

**MEMORIES OF THE
MONTHS.
SEVENTH SERIES**

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Memories of the months. Seventh series by Sir Herbert Maxwell

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SIR HERBERT MAXWELL

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*John, 10th Earl of Westmorland,
from the portrait by S. Romney in the possession of the Earl of Jersey.*

EDWARD ARNOLD, R.S.A. LONDON

Memories of the Months

SEVENTH SERIES

BY THE RIGHT HON.
SIR HERBERT MAXWELL
BART., F.R.S., D.C.L., LL.D.

Quid de pollicibus, vita saltantia puncta?



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TO THE READER

It was primarily for my own convenience that the first volume of these disjointed notes was published just a quarter of a century ago. Memory is a slippery jade, and requires to be jogged pretty frequently by some form of written record if impressions received from seasons, scenes, and books are not to fade into oblivion. Manuscript memoranda being unhandy for reference, methought it would be a luxury to have them transfigured into print and bound in a volume wherewith a few friends, sharing the writer's fads, might beguile an odd half-hour. It never was in contemplation at that time that the volume should be the first of a series. That it has been followed by six others must be attributed in large measure to the attractive form in which they have been presented to the public by Mr. Edward Arnold.

It was inevitable that many blunders should be perpetrated in a miscellany of this kind, wherein one who is fully conscious of his limitations has touched upon so wide a variety of subjects. He feels, therefore, that his first duty in presenting a fresh volume of *adversaria* is to offer such atonement as lies in his power by exposing the worst of these blunders in a pillory.

'Cum relego scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno
Me quoque quæ fuerant judice digna lini.'

FIRST SERIES

- Page 315. A line has been omitted from the second stanza of the Buckinghamshire Ballad. After 'Butson's Hill' insert—
'And as many as e'er they pleased they'd kill'
- Page 247. For 'Malcolm Canmore' read 'Malcolm the Maiden.'
Malcolm Ceanmor reigned 1055-1093, Malcolm the Maiden 1163-1165.
- Page 253, line 14. Leave out 'rushes swiftly at right and.'

SECOND SERIES

- Page 8, line 9 from the bottom. I regret to have been guilty of this error. William Scrope (1772-1852) of Castle Combe, author of *The Art of Decrestalking* and *Days and Nights of Salmon-Fishing*, was descended from Richard le Scrope, 1st Baron Scrope (died in 1403), and that branch of the family ended with his only child Emma, who married George Poulett Thomson, Esq., M.P. (who afterwards took the name of Scrope), and died without issue in August 1868. But Henry Aloysius Scrope, Esq. of Danby-on-Yore, Yorkshire, is in direct male descent from Henry, 6th Baron Scrope of Bolton.
- Page 12, line 2. For 'Gladwood' read 'Gladswold.'
- Page 49, line 16. For 'hussti' read 'Huasti.'
- Page 71, last line. A serious slip! For 'cuckchuter' read 'click-lucke.'
- Page 92. The question propounded here has solved itself. In 1904 I happened to see a great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) sitting upright on the shingle beside the Sanctuary Lake, and watched the bird through the glass preening its plumage in that attitude for fifteen or twenty minutes. A singular error has crept into the description of this species in the late Lord Lilford's admirable *Coloured Figures of the Birds of the British Islands*, vol. vi, page 109. The generic name is given as *Podiceps*, which means 'rump-headed,' whereas the true name *Podiceps* signifies 'rump-footed,' in allusion to the posterior position of the feet.
- Page 120, line 8. For 'frontialis' read 'fontinalis.'
- Page 192, line 5. For 'loch-cacha' read 'each-locha.'
- Page 263, line 12. For 'chamcorus' read 'chamcorus.'
- Page 281, line 3. For 'six-and-forty' read 'two-and-forty.'
- Page 290, line 16. For 'five' read 'three.'

THIRD SERIES

- Page 42. After reading these remarks, the late Canon H. Ellacombe wrote to me :—'The keeper at the Helston Lizard Lighthouse told me . . . that he had never had any of the lights broken but once, and that was by a woodcock that went clean through it. I was unable to ascertain whether the woodcock survived the shock.'
- Page 60. Canon Ellacombe wrote to me thus :—'Do you know that the spines of hollies are no protection if a vacant place can be found? A friend of mine near Barnet had a long extent of holly hedges, and he found that if a cow could find an opening it loved to scratch itself, and so made bad worse.'
- Page 208, line 11 from bottom. For 'about £100 sterling' read '£177, 13s. 4d. sterling.'
- Page 270. On the matter of the Yucca moth, Canon Ellacombe wrote to me thus :—'It seems certain that there is some insect that must fertilise the Yucca besides the *Proctos*. It fruits in S. Europe. This last spring I gathered a good handful of seeds near Nice. There are certainly natural hybrids there, though the hybrids produced near Naples are by artificial fertilisation. The whole subject is fully gone into in Trelease's good monograph of the Yucca published last year.'

FOURTH SERIES

- Page 8, line 9 from bottom. After the volume had been published I happened to hear another synonym for 'evening.' In Devonshire they speak of it as 'the dimsey,' equivalent in meaning and cognate in origin with the German *Dämmerung*.
- Page 68, line 5. For 'mingle' read 'mingled.'
- Page 245. Leave out from 'breathing apparatus' in line 4 from bottom to 'like' in line 3. I am informed that the *setæ* or iridescent hairs, which I took to be external *branchiæ*, have no function in respiration, breathing being effected through the skin.
- Page 258, line 2. After 'purposes' insert, 'It is stated in Munro's *Bambusæ* that during the famine of 1864, fifty thousand natives were busy collecting the seed of bamboo, which saved them from starvation.'
- Page 280, line 12. For 'Fowler' read 'Flower.' A tiresome misprint of an old and valued friend's name.

FIFTH SERIES

No doubt there are 'howlers' in this volume also, but I have mislaid the notes thereof.

SIXTH SERIES

Page 15, line 3. After 'Gadwall' insert 'Pintail.'

Page 18, line 16. Since this note on wild swans was written a pair of whoopers (*Cygnus musicus*) nested and reared their young in a loch in Perthshire in 1920 and 1921. The destructive vigilance of collectors renders it expedient to suppress mention of the exact locality, but the birds have been identified by competent ornithologists, and I have seen a photograph of the female sitting on her nest. The incident is most noteworthy, for, if I am not mistaken, the only previous authentic record of the whooper breeding in the British Isles is contained in the *Fauna Orcadensis* of the Rev. George Low, compiled between the years 1774 and 1778 and published in 1813.

'The wild swan,' says that excellent observer, 'is found at all seasons in Orkney; a few pairs build in the holms of the loch of Stenness. These, however, are nothing to the flocks that visit us in October from the more northern climates, their summer retreat. Part of these continue with us all the winter, and the rest go to Caithness and the other northern shires of Scotland. In April they go off again northward, except the few which remain here for the summer.'

If it were possible to induce or compel gunners to refrain from murderous persecution of these beautiful and absolutely harmless birds, no doubt they would re-occupy their former nesting places, and our eyes would be more frequently gladdened by what I think the grandest display of British bird life—a flock of wild swans, Homer's *ἔθρα πολλά κίεων δουλεχοδείριον*, winging their clamorous way under a wintry sky.

Page 103, last line but one. One who is so prone to pedantry as to employ a dead language to express what could be rendered equally well or better in his mother tongue, ought at least to avoid blunders in grammar. *Careo* is never intransitive; the phrase here should read, 'caveat vate sacra.'