

The food of the Raven in Virginia.—For some years a pair of ravens has nested near Lexington, Virginia, alternating between two high cliffs on the same mountain. This year, while there were still eggs in the 1944 nest, I gathered a handful of bone fragments from a small area immediately beneath each nesting site. Mr. A. L. Nelson of the Economic Investigations Laboratory of the Fish and Wildlife Service was kind enough to examine the material. In the debris collected at the 1942 nesting site he reports the following items: "10 flying squirrels; 1 Norway rat; 1 gray squirrel, adult; 1 squirrel, probably a young gray squirrel; 1 mourning dove; 1 unidentified bird, about the size of a jay; 1 colubrine snake; 1 *Polygyra* snail; short-horned grasshoppers." In the 1943 material he found the following: "6 flying squirrels; 1 grouse; 1 unidentified bird, about the size of a jay; 1 snail, probably *Polygyra*." Since broken snail shells occur everywhere on the mountain sides I am inclined to think that the *Polygyra* fragments should be disregarded. The rest of the material seems likely to have come from food brought to the young ravens. It would be interesting to know how many of these animals were killed by the ravens and how many were found dead.—J. J. MURRAY, *Lexington, Virginia*.

Middle 19th-Century introduction of British birds to Long Island, N. Y.—Information on this somewhat obscure subject has been found in a book not likely to be listed in ornithological bibliographies. It is 'Green-Wood Cemetery: a History of the Institution from 1838 to 1864,' by Nehemiah Cleaveland, New York, 1866. The data are on pages 73 and 134.

Toward the end of 1852, the trustees of the cemetery purchased 168 British birds, through the agency of Mr. Thomas S. Woodcock, of Manchester, and freed them in Green-Wood. There were 48 skylarks, 24 wood larks, 48 goldfinches, 24 robins, 12 thrushes, and 12 blackbirds. The birds were purchased at an average price of eight-pence, and the entire importation cost slightly over \$100.00.

According to the author, the experiment was a failure because the freed birds all disappeared. It is worthy of note, however, that skylarks maintained for many years a representation on farmlands in the outskirts of Brooklyn, and that European goldfinches still persist in the more distant vicinity of Seaford and Massapequa.—R. C. MURPHY, *American Museum of Natural History, New York*.

Cotton Mather's manuscript references to the Passenger Pigeon.—In the October issue of the *Auk* (61: 587-592, 1944) presumably all that Cotton Mather published concerning the Passenger Pigeon was reprinted and discussed. Nothing was said of the additional information contained in three of his letters, sent to Dr. John Woodward for presentation to the Royal Society. They are among those admirably studied by Professor George L. Kittredge (Cotton Mather's Scientific Communications to the Royal Society. *Proc. Amer. Antiq. Soc.*, N. S. 26: 18-57, 1916). Complete copies of the second of these letters, written probably in June, 1714, and the third, dated July 4, 1716, have since been made readily available by Dr. Arlie W. Schorger (Unpublished manuscripts by Cotton Mather on the Passenger Pigeon. *Auk*, 55: 471-477, 1938). Between the two (in 1715) "in lieu of his usual series of letters," Mather sent to England the manuscript of "The Christian Philosopher," printed in 1720, but postdated 1721 (Kittredge). That book includes everything of importance in regard to pigeons that is contained in the two letters except—as rightly stressed by Dr. Schorger—the source of his information. It was from the Indians that Captain Billings learned that what the pigeons disgorged for their young was "nothing they had eaten, but something that came naturally into their crops, as milk." In fact, all the best that Mather published about pigeons was transcribed