WILD FLOWERS OF SCOTLAND

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Wild flowers of Scotland by J. H. Crawford

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J. H. CRAWFORD

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Wild Flowers of Scotland

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LONDON: JOHN MACQUEEN

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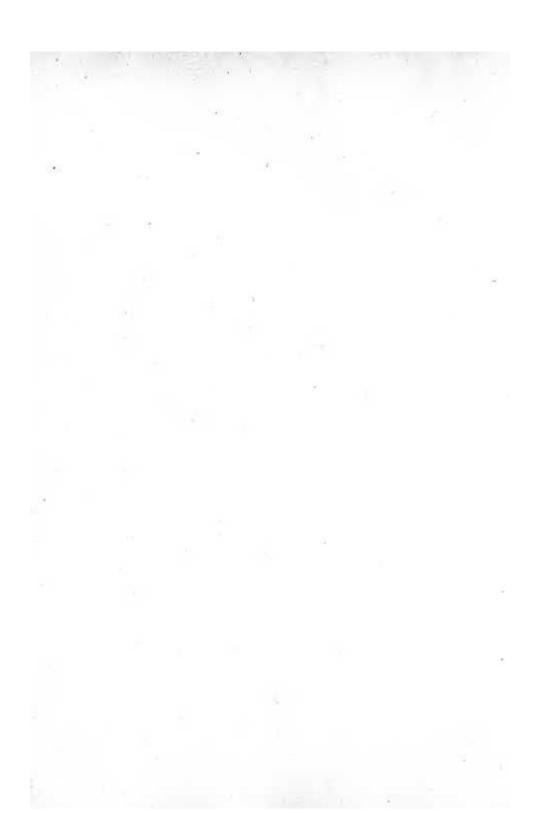


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INTRODUCTION

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L ESS has been said in a pleasant way about the wild flowers than about the wild animals of Scotland.

Yet our four-footed creatures are few, and their tale easily told. Our wild birds, too, have been sadly thinned out, with the exception of sea forms; and these belong to other coasts as well. Birds have wings, and can cross water.

Whereas the many wild flowers are well-nigh untouched. Nor do they fly about from place to place, but remain pretty much where they have been all along. They are ours, in a sense in which other living things are not.

Moreover, they are out of fellowship with the wild flowers of other lands. There is no common border across which they mingle with kindred forms. Like ourselves, they have a semi-island character, and have grown into what they are by long ages spent within the Channel. They have been shaped and coloured here.

If the quest is not exciting, it is not therefore less interesting. Some of the ruder elements of sport are absent. We do not shoot them, nor do we hunt them with dogs,

Nevertheless, it is not all dainty basket-work in shaded woodland glade, or on sunny bank, seeing that Scotland is not made up of such mild features as these. To the venturesome there is abundant opportunity of showing what is in him.

If the ledge of coast-cliff, where the peregrine builds, is bad to get at, either from the grassy top, or from the bottom where the water gurgles, the erack in which the rare seaside flower roots itself is still more puzzling. It needs a cool head as well as a rope and a belt.

If only a bold man dare take the golden eagle's eggs from the face of a Grampian precipice, it needs a bolder one still to rob that little colony of alpines, faintly glowing, through the field-glass, five hundred feet above or below.