

THE

AUDUBON

MAGAZINE



J. J. Audubon

Published in the Interests of The

AUDUBON SOCIETY

for the

PROTECTION OF BIRDS

FOREST AND STREAM PUBLISHING COMPANY.
NEW YORK.

Annual Subscription, 50 Cts.

Single Copy, 6 Cts.


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A facsimile of Vol. 1, No. 1 of *The Audubon Magazine*,
originally published in February 1887 and reprinted
as a supplement to the March 1987 issue of AUDUBON.



THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

Icterus Baltimore, DAUDIN.

THE AUDUBON MAGAZINE.

Vol. I.

FEBRUARY, 1887.

No. 1.

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON.

1.

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON was born on his father's plantation near New Orleans, Louisiana, May 4, 1780. His father was a Frenchman, and the naturalist himself spent a considerable part of his early life in France. What he knew of his ancestry he tells us in the following language: "John Audubon, my grandfather, was born at the small village of Sable d'Olonne, in La Vendée, with a small harbor, forty-five miles south from Nantes. He was a poor fisherman with a numerous family, twenty-one of whom grew to maturity. There was but one boy besides my father, he being the twentieth born, and the only one of the numerous family who lived to a considerable age."

The father of the naturalist was sent out into the world to seek his fortune at the age of twelve years. Shipping at Nantes as a "boy" on a fishing vessel bound to America, at the age of twenty-one he was in command of a vessel, and at twenty-five not only captain but owner of his craft. His voyages were successful, and he at length found himself at St. Domingo, where he purchased a plantation. Here he accumulated a fortune, and was later sent to France by the Governor of St. Domingo in an official capacity during the days of the First Empire. His acquaintance with prominent men of the time soon led to his receiving an appointment to the command of a vessel of war in the Imperial Navy.

Previous to this, and while residing in the West Indies, he had made various purchases of land in Virginia, Pennsylvania and Louisiana, and had married Anne Moyette, a Louisiana lady of Spanish extraction. A daughter and three sons were born to him, the youngest of the latter being John James.

The first years of the boy's life were spent in Louisiana, but later the family removed to St. Domingo, where, in the rising of the negroes, Madame Audubon was killed. Soon after this Commodore Audubon returned to France, where he married a second time, and again sailed for America, leaving John James in the charge of his wife. She proved a loving and indulgent guardian to the self-willed boy, who was pretty much his own master until the return of his father to France. It was the father's desire that the boy should become either a sailor or an engineer, and as a preparation for whichever profession should be determined on for him, he received especial instruction in mathematics, drawing, geography, music and fencing. But the boy cared only for an outdoor life which brought him in contact with nature. It was his delight even in his earliest years to make long excursions alone into the country, returning laden with the natural objects which he met with in his walks. Thus birds' nests and eggs, plants, insects and stones became early his playthings. He was certainly not an ardent student of

books, and we are told that differences of opinion between his father and himself as to the progress he made in his studies were frequent. Of drawing he was very fond, and even at Nantes he began to make drawings of French birds—drawings which gave him only temporary satisfaction, for he says: "My pencil gave birth to a family of cripples. So maimed were most of them that they resembled the mangled corpses on a field of battle, compared with the integrity of living men. These difficulties and disappointments irritated me, but never for a moment destroyed the desire of obtaining perfect representations of nature. The worse my drawings were, the more beautiful did I see the originals. To have been torn from the study would have been as death to me. My time was entirely occupied with it. I produced hundreds of these rude sketches annually, and for a long time, at my request, they made bonfires on the anniversaries of my birthday."

As the boy approached manhood his father was desirous that he should enter the French army, but war no longer seemed to the youth the most glorious of pursuits, and instead of becoming a soldier he was sent out to America to look after his father's property. On reaching New York he was stricken with yellow fever, and after his recovery was put in charge of his father's estates at Mill Grove, Pa. Here his life was one of quiet enjoyment, devoted to shooting, fishing and drawing. It was here that he met Miss Lucy Bakewell, the daughter of a neighbor, who afterwards became his wife, and who all through his eventful and checkered career helped to cheer him by her love and to aid him by her strong common sense.

Life at Mill Grove was pleasant, but it was at length rudely interrupted by the arrival of a certain Da Costa, an agent sent out from France by the elder Audubon to look after his son and his property. This man

not only attempted to put restraints on young Audubon, but even objected to his proposed marriage with Miss Bakewell. Outraged by this treatment he started for New York, and after considerable difficulties and delays took passage for Nantes, where he arrived and laid the condition of things before his father. Da Costa was removed, and a conditional assent granted to the marriage with Miss Bakewell.

For a year Audubon remained in France. The Empire was then shaken by preparations for the invasion of Russia, and there seemed danger that he might be obliged to join the army. To avoid this he volunteered in the navy and received an appointment as midshipman. After one short cruise, leave of absence was obtained for the young man, and in company with a friend named Rosier, he sailed for America, the two having agreed to a nine years' partnership. The vessel on which they sailed was overhauled by a British privateer, the crew of which plundered the passengers, but after considerable delay and adventure they reached New York.

Back again at Mill Grove, with the disturber of his peace removed, Audubon entered once more upon his pleasant country life, but he now desired to marry, and it was evident that he must first have some settled occupation.

He accordingly entered the counting house of Benjamin Bakewell of New York, but gave most of his time to collecting birds. It was during this period that he met Dr. Samuel Mitchell, at that time one of the leading scientific men of New York. It took but a short time to convince Mr. Bakewell that it would be impossible to instil business habits into the nature of young Audubon, and the latter, therefore, returned to Mill Grove. He and Rosier now planned a commercial expedition to Kentucky, and the estate at Mill Grove was sold and the proceeds invested in goods. Before starting, the marriage with Miss Bakewell took

place on the 8th of April, 1808. The business journey to Louisville thus became as well a wedding tour, and was made for the most part on a flat boat.

Now followed nearly twenty years of wandering life, interspersed with attempts in commercial pursuits, which were never successful. Audubon was by turns merchant, portrait painter, curator of a museum, dancing master and school teacher. During all this time he was making collections,

observations, drawings. When his money quite gave out he would put his skillful hand to something which would bring in bread, and then, when his accumulations were enough to last for a little while, would turn his back on civilization and take to the woods again. Though often depressed, he was never discouraged, but kept the main object of his life steadily in view. Through the adventures of those years we will follow him in subsequent chapters.

THE AUDUBON MAGAZINE.

THE purpose of the AUDUBON MAGAZINE is to advance the interests of the Audubon Society. The Society has a roll of more than 20,000 members, scattered among more than 400 towns, so that there is very evident need of a special medium of ready communication between officers and members. Present methods of personal letter writing and circular distribution are slow and cumbersome. The strength and growth of the work will be promoted by a regular monthly journal recognized as its exponent. The magazine will give stability to the Society, foster the zeal of the thousands now on its rolls, increase the membership, aid in carrying out the Society's special work, and broaden the sphere of effort in such directions as may be approved.

While directly concerned with the attainment of the specific purpose for which the Audubon Society was established, the magazine will deal with bird life and other natural history, and discuss the general economic problems of animal life in relation to agriculture and human welfare. It will aim to be practical, instructive and helpful; but it will never be prosy. With inspiration drawn from the great book of nature, how can its pages have other than variety, freshness and charm? Competent ornithologists are associated with the editor in the work, and every effort will be made to place before its readers the results of the most reliable ob-

servations on birds, and the nature of their services to man. But the MAGAZINE will not confine itself to birds alone. It will take a far wider range and will discuss many other interesting points in animated nature.

The AUDUBON will be illustrated, and everything done to render it attractive to the young folks; but while its language will be simple, it is intended to convey the most reliable information on the little known subject of man's dependence on the services of the lowliest creatures that live: a subject of first-class importance to every student of nature, and above all to the farmer.

The AUDUBON will be a family magazine, and as the young folks have rendered most material aid in advancing the Society's work, each number will be prepared with special care that there be for young readers a full share of entertainment.

