

ferred during the last one or two centuries, that they have not become wilder; it shows that the fear of man is not soon acquired.

In old inhabited countries, where the animals have acquired much general and instinctive suspicion and fear, they seem very soon to learn from each other, and perhaps even from other species, caution directed towards any particular object. It is notorious that rats and mice cannot long be caught by the same sort of trap,* however tempting the bait may be; yet, as it is rare that one which has actually been caught escapes, the others must have learnt the danger from seeing their companions suffer. Even the most terrific object, if never causing danger, and if not *instinctively* dreaded, is immediately viewed with indifference, as we see in our railway trains. What bird is so difficult to approach as the heron, and how many generations would it not require to make herons fearless of man? Yet Mr. Thompson says† that these birds, after a few days' experience, would fearlessly allow a train to pass within half gun-shot distance.‡ Although it cannot be doubted that the fear of man in old inhabited countries is partly acquired, yet it also certainly is instinctive; for nesting birds are generally terrified at the first sight of man, and certainly far more so than most of the old birds at the Falklands and Galapagos Archipelago after years of persecution.

We have in England excellent evidence of the fear of man being acquired and inherited in proportion to the danger incurred; for, as was long ago remarked by the Hon. Daines Barrington,§ all our *large* birds, young and old, are extremely wild. Yet there can be no relation between size and fear;

* E. P. Thompson, *Passions of Animals*, p. 29.

† *Nat. Hist. of Ireland*, "Birds," vol. ii, p. 133.

‡ [I may here refer to the corroboration which this statement has recently received in a correspondence between Dr. Rae and Mr. Goodsir (*Nature*, July 3rd, 12th, and 19th, 1883). The former says that the wild duck, teal, &c., which frequent certain districts through which the Pacific Railway has been carried in Canada, became quite fearless of the trains the first few days after traffic was opened, and the latter gives similar testimony concerning the wild fowl of Australia, adding, "The constant roar of a great passing traffic, as well as the unceasing turmoil and unearthly noises of a large railway station within a stone's throw of their haunts, is now quite unnoticed by these usually most watchful and wary of all birds. [*i.e.*, wild ducks.] But for fear of trespassing on your space, I could give many more illustrations of the truth of Dr. Rae's remarks."—G. J. R.]

§ *Phil. Trans.*, 1773, p. 264.