

## LORD TREDEGAR'S SHOW.

This is one of the last, if not the only, survivor of a number of annual exhibitions which, for the purpose of promoting the interests of agriculture, wealthy landowners set a-going in the opening years of this century. We ourselves hold a broadsheet prize list issued by one of Lord Tredegar's ancestors in 1812. Then, as now, a prime object seems to have been to provoke a comparison of breed with breed. The copy of which we speak was sent into the Teeswater country to induce the breeders of the then comparatively little known shorthorn to come and pit their cattle against the local favourites of the country of the Severn and Wye. In another column will be found a review of the classes of light horses, for from the first comprehensiveness has been a characteristic of these exhibitions. The early schedule of which we speak includes such a wide range of entries that it commences with a prize for a thoroughbred stallion and ends with one for a turkey.

**CATTLE.**—We cannot spare the space to give a full detail of all the classes. As usual, Mr J. D. Willis, Mr C. W. Brierley, Mr S. Hosken, and Mr R. Stratton were busy among the shorthorns. Those who have followed the fortunes of the year will be aware from this statement that the fact implies that some of the very best animals of the breed, now on circuit, were at Newport—the bull Count Lavender (60,545), the cow Softlaw Rose, and not a few of the choicest heifers. To these were added some excellent calves, too young to have made their *début* earlier, but promising to carry the triumphs of the exhibitors forward in another season. The Herefords were even more numerous (fifty-four against fifty-one of the red, white, and roan), and they, too, included animals which had been champions of their breed elsewhere. We need only mention Mr J. H. Arkwright's Spring Jack (14,191) and Mr A. E. Hughes's Albion (15,027) among the males, and Mr T. Fenn's Bravura and Mr R. Green's Perilla among the females. The attractions of these again were supplemented by excellent calves. When the finest specimens of the two breeds were drawn out for the final awards of "the best animals" in the show, the rivals proved to be Spring Jack and Count Lavender among the bulls, and Softlaw Rose and Perilla among the cows and heifers. The judges did not hesitate long about the former pair, and they gave the preference, as best of all the bulls, to Mr J. H. Arkwright's Spring Jack. About the latter there was strong difference of opinion, and an umpire had to be called in. Eventually, as the Hereford breed triumphed in one sex, the shorthorn was pronounced superior in the other, and Mr C. W. Brierley's Softlaw Rose was the winner as best cow or heifer in the show. She is so well known now that it is unnecessary to say more than that this is another triumph for Scotch-bred shorthorns. The fat stock classes were of less interest than usual. Lord Tredegar's white shorthorn ox (much older than its rivals) took first prize among the males, and the Earl of Coventry's Hereford heifer Golden Fleece won the same position among the females, in which class there was much the closer competition. There was a remarkably strong class of dairy cows. An excellent unpedigreed cow of Mr J. Little's had the first prize; and Mr S. Hosken won the second with a specimen of his Gertrude tribe, well known at Loggan's Mile and in the Herd-book. Gertrude 7th is a seven-eighths Bates shorthorn by her later crosses.

**SHEEP.**—There was not a very comprehensive display of breeds, but there were really good longwools, shown by Mr T. R. Hulbert, from his Cotswold flock; and the Hampshire Down breed was well represented, Mr F. R. Moore winning several prizes. Lord Tredegar and Mr C. L. Campbell each had a first prize.

**SWINE.**—These were divided into whites and blacks, and no attempt was made to put the two into competition with each other. Mr D. Gibson was the most successful exhibitor of whites and Mr J. A. Fricker of Berkehiros.

**CARTHORSES.**—The competition in the older of these classes was limited to residents within a proscribed range. Especially in the younger classes, there were excellent Shirebreds shown. The principal prize for adult stallions went to the Caerwent Horse-breeding Company for Dunsmore Drayman (9242), and that for best brood cart mares to Mr J. Williams for Chance, by Chancellor (4959). The prize for the best of the two-year-olds was taken by Mr W. Morgan's Kingsland Quality, and that for the best yearling by Mrs Pery-Herrick's noted grey son of Harold, now called, from his success there, Warwick. Mr B. Phillips won the prize for the best cart-foal in the show-yard. Taking into account all the circumstances, it must be said that the Newport exhibition had "good body and fine flavour," like rare old wine.