To spread the Audubon movement as widely as possible, and in every way to foster its growth, is the purpose of the MAGAZINE. This can best be done by giving it the widest possible currency, and it is hoped that each one who is interested in the Society's work will not only send in a subscription, but will induce others to do the same. The price being merely nominal can at best only cover the cost of production, while a large subscription will do much to instruct young and old in the important part played by our birds in the economy of Nature.

THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

Icterus Baltimore, Daudin.

ONE of the most beautiful and most useful of our North American birds is the Baltimore Oriole, a plate of which forms the frontispiece of this number. Its bright colors, seen flashing amid the tender green of the budding leaves in spring, and its clear, mellow whistle, sounded as it moves along the branches of some tall tree in its search for food, make it a conspicuous and beautiful feature of the loveliest season of the year. Formerly the Oriole was one of the most abundant of our Eastern birds, but its very beauty has led to its destruction. Its brilliant plumage makes it very desirable to the hat bird collector, while its sweet notes catch his ear as its colors do his eye. It is often the case that all the male birds in a district are exterminated within a short time after their arrival from the South.

In different localities the Oriole is known by different names, such as Fire-bird, Golden Robin, Fire-hang-nest, Hang-nest and Baltimore-bird, or Baltimore Oriole. These names refer either to its gorgeous plumage or else to its habit of building a curious hanging nest, which swings in the air below the twig to which it is attached. Orange and black were the colors of Lord Baltimore, for whom the bird was named by the great Swedish naturalist Linnæus, and this is the name by which it is most widely known.

The Baltimore Oriole comes to us from the South in early spring. It passes the winter in Mexico, Central America and Cuba, and enters the United States in March. Audubon tells us that in Louisiana he has seen the young of the first brood early in May. The journey northward is performed rather slowly, and usually it is the 9th or 10th of May before the Orioles are seen in southern New York and Con-

necticut. They are extremely regular in the time of their arrival, and year after year appear at any point at about the same date. The male birds are the first to arrive, and the females usually make their appearance a day or two later.

The first notice we have of the Baltimore's presence is his sweet whistle heard in the early morning. If we look for him we shall find him high up among the branches of an oak or elm or sycamore or cherry tree, busily looking for food, and if we take a little time to watch him, may see how systematically he goes to work to secure his breakfast. He will very likely alight on some large branch near the trunk of the tree, and thence work outward toward the smaller branches, going carefully over almost every twig, and always flying back to the main branch to begin his examination of a smaller one. He peers into each crevice in the bark; looks under each leaf; and takes out from each blossom the insects which have gathered there to feed on the sweet honey. The little bunches of eggs hidden last autumn in the crannies and nooks where the mother beetle or moth thought they would be safe, do not escape his keen sight and his strong, sharp-pointed bill; the caterpillar, just hatched out and beginning to feed on the tender leaves, is far too slow to get away if the Oriole once espies him; and the insect which is about to lay its eggs in the fruit which is just now forming will have to be very quick and cunning if it is to avoid the sharp eyes of Lord Baltimore. All through the spring and summer this is the Oriole's work, performed day after day, constantly, carefully, faithfully. No one can know how much good he does by his unceasing warfare against the insects; no one can know how many trees he saves, how many barrels of

fruit he gives to the farmer, fruit which but for him would be eaten up by the grubs, or having been stung by insects would drop off from the trees before ripening.

But there are some people who believe that the Oriole does a great deal of harm. They say that he eats the peas in spring and destroys grapes in great numbers in the autumn.

Perhaps the Baltimore is not altogether perfect. He does visit the pea vines, but it is probably more to get the insects which gather about the sweet white blossoms than to eat the peas. But even if he should take a few of them, what a trifle in money value this loss would be when compared with the great good that he does by destroying the insects; and the same thing is true with regard to the few grapes he may eat. Without the Oriole, and other birds who do such work as he, we might not have any vines at all on which to grow grapes. There are many learned people who believe that the terrible disease, due to a small insect, which has destroyed so many of the finest vineyards in France, is caused by the wholesale killing of birds which takes place in that country. The Oriole may do some little harm in the way indicated, but his services to man are very great and far outweigh the value of a few small fruits.

Soon after the Orioles reach the place which they have chosen for their summer home they select their mates. Sometimes sharp battles take place between two male birds for the favor of a female, and the rivals chase one another here and there with shrill cries of anger, while the female looks on with interest to see which of her admirers will be the conqueror in the fight. As soon as the birds have paired, each couple begins to look about for a suitable place for the nest. This is built usually in an elm or sycamore tree, though sometimes in a cherry or pear, or as in the illustration, in a tulip tree. It is a structure of wonderful skill and ingenuity, a neatly woven purse

or pouch-shaped bag of varying depth, constructed of long strings, sometimes of the fibre of the milkweed, or of horse-hair or of the threads of the Spanish moss of the South, the whole forming, as Nuttall remarks, "a sort of coarse cloth." The nest is usually placed at the forking of two twigs, one side of it being attached to either of them, but sometimes it is fastened to one twig by one side only. We have seen one nest, built in a pear tree, which was formed entirely of black and brown horse-hairs without any other material whatever.

The birds readily gather up and work into their nests any bits of string or tow which they may find, and we knew of one house where it was the custom for the children in spring, when the Orioles were building, to put out on the lawn bits of blue and red worsted or yarn. These the birds would take and weave into their nests, thus adding a little bright color to their sober gray homes. Mr. Nuttall speaks of a case where a female which he was watching carried off to her nest a piece of lampwick ten or twelve feet long. He says further: "This long string, and many other shorter ones, were left hanging out for about a week before both the ends were wattled into the sides of the nest. Some other little birds, making use of similar materials, at times twitched these flowing ends, and generally brought out the busy Baltimore from her occupation in great anger."

In the South the network of the nest is open, and there is little or no lining, so that the air may circulate freely through it, but in the Northern States the fabric is more closely woven and hair or down is often used to thicken it and make the nest warm.

The work of building the nest is taken part in by both birds. Sometimes the female does almost all the weaving and the male brings the materials to her, and at others the male is the architect. It is a busy time for both of them, and no doubt

the days seem all too short for the work that has to be done. When the swinging nest is completed the eggs are laid. They are four or five in number, white marked with dots and curious curving lines and streaks, as if some one had been scratching on them with a pen and very black ink.

Now the female begins to sit upon her eggs and the male is kept very busy. He has to bring food to his mate, and also to keep a sharp lookout for any enemies who may be suspected of having designs against his family. The presence of a strange dog or cat in the vicinity of his nest will bring him down to the lower branches of the tree or to the top of a fence post with a sharp rolling cry of anger and warning. The Baltimore Oriole is not afraid of anything that flies, and will attack most courageously any bird that may attempt to alight in the tree where his nest is built. We have seen one administer such a severe thrashing to a marauding bluejay who was prowling about his home, that the rascal went off quite crestfallen and hid himself in a cedar tree, where he staid half an hour before he dared to venture out from its sheltering branches.

For two weeks the tender mother sits upon her eggs, rocked by the soft breezes and cheered by the love song of her devoted mate. Then the shells begin to crack, and the blind, naked, helpless young appear. The mother carefully throws out of the nest every particle of eggshell that might scratch their tender bodies, and soon feeds them with the soft insect food that she has prepared for them. From this time on both parents are busily at work providing food for the young, which grow hungrier and hungrier as they increase in size. In the course of a couple of weeks they are pretty well feathered, and now they begin to make excursions to the door of the nest, so that they can peep out into the world about them and see what is going on there. The sides of the nest are straight

up and down, and the young birds climb up the walls as a woodpecker climbs up a tree. Soon after they venture on this feat their wings become strong enough to support them, and at length the boldest of them all ventures to tumble off his perch and take a short flight; and soon the nest is deserted.

