

WONDERFUL BIRDS.

IN no other one division of animated nature are there found more wonderfully beautiful or much more grotesque forms than among the birds. Here is one all grace and colour; there one distinguished by clumsiness and oddity. Some seem all body; others all wing; others again all beak or tail. Some are mounted high on long, thin stilts; others waddle on webbed feet as short as flippers. Wonderful birds indeed! they are all wonderful. The fabled Roc of the "Arabian Nights," that great white bird which could lift an elephant and carry it to its mountain nest, there to devour it at its leisure, was doubtless a myth, while we must not place implicit reliance on the accounts given of the great Madagascar bird, which the natives assert could knock down an ox and then make a meal of it. These fictions were, however, founded on some considerable degree of fact; among extinct birds there were undoubtedly some monsters, the strength of which might well have been two or three times greater than that of any now known to exist. A fossil egg of the *Epiornis*, the bird last mentioned, was as large as six ostrich eggs, and its capacity at least fifteen pints, while from such remains of the bones as have been discovered, it is believed that the creature's height was as much as ten or twelve feet. Nor is it absolutely certain that it is extinct; the natives of Madagascar assert that some few representatives still exist in the little-known interior of their island. The same is believed to be possible regarding the Moa of New Zealand, the *Dinornis* of the naturalists, for the bones discovered were yet rich in gelatine, and had dry flesh adhering to them. There is a story, not thoroughly well authenticated, however, which tells how two Englishmen encountered a living example thirteen feet in height, in one of the marshy forests of the colony, which they did not venture to attack. The bones of the Moa were twice as large as those of the ostrich, while the toe-bones of one species could only be compared with those of the elephant in toughness and strength.

There has recently been opened to the public at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, a collection of birds which is probably the most complete in the world, and which our young readers are strongly recommended to inspect. It includes the old British Museum specimens, but there are so many additions and improvements in arrangement as to constitute the exhibition a new one. Wherever practicable, the nest,



WEAVER-BIRD'S NEST.



THE GREAT DINORNIS (From the British Museum).

eggs, and young, as well as the skeleton of each bird are, or will shortly be, placed together, enabling the visitor of an observant turn of mind to quickly learn much about birds and bird-life.

The power of flying possessed by almost all birds in more or less perfection is their most distinguishing quality. Man has been at intervals trying to fly from a very early period of the world's history; but the brief record of his attempts is only one of utter failure or dismal disaster, till he has been forced to content himself with the nearest approach to it he is likely to attain—a seat in an express train, drawn by the "Flying Dutchman" or "Flying Scotchman." The fleetest quadruped known does not approach the speed of certain birds, while it soon succumbs to the fatigue they hardly seem to experience at all. Three or four hundred miles in one flight is nothing extraordinary for the artificially bred carrier or passage pigeon, of which so many fine examples have been shown at the Crystal Palace and other exhibitions. Set free in various parts of France, they have found their way unerringly to their dovecots in England, Scotland, or Ireland. Audubon tells us that wild pigeons have been killed in the neighbourhood of New York with their crops still full of undigested rice, which they could not have obtained nearer than the fields of Georgia and Carolina—600 to 700 miles distant. As they can digest such grain entirely in twelve hours, that great naturalist calculated that they must have flown through the above space at the rate of a mile a minute. Pigeons were employed in early Egyptian days; navigators taking them on their galleys and liberating them when they arrived at the port of destination, in order to announce their safe arrival to their friends or employers. The Romans utilised them in communicating with each other in war-time, just as was done during the late siege of Paris, and very notably at the terrible siege of Leyden in 1574, when the Prince of Orange managed to carry on a correspondence with the beleaguered citizens by their aid. When, more by the winds and waves which drowned out the cruel Spanish invaders than by the force of arms, Leyden was again free, the Prince directed that the faithful birds should be fed with strawberries and their bodies embalmed after death, in recognition of the services they had rendered. A falcon which strayed from Fontainebleau, near Paris, in pursuit of some other bird, was found next day at Malta, in the Mediterranean. Another falcon is said to have returned from Andalusia, Spain, to the peak of Teneriffe in six hours. There is some doubt as to the flight of the eagle being as rapid as many would make it, but it is yet known that the swiftest hare has no chance with it in regard to speed.