## THE NATURALIST.

## THE NOTE OF THE BELL-BIRD.

IT IS CURIOUS how little has been ascertained of the habits of the bell-birds belonging to the South American genus *Chasmorhynchus* since Charles Waterton sixty years ago published his account of one of them, the snow-white *Chasmorhynchus niveus*, which dwells in the forests of Cayenne, Surinam, and Demerara.

It is the celebrated campanero of the Spaniards, called *duru* by the Indians, and by the English bell-bird. It is somewhat smaller than a jay, the male bird pure white with a black caruncle on the forehead nearly 3in. long, dotted over with small white feathers, and which, according to Waterton, has a communication with the palate; when filled with air looks like a spire, and when empty becomes pendulous.

Referring to this description in an account which I gave of the known species of bell-bird (the *Field*, July 26, 1890), I inquired whether there is any connection between the singular sound produced by the bird (likened to the tolling of a bell) and the caruncle, which Waterton says becomes erectile when inflated with air. For example, is the air rushing up from the lungs through the trachea driven by muscular contraction across the basal opening of the inflated caruncle, producing a sound such as is caused by blowing on a flute? This at first seems plausible, but there are several objections which are fatal to such a theory. In the first place, the caruncle is not a hollow pipe, but has fine fibrous tissues adhering to the inclosing skin, which would hinder any considerable inflation. Mr Osbert Salvin has expressed the opinion (*Ibis*, 1865, p. 93) that no inflation takes place, although Waterton states the contrary, and that the bird possesses little or no voluntary muscular control over these excrescences, but that contraction or elongation takes place as in the fleshy protuberance over the bill of a common turkey. A good argument against any supposed connection between the sound produced and the caruncle is to be found in the fact that a similar sound is produced by another species of bell-bird (*C. nudicollis*), which possesses no caruncle.

It is impossible, as Mr Salvin has remarked, to make any satisfactory examination of dried skins, and we must look to naturalists who may have the opportunity of observing these birds in their natural haunts to solve the interesting question at issue.

A step in this direction has lately been taken by Mr J. J. Quelch, curator of the Museum at Georgetown, Demerara, who has had the opportunity of observing two living examples of *C. niveus*, which have been kept in that town for some time. The result of his observations is as follows:

The caruncle is never carried upright. The erect position, in fact, is an impossible one, since the organ is made up of very fine elastic tissue, which causes it to depend lower and lower over one side of the beak during extension. When the bird is about to utter its characteristic notes, it slowly becomes elongated, at times to as much as 5in. At the conclusion of the note, the organ may remain extended till the next note, or may be partially retracted; but when a long interval takes place, the structure is always allowed to shrink up to about 1/2in. or 1in. in length, and it then hangs against the beak. During extension the caruncle is never distended with air, but is always in a state of collapse. When the appendage is fully elongated, the bird suddenly inflates its lungs, right and left, by inhaling two great draughts of air; but the method by which this is done depends upon which of its two characteristic notes it intends to utter. When the notes *kong-kay* are uttered, the action of inflation has been performed by two distinct inhalations of air, one with the head turned to the right, and the other immediately after to the left. At the moment of the utterance of the notes, the head is turned to the right for the syllable *kong*, and then very suddenly to the left for the *kay*, which is given with a strikingly loud, piercing, and metallic ring or clang; so loud and shrill, indeed, that if the observer is close by, the ears are actually deafened for the moment by the sharpness of the sound.

When, however, the sweet, musical, and deeply toned bell-like notes *Do-rong* are about to be uttered, the bird is observed to hold its head forward and to make two distinct gulps of air, and then holding its beak upwards, and slightly extending its neck, the notes are rolled out, as it were, with full voice, roundness, and resonance. On each occasion the caruncle is depended in a state of collapse to its greatest length possible over one side of the beak.