Although the Oriole does not possess any very great powers of song, its cheerful whistle is a pleasant sound, and it has, according to Nuttall, considerable powers of mimicry. He speaks of one which imitated the whistle of the cardinal redbird, the call of the Wilson's thrush and the song of the robin, and indeed had such a variety of unusual notes as often to deceive the naturalist, who sometimes thought he was hearing the notes of birds new to him.

The same author, in the course of his very extended and interesting article on the Baltimore Oriole, gives an account of a male which he kept as a pet. He says: "I have had a male bird in a state of domestication, raised from the nest very readily on fresh minced meat soaked in milk. When established, his principal food was scalded Indian corn meal, on which he fed contentedly, but was also fond of sweet cakes, insects of all descriptions, and nearly every kind of fruit. In short, he ate everything that he would in a state of nature, and did not refuse to taste and eat of everything but the condiments which enter into the multifarious diet of the human species. He was literally omnivorous. No bird could become more tame, allowing himself to be handled with patient indifference, and sometimes with playfulness. The singular mechanical application of his bill was remarkable and explains at once the ingenious art employed by the species in weaving their nest. If the folded hand was presented to our familiar Oriole, he endeavored to open it by inserting his pointed and straight bill between the closed fingers, and then by

pressing open the bill with great muscular force, in the manner of an opening pair of compasses, he contrived, if the force was not great, to open the hand and examine its contents. If brought to the face he did the same with the mouth, and would try hard to open the closed teeth. In this way, by pressing open any yielding interstice, he could readily insert the threads of his nest, and pass them through an infinity of openings, so as to form an ingenious network or basis of his suspensory and procreant cradle."

Two Orioles which we once had in confinement were fed, as very young birds, partly on bread and milk and partly on raw beef finely minced. They thrived excellently, and as soon as they were able to feed themselves, their bill of fare was enlarged so as to include boiled rice, raisins and dried figs, of both of which fruits they were very fond. They grew to be fine, strong, healthy birds, but that same autumn circumstances made it necessary that they should be set free, so that there was no opportunity for making any extended observations on their habits in confinement.

After the brood is reared and the young birds have become strong and well able to look out for themselves, the Orioles begin preparations for their southern migrations. They usually leave New England in Sep-

tember, and go away one by one, or at most only a few together. The males have ceased their cheery whistle, and the birds seem to wish to shun observation, flitting quietly along the hedgerows and through the woods, seldom noticed except by the ornithologist.

As has been said, the winter home of the Oriole is beyond our borders. In summer it is found all over the United States east of the Rocky Mountains, and north well into the British Provinces. It is a bird of strong local attachments, and may sometimes be found abundant in one district and quite rare or even absent from another neighboring section.

The Baltimore Oriole is about seven and a half inches long. In the full-plumaged male the head, neck, throat, back, wings and part of the tail are black. The other parts are orange. The two middle tail feathers are black, and those outside of these are part black toward the body and part orange toward the tips. There are two lines of white on the wings. The bill is bluish-black. The feet and legs are lead color. The female is everywhere paler and duller than the male. Where he is black she is grayish-yellow, except on the wings, which are brownish-black, and where he is orange she is olive-yellow. The males do not attain their full beauty of plumage until the third year.

MAN THE DESTROYER.

IT is stated that the quagga, the beautiful wild striped ass of South Africa, has suddenly ceased to exist. The boot-makers of London and New York wanted his skin for a particular kind of sportsman's boot, and he consequently passed away out of zoology. There may be a few left on the highest and wildest plateaus, but the Boers, tempted by the high prices, have extirpated the herds which only ten years ago existed in South Africa. That will be the

fate of the elephant, too. There will soon not be a bird of paradise on earth, and the ostrich has only been saved by private breeders. Man will not wait for the cooling of the world to consume everything in it, from teak trees to humming-birds, and a century or two hence will find himself perplexed by a planet in which there is nothing except what he makes. He is a poor sort of creator.—*The Spectator (London, England)*.

A BIRD AMONG BIRDS.

I AM very glad to learn that we are to have an AUDUBON MAGAZINE. All lovers of birds will be pleased, but to me it is a source of especial pleasure, as affording a fitting opportunity of chronicling the life and adventures, the talents and virtues, the sayings and doings of a bird *primus inter pares*—a bird among birds—which was my constant companion and devoted friend for a period of more than twenty long years. Death has, alas! parted us, and nothing remains to me but the sad pleasure of immortalizing his memory in the columns of the AUDUBON.

As all birds of the parrot kind are by common consent called "Polly," I will not deviate from that rule, although in this case it might be called a misnomer, for my "Polly" was not only not a polly of the common kind, but a cockatoo of the larger species, as white as snow, "orange-crested," and withal a male, and for that reason not entitled to the feminine appellation, Polly. Yet I prefer to call my departed friend and companion of twenty-two years, "Polly," more as expressive of endearment than of propriety. Well, Polly had a history, and it is that I propose to interest your readers with.

Somewhere back in the dark past, say about fifty years ago, there lived in Philadelphia a family named Miller, who kept a hotel on Chestnut street (Sam Miller's). By some means not known to me, this Polly got into the possession of that family. How old he may have been when he arrived from Australia has never been established, but it is likely he was full-grown and probably two or three years old. Some time in the beginning of the forties, Polly came into the hands of a Wentz family at Lancaster, Pa., who had him for perhaps ten or fifteen years, when he was sold to a Mr. Connell, in Leacock Town-

ship, Lancaster county. Here he had the misfortune to break a leg, which disabled him so that he could not feed himself properly, and came very near being sacrificed to relieve him of his misery, when a good Samaritan in the person of a Mr. Crick, a butcher, who supplied the Connell family with meat, seeing the unfortunate condition of the bird, suggested that perhaps he might be healed. Mr. Connell had very little hopes of such a happy result, but told Mr. Crick to take him and see what he could do with him. Thus Mr. Crick became Polly's new owner, successfully splinted and bandaged the broken limb, and in a short time healed the fracture. From this time forth the history of Polly's precocity begins. It was never known before what "was in" the bird. The sequel will show that there was much "in him" that was only waiting an opportunity to be developed, more perhaps than some people would have given a bird credit for.

Polly was given a wide range on the little farm, where he mingled with geese, ducks, chickens and pigs, and by degrees became a mimic unparalleled by anything recorded in history. When he cackled, any one not aware of his presence naturally concluded that a hen was just glorying over her "last lay." When he crowed all the barn-yard strutters joined in chorus to outcrow him. When he imitated the small "chick" with a shrill and quick "peep" as if in pain, clucking mothers would run in the direction whence the sound came, to the rescue of the supposed little victim, only to be confronted by the mischievous hook-billed counterfeit. His braying of a mule was perfect in modulation, but somewhat lacking in volume, and for that reason was one of his very best efforts. No woman ever laughed more heartily than Polly could laugh; in fact, so natural was this

imitation that on more than one occasion persons would stop to listen to the fun among the women folks of the house, to be told on inquiring as to what was going on, that it was "only Polly having a laugh to himself." The most natural of all his imitations, however, was the crying of a baby. It was enough to touch the heart of any tender parent passing the house when Polly had this theme in hand. Such sobbing, such holding of breath and then bursting out afresh in a perfect scream as of pain, made everybody within hearing and not knowing the source feel like suggesting Winslow soothing syrup or paregoric, and that without delay. One other extraordinary effort of Polly was the squealing of a dying pig. Mr. Crick killed many hogs for the market, and this gave the bird an excellent opportunity to acquire this ear-piercing refrain. His imitation of the whining of a puppy and the barking of a dog were perfect in the full sense of the term. In short there was nothing that he undertook to imitate which was not done to perfection, except the braying of the mule.

Polly was happy in his home, but he finally became too sociable for Mr. Crick's use, and this was the cause of his sale and my becoming his owner, master, friend—his last owner. His obtrusive sociability consisted in eating from the baby's hand. One day the baby was eating candy. Polly wanted some of that candy, so he just walked up to where baby was sitting at the door and took the candy and a part of the thumb from baby's hand. When baby cried he broke out in a fit of laughing, which novel concert brought the family to the scene, and from that moment it was resolved, finally and irrevocably, that "Polly must go." He was at once deprived of his liberty by being put into his cage and transported to Lancaster, five miles distant, to be sold. He was kept in a basement restaurant, where I for the first time saw him, loved him, and bought him.