The "homing" instinct of the carrier-pigeon is very beautiful, and equally mysterious. The probability of any bird which can fly to a great height, and so survey the country all around, finding its way home for any moderate distance, will be understood, but this does not explain the unerring instinct of a pigeon taken in a closed basket hundreds of miles from its cot. And yet it returns thither more certainly than does the skilled mariner to an oft-visited port.

The organisation of a bird explains, to a great extent, its power of flying and supporting itself in the air. Not to mention its light feathers, its bones are hollow, and possess large cells, termed *aerial sacs*, which it can fill with air at will, while its muscles are relatively powerful, and specially adapted to its kind, whether as flyer, swimmer, wader, or climber. The reader can imagine the power of muscle required by, for example, the golden eagle, the spread of the wings of which may be nine or ten feet; or by an ostrich, which has been known to kill a man with one kick.

The perfection of vision in many birds is very wonderful. The condor may be itself nearly out of sight, thousands of feet high up in the heavens; suddenly it swoops down straight upon some small victim which the traveller on the same level has not himself even noticed, but which it has been watching with deadliest intent. The martin is said to be able to clearly perceive a fly at a distance of 120 yards.

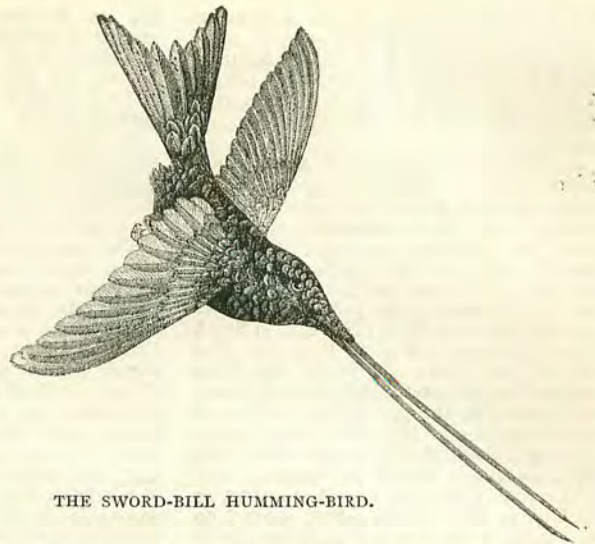
Let us—as the most convenient mode which presents itself—make a rapid tour of inspection round the new collection at South Kensington, halting at a few of the more wonderful birds so lavishly displayed there. First come the vultures, which, unattractive and repulsive birds though they be, have their uses in nature. Note here the Cinereous vulture, with its cadaverous, haggish-looking head stretching out of what looks like a great feather cloak of sable dye, and, hard by, the sociable vulture, a much more jaunty kind of bird, the urubu of South America. He is the public scavenger of many parts of that great continent, and



THE SICKLE-BILL HUMMING-BIRD.

is literally under the protection of the law in many places; in Peru the inhabitants are interdicted from killing one under a penalty equivalent to ten pounds, and a similar prohibition exists in Jamaica. One has to remember that in many tropical countries the sanitary arrangements are of the worst, while any decaying matter will more rapidly poison the atmosphere than in more temperate climates. Filth and garbage, however, are the chosen food of this unpleasant bird; hence its public utility. Here again is the secretary bird, a particularly useful creature to man, devoting as it does most of its energies to serpent-eating. It has on and behind its head a number of feathers, which stick out much as did quills from above the ears of clerks in the olden time; hence its name. It does not feed exclusively on snakes, however, but consumes tortoises, lizards, and insects by the score, its voracity and digestive powers being far above the common. A French naturalist opened one, the stomach of which contained twenty-one small tortoises, eleven lizards, three snakes, varying in length from two to two and a half feet, and a variety of insects too numerous to mention. It eats rattlesnakes as though they were sticks of celery. It has been purposely introduced into the French West Indies with the most beneficial results. In Cape Colony the settlers have domesticated it, using it to protect their poultry against serpents and rats.

