

## SOIRÉES.

The sixth soirée was held in the Assembly Room of the Normal School on March 11th, when Mr. W. E. Saunders, of London, Ont., lectured on "Native Birds: their Characteristics and Habits." The lecturer showed about 70 slides, which comprised most of the better known birds of Canada. Many peculiarities of these species were mentioned, and frequently the different families were treated as a group; the modifications of structure and habit which fit them for their place in nature, were also explained. Particular attention was paid to the relation the various tribes and species of birds bear to agriculture, and their influence on this important industry was deduced not only from their own direct efforts but indirectly by their attitude towards other species of birds and animals, both beneficial and injurious. The lecture was illustrated by anecdotes which had come within the speaker's personal experience, and the audience enjoyed especially the imitations of the various bird-songs and call-notes, some of which, particularly the plain clear whistles, were very faithful to nature. Deprecating mention was made of the enormous destruction which had nearly exterminated some species of gull, terns and herons on the Atlantic coast and in Florida, and a short account given of the methods which are now being employed to preserve the remnant and, if possible, to restore them to something of their former abundance.

The last soirée of the season was held in the Assembly Room of the Y.M.C.A. on March 18th, when officers for the ensuing year were elected. A paper entitled "Notes on the Arboretum at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa," was read by Mr. W. T. Macoun which is printed in this number of THE NATURALIST.

---