A large volume might be written of my more than twenty years' experience with this wonderful creature; of the excursions we made together through the surrounding country; of our trips to various large cities in Pennsylvania; of his tricks in gymnastics; of his accompaniment when I whistled "Sweet Home;" of his gathering up from the floor a number of coins, carefully bringing them to me in a perfect roll and placing them in my hand; of his ringing a bell, carrying a little bucket of water, bringing my hat, my handkerchief or my purse, when told to do so, and of a number of other equally wonderful feats indicating extraordinary sagacity, if not reasoning powers. But I will content myself with giving one remarkable episode in his career which I think most astonishing of all, and one in which I, for one, found great difficulty in fixing the line where "animal instinct" ceases and reasoning faculties begin.

In 1876 I left for Europe, and expecting to stay several years, bethought me as to what disposition to make of my pet, during my absence. It occurred to me that the safest place would be the Zoological Gardens at Philadelphia, and there, accordingly, I left him. After three years and three months absence, I called at the Zoo and requested the superintendent, Mr. Brown, to accompany me to the bird house, telling him that I proposed to put Polly to a test as to the retentiveness of his memory. Mr. Brown cheerfully complied, and we were witnesses of one of the most remarkable instances of animal sagacity on record. I will quote from an article in a Philadelphia paper, which appeared a few days later, and was written by one of the reporters after an interview with the superintendent. He says: "On entering the bird house Mr. Sprenger took his station on the opposite side of the building from that occupied by Polly, where the bird could not see him, and then exclaimed: 'Where's

my Polly?' Immediately the bird recognized the voice of his former master, became excited, walking back and forth on his perch, showed as best he could, by voice and gesture, that he wished to answer the question by saying, 'Here am I.' It was a clear case of instant recognition. Then Mr. Sprenger went to his pet, and the scene is described by Mr. Brown as the reunion of a parent and a child. The affectionate creature ran his bill through his old master's moustache in the attempt to kiss him, rubbed his head against his cheek, then kissed him again and nestled close to his old friend, as though he feared he might lose him again. Then Mr. Sprenger tested him in some of his old tricks to prove his memory, and they were performed with as much readiness as in former days. 'Polly, I have lost my pocket-book,' said his old friend, after having dropped it. Then Polly went in search of it, and soon brought it in his bill, and having deposited it in his friend's hand, expressed his joy in a hearty laugh. On Mr. Sprenger's taking his leave of him, he was almost frantic with grief, and it was only with difficulty that his keeper prevented him from following the master he so affectionately loved."

If I loved the bird before, that feeling was intensified from that moment, and money could no more have tempted me to part with him than it could to part with one of my children. Call it a strange infatuation; call it weakness or effeminacy; call it what you will, but my solemn resolve from that day was that "naught but death should part" us two.

In 1881 Polly was brought from Lancaster, Pa., to this city, where I had located a year before, and soon attracted unusual attention, as he had at the North, exciting the wonder and admiration of all who saw him. It was evident, however, by noticeable failing of eyesight and stiffness in his joints, that age was telling on Polly, and

this caused me to watch him with as much solicitude as a tender father watches his child. My greatest fear was that growing years might lead to decrepitude and helplessness with all the attendant evils of extreme age. Often in my contemplative moments did I picture to myself the probable final separation. At last the end came. The closing scene of this enigmatical existence burst upon my view when I least expected it.

Polly was entertaining a number of callers with his laughing, talking, whistling and barking programme, until a late hour in the evening, and seemed to be in his usual good spirits. After the company had left, members of the family were startled by plaintive cries from the bird as if in great distress. Rushing into the room, they found him lying on the floor, to where he had fallen from the back of a chair upon which he had been sitting, uttering the most pitiable cries, evidently trying to say "Papa" (meaning me). I heard the commotion from a room in the lower story, and immediately ran up-stairs. Imagine my feelings if you can, gentle reader, when I picked up my dear old friend! A few gasps, a convulsive tremor, a closing of his jet black eyes, and Polly was no more! He died in my hands, doubtless from an apoplectic stroke. May I not be pardoned when I admit the fact that tears fell from my eyes at that moment? It was a weakness, 'tis true, but still, under the circumstances, pardonable, I think. My love for the feathered tribe has always been intense. Since Polly's death I love them more, and no matter how homely in plumage, all alike have my undivided love and ceaseless care. The insignificant little sparrow, and the goldfinch gay, the crow and the pheasant, the robin and the wren, the lark and the swallow, in short all of God's beautiful feathered family, are the objects of my jealous care.

J. J. SPRENGER.

WOMAN'S HEARTLESSNESS.

WHEN the Audubon Society was first organized, it seemed a comparatively simple thing to awaken in the minds of all bird-wearing women a sense of what their "decoration" involved. We flattered ourselves that the tender and compassionate heart of woman would at once respond to the appeal for mercy, but after many months of effort we are obliged to acknowledge ourselves mistaken in our estimate of that universal compassion, that tender heart in which we believed. Not among the ignorant and uncultured so much as the educated and enlightened do we find the indifference and hardness that baffles and perplexes us. Not always, heaven be praised! but too often—I think I may say in two-thirds of the cases to which we appeal. One lady said to me, "I think there is a great deal of sentiment wasted on the birds. There are so many of them, they never will be missed, any more than mosquitoes! I shall put birds on my new bonnet." This was a fond and devoted mother, a cultivated and accomplished woman. It seemed a desperate case indeed, but still I strove with it. "Why do you give yourself so much trouble?" she asked. "They will soon go out of fashion and there will be an end of it." "That may be," I replied, "but fashion next year may order them back again, and how many women will have human feeling enough to refuse to wear them?" It was merely waste of breath, however, and she went her way, a charnel house of beaks and claws and bones and feathers and glass eyes upon her fatuous head. Another, mocking, says, "Why don't you try to save the little fishes in the sea?" and continues to walk the world with dozens of warblers' wings making her headgear hideous. Not one in fifty is found willing to remove at once the birds from her head, even if languidly she does acquiesce in the assertion that it is a cruel

sin against nature to destroy them. "When these are worn out I am willing to promise not to buy any more," is what we hear, and we are thankful indeed for even so much grace; but, alas! birds never "wear out." And as their wearer does not carry a placard stating their history, that they were bought last year or perhaps given to her, and she does not intend to buy more, her economy goes on setting the bad example, or it may be her indolence is to blame—one is as fatal as the other. Occasionally, but too rarely, we meet a fine spirit, the fire of whose generous impulse consumes at once all selfish considerations, who recognizes the importance of her own responsibility, and whose action is swift as her thought to pluck out the murderous sign, and go forth free from its dishonor. And how refreshing is the sight of the birdless bonnet! The face, beneath, no matter how plain it may be, seems to possess a gentle charm. She might have had birds, this woman, for they are cheap enough and plentiful enough, heaven knows! But she has them not, therefore she must wear within things infinitely precious, namely, good sense, good taste, good feeling. Heaven bless every woman who dares turn her back on Fashion and go about thus beautifully adorned!