It is impossible to pass the next recess of the gallery without a halt, for here are the eagles, a grand-looking if not a happy family. The eagle in its native haunts is a solitary bird; its mate alone excepted, no other of its kind is likely to be found living within a considerable distance of it. The "king of birds," like the "king of beasts," has had its ancient character for magnanimity and nobility somewhat impugned of late years, but of its strength there can be no question. A blow from its wing alone is said to have killed a kid. There are many instances of babes and young children having been carried off by eagles. It is even stated that in the canton of Geneva a boy of ten years of age, who was attempting to rob an eagle's nest, was seized by one of the birds and carried a distance of 600 yards; he was, however, rescued by his companions, without having suffered any very serious injury, though its talons had inflicted some severe wounds. The eagle builds its eyrie in the clefts of inaccessible rocks, or on the



THE SWORD-BILL HUMMING-BIRD.

edges of precipices, the nest being little more than a flooring of sticks and branches lined with leaves, heather, etc. Here it brings and stores up a considerable amount of food, often consisting of young lambs or game. The story goes that an Irish peasant long fed himself and his family by robbing the eaglets of the stores of food thus brought home by the parents to their mountain eyrie in his neighbourhood. He is said to have prolonged his source of supply by cutting the wings of the young ones to prevent them flying; knowing that the old birds would not drive them forth to forage for themselves until they could fly.

Only a few months ago the following episode, in which a great eagle figured, occurred at Fürstenwald, in Brandenburg. A field labourer heard a dog howling in a most dismal manner at no great distance from the spot at which he was working. Running in the direction whence the sounds came, he saw a large bird perched on the back of the watch-dog of a neighbouring farm; the two were struggling and fighting, half in the air, half on the ground. At last they passed into an adjoining copse, when the labourer ran and called the bailiff of the place where he was employed. Both proceeded to the copse, to find the bird moving with the greatest difficulty, and scarcely able to hop a few paces; it tried to fly, but was evidently disabled, and a well-directed shot killed it. They found the poor dog dead; all the flesh had been literally torn off its bones by its enemy. The eagle measured seven feet between the tips of its wings, and was almost black, with snow-white shoulders, indicating great age. It had evidently had a history, for on its left foot, just above the claws,



THE UMBRELLA BIRD.

was a strong gold ring, on which were engraved some letters, the meaning of which could not be deciphered, the word "Eperjes," and date "10. 9. 1827." Eperjes is a town in Hungary, not far from the Northern Carpathians. The bird had probably once been in captivity.

In the South Kensington collection a superb golden eagle, spreading its wings across the spaces on either side of the table on which it stands, is sure to be remarked, and many other fine examples, including the birds specially stuffed for Count Gleichen to model the eagles which now form part of the monument at Woolwich to the poor young Prince Imperial, who so sadly met his death in South Africa. Around and about them are other birds of prey, kites and hawks, the latter ranging from the pretty little butterfly hawk that pounces on the grasshopper or bee—to the noble gyrfalcon of Iceland, which in strength almost rivals the eagle itself. The falcon sometimes attains an enormous age. It is recorded that one was taken in 1797 at the Cape of Good Hope, which showed no great signs of old age, but which bore on its golden collar an inscription stating that in 1610 it belonged to James I. of England; it was therefore over 187 years old.

