

terror-stricken animals are soon overtaken and destroyed."

In the town of Hnmtington, on Dec. 27, 1685, it was "ordered that the Indians have ten shillings for as many wolves as they kill within our bounds; that is, ten shillings a year, if they make it evident they were so killed." It is also stated that "At the first settlement of the town, wolves, wildcats, wild turkeys, swans and pelicans were found in abundance, and wolves were so mischievous, that bounties were freely given for their destruction."

In the town of Hempstead in the year 1658, "six bushels of corn was allowed by the town for the killing of a wolf."

That stocking ponds with fish was carried on to some extent is evident from the following: "In 1790 my uncle, Uriah Mitchell, sheriff of Queens county, and myself, went to Ronkonkoma Pond in Suffolk county, a distance of forty miles, in a wagon, for the purpose of transporting alive some of the yellow perch, from thence to Success Pond. We took about three dozen of those least injured by the hook and put all but two in Success Pond in good condition and in two years thereafter they had so multiplied as to be caught by the hook in every part of the pond."

That wolves also troubled the people of the town of Jamaica is potent from the fact that "In 1661, Jan. 15, it was ordered that a rate be made to pay for a wolf of Abraham's killing, and one that John Townsend's pit caught," and that the town "Agreed, Feb. 6, 1663, that whoever shall kill any wolf, the head being shown to the town or nailed upon a tree, shall have seven bushels of Indian corn."

In the town of Gravesend "Wolves were both plentiful and mischievous at that time, appears from the fact that on the 8th of August, 1650, three guilders were offered for each wolf killed in the town, and two guilders for a fox."

The town of Flatlands tried to exterminate the wolves by authorizing "The constable and two overseers to pay the value of an Indian coat for each wolf killed, and cause the wolf's head to be nailed over the door of the constable, there to remain; as also to cut off both the ears in token that the head is brought in and payed for."

The town of New Utrecht seemed to have been the only one that was troubled with a ministerial scandal, in which case the sentence of the court was "a fine of two hundred guilders and forty beaver skins." WM. DUTCHER.

NEW YORK CITY, February, 1887.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM BUFFALO.

THE Washington *Evening Star* says of the National Museum buffalo: "On the floor of a large room in a big wooden building adjoining the National Museum building are stretched out the furry hides of two dozen buffalo. In corners of the room are boxes and bundles of bones, and here and there are bleached bison skulls, picked up on the plains. These are the trophies brought home by Mr. William T. Hornaday, the naturalist and taxidermist who went recently on an expedition for the Smithsonian Institution, to secure specimens of the American buffalo before the species became extinct. Millions of buffalo once roamed the plains, and in the days of Daniel Boone were found in West Virginia, southeastern Pennsylvania and other places about the Appalachian range; but to-day the buffalo has become so rare an animal that Prof. Baird deemed it desirable, in the interest of science, to send out a special expedition to secure specimens. Mr. Hornaday, who has followed the chase in the interest of science in African forests, in the monkey-haunted woods of Borneo and the jungles of India, was naturally chosen for the work. He made Miles City, Mont., the base of his operations, and with a well-equipped party of cowboys went on a hunting expedition which resulted in his securing within two months over twenty-five buffalo, beside specimens of antelope, deer, wolves, badgers, porcupines, sage cocks and grouse. Only a few years ago buffalo were so numerous that trains on the trans-continental railroads had often to stop while large herds crossed the tracks. Now Mr. Hornaday figures that there are but 200 in the country outside of the small herd of about 100 that range through the Yellowstone Park and are there protected by law from the hunter's rifle. Where Mr. Hornaday hunted he thinks there are twenty-five or thirty buffalo left, but they will all be killed next spring or the following spring when the cowboys make their annual "round-up." The terrible work of destruction following upon the completion of the railroads has been done by hunters who killed scores for sport, men who shot buffalo for their hides, and when buffalo were in large herds, used to be able to take a "stand" near a herd and shoot them by the hundred, and cowboys that never see a buffalo without shooting. In the buffalo that were killed by Mr. Hornaday in several instances bullet marks, encysted bullets, or bones shattered by rifle balls, were found, showing how closely and relentlessly this last remnant of a great family had been pursued. The plains were a few years ago whitened with the bleaching bones of the slaughtered animals, but even these traces of the buffalo are being rapidly removed. The bones are gathered up and shipped to the cities to be ground up and used as fertilizers. There are about 100 buffalo left in the panhandle of Texas. The specimens brought from Montana by Mr. Hornaday, some of which will be mounted for the National Museum, comprise eight old bulls, eleven young bulls, six old cows, five young cows, two yearlings and one three-months-old calf. The calf which was secured on Mr. Hornaday's visit to Montana last spring, and was brought here alive, but soon died from a colic contracted by eating damp clover. The animal has been mounted, and now stands as a sentry in front of the taxidermists' work room in the old army building. Last spring Mr. Hornaday shot also three or four buffalo, but they were then shedding their coats, and the skins are considered useless for the taxidermists' purposes. Mr. Hornaday brought with him also sixteen complete buffalo skeletons, besides fifty-one skulls, picked up on the prairie. A sufficient number of these specimens to give a fair representation of the buffalo, from the naturalists' standpoint, will be prepared for exhibition in the National Museum, and the remainder will be kept, to exchange with other institutions. One huge skin Mr. Hornaday points to with special pride. It is that of a huge bull that stood 5ft. 8in. high. Mr. Hornaday gave chase to the bull on horseback and brought him to bay. The bull turned to charge, but a shot crippled him, so that he tumbled to the ground. The bull regained his feet and stood motionless. Mr.