In one of the most widely circulated newspapers the fashionable news from Paris begins: "Birds are worn more than ever." Birds "are worn!" Pitiful phrase! Sentence of deadly significance! "Birds are worn"—as if that were final, as if all women must follow one another like a flock of sheep over a wall, and forget reason, forget the human heart within, forget everything but the empty pride of being "in the fashion." Ah me, my fire-flecked oriole, watching your airy cradle from the friendly elm bough swinging, go get yourself an inky coat. Your beauty makes you but a target

for the accused gun that shatters your lovely life, quenches your delicious voice, destroys your love, your bliss, your dutiful cares, your whole beautiful being, that your dead body may disfigure some woman's head and call all eyes to gaze at her! But no—that will not save you! Blackbirds are not safe, they "are worn." Carrion crows "are worn," unsavory scavengers though they be. No matter on what they may have fed—they "are worn." Soar, swift sea-swallow—I would it could be millions of miles away from the haunts of men; to the uttermost parts of the earth and the ocean carry your grace, your slender loveliness of shape, your matchless delicacy of tint and tone of color, soft, wondrous, like gray cloud and silvery snow—fly! dear and beautiful creature; seek the centre of the storm, the heart of the arctic cold, the winter blast—they are not so unkind as—woman's vanity. Do I not see you every day, your mocking semblance writhing as if in agony round female heads—still and stark, sharp wings and tail pointing in stiff distress to heaven, your dried and ghastly head and beak dragged down to point to the face below, as if saying, "*She* did it?" The albatross of the Ancient Mariner is not more dreadful. Yesterday I saw three of you on one hat! Three terns at once, a horrible confusion of death and dismay.

Does any woman imagine these withered corpses (cured with arsenic) which she loves to carry about, are *beautiful*? Not so; the birds lost their beauty with their lives. To-day I saw a mat woven of warblers' heads, spiked all over its surface with sharp beaks, set up on a bonnet and borne aloft by its possessor in pride! Twenty murders in one! and the face beneath bland and satisfied, for are not "Birds to be worn

more than ever?" Flit, sandpiper, from the sea's margin to some loneliness remote and safe from the noble race of man! No longer in the soft May twilight call from cove to cove along the shore in notes that seem to breathe the very spirit of tender joy, of happy love, of sweet content; tones that mingle so divinely with the warm waves' murmur, with the south wind's balm, and sound in music through the dusk, long after the last crimson flush of sunset has faded from the sky. Year after year you come back to make your nest in the place you know and love, but you shall not live your humble, blissful, dutiful life, you shall not guard your treasured home, nor rejoice when your little ones break the silence with their first cry to you for food. You shall not shelter and protect and care for them with the same divine instinct you share with human mothers. No, some woman wants your corpse to carry on her head. You shall die that vanity, that "Fashion," may live.

I fear we no longer deserve these golden gifts of God. I would the birds could all emigrate to some friendlier planet, peopled by a nobler race than ours, where they might live their sweet lives unmolested, and be treated with the respect, the consideration and the grateful love which are their due. For we have almost forfeited our right to the blessing of their presence.

But still we venture to hope for a better future, still the Audubon and other societies work with heart and soul to protect and save them, and we trust yet to see the day when women, one and all, will look upon the wearing of birds in its proper light, namely, as a sign of heartlessness and a mark of ignominy and reproach.

CELIA THAXTER.

BOSTON, Mass., Dec. 26, 1886.

'Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.—*Longfellow.*

A REVIEW.

THE Audubon Society was founded by the *Forest and Stream* in February, 1886, with the object of saving the birds of this continent, and especially song and other small birds, from being practically exterminated. Those who thought about the matter saw that the birds were rapidly growing fewer. Many of the farmers noticed that there were not so many birds as there used to be. As a rule they did not trouble themselves much about it; they had too many other things to think of. But sometimes, when their orchards were attacked by insects, and every apple had a worm at its core, or when their crops, one after the other, were damaged by various insects, they recollected that birds eat insects by the thousand, and could not help wondering how it would fare with the harvests if there were no birds left to keep the insects in check.

There were other people besides farmers who lived in the country, or visited it in the summer months, because they liked to get away from the noise, and heat, and dust of the great cities, and spend weeks or months in the woods and fields, and listen to the glad music of the song-birds. These were the first to notice the disappearance of the birds, and to feel the loss deeply. Then there were scientific men, like the members of the American Ornithologists' Union, who make a study of birds and their habits—of the food they eat, and of the share of world's work which falls upon their shoulders, and who knew that a country could not be deprived of its birds without inflicting very severe trouble upon the people. In fact, it was they, and such as they, who first opened the farmer's eyes to the value of the services which the birds render him, by feeding on insects, and thus saving his whole crop from destruction.

When it was noticed that the birds were

not as plenty as they used to be, there was not much difficulty in accounting for it. In the year 1786 there were less than five millions of people in the United States, and the ladies wore no feathers—at least nothing but ostrich or marabout feathers—but in the year 1886 there were fifty-five millions of people in the country—nearly all the ladies wore bird skins or heads or wings; many men went shooting small birds to make money by selling the skins, and innumerable boys went bird nesting. Of course there were exceptions—there were gentle women who were deeply pained at the sight of so many bright lives being thoughtlessly sacrificed; there were men, too, indignant at the wanton destruction of life. But what could one person, or a score of persons do to influence the conduct of a whole people? How could one person appeal to fifty-five millions of people, and ask them even to consider the matter?

Of course the thing was possible, and what is more, it is in a fair way of being achieved. There is hardly a State or Territory in the Union, in which there is not now a large number of people pledged to protect the birds; and there is every reason to believe that before many years shall have passed, a person who has not heard of the movement will be a rare exception.

The idea of founding the Audubon Society originated with Dr. George Bird Grinnell of the *Forest and Stream* Publishing Company, of New York. As a member of the American Ornithologists' Union, he had acquainted himself with all the facts bearing upon the destruction of birds and their rapid disappearance, and had given much study to the subject in all its aspects. The Union, while it laid stress upon the importance of public agitation for the preservation of our birds, declared plainly that it would not head such a movement. As experts, its

members felt warranted in giving time and knowledge freely, and in suggesting measures, but for the circulation of their suggestions to the general public, they appealed to philanthropists, societies and individuals. The papers on this subject read before the A. O. U. were of great interest, and were published as a supplement to *Science*. But it was reserved for Dr. Grinnell to take up the matter from the practical standpoint. Again it was not easy to calculate what it would cost to set on foot a popular movement for the protection of our birds. Most of the warmest friends of the movement held such exaggerated views of what it would cost, that all shrank from committing themselves to any share of the responsibility. To the business managers of the *Forest and Stream* it looked less formidable. They could estimate costs, and if necessary regulate them. They could use their own paper to scatter the seeds of the movement in every State of the Union; it was a movement calculated to secure the co-operation of the press; and seeing one of their own colleagues so anxious to set it afloat, they made the necessary appropriation. On the 13th of February, 1886, the Audubon Society was founded by *Forest and Stream*, and a great number of the leading people of the country were called on to express their sentiments on the subject, or to aid the movement with their hearty co-operation.

The first steps were naturally slow. Circulars were sent flying all over the country, and almost all the newspapers responded cordially to the invitation to help make the movement known. On April 19 the first supply of membership certificates was received from the printer, and by May 1st fifteen hundred of them had been issued. From that date to this present, every day's mail has brought applications for membership, until at the close of the year, and really only ten months after its foundation, the Society has a membership of twenty

thousand. With the AUDUBON MAGAZINE to add to the impetus of the movement, there is every indication that the Society will go on prospering and increasing in numbers, until it shall reach far into the hundreds of thousands. It was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, on August 6, 1886.

The correspondence of the year has been very interesting. Many of the more active lady members who formerly wore feathers, simply because it was the fashion, were quite shocked when they learned from the circulars of the Audubon Society what a fearful sacrifice of bird life was entailed, and how very serious were the future consequences involved; and the last few months have given abundant evidence of the widespread influence of the movement.

It would be hard to say whether boys or girls have behaved most generously in the matter. To both sexes membership in the Audubon Society involves some self-denial for conscience sake, and they have both responded in a manner to maintain the high character of the race and its readiness to place principle above everything.

It was intended to make the Audubon movement a national one, but it has outgrown the conception of its promoters and become a continental one.

From across the border our Canadian cousins have hailed the work with the warmest expressions of sympathy, and among them, too, we have a large and growing membership anxious to co-operate with us to preserve everything that tends to make this great continent dear to all the dwellers on its soil.