Next we reach the owls, of whom the people in many country districts have such an unreasonable terror to this day, but which are on the whole useful to man, for they destroy enormous quantities of rats and mice. The great owl is an ugly opponent even for the eagle, though, on the other hand, it can be easily tamed. One case is recorded where a great owl and an eagle had buried their claws so deep in each other's flesh that they could not withdraw them; they died together in this deadly embrace. Yet few birds have a much greater attachment to their young than the great owl. A Swiss gentleman, whose farm was situated at the foot of a mountain, at the top of which dwelt a pair of these birds, tells how his servants caught and confined one of the young owlets in a hen-house. Fourteen consecutive mornings a freshly-killed partridge or other bird was found lying outside the door of the hen-house, brought there, undoubtedly, by one of the parent birds. The Chinese pay special reverence to the barn owl, instead of believing it to be a bird of ill-omen, as do scores of our own country people. Their reason is that when Gengis Khan, the founder of their empire, was compelled to hide in a wood from his pursuing enemies, an owl came and perched himself in the same thicket. His foes, thinking it unlikely that the bird would occupy the same covert with a man, omitted to explore it, and so Gengis Khan escaped. An owl's feather is often worn by the Chinese in memory of the event.

And now we leave the well-defined *Raptores*—birds of prey—for an order known as the *Passerines*, under which the naturalists have grouped a selection of birds which would seem most incongruous to any ordinary intellect, and upon which they themselves are not entirely agreed. Never mind; suffice it to say that some of the most beautiful, as well as the oddest of birds, come under this head, the bird of paradise among the number. When travellers spoke of these birds in olden times, it is perhaps not surprising that they were not generally believed. Some of them said that they were without legs, that the female deposited her eggs under the feathers on the male's back, and that they passed the breeding time in paradise! The most remarkable, perhaps, of these birds—the "Great Emerald," with its two showers of light gay feathers proceeding from its wings, in a measure overshadowing its body and legs, may have given rise to the first idea; but where did these early naturalists derive the second and third ones? The above bird, as it shoots through

the vast Papuan forests, is said really to suggest a meteor. The golden bird of paradise has six long shafted and delicate feathers sticking out from its head, while the king bird has a pair of similar adornments depending from its tail.

Wonderful too, are the bower-birds, with their love of gaiety and colour. They build themselves playgrounds, and adorn them with the brightest berries, shells, or even shreds of rag or ribbon, if they can find such.

The weaver-birds form a most interesting series, their name being derived from the ingenious manner in which they construct their nests, literally weaving together the coarse fibres of which they are composed. Sometimes they are spiral-shaped, sometimes round. One naturalist has described the nest of a species, built like a chemist's retort, and projecting over a stream. The neck of the retort, some eight or ten inches in length, nearly touched the water, and it was there that the entrance was left. The most wonderful of all are the Sociable or Republican weavers, of South Africa, who place hundreds of their nests together in colonies, round the trunk of a tree. The appearance of this aviary is something like that of a great umbrella. As many as 300 separate cells or nests have been found in one of these bird settlements, representing at least 600 grown birds. The tailor-bird's nest is a great leaf, the edges of which are sewn together, so as to form a bag. Many of these nests are to be seen at South Kensington.

A queer creature is the umbrella-bird, with its wide crest spread over the top of its head; while one that will compel a special halt, on account of the beauty and intricacy of its tail, is the superb menura, or lyre-bird. Two great and well-defined tail feathers rise upwards exactly in the form of a lyre, these being interlaced by a number of finer feathers, springing from nearly the same point, but crossing each other and spreading out in fan-like form. It is a native of New South Wales.

No birds are, however, more likely to interest young lady readers than those feathered gems the humming-birds. "Nature," says a lively French writer, "seems to have endowed them with her rarest gifts. In creating them she surpassed herself, and exhausted all the charms at her disposal; for she imbued them with grace, elegance, rapidity of motion, magnificence of plumage, and indomitable courage. What can be more delightful than the sight of these little feathered beauties, flashing with the united fires of the ruby, the topaz, the sapphire, and the emerald, flying from flower to flower amid the richest tropical vegetation?" Their colouring defies analysis, and often the slightest movement reveals a new and unsuspected tint. When flying, the vibration of their wings (the humming sound of which gives them their name) is hardly to be seen, and when they hover they appear as though suspended in the air by some invisible means. Thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of the late Mr. John Gould, the nation now possesses at South Kensington the finest collection in existence of these beautiful, and often valuable little birds, single skins of some species of which have sold for as much as £7 apiece.