Hornaday leaped from his horse and made rapid sketches of the fine animal as he stood. Such an opportunity of sketching a buffalo in life could not be neglected. So by rapid work he secured considerable material to aid him in his work as a taxidermist before he gave the animal his death shot."

PRAIRIE OWLS AND SCORPIONS.

AMONG all the birds of America there are none better deserving to receive the protection of the laws than the little prairie owls of the Pacific slope. Although very numerous they are harmless and unobtrusive. They may generally be seen sitting on a heap of sand thrown up by the prairie dog in digging his hole. This hole is appropriated by the owl for his house, and as you drive past, he never fails to salute you with a very polite bow, and in the style of the real gentleman. The female may often be seen with her half-grown brood sitting at the entrance of the invariable prairie dog hole. Should you come too near she makes her obeisance and retires with her little ones as gracefully as might a fashionable lady. Because of the positive good he does in the destruction of many harmful insects and reptiles, and especially of the scorpion, he should have protection. In southern California and the warmer parts of Utah and Arizona, every summer evening brings forth great numbers of scorpions. They get into the houses and infest the paths and walks about door yard and gardens; and but for the appetite and industry of the owl they would become an intolerable nuisance in those hot climates for three or four months of the year. At such seasons our little owl comes quietly about the house at dusk every night and picks up the scorpions by scores. Usually he has some place near by, as the cornice of the house or some broad beam in the barn, where he deposits his load and eats what he desires. He devours only the soft part of the body of the scorpion, leaving the head, claws and tail of the reptile until there may often be found a quart or more of such remnants at the place he has chosen for his nightly banquet. One owl having selected a perch under the cornice of my house as the spot for devouring his nightly catch of scorpions, left in a few weeks so large a quantity of remnants as to prove he must have destroyed the reptiles by the score every night, and of course the yard about the house and the garden were correspondingly thinned of these most unpleasant creatures. This good work, as well as the grave courtly manners of our little prairie owl, have made him our special friend and induce us to speak a good word for him. GEO. H. WYMAN.
ST. GEORGE, Utah.

