

## The Rockwood Review.

One magnificent specimen of the Goshawk was captured by my father, while duck shooting over decoys. While sitting in a blind, he was suddenly startled by the sudden swoop of an immense hawk, which passed very close to him and seized one of the decoys. The hawk was shot, and was found to have its talons firmly fixed in the head of a decoy.

The Upland Plover is becoming fairly numerous about this vicinity, and this year has been found breeding over an area of forty miles in length, but of uncertain depth. Flocks of ten or twelve were to be seen at the end of the summer, but were most difficult of approach. These birds left before October.

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In a recent issue of one of our local papers, the following interesting item appeared:—

"The floods in Greece have assumed a serious aspect, and one of the largest of the cemeteries has been washed away. The loss of life was very large." Comment is unnecessary.

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### HOW MY COUSIN CHARLIE GOT HIS STRAD.

It had been raining for a fortnight as it only can rain in Devonshire and the far West, and the little party at my uncle's house at Widdlecombe had dwindled down to two old naval captains and their wives; cousin Charlie and I, and a more prosy and dozy lot it is impossible to imagine. As all country sports were out of the question, we spent hours and hours at whist and cribbage with the old folks, who parted cheerfully with the three-penny we won of them, and when the luck was the other way about, pocketed their winnings with equal affability. The only other relief we had to our monotony was owing to the fact that both the captains

and my uncle were extremely musical, and each of them were enthusiastic fiddlers. Charley and myself were only tolerated because we could when occasion called upon us, wield a bow, and thus make the performance of certain venerable quartettes possible. My uncle played the 'cello, Captain Pegwell the tenor, Captain Sawyer the first violin, while Charlie and I came in as best we could with our somewhat uncertain seconds. Our musical performances were conducted in the afternoon, and as the music room was in a remote corner of the house, we disturbed no one by our harmonious efforts. I say "harmonious," but I must qualify the term, because the three old gentlemen occasionally came to rather high words over the "tempo," and our performances were often considerably abbreviated by the arguments which arose as to the rendering of certain passages, but on the whole our afternoons were thoroughly enjoyable, and those movements about which there could be no dispute were got through in a manner entirely to our own satisfaction. I do not for one moment suppose that we came up to a very high standard of playing at any time, but I have nothing but the kindest memory of those tuneful afternoons.

Our instruments were all very good of their sort. My uncle's 'cello was a John Forster, bought direct from the maker, in splendid preservation, and with a varnish anything but the "pea soup" of which Mr. Charles Reade speaks. Captain Pegwell's tenor was a Barak Norman of charming tone and rich appearance, the other captain led us into action on a Nicholas Amati found on board of a French ship captured by Nelson, while Charley and I had to do our scraping on a couple of fairish Dukes which looked better than