The true humming-birds are entirely confined to the New World, and by far the largest number of species are found just northward of the equator in Central America. Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Guiana abound with them, more than two hundred distinct species being known there. The egg is pure white, and about the size of a pea; they are always two in number. The nest is a delicate structure, about the size of a half apricot, and is compactly built of lichens or

dead leaves felted together and lined with the soft fibres of various plants. As a rule, the male is the most brilliantly coloured. Their bills, though always slender, vary greatly in shape and size, some being straight and extremely long, as in the "sword-bills," others greatly arched, as in the "sickle-bills," and others again extremely short, as in the "thorn-bills." The popular titles by which a number of them are known generally refer to some peculiarity or marked feature. Thus we have "round-tailed" and "long-tailed" hermits (the term "hermit" applying to the solitary habits of these species), "velvet-breasts," "green-backs," "lilac-throats," "brilliant," "rainbow," "star-frontlets," "golden-tails," and a variety of other titles too numerous to mention. The smallest known humming-birds are the "wood-stars"—these are scarcely bigger than large bees. The tongue, which is forked at the end, and capable of opening and shutting like a pair of pliers, is a marvelously delicate organ; it is capable of being protruded for some distance, and is constantly moistened by a glutinous saliva. Woe to the unfortunate insect on whom the humming-bird has cast eye, for these characteristics of its microscopic tongue enable it both to seize and hold its victim. Their food, however, is principally derived from the calyx of flowers.

In their disposition, Mr. Gould tells us they are restless, irritable, and pugnacious; they will not only fight among themselves, but will even venture to attack much larger birds; it is even said that several of them will combine to attack a hawk, and manage to drive it away. They will even attack human beings who approach too closely to their nests. They are extremely difficult to keep in confinement; one brought to London by Mr. Gould only survived its arrival two days. How abundant many varieties of them must be in their native forests may be inferred from the tens of thousands of skins used annually, year after year, by the ladies of London, Paris, and most of the other civilised capitals of the world, for their personal adornment.

A lady residing at San Rafael, California, recently sent to friends in London an account of the taming of two humming-birds, which has been published by a contemporary. Her invalid daughter had, under medical direction, passed several hours daily reclining on rugs spread on the garden lawn, to get the full benefit of the delightful summer weather. The humming-birds seemed inclined to be friendly, so "to entice them to a nearer approach E— plucked a fuchsia, attached it to a branch of a tree over her head, and filled it with sweetened water. The intelligent little creatures soon had their slender bills thrust into the flower, from which they took long draughts. Then E— took honey, thinking they might prefer it, and filled a fresh flower each day. They would sometimes become so impatient as scarcely to wait for her to leave before they were into the sweets, and, finally, while she held a flower in one hand and filled it with drops from a spoon, the now tame little pets would catch the drops as they fell, and dart into the honey-cups their silvery thread-like tongues." Referring to a later period, when the rainy season was commencing, the writer tells us that her daughter tried to coax them to the parlour windows. For a long time they evidently hesitated, though they hummed about the window or would watch from a neighbouring branch; but at length one, recognising her call, approached and ventured repeatedly to take the honey directly from her hand.

From humming-birds to ostriches may seem a great leap, though at South Kensington one finds them in close proximity and glaring contrast. After all, do not both contribute largely to the adornment of the fair sex? An ostrich farm "means money" in these days, and takes

capital to start it. A good pair of breeding ostriches is worth £60 to £80. In the new collection they may be seen grouped with their enormous eggs, baby chicks, and growing youngsters.

