAL.

CELEBRITIES OF THE DAY.

CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW.

JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH DENTAL

ASSOCIATION.

LIBRARY.

OPHTHALMIC REVIEW.

ODONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S TRANSACTIONS.

NATURE NOTES.

NURSES' JOURNAL.

RATIONAL DRESS SOCIETY'S GAZETTE.

SHEFFIELD MEDICAL JOURNAL.

&c., &c.

Typing of Balance Sheets and Tables, Legal and General Copying, Medical and Scientific MS., Prompt Books, and Actors' Parts at reasonable rates.

TRANSLATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN ANY LANGUAGE, AND TYPE-WRITTEN COPIES SUPPLIED.

---

# JOHNSTON'S

# CORN FLOUR.

"Is decidedly superior."—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

NO BETTER PRESENT †‡

FOR

‡‡ CHRISTMAS OR THE NEW YEAR

CAN BE GIVEN THAN

**The Volume of Nature Notes**  
**FOR 1893.**

IT IS A MOST SUITABLE BOOK AS

A PRIZE FOR DAY AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

*There are only a limited number to be obtained. Orders should therefore be given at once.*

Price, cloth, gilt lettered, 3/-. Post free, 3/5.  
Top edge gilt, 7d. extra.

**JOHN BALE & SONS,**

PUBLISHERS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, W.

**THE NATURE LOVER**  
*And Literary Review.*

**Edited by H. DURRANT.**

This Magazine aims at traversing in part the field of Nature, pure and simple, and as companion, and not supplanter, of its more exclusively scientific contemporaries. Especial attention will be devoted to reviews of kindred literature, while a series of Nature Classics will also be given, including Gilbert White, Jefferies, Thoreau, &c. The magazine will be printed in the best style on finest toned paper.

The Contents of No. 1 is as follows: "Izaak Walton"; "Sketches of a Voyage to Nova Scotia": No 1—"From the Old to the New"; "In a Fir Wood"; "Sweet Violets"; "Shakespeare's Wild Flowers"; "Grace as distinguished in Trees"; "When the Leaves Fall"; "Timber"; "To the Nightingale" (*Poem*); Reviews, Correspondence, &c. There is also a corner devoted to literary competitions, with prizes, of which particulars will be given.

Published quarterly. No. 1 ready September 25th, 1893, price One Shilling; post free, 1s. 1d. Annual Subscription, including postage, Four Shillings. All business communications, advertisements, or subscriptions, should be sent to **H. K. SWANN**, 369, Euston Road, London, N.W.

*The NATURE LOVER may be ordered through any Bookseller or Newsagent in the United Kingdom.*

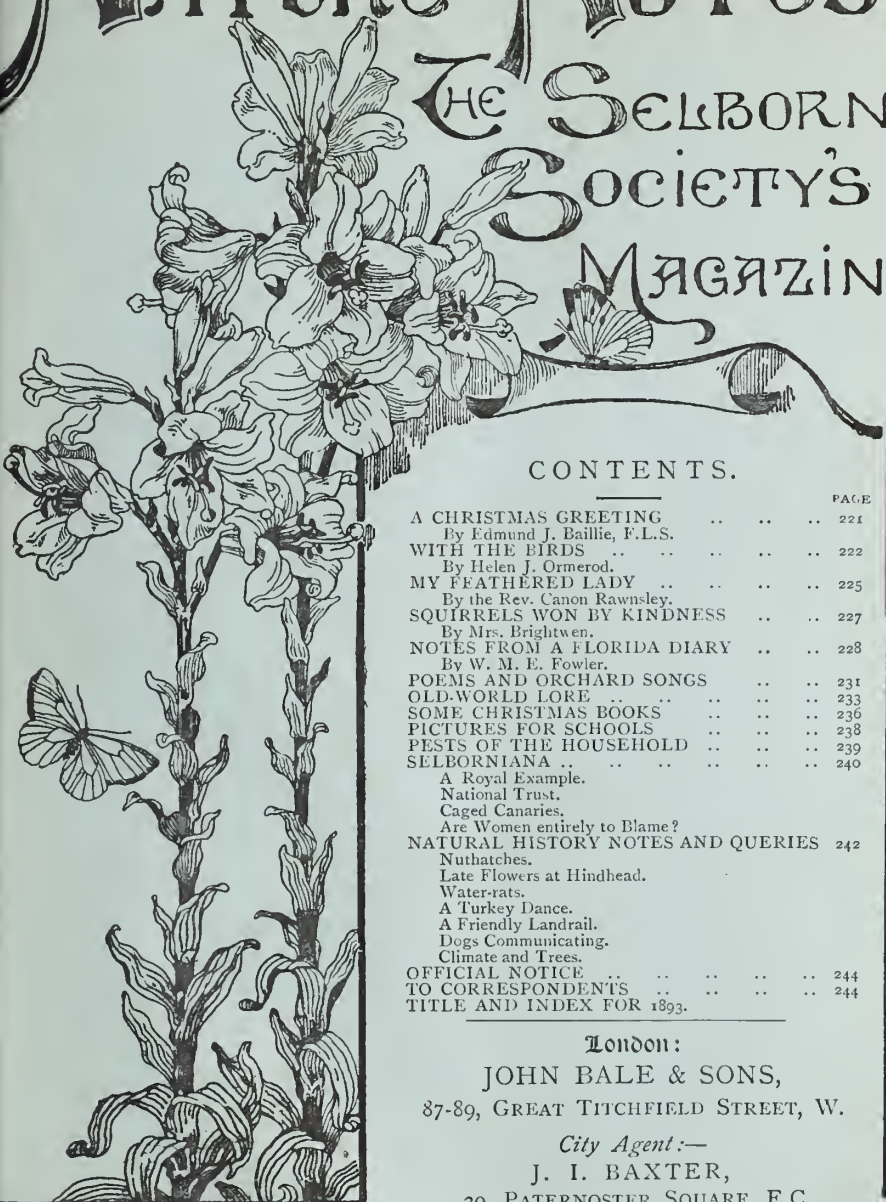
LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