The movement appeals so strongly to all intelligent people on economic and humane grounds that it can scarcely fail of accomplishing its objects. These are the education of our whole people to an understanding of the usefulness of the birds and the folly of permitting their wholesale destruction.

THE TWO PRINCESSES.

ONCE upon a time there lived a king who had two lovely daughters. So beautiful, so learned and so good were they, that when the time came for them to be married, so many suitors thronged to the King's palace that the roads for miles around were blocked, and the throng could move neither backward nor forward. At first this was very amusing, but presently it began to be very serious. One of the laws of the country was, that no provisions could be kept inside the city gates. Early every morning wagons arrived from the surrounding country laden with the food for the day. Now, owing to the crowded state of the roads, no wagons could reach the city, and very soon the inhabitants began to suffer for want of food. The King, who was much alarmed, after in vain consulting all the wisest men in his palace, retired to his room and gave way to great grief. As he wept, his attention was attracted by the curious behavior of a large moth that had fluttered in at the open window. First it flew up, then down, then quickly back and forth, and finally fluttered so near the king's hand that he could not resist the temptation of trying to seize it. He only succeeded in catching the end of one long wing. The moth in its struggles to escape broke the tip off. No sooner had this happened than the moth disappeared, leaving in its place a beautiful woman, who knelt before the astonished King.

When the King had recovered enough breath to speak, he gasped :

"Pray who are you? What does this mean?"

"Great King," said the lady, "I am a fairy. Long ago I innocently interfered with the plans of one of my superiors. As a punishment she changed me into a moth, and condemned me to wear that form until released by a king. You have released me,

and in return for this kindness I will perform the task that you most wish done."

"Hurrah!" cried the King, jumping up, then suddenly remembering his regal dignity :

"We mean, 'tis well. Listen then—the task I most wish done, is the clearing of the roads, that the provision wagons may enter the city."

"It shall be done," said the fairy, and vanished.

The next moment the King was startled to hear a merry fanfare of trumpets in the court. Hastening to the window, he saw the fairy who had mounted to the castle wall. In clear tones, that reached to the last suitor, she said :

"Gentle sirs, your eagerness to wed these fair princesses, while most flattering to them, is causing serious trouble in the city; provisions have given out, and a famine prevails. Behold, now, I release two butterflies. Follow them, and the two men who are fortunate enough to capture them, shall become the happy husbands of the princesses."

As she spoke, she opened her hand and out flew two butterflies of the most brilliant hues. One flew to the east, one to the west, and so eager were the suitors to catch them, that in half an hour the roads were clear, the provision wagons rolled into the city, and the hungry people gathered about them, and received their bread, their chops and steaks and vegetables, and the famine was at an end.

The two sisters had watched all these proceedings from an upper window in the castle, and when they had seen the last of the two trains of suitors vanish in the distance, they fell into each other's arms and wept.

"Oh, sister, said the younger, "must we part? I do not want to marry any of

these men who clamor for our hands. Far, far rather would I live and die by thee."

"And I," replied the other, "long for no companionship but thine. Alas! alas! is there no help?"

"Yes," answered the good fairy, appearing before them, "there is help, and I am come to bring it. Your sisterly devotion is such a lovely sight that I cannot allow you to be separated. Trust to me, all shall be well." And then she disappeared.

For days and days the two long trains of suitors marched on, following the butterflies, one to the east, the other to the west, and still no one succeeded in capturing the prize. At last, after months of weary pursuit, the western band saw advancing toward them another body of men, who turned neither to the right nor to the left. They were the eastern suitors following *their* butterfly. On and on they came, nearer and nearer, until at last the fore-

most men of each band stood face to face. Neither would give way nor turn aside, and at last they began to struggle for the right of way.

As they fought and struggled, the two butterflies floated back and forth above them, each above the leader of the company that had been following it. Suddenly there was a swift rustle of wings, and a swallow darted toward them; in a second both butterflies had vanished.

"The butterflies! Where are the butterflies?" cried the suitors from the west. "The butterflies! Where are the butterflies?" cried the suitors from the east.

The battle ceased instantly, and both bands joined in searching, but in vain. So the saddened suitors all returned lonely to their homes, and the two sisters were never separated, but lived all their life together, two happy old maids.

N. B. G.

THE SELBORNE SOCIETY.

THIS is an English society with nearly the same aims as the Audubon Society, presided over by George A. Musgrave, Esq., F. R. G. S., of Holland Park, London.

Mr. Musgrave has been indefatigable in his efforts to prick the consciences of his countrywomen on the enormity of the offense of exterminating the feathered creation to gratify a passing caprice of fashion, and to judge from the published list of lady patronesses it is evident that the movement has made its influence felt among the upper ranks of English society.

No pledge is required of its members, who are simply appealed to, to refrain from the needless sacrifice of life, and to influence others to like conduct by the propagation of pamphlets bearing on the subject.

These pamphlets are supplied cheaply by the Society, and subscriptions of not

less than one shilling (twenty-five cents) in aid of the movement are invited. The ordinary membership subscription is half a crown, equal to sixty cents of our money.

The Society appears to be doing excellent work, but its methods do not perhaps admit of assessing the value of the work done, as readily as ours, still we are not left without indications, one of the most striking of which is the trade pamphlet of a leading millinery establishment announcing "that to meet the wishes of the advocates of bird protection it has decided to handle only ostrich feathers and those of poultry and game birds in future." Our readers will be interested in tracing the progress of this sister movement, and we intend that matters of interest in connection with the Selborne Society shall be chronicled in future issues of the AUDUBON.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY.

THE numerical strength of the Audubon Society by States on Dec. 31, 1886, with the number of Local Secretaries, is told in the following table:

State.	No. of Local Sec's.	No. of Mem-bers.	State.	No. of Local Sec's.	No. of Mem-bers.
New York.....	64	6322	Nevada.....	—	1
Massachusetts..	36	1922	Iowa.....	9	612
Philadelphia....	28	1645	Kentucky.....	4	82
Ohio.....	33	1123	Arkansas.....	2	30
New Jersey....	27	1162	Texas.....	2	104
Connecticut....	16	540	California.....	1	32
Rhode Island...	6	520	Dist. Columbia.	3	127
Maine.....	2	50	Indiana.....	5	139
Vermont.....	6	373	Virginia & W.Va	4	177
New Hampshire	6	385	North Carolina.	2	22
Illinois.....	10	396	South Carolina.	1	30
Michigan.....	6	434	Missouri.....	4	46
Minnesota.....	2	88	Tennessee.....	2	54
Kansas.....	6	166	Georgia.....	1	45
Nebraska.....	1	56	Florida.....	2	57
Wisconsin.....	1	64	Maryland.....	3	192
Colorado.....	1	25	Delaware.....	—	12
Dakota.....	1	17	New Orleans...	1	67
Wyoming.....	1	6	Dom. of Canada	16	582
Indian Territory	1	18			
Total registered.....					17,723

This distribution is not precisely accurate—it represents the number of certificates sent out from headquarters to the several States and Territories indicated, but as Local Secretaries frequently enlist members resident beyond their borders, the actual count of pledges would differ somewhat from the above returns. The General Secretary, too, in his capacity of Local Secretary for New York city, counts all his issues to the credit of New York State, hence the table gives no clue to the residence of those not enlisted through a resident Local Secretary. The Society numbers in its ranks a few stragglers from far and wide, who describe themselves as residents of England, Wales, France, Russia, Burmah, Japan, with one red Indian to round off the list.

Besides the above, a very energetic secretary in Michigan, Mrs. C. R. Bacon, of Grand Rapids, has by a systematic canvass of the schools, enlisted upward of three thousand members, not yet registered, making our grand total for the year in excess of twenty thousand.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

The announcement in another column that we have opened a separate register for the enrollment of Associate Members, will be read with satisfaction by many warm friends of the movement, who shrink from subscribing to a pledge of any sort. The Audubon pledge is really nothing more than an undertaking to do or abstain from certain acts, as long as in the judgment of the subscriber it shall be obviously right to do or abstain from them; but by association of

ideas many people regard the act of taking a pledge as objectionable, or at least find it distasteful. The correspondence of the Society during the past year has brought to light many phases of this sentiment.