Of the two birds upon which these observations were made, one was an adult male, the other a younger male. The notes of the former were so loud and resonant as to be heard at a considerable distance from the house, amidst all the distracting noises of the town.

The periodical from which I quote is one hardly known in this country, being the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural and Com-*

shore. The lower parts, including the two hands at the wrists, had been simply sheared off at one bite! A huge shark was known to frequent the *abattoirs*, and my poor old cook must have plunged into his mouth! A poor fellow from one of the New Hebrides was bathing in Noumea Harbour from the vessel to which he was attached, when his comrades called out that a shark was making for him. As he climbed the side of his ship, the shark swam up to him; he pushed it off with one hand, losing a couple of fingers in so doing. His friends seized him, and were hauling him on board when the ravenous fish, excited by the taste of blood, dashed up, and caught him by the hip. He was got on board with his hip bone smashed and all the flesh torn from the limb. Death followed quickly. A steam launch was got, a stout hook, well baited, soon lowered into the water, and master shark got his deserts. With the hook well in his throat, he was towed about the harbour and stabbed with spears till he died.

E. L. LAYARD.

Budeleigh Salterton, Nov. 21.

## AFRICAN RHINOCEROSSES.

SIR,—It may interest some of your readers (especially my friend Mr H. A. Bryden) to know that the great square-mouthed, grass-eating rhinoceros (*R. simus*) is not yet extinct. I have just heard from a reliable source that one of these animals (a female) has been killed lately about 100 miles N.W. of Salisbury, Mashunaland. This animal was one of six that were consorting together, and the two gentlemen who shot it—Messrs Eyres and Coryndon—have, I believe, preserved the skin and skeleton. Whilst on this subject, I will take the opportunity of saying that I have never stated that the white rhinoceros was extinct, although I have often lately seen myself quoted as having done so. What I have said, and what I still say, is that this most interesting animal, the largest of terrestrial mammals after the elephant, is on the verge of extinction, its range being now confined to a very small tract of country in Northern Mashunaland.

Had it not been for the occupation of this country by the British South Africa Company, I believe that the white rhinoceros would already be extinct; but that occupation having kept all native hunters from Matabeleland to the west of the Umwati river, has happily preserved the few white rhinoceroses still left alive from the constant persecution, which in less than twenty years has utterly exterminated them in every other portion of South Central Africa. There may yet be ten or even twenty of these animals left, but certainly not more, I think, than the latter number. I have some evidence that one or two have again crossed the Umfuli river to the west, and are now living in the Limuga, as the country is called between that river and the Umzweswe. They were very plentiful there in 1878 and 1880. I had always intended, after my term of service with the British South Africa Company was over, to make an attempt to secure a skin and skeleton of the white rhinoceros for our own magnificent national collection at Kensington, and left Salisbury last June for that purpose. Unfortunately a fall from my horse, whilst chasing an ostrich, bruised my leg, and laid me up for a time, and when I was all right again, my time was too short to allow of a journey into the rhinoceros country.

Before closing this letter I wish to call your attention to an article on African Rhinoceroses, which appeared in the *Field* of July 2 last, from the pen of the eminent zoologist, Mr R. Lydekker. In the course of his interesting and instructive letter, Mr Lydekker says, *à propos* of the black rhinoceros (*R. bicornis*), "Mr Selous attributes to this species a gentle and unoffending disposition, but in this respect he is not in accord with Mr Drummond and most other writers on African sport." If Mr Lydekker will refer to my book, he will find that he has entirely failed to convey the sense of my remarks upon the general character of the black rhinoceros. The passage to which I presume Mr Lydekker refers reads as follows: "What I wish to argue is, not that the black rhinoceros is a sweet-tempered animal, but that, at any rate in the great majority of cases, he is by no means the surly, morose, and dangerous beast that some travellers would have one believe." And to this opinion I still adhere.

F. C. SELOUS.

Cape Town, Nov. 4.