Those who assert that the ostrich lives on broken glass and iron nails are not quite right; but that it swallows pebbles to assist its digestion, as do many other birds, on a lesser scale, when in a state of nature, and pieces of wood, metal, or what not, when in a state of captivity for the same purpose, is most undoubted. The strength of the ostrich is quite equal to carrying a man on its back at a rapid rate of progression; the negroes often use it for riding purposes. Dr. Livingstone tells us that the legs of an ostrich running at full speed can no more be seen than the spokes in the wheel of a vehicle drawn at a gallop. The ostrich can run about thirty miles an hour, and the Arabs would never be able to overtake them but for the stratagems employed. They first follow them for a day or two, without pressing too closely, but sufficiently to prevent them taking food. When they have tired out the hungry bird, they pursue it at full speed, and, taking advantage of a fact well-known to them, that the ostrich always describes a curve in its course, themselves make a direct straight "short cut," and so gradually get within reach. Each adult bird produces about half a pound of white and three pounds of black feathers; those from the male bird are most highly esteemed, and all are in best condition when plucked from the living bird.

The last of the curious birds about to be mentioned, the toucan, is equally remarkable for its ugliness and for its beauty. See it "squatting," the only correct expression for its mode of rest, on a tree, with its enormous bill threatening almost to overbalance it, and nothing much more ill-shaped or clumsy can be found. But its beautiful feathers, long used for ladies' adornment in Brazil and Peru, are now greatly esteemed in Europe, and muffs made from the throats of toucans are quite valuable.

THE OBSERVER.

By DORA HOPE.

SUBJECTS of all kinds are much more interesting when they can be studied from real life and personal observation than when merely learnt from books, and happily there are very few girls so circumstanced that they cannot study animal life in this way.

A small but very interesting aquarium can be made by those who cannot afford expensive tanks from a wide-mouthed bottle of clear glass. It will do for either fresh or sea water, and is often as healthy as a more ambitious venture.

Girls living in towns can find many interesting objects for an aquarium in the lakes and ponds in public parks, especially where water weeds are growing, and the weeds themselves have much of interest about them. The only difficulty is to get the balance of life—that is, to get the right proportion of animal and vegetable life to support each other, as the weeds give out the oxygen necessary for the fish, while the fish exhale the carbonic acid gas needed by the weeds. In so small an aquarium it is necessary to add to the supply of oxygen by taking away a little of the water frequently and pouring in fresh from a height above the bottle, so as to force air down into the water.

Water snails are amongst the objects of interest always to be found amongst water weeds. They are necessary in even the smallest aquarium, to keep the sides clear of green growth. They have, in common with

their land and sea relations, a most wonderful set of teeth, or tongue, or "palate," as it is called. This tongue is like a ribbon, set lengthwise with rows of sharp flint teeth, shaped like hooks. The number of rows differs with the kind of snail. This ribbon, moving at the creature's will, cuts or scrapes off its food. You can watch one on the glass sides of your aquarium, the mouth opening regularly, and the tongue licking the glass at each movement. There is much more of interest in the water snail, such as the wavy edge of its body, by which it moves along, called the "foot," though anything more unlike a foot cannot be imagined, and the little towers or horns on its head, through which the eye runs up like a watchman. The eye has wonderful strong muscles to draw it up and down. Snails have ears, too, or at least something equivalent by which they can hear; but in water snails they are difficult to find. Their shells, too, are an interesting study, for, instead of leaving them when they become too small, as crabs and lobsters do, they build on another storey, and widen them out at the bottom.

There are many larvae of flies to be found now in ponds and streams, and they are interesting objects when examined with a common magnifying glass, and much more so when a microscope is used; and the spiracles on both sides of their bodies can be seen, their gills keeping up a constant motion as they swim about; all their internal arrangements can be traced, and their fierce goggle eyes and ferocious jaws.

There are more plants in flower in July than in any other month in the year, and, as in the early spring, the majority of them are yellow. In a list of flowers compiled by Alfred Waller it is computed that during July there are ninety-four varieties of flowers to be found in different shades of yellow, while of white, the next in number, there are only seventy-one, and sixty-four purple. There are twenty varieties of blue more than in any other month, and twenty-nine of pink or rose-colour. Red flowers are most plentiful during June.

The moon will be full on the 8th of July. There is no real night during the early part of the month; for, besides the moon, there is either daylight or twilight all through the night till the 20th of the month.

NEW MUSIC.

ORSBORN AND TUCKWOOD.

Cousin Madge. Words by F. W. Waithman. Music by George E. Iles.—A simple melodious setting of well-written verses.