Some people's self-respect forbids their taking a pledge, because the act may be held to imply that they dare not trust themselves to abide by the prescribed line of conduct, unless bound by a solemn obligation. They hold it sufficient to pledge themselves to themselves, and regard it as detracting from their dignity to hold themselves open^{ly} pledged to society.

Others again are withheld by a very sensitive conscience, from subscribing to a pledge which, strictly interpreted, may imply more than they are capable of performing. To them a phrase may mean a great deal more than would be ascribed to it by ordinary matter-of-fact people; a great deal more, perhaps, than was in the mind of the one who formulated it, for at the best, words express ideas but very imperfectly.

On the whole the system of issuing certificates of membership based on subscription to the prescribed pledges, has worked very satisfactorily, and will be continued; but it is obviously desirable that the Society should have some avenue open for the admission of all who approve of its objects, abide by its requirements, who are ready to co-operate for its extension, and only withheld from association by motives which command our respect; and as stated it has been decided to open our portals for the reception of associate members. We have some already working for us, and rendering us very valuable co-operation, and by that co-operation demonstrating the imperfection of a system which excludes them from acknowledged membership.

The certificate of membership cannot be given to associate members because, as above said, it is based on subscription to a pledge.

The new departure was suggested by outside friends, and was not resolved on until after mature deliberation. Now that it has been adopted we trust that all friends of the movement, all who are desirous of saving our birds from reckless extermination, will associate themselves with us, for in a great movement such as this is fast becoming, numbers exercise an important influence not only in moulding legislation, but also in swaying public opinion to the support of the laws.

WHAT IS A BIRD?—That is not such an easy question to answer, as any one may discover by trying to tell just what a bird is and how it differs from all other animals. The President of the American Ornithologists' Union has written a paper on this subject, which will appear in our next number.

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS.

President pro tem.,

GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL, Ph. D.

Honorary Vice-Presidents.

Mrs. W. Appleton.....	Boston, Mass.
Mr. George T. Angell.....	Boston, Mass.
Mr. Charles Alexander.....	Montreal, Canada.
Miss Maria R. Audubon.....	New York.
Miss Mary E. Audubon.....	New York.
Mrs. Margaret Blake.....	Ottawa, Canada.
Miss Biddle.....	Philadelphia, Pa.
Mrs. Charles T. Barney.....	New York.
Mrs. Frank Bottome.....	New York.
Mr. Henry Brough.....	New York.
Mr. T. F. Burgess.....	Cleveland, Ohio.
Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher.....	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mrs. Brinton Coxe.....	Philadelphia, Pa.
Miss M. Dusenberry.....	Sing Sing, N. Y.
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Mrs. William Ludlow.....	Philadelphia, Pa.
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Mr. Charles McLaughlin.....	Portland, Me.
Lady Macdonald.....	Ottawa, Canada.
Mr. Thomas E. D. Marvin.....	Portsmouth, N. H.
Justice Arthur McArthur.....	Washington, D. C.
Dr. R. Noyes.....	St. Paul, Minn.
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CHARLES F. AMERY, *General Secretary.*

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY was founded in New York city in February, 1886. Its purpose is the protection of American birds, not used for food, from destruction for mercantile purposes. The magnitude of the evil with which the Society will cope, and the imperative need of the work which it proposes to accomplish, are outlined in the following statement concerning

THE DESTRUCTION OF BIRDS.

Within the last few years, the destruction of our birds has increased at a rate which is alarming. This destruction now takes place on such a large scale as to seriously threaten the existence of a number of our most useful species. It is carried on chiefly by men and boys who sell the skins or plumage to be used for ornamenta purposes—principally for the trimming of women's hats, bonnets and clothing. These men kill every-

thing that wears feathers. The birds of the woods, the birds of the field, the birds of the marsh and those of the sea are alike slain, at all times and at all seasons. It matters not if the bird be a useful one which devours the hurtful insects which destroy the farmer's crops, or a bright-plumaged songster whose advent has been welcomed in spring, and which has reared its brood in the door yard during the summer, or a swift-winged sea swallow whose flight along the shore has often with unerring certainty led the fisherman to his finny prey—whatever it be, it must be sacrificed to the bird butcher's lust for slaughter and for gain. Besides the actual destruction of the birds, their numbers are still further diminished by the practice of robbing their nests in the breeding season.

Although it is impossible to get at the number of birds killed each year, some figures have been published which give an idea of what the slaughter must be. We know that a single local taxidermist handles 30,000 bird skins in one year; that a single collector brought back from a three months trip 11,000 skins; that from one small district on Long Island about 70,000 birds were brought to New York in four months time. In New York one firm had on hand February 1, 1886, 200,000 skins. The supply is not limited by domestic consumption. American bird skins are sent abroad. The great European markets draw their supplies from all over the world. In London there were sold in three months from one auction room, 404,464 West Indian and Brazilian bird skins, and 356,389 East Indian birds. In Paris 100,000 African birds have been sold by one dealer in one year. One New York firm recently had a contract to supply 40,000 skins of American birds to one Paris firm. These figures tell their own story—but it is a story which might be known even without them; we may read it plainly enough in the silent hedges, once vocal with the morning songs of birds, and in the deserted fields where once bright plumage flashed in the sunlight.

The objections to this cruel and wanton destruction of bird life are not sentimental only. If continued it will soon not only deprive us of one of the most attractive features of rural life, but it will surely work a vast amount of harm to the farmers by removing one of the most efficient checks on the increase of insects. Agricultural interests are at stake.

BIRDS, INSECTS AND CROPS.

The food of our small birds consists very largely of the insects which feed on the plants grown by the farmer. These insects multiply with such astounding rapidity that a single pair may in the course of one season be the progenitors of six billions of their kind. All through the season at which this insect life is most active, the birds are constantly at work destroying for their young and for themselves, tens of thousands of hurtful creatures, which, but for them, would swarm upon the farmer's crops and lessen the results of his labors.

A painstaking and ardent naturalist not very long ago watched the nest of a pair of martins for sixteen hours, from 4 A. M. till 8 P. M., just to see how many visits the parent birds made to their young. He found that in that time 312 visits to the four young were made, 119 by the male and 193 by the female. If we suppose only six insects to have been brought at each visit, this pair of birds would have destroyed, for their young alone, in this one summer's day, not far from 2,000 insects. The important relations which our birds bear to the agricultural interests and so to the general welfare, are recognized by the governments of all our States. Laws exist for their protection, but these laws are rendered inoperative by the lack of an intelligent public sentiment to support them. They are nowhere enforced. It is for the interest of every one that such a public sentiment should be created.

It is time that this destruction were stopped.

PURPOSE OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY.

To secure the protection of our birds by awakening a better sentiment, the Audubon Society, named after the greatest of American ornithologists, has been founded. The objects sought to be accomplished by this Society are to prevent as far as possible—

- (1) The killing of any wild bird not used for food.
- (2) The taking or destroying of the eggs or nests of any wild birds.
- (3) The wearing of the feathers of wild birds. Ostrich's feathers, whether from wild or tame birds, and those of domestic fowls, are specially exempted.

The Audubon Society aims especially to preserve those birds which are now practically without protection. Our game birds are already protected by law, and in large measure by public sentiment, and their care may be left to the sportsman. The great aim of the Society is the protection of American non-game birds. The English sparrow is not included in our lists.

PLAN OF THE WORK.

Obviously the Society cannot supply any machinery of compulsion to lead individuals and communities to a higher regard for bird life and to efforts for its protection. Nor are compulsory measures thought necessary. The wrong is tolerated now only because of thoughtlessness and indifference.