**WEIGHT OF GROUSE IN CUMBERLAND.**—In 1868 a cock grouse was killed here, which weighed 234oz., and again in 1873, another of the same weight. I have not heard any since that, but should say the above was not an unusual weight for old cocks in these

## BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

THE weekly return of the working of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, for the seven days ending Nov. 12, is again disturbed by the Scotch outbreak among Canadian store cattle. There was but one new centre, but 165 head were slaughtered from having been in contact with the diseased beast there. Glanders and farcy together show 26 outbreaks—i.e., a small increase. Anthrax shows nine new centres, which also is an advance in number upon recent records. Swine fever, with forty-four new infected places, is on the declining scale; but rabies has not been extinguished, there having been 3 deaths of mad dogs—two in the North Riding of Yorkshire, and one in Lancashire.

## PREVIOUS WET SEASONS.

YOUR correspondent, "A Lincolnshire Farmer," may perhaps be interested in seeing an extract from a church register in the parish of Churchill, Worcestershire:

From the 27th August, 1821 (the commencement of harvest) to the 9th of January, 1822, there were upwards of twenty floods. During that period there was only two weeks without a flood. Most of the wheat, barley, and beans were spoiled, and very little wheat sowing could be done until the month of January, 1822.

These floods were in a large brook which runs through this parish. The said brook has not been in flood once the whole of this year.

W. A. F.

## THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY.

ON THURSDAY, Nov. 10, in the Court of Appeal (the Master of the Rolls and Lords Justices Kay and Lopes), was heard an application, by the Earl of Derby, for a new trial of a case—"Lord Derby v. Walker"—which was decided at the late Chester Assizes. This case raises a question of agricultural custom, and the trial (before Mr Justice Lawrence and a special jury) had ended in a verdict for the defendant, Mr Walker. He gave notice to quit his farm on March 25, 1892, and, in the previous October, sold all his stock, and afterwards attempted to sell as well the hay by auction and to remove manure. An interim injunction was obtained from the Court of Chancery preventing these acts, and the action (at Chester) was brought to make this injunction perpetual, and to prevent Mr Walker from ever selling the hay or removing manure. The Earl of Derby relied partly on the terms of a lease, but also on "the custom of the country," which forbids this method of dealing with hay and manure. The agent for the adjoining estate (Lord Harrington's) was called at the trial at the assizes, and stated that the custom of East Cheshire was against the tenant having such a power as that claimed by Mr Walker. The counsel for Lord Derby had urged, at Chester, that, if the hay and manure were removed, the soil would be impoverished, and that the landlord had, by custom, the right to take the hay at a valuation called consumer's value. The Cheshire jury, however, held that the tenant was justified in removing both hay and manure. The counsel for Lord Derby came to the conclusion that this verdict had been altogether against the weight of evidence, and the application to the Court of Appeal for a new trial was the result of this opinion.

After Lord Derby's counsel had been heard in London, giving a résumé of what the evidence at Chester had been, counsel for Mr Walker spoke at length. He stated that six witnesses, on each side, had given opposite testimony as to the custom of the country. The six brought forward by Mr Walker had affirmed that landlords in Cheshire did allow their tenants to sell off both hay and manure, a Mr Brady (an auctioneer, and one of these witnesses) declaring that he had acted, as salesman, 500 times in such sales of hay, &c., by auction. Lord Justice Lopes said that this might be so, yet evidence of that kind would not upset custom. Lord Justice Kay remarked that there was not in Mr Brady's evidence anything to show that, in his cases, the landlord and tenant had not come to some special agreement.

The Master of the Rolls, in summing up, said that he must enter judgment for the plaintiff (Lord Derby). The plaintiff had given strong evidence of there being a custom to offer the hay, &c., on certain prescribed rates to the landlord. The defendant had to show that no such custom existed. The practice which he attempted, if a custom, would be a bad custom. The Cheshire jury seemed to have taken no notice of custom either way; but to have decided the case on grounds for which there appeared to be no evidence. The appeal would therefore be allowed, and as the case had been a second time heard out, judgment would be given (at once) for the appellant (Lord Derby), with costs. In this decision Lords Justices Kay and Lopes concurred.