THE HERMIT THRUSH (*Turdus pallasi*) NEAR BALTIMORE, MD., IN WINTER.—In a paper read before the Academy of Sciences, Feb. 11, 1880, on birds to be found wintering near Baltimore, Md., I made the following remarks about the hermit thrush (*Turdus pallasi*), which I will quote verbatim: "Twice we (my brother and I) observed thrushes during the winter season, one specimen a few years ago, Feb. 6, 1876, while the ground was covered with snow for some days previously; a second specimen a few weeks ago, Jan. 29, 1880, also a very cold day. Unfortunately, however, neither one I could obtain so as to identify the species, which can not be easily done when the bird is at a distance from you, all our thrushes bearing more or less the same color. Nevertheless, from the fact that none of our thrushes, with the exception of the hermit, winter north of the Gulf States, I infer that this was the species, for it is altogether a more northern bird than our other thrushes. However, I could not say positively it was that thrush." What I could not do at that time I am able to do now. On Jan. 8, 1887, a very cold day, the thermometer about 10 below the freezing point, while on one of my ornithological rambles through the woods, about five miles north from this city, my friend, F. Fisher, who was with me that day, shot a thrush, which I at once recognized as our hermit thrush. Mr. R. Ridgway, of Washington, to whom I wrote about this observation, informed me that in the severe winter of 1879-80 the same bird was found near Georgetown, D. C., in sheltered ravines. Our bird when shot was sitting on a fence, not very far—about 10 or 20 yds.—from a farm house. The other two I found more in the woods. It would be interesting to know how far north this bird can be traced during winter.—ARTHUR RESLER (Baltimore, Md.).

THE JACK SNIFE A HARDY WINTER BIRD.—Under date of Feb. 1, your mountain correspondent "P.," in a private letter, asks: "Do you know much of the jack-snipe? A pair of them have been caught, probably by the excessive snow blizzards up here, and not being able to get away are spending the winter here, and thus far they have passed through a very severe winter all right, the only water open for them being three or four springs of very small extent. I saw them yesterday, Jan. 31, after a -36° night, and yesterday with the highest temperature -25° during the day." I am unable to satisfactorily answer this interesting question of natural history, and perhaps some other person will do it. How these tiny, bare-legged birds can live up in that very cold region, about 5,000 feet above sea level, is a wonder to me, and let the naturalist note the fact, for "P." is a man of truth.—H. W. MERRILL.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW PLUMED PARTRIDGE FROM SONORA (*Callipepla elegans bensoni*).—Characters: Similar to *C. elegans* (Less.), but with throat much more heavily spotted with black (this color predominating); rusty of scapulars, tertials and flanks much duller; lower back, rump, and upper tail coverts much grayer; tail and breast more bluish gray, and under tail coverts edged with much paler buffy. Hab. Sonora (Campos).—Five specimens of this interesting and handsome new partridge have recently been received by the National Museum from Lieut. H. C. Benson, U. S. A., to whom I take great pleasure in dedicating it, as a testimonial to his zeal in ornithological investigations along our Southwestern frontier.—ROBERT RIDGWAY (Smithsonian Institution, Feb. 26, 1887).

WHERE DO MEADOW LARKS WINTER?—It is a little surprising that "C. H. A." should ask if meadow larks winter so far north as Boston, as a stroll through the borders of almost any salt marsh (and salt marshes abound near Boston) would answer the question in the affirmative.—L.

WHAT ARE THESE BIRDS?—Sheriden, O., Dec. 16, 1886. —*Editor Forest and Stream:* In your issue of Nov. 25 is a note dated Madison, Wis., Nov. 15, by C. F. Carr, on eagle measurement, wherein he states that a friend of his in Nebraska had shot an eagle that measured 10ft. 5in. from tip to tip and 40in. in length. I have in my possession an eagle's head from a bird that measured 10ft. 4in. from tip to tip and was 42in. in length and weighed over 23lbs. I am not certain about the weight, but it was near about the above. I am sorry to say that I could not get the body, as the person that killed it just saved the head and wings and threw the remainder away. By mere chance I got possession of the head and had it mounted. It was a female bird of the gray eagle species.—CHARLES WHITMER.

GOLDEN EAGLE IN RHODE ISLAND.—Providence, R. I., Feb. 21.—*Editor Forest and Stream:* I desire to put upon record in your valuable paper the taking of a golden eagle at Westerly a few days since. It is a magnificent specimen and is (presumably) a female; weight, 12lbs. It will be mounted, of course, and is the only one I have known taken in Rhode Island in an experience of over thirty years hard work in natural history.—NEWTON DEXTER.