*John Bale and Sons, Printers, 87-89, Gt. Titchfield Street, London, W.*

# NATURE NOTES,

## THE SELBORNE SOCIETY'S

### MAGAZINE



#### CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A CHRISTMAS GREETING .. .. .	221
By Edmund J. Baillie, F.L.S.	
WITH THE BIRDS .. .. .	222
By Helen J. Ormerod.	
MY FEATHERED LADY .. .. .	225
By the Rev. Canon Rawnsley.	
SQUIRRELS WON BY KINDNESS .. .. .	227
By Mrs. Brightwen.	
NOTES FROM A FLORIDA DIARY .. .. .	228
By W. M. E. Fowler.	
POEMS AND ORCHARD SONGS .. .. .	231
OLD-WORLD LORE .. .. .	233
SOME CHRISTMAS BOOKS .. .. .	236
PICTURES FOR SCHOOLS .. .. .	238
PESTS OF THE HOUSEHOLD .. .. .	239
SELBORNIANA .. .. .	240
A Royal Example.	
National Trust.	
Caged Canaries.	
Are Women entirely to Blame?	
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES AND QUERIES .. .. .	242
Nuthatches.	
Late Flowers at Hindhead.	
Water-rats.	
A Turkey Dance.	
A Friendly Landrail.	
Dogs Communicating.	
Climate and Trees.	
OFFICIAL NOTICE .. .. .	244
TO CORRESPONDENTS .. .. .	244
TITLE AND INDEX FOR 1893.	

London:

JOHN BALE & SONS,  
87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, W.

City Agent:—

J. I. BAXTER,  
29, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Edited by  
JAMES BRITTEN, F.L.S.

Second Edition. Just published, demy 8vo, cloth, price 10/6.

# A MENDIP VALLEY,

BY

THEODORE COMPTON,

WITH

FIFTY ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDWARD THEODORE COMPTON.

## CONTENTS.

CHAP.

1. The Valley, Brook and Springs.
2. The Hills and Views from them.
3. Days of Yore, Antiquities.
4. Monkish Times, Old Crosses.
5. The Village Church.
6. The Ancient Yew Tree.
7. The Village.
8. Winscombe Folk and Worthies.
9. The Sidcot Conjuror and Ghost.
10. The Wild Beasts, Past and Present.

CHAP.

11. The Birds of the District.
12. The Fish and Reptiles.
13. The Butterflies and Flowers.
14. The Rocks, by Prof. Morgan.
15. Rich and Poor Together.
16. Town and Country Life.
17. Old Shoes and Shoemakers.
18. Old Coaches in their Glory.
19. Sidcot School: Its History.
20. Addenda and Notes.

"The beauty of the illustrations and the affectionate care bestowed by the author should secure for this volume a popularity at least equal to that of its predecessor."—*Times*.

"It is just one of those books the reading of a chapter of which by a jaded city man would act like an anodyne. There are upwards of fifty delightful illustrations of which no artist could speak too highly. They are simply gems."—*Science Gossip*.