[Advertisement.] The resources of Ulster House, Conduit-street, enable Messrs Benjamin, in cases of necessity, to execute orders in twenty-four hours.

FOURTH SHEET.

under the short title *Timelivi*. Thanks to the labours of its editor, Mr Quelch, it often contains original observations on animals and plants which are of the highest interest to naturalists; and through the medium of this publication, it is to be hoped, we may see the elucidation of many questions affecting the natural history of the great country which has given it birth.

J. E. HARTING.

## NIGGERS AND SHARKS.

SIR.—In Mr Carrington's article on "British Sharks," in last Saturday's issue, he says that in "some places . . . there seems to be a sort of understanding between niggers and sharks," under which sharks do not eat "niggers." It is undoubtedly true that in many places our "black brethren" swim about among sharks with impunity, while a "mean white" would instantly be seized and devoured.

But this forbearance on the part of Mr Shark is not to be trusted. I know of places where sharks and dark-skinned natives may be seen swimming about together, and yet some of the latter are occasionally seized. At Aden, for instance, numbers of your readers have seen the Arab boys diving for sippets, with sharks swimming round, and yet among the diving boys is one with only one leg! The other was bitten off by a shark! The lad, however, still dives! In Ceylon the natives do not seem to care much for sharks at some places; in others they do. The pearl divers at Arripo always go armed with a big, sharp-pointed knife, and pay the "devil priests" to use incantations to prevent the sharks from attacking them. At Point Pedro, Galle, Colombo, Caltura, and other places, I have seen natives and sharks mingle together in the water. I heard an amusing story illustrating how little sharks are dreaded by the natives at the latter place named. The "Caloo ganga" (Black river) debouches at Caltura, but a sandspit forms a sort of lagoon. Large boats, called "padda" boats, come down the river from the interior, bringing produce, and occasionally passengers. I have made the journey myself, and a lovely one it is. These boats generally arrive at the rapids about sundown, and, as light is required to shoot them safely, a halt is usually made for the night, and the journey resumed next morning. A white gentleman arrived one night at the rapids, and, thinking that a plunge into the cool river would refresh him after the heat of the day, began to divest himself of his garments for the purpose, when his "appoo," or servant, rushed to him, begging him to desist, urging, "Too many alligator—stop!" meaning that the place abounded in crocodiles. Of course, the intending bather gave up his bath, and on the morrow early safely reached Caltura. Here the necessity of "morning tub" suggested itself. "Any alligators here, boy?" "Oh, no, master," was the reply, given in a very decided tone. So over went "Viator" into the salt lagoon, and, after a delicious bath, proceeded to dress himself, aided by "appoo." "But how is it, 'appoo,' that, as there are so many alligators in the river, there are none here?" The answer must have been comforting. "Ho! ho! master—no alligator stop here; plenty too many shark got!" "Birds in their little nests agree" (*teste* Dr Watts—*credat Judæus!*), but sharks and alligators do not.

I have heard that in old days, in Tasmania, so many convicts attempting to escape by swimming a certain arm of the sea were taken down by sharks, that it was hardly necessary to guard the spot. Death appeared certain, but the convicts found out that if they dyed their bodies black they could swim the estuary with impunity, and many did so, until the authorities learnt the secret.

In Fiji, off my own wharf, I saw a couple of sharks dash in through a circle of fishing girls, knocking several off their legs, not otherwise molesting them, but seizing the fish that had been killed by a charge of dynamite. The dripping naiads scrambled up the steps and piles of my wharf, laughing and cursing the robbers, but dared not dispute with them for the prizes. I heard also that in old days the chief Tui Levuka was upset from his big canoe. His people formed a ring round him in the water, and they all swam shorewards. Sharks attacked them, and one by one the men were taken down, till, in very reduced numbers, the devoted band got their chief safely to land. In New Caledonia sharks are no "respecters of persons," black or white. An old Indian cook of mine went, like a fool, to bathe near the *abatoirs*. He plunged into the water, as many of his nation do, feet downwards, with his hands close to his side. But he never came up again. Half his body was subsequently washed on

THE SHORT-SPINED SEA HULLHEAD. — A specimen of the short-spined sea bullhead (*Octopus scorpius*) was taken on musse but by an angler who was fishing for codling over the rocks off the White Nab, two miles south of Scarborough, some ten days ago. The fish measured about 9in. in length, and weighed about ½lb. It is some ten years since a similar specimen was taken here.—H. S. HARLAND (Nov. 16). [It is not uncommon in English and Irish bays where Fucus abounds.—Ed.]