BELATED NOTE OF AN EARLY ROBIN.—Bradford, Pa., Jan. 31.—"Robin (a dare)" was on hand Sunday morning, Jan. 30, with his whistle.—SIALIA.

Game Bag and Gun.

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A BEAR IN A HOLE.

THIS bear story of so long standing seems yet to remain fresh in my mind, while other things that happened long since have faded and gone from recollection. As nearly as I can recollect, it was in the winter of 1840 that David Moreland (who was quite a sportsman and who afterward became my father-in-law, and for the last twenty years has been sleeping the sleep that needs no waking) came to my cabin, situated on the south bank of the Big Turkey River, formerly known as Peck's Ferry (now Osterdock), Clayton county, Iowa, for the purpose of taking a hunt with me. When we had finished our hunt we concluded to hunt through the timber some ten miles to his place, which is now owned by Mr. Jacob Smith, three-quarters of a mile south from Colesburg, Delaware county, Iowa. Our hunt was to be up the Peck Branch, a tributary to the Turkey, putting in on the south bank one mile below my cabin, and heading near Mr. Moreland's place on the prairie. According to arrangements, we started from the mouth of the Branch, he taking the east bluff and I the west. I think we did not meet until we reached his house after dark.

On relating our hunt and discoveries (as hunters will) he told me that he had seen the tracks of a bear, but the snow had melted so that he could not track it. The consequence was that I took the bear fever right away, but the next morning I was able to start with rifle and tomahawk, following Mr. M.'s tracks some four miles to where he had come into a trail leading to his house. Following this track probably three miles further, I discovered the dim tracks of a bear in the ice from melted snow, and I began trying to trail it out. After a lengthy hunt, circling back and forth, I found where I thought the bear had gone into a cave in the rocks, where I concluded it had previously made its headquarters in the fore part of the winter. I then cut poles and fastened up the hole, and returned well pleased to Mr. Moreland's and reported. Arrangements having been made, a jolly sled load started next morning, equipped with guns, dogs, among them a large bulldog, axes, ropes, stone hammers, knives and everything that we thought necessary. We cut our way through the timber and went to the den. When we got there and unfastened the hole the first thing was to break off some rock to enable me to get through. The next thought was a light. Bad luck for us. The big beeswax candle had been forgotten. What next? Go back badly disappointed. "Not yet," said I. "Gather some dry bark and light a torch." That being done, I went down into the den; the torch was handed down to me burning nicely, and I started in search of the bear. But as there was no circulation of air the candle would not burn, and the den was soon filled so full of smoke as to compel me to get back and hand out the torch and get out as soon as possible. After giving the smoke time to clear away, I descended again with a butcher knife and told them to hand me down the best dog in the lot. No sooner had the dog landed than he commenced a fierce barking; but he would not go any further than I pushed him along ahead of me. About that time a little daylight or candle light would have been very acceptable, but as I had neither, I pushed the dog along, at the same time stabbing ahead with the knife in different directions, until I struck the bear with the knife in some place, at the same time springing back toward the entrance. Dog and bear both landed on my feet and legs, and you can safely wager that I got out as quick as practicable, and it was not necessary to call the dog after me. My next move was to cut a slim pole, leaving a long limb, and cutting the top off above the limb. In the meantime we kept the hole closed to prevent his getting out. Then with the crooked pole and limb I punched around the rocks and got him so enraged that when I would draw the pole back he would follow it out around the rocks where we could see him, and he would fight and strike the wickedest kind. I then gave the pole to some one to work, and fixed a slip-noose on a rope and let it down, and when he would rear up to strike I'd jerk the rope. Finally I got him fast by one paw, including a part of his toes. We then pulled his foot up gently to where we could reach his foot. We then fastened the other end of the rope below. Then loosening the first knot, we unfastened the hole and began trying to drag him forth. But we soon discovered that all of us could not drag him out forthwith. He would brace against the rocks, and it was only by steady and hard pulling that we could move him a little at a time. Finally we got him out; and then for a dog and bear fight, big bulldog and all. The dogs fought him until they were tired out, but the bear did not seem to