"A splendid addition to the annals of rural England."—*Birmingham Argus*.

"The book is a delightful one, full of natural history notes and records of days of yore."—*The Bristol Times and Mirror*.

"Pleasant and instructive reading."—*Daily Telegraph*.

London: EDWARD STANFORD, 26 & 27, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, S.W.

NO BETTER PRESENT †

FOR

† CHRISTMAS OR THE NEW YEAR

CAN BE GIVEN THAN

**The Volume of Nature Notes**  
**FOR 1893.**

IT IS A MOST SUITABLE BOOK AS

A PRIZE FOR DAY AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

*There are only a limited number to be obtained. Orders should therefore be given at once.*

Price, cloth, gilt lettered, 3/-. Post free, 3/5.

Top edge gilt, 7d. extra.

**JOHN BALE & SONS,**

PUBLISHERS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET,



# STANDARD WORKS ON NATURAL HISTORY FOR SALE.

**English Botany.** By SOWERBY (E. B. 2). With Figures of all the British Plants, partially colored, 7 vols, large 8vo, 1852.

**Ferns, British and Exotic.** By E. J. LOWE. Fully colored plates of each species, 7 vols, 1859 edition.

**British Seaweeds.** Nature printed, fully colored, by JOHNSON & CROALL, 4 vols, large 8vo, 1859.

**Herefordshire Pomona.** Figures of all the known varieties of Apples and Pears, with exquisitely hand-colored plates of each. First edition in 2 vols, large 4to, perfectly new.

Apply to A. SEWELL, Esq., Lauriston House, Grange Rd., Ealing.

---

THE PRACTICAL CABINET MAKER.

**J. T. CROCKETT,**

MAKER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF

ENTOMOLOGICAL CABINETS AND APPARATUS.

*Store and Book Boxes fitted with Camphor Cells. Setting Boards, Oval or Flat, etc. Cabinets of every description kept in Stock.*

**SPECIAL INSECT CABINETS,**

With Drawers fitted with Glass Tops and Bottoms, to show upper and under side without removing insects.

STORE BOXES SPECIALLY MADE FOR CONTINENTAL SETTING, HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR BEETLES.

*All best work. Lowest possible terms for cash. Prices on application. Estimates given. The trade supplied.*

Established since 1847.

Show Rooms—7a, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.  
(Seven doors from Oxford Circus).

FACTORIES—34, RIDING HOUSE STREET AND OGLE STREET, W.

*The Largest Stock of Cabinets and Boxes to select from.*

---

Crown 16mo, 75pp., in Crimson Cloth, Price One Shilling free by post 13d.

---

THE

## Service of the Sanctuary

*Compiled by a Clergyman of the Church of England.*

CONTAINING—

The Mass [Sarum Rite], Vespers, Benediction and Compline or Night Prayers.

JOHN BALE & SONS,

87-89, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

---

# JOHNSTON'S CORN FLOUR.

“Is decidedly superior.”—*The Lancet.*

The Best Quality is supplied in Family Tins, 1-lb. and 3-lbs.; also  
Packets 2, 4, 8 and 16-ozs.

# A SELBORNIAN GIFT BOOK.

---

*In One Volume, 750 pages demy 8vo, cloth, with 367 fine Woodcuts,  
and 3 Maps, £1 1s.*

---

AN

# Illustrated Manual

---

OF

# British Birds

---

BY

HOWARD SAUNDERS, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.

Editor of the Third and Fourth Volumes of the Fourth Edition of  
"Yarrell's History of British Birds."

---

"It would be difficult to give a better condensation of facts in fewer lines than has been contrived by Mr. Saunders . . . . We have only to add that the natural history loving portion of the British public ought to be grateful to Mr. Saunders for having placed within reach at a moderate cost, and in one volume, such a well-illustrated and accurately-written account of our native birds."—*Zoologist*.

"Perhaps the question most frequently put to a zoologist by a lay friend is, 'What is a really good book on British Birds that is not too expensive?' and the question has been one that has been found extremely difficult to answer. Mr. Saunders deserves our thanks for having taken this difficulty out of our way."—*Athenæum*.

"Excellent alike in style and matter, it ought to be in the hands of every lover of birds, and should take the place of several inferior books on the subject now before the public."—*Annals of Natural History*.

"It is scarcely necessary to inform those who are acquainted with the previous work of the author, that the information is not only valuable from its correctness, but that it is brought up to the present date."—*Field*.

---

LONDON :

GURNEY & JACKSON, 1, Paternoster Row

(Successors to Mr. VAN VOORST).









764

AMNH LIBRARY



100224194