A BROOD OF WHITE BLACKBIRDS. — A short time ago, when passing through the Botanic Gardens, Glasgow, one of these birds, quite white, perched on a tree near the spot where I was. I examined it closely in case of mistake, and then made inquiry if any other person had seen it, when I was told that there are three of them about the gardens. One of them has a strong beak of an orange colour, and is thought to be a cock bird; the other two are thought to be hens.—J. B. WEBSTER.

## ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

ADDITIONS TO THE MENAGERIE, REGENT'S PARK, FROM NOV. 14 TO 20.

Date.	Name.	Country.	How obtained.	Where located in the Gardens.
Nov. 14	1 Blue and Yellow Macaw ( <i>Araraucana</i> )	So. America	Deposited	Parrot House
"	12 Snow Buntings ( <i>Plectrophanes nivalis</i> )	Brit. Islands	Purchased	Western Aviary
"	4 Lapland Buntings ( <i>Calcurius lapponicus</i> )	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
"	1 Common Chameleon ( <i>Chamaeleon vulgaris</i> )	North Africa	Presented by Mr J. Pettitt	Reptile House
16	18 Deadly Snake ( <i>Trigonoccephalus atrox</i> , jr.)	Demerara	Presented by Mr J. J. Quelch, C.M.Z.S.	Ditto
17	6 Gull Buntings ( <i>Emberiza cirlus</i> ) 3 ♂, 3 ♀	Brit. Islands	Purchased	Western Aviary
19	2 Maholi Galagos ( <i>Galago maholi</i> )	South Africa	Presented by Mr Luscombe Suetelle	Monkey House
"	1 Tigrine Genet ( <i>Genetta grina</i> )	Matabeleland South Africa	Presented by Mr B. B. Weill	Small Cats House
"	1 White-eared Scops Owl ( <i>Scops leucotis</i> )	Ditto	Ditto	Eastern Aviary
"	1 Tawny Eagle ( <i>Aquila nebulosa</i> )	Ditto	Ditto	Western Aviary
"	2 Jackdaws ( <i>Corvus monedula</i> ) white varieties	Brit. Islands	Presented by Mr Harding Cox	Western Aviary

♂ Male. ♀ Female.

PRESENTATION TO THE REV. LEONARD BLOMEFIELD.—An event of some interest to naturalists took place at the last meeting of the Linnean Society, held at Burlington House on the 17th inst., when a congratulatory address, illuminated on vellum, was presented to the Rev. Leonard Blomefield, M.A., F.L.S. (formerly Leonard Jenyns, vicar of Swaffham, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, but sometime resident in Bath), on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of his election as a fellow of the society, and in recognition of his continuous and useful labour as a zoologist. Mr Blomefield was elected in November, 1822, and is now in his ninety-third year. He is an original member of the Zoological, Entomological, and Itay Societies, and joined the British Association in the second year of its existence. As the author of a useful "Manual of British Vertebrates" (written years ago when he was an active member of the Cambridge Philosophical Society), "Observations on Natural History," "Observations on Meteorology," and sundry scientific papers in the "Transactions" of learned societies, he is best known under the more familiar name of Jenyns, which, for family reasons, he changed some time since for that of Blomefield. He might have served as naturalist on board the Beagle, having been invited to do so before Darwin, who in that capacity subsequently made the voyage famous by his delightfully written "Journal of a Naturalist." As it was, he published an excellent account of the fishes collected on that expedition. He now resides at Bath, where he is the president of a Natural History Society, which he founded in 1855.

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