Forty Winks. Words by G. Clifton Bingham. Music by Arthur Carnall.—A very taking song, with a dreamy refrain, which is both agreeable and pleasing, likewise free from difficulty.

My Queen of Hearts. Words written and music composed by Edward Harper.—A well-written and pretty song of moderate compass. Although there is no great originality, it will find many admirers.

Beyond the Gates. Words by Lindsay Lennox. Music by Ciro Pinsuti.—An able and musically setting of grand and poetical words. Ciro Pinsuti is always happy in his arrangement when given a worthy theme. It is written in two keys—compass B to D and C to E.

Epineuse. Rigodon. By Henri Stanislaus.—An interesting short piece for small fingers.

Dance Moderne. Composed by Sidney H. French.—A very pretty instrumental piece of four pages; will be welcomed by our young musical aspirants.

J. B. CRAMFR AND CO.

Primrose Lane. Words by Mary L. Campbell. Music by James J. Monk.—A lively, tuneful song; the modulation into A flat is effective and agreeable. We think it deserves to become popular.

The Evening Rest. With harmonium *ad lib.* Written by Edith Ramage. Composed by James J. Monk.—A very charming song; the verses descriptive of the repose at close of day—

"The cares and labours of daylight cease,
And all is peace, sweet slumb'rous peace."

The change of time from 4-4 to 6-8 is bright and sparkling; the harmonium accompaniment is most effective. We recommend this song to our musical girls.

Home Recollections. Written by Samuel Jones. Music by James J. Monk.

Love is a Wicked Boy. Words by Claxton Bellamy. Music by James J. Monk.

Both these songs are simple and pleasing, and may become favourites with many.

The Song and the Singer. By Henry Parker. Words by Nella.—Is a most effective song, and will help to sustain the composer's deservedly high reputation. It is published in three keys, and has also a violoncello accompaniment.

STANLEY LUCAS, WEBER AND CO.

Inclusions. Written by Elizabeth B. Brown-ing. Composed by Annette Leigh Hunt.—A song of more than ordinary merit.

Gondoliera. (E. Geibel.) Translated by Claxton Bellamy. Music by Mary Carmichael.—An extremely pretty song; well sung, and accompaniment smoothly performed, will be a welcome addition to the vocal repertory of many a young singer.

Tommy and Barbara. Song, for one or two voices. Words by W. H. Wright. Composed by Carl Th. Kühne.—A lively composition, both as regards words and music. We give the preference to its being sung as a duet.

We have received a batch of new songs, including *Bygone Days* (Halldan Kjerulf), *Castles in Spain* (Lady Benedict), *Fettered, yet Free* (Antonio L. Mora), *Spring Showers* and a *Portuguese Love Song* (Emily J. Troup), *When all Around is Still* (William Harold).—We are glad to see Halldan Kjerulf's songs presented to English musicians, as has been done by Mr. Theo Marzials, who has set the Scandinavian composer's music to various English verse. We venture to think, however, that, in this instance, Robert Burns's lyric hardly suits the music to which it is here set. Kjerulf's celebrated "Brudeforden i Hardanger" has been given, we note, already in London this spring. The song, "Bygone Days," presents some of the same characteristics as the music of the "Brudeforden." "Castles in Spain," by Lady Benedict, has a pretty refrain, but is not very striking in other respects; the words by E. A. Allen are effective. The "Portuguese Love Song," by Emily J. Troup, has a well-written accompaniment, which will help to brighten a somewhat monotonous air. It has Portuguese as well as English words—not a very common language to meet with in the songs of the present day. More pleasing is "Spring Showers," by the same composer, an effective musical setting of Robert Buchanan's words. "Fettered, yet Free" is a sentimental song by Antonio L. Mora, who has written a rather commonplace air to the equally commonplace words of H. L. D'Arcy Jaxone. "When all Around is Still," by William Harold, is a simple but very pretty song, best suited to a contralto or baritone, and though not, perhaps, strikingly original, will be a welcome addition to many port-folios.