The birds are killed for millinery purposes. So long as fashion demands bird feathers, the birds will be slaughtered. The remedy is to be found in the awakening of a healthy public sentiment on the subject. If this enormous destruction of birds can once be put in its true light before the eyes of men and women and young folks, if interest be aroused and sentiment created, the great wrong must cease. To so present the case to the people as to awaken this corrective sentiment is the special work contemplated by the Audubon Society. The methods adopted are very simple. Pledges are furnished, subscription to which constitutes membership, and certificates are issued to members.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP.

The signing of any of the pledges will qualify one for membership in the Society. It is earnestly desired that each member may sign all three of the pledges. Beyond the promise contained in the pledge no obligation nor responsibility is incurred. There are no fees, nor dues, nor any expenses of any kind. There are no conditions as to age. The boys and girls are invited to take part in the work, for they can often do more than others to practically protect the nesting birds. All who are interested in the subject are invited to become members, and to urge their friends to join the Society. If each man, woman or child who reads this circular will exert his or her influence, it will not take long to enlist in the good work a great number of people actively concerned in the protection of our birds. It is desired that members may be enrolled in every town and village throughout the land, so that by the moral weight of its influence this Society may check the slaughter of our beautiful songsters. The beneficent influence of the Audubon Society should be exerted in every remotest by-way where the songs of birds fill the air, and in every crowded city where the plumes of slain songsters are worn as an article of dress.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

As there are a very great number of people in full sympathy with the Audubon movement, and ready to lend it their moral support, but who refrain from joining the Society simply because they find it distasteful to sign a pledge, it has been determined to form a class of Associate Members. Any one expressing his or her sympathy with the objects of the Audubon Society and submitting a written request for membership to any local secretary, will be enrolled on the list of Associate Members. All such applications for membership received by local secretaries of the Society should be forwarded to the General Secretary for registration.

LOCAL SECRETARIES.

The Society has local secretaries in cities, towns and villages. The local secretary will furnish this circular of information and pledge forms; will receive the signed pledges, keep a list of the members, forward a duplicate list with the pledges for enrollment and file at the Society's office; and will receive in return certificates of membership, to be filled out and signed by the local secretary and given to the members. No certificate of membership will be issued to any person except upon the receipt of a signed pledge at the office of the Society. Where no local secretary has yet been appointed, individual applicants for membership may address the Society at its office, No. 40 Park Row, New York.

If there is no local secretary in your town, you are invited to act as such yourself, or to hand this to some other person who will accept the office. Upon application we will supply copies of this circular and pledge forms.

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY CERTIFICATE.

The Society furnishes to each member a handsome certificate of membership. This bears a portrait of the great naturalist, John James Audubon, after whom the Society very appropriately takes its name.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LOCAL WORK.

Meetings should be held at least once each month, at which the efforts put forth by the different members should be reported. Papers on the local condition of public opinion, on the interest taken by those not members of the Society, on the destruction of birds in the neighborhood, should be read. Field observations and reports on the local birds and their habits might be made, and these observations would be interesting to the members. The individual effort to interest others in the work and to bring them into the Society should be unceasing, for the great object of the Society is to increase the number of those who will protect the birds.

In many cases it will be possible for the members to take active means to bring to justice those who violate the laws respecting the killing of birds. An officer might be appointed whose duty it should be to attend to the prosecution of offenders against the law. Strong efforts should be made to enlist the aid of the local press.

The office of the Society is at 40 Park Row, New York city. All communications should be addressed

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY,
No. 40 Park Row, New York.

THE NEW YORK BIRD LAW.

Chapter 427.

AN ACT

For the Preservation of Song and Wild Birds.

Passed May 20, 1886; three-fifths being present; without the approval of the Governor.*

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. No person in any of the counties of this State, shall kill, wound, trap, net, snare, catch, with bird lime, or with any similar substance, poison or drug, any bird of song or any linnet, blue bird, yellow hammer, yellow bird, thrush, woodpecker, cat bird, pewee, swallow, martin, bluejay, oriole, kildee, snow bird, grass bird, gross beak, bobolink, phoebe bird, humming bird, wren, robin, meadow lark or starling, or any wild bird, other than a game bird. Nor shall any person purchase, or have in possession, or expose for sale any such song or wild bird, or any part thereof, after the same has been killed. For the purposes of this act the following only shall be considered game birds: the Anatidæ, commonly known as swans, geese, brant, and river and sea ducks; the Rallidæ, commonly known as rails, coots, mud-hens and gallinules; the Limicolæ, commonly known as shore birds, plovers, surf-birds, snipe, woodcock, sand pipers, tattlers, and curlews; the Gallinæ, commonly known as wild turkeys, grouse, prairie-chickens, pheasants, partridges and quails.

§ 2. No person shall take or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any song or wild bird.

§ 3. Sections one and two of this act shall not apply to any person holding a certificate giving the right to take birds, and their nests and eggs, for scientific purposes, as provided for in section four of this act.

§ 4. Certificates may be granted by any incorporated society of natural history in the State, through such persons or officers as said society may designate, to any properly accredited person of the age of eighteen years or upward, permitting the holder thereof to collect birds, their nests or eggs, for strictly scientific purposes only. In order to obtain such certificate, the applicant for the same must present to the person or persons having the power to grant said certificates, written testimonials from two well-known scientific men, certifying to the good character and fitness of said applicant to be intrusted with such privilege; must pay to said persons or officers one dollar to defray the necessary expenses attending the granting of such certificates; and must file with said persons or officers a properly executed bond, in the sum of two hundred dollars, signed by two responsible citizens of the State as sureties. This bond shall be forfeited to the State, and the certificate become void, upon proof that the holder of such a certificate has killed any bird, or taken the nest or eggs of any bird, for other than the purposes named in sections three and four of this act, and shall be further subject for each such offense to the penalties provided therefor in sections one and two of this act.

§ 5. The certificates authorized by this act shall be in force for one year only from the date of their issue, and shall not be transferable.

§ 6. The English or European house-sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is not included among the birds protected by this act.

§ 7. Any person or persons violating any of the provisions of this act shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment in the county jail or penitentiary, of not less than five or more than thirty days, or to a fine of not less than ten or more than fifty dollars, or both, at the discretion of the court.

§ 8. In all actions for the recovery of penalties under this act, one-half of the recovery shall belong to the plaintiff, and the remainder shall be paid to the county treasurer of the county where the offense is committed, except if the offense be committed in the city and county of New York, the remaining one-half shall be paid to the chamberlain of said city.

§ 9. All acts or parts of acts inconsistent with, or contrary to the provisions of this act, are hereby repealed.

§ 10. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATE OF NEW YORK, }
Office of Secretary of State, } ss.:

I have compared the preceding with the original law on file in this office, and do hereby certify that the same is a correct transcript therefrom and of the whole of said original law.

FREDERICK COOK, Secretary of State.

* Not returned by the Governor within ten days after it was presented to him, and became a law without his signature, [Art. IV., Sec. 9, Constitution of the State of New York.]

THE great amount of official and explanatory matter which necessarily appears in the first number of the AUDUBON MAGAZINE has crowded out a number of lighter and more entertaining, but not less valuable, articles, which had been prepared for the first issue. In the March number will be found articles by Mr. J. A. Allen, the President of the American Ornithologists' Union; Mr. G. B. Sennett, the Chairman of the A. O. U. Committee on Bird Protection; Mr. C. F. Amery, Mr. F. H. Thurston, Mr. C. B. Reynolds, Mr. Geo. Bird Grinnell, Ph. D., and other well-known writers. It is hoped that all friends of the Audubon movement will do what lies in their power to increase the circulation of the AUDUBON MAGAZINE. It is the purpose of the conductors to make it a great power for good in the cause of humane education, and at the same time to render it so attractive that the young people shall value it for its own sake, aside from any educational influence which it may exert. The price, fifty cents a year, brings it within the reach of all, and no doubt the many who are interested in the Audubon movement and feel willing to contribute to the good end which the Society has in view, will feel inclined to spread its influence by subscribing to several copies of the MAGAZINE for the benefit of friends whose interest they may desire to awaken. Specimen copies will be sent to any address on receipt of 6 cents.

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