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MISCELLANEOUS.

At the instance of Lord Onslow the New Zealand Government have taken measures to preserve the native fauna from the destruction which has been going on, especially amongst birds, ever since white men settled there. Many of the wild birds of New Zealand are amongst the most remarkable in the world, and certain kinds are to be specially protected in future. Two Islands have been set apart as menageries where trapping and shooting will be strictly prohibited.—English Mechanic.

Blow, blow, blow! That disagreeable catarrh can be cured by taking Hood's Sarsaparilla, the constitutional remedy.

A correspondent of Science, has the following anecdote on the Sense of Direction:—Some time in the fifties, in Oregon, a party of prospectors took a mule team, wagon, and camping equipage on a prospecting tour. In order to be correct in their local geography, and to retrace their steps should they find anything worthy of a re-visit, they took a civil engineer along, who took the bearing of every course, and the distance was chained. When they gave up the prospecting enterprise, their route had been so tortuous that they decided to take the direct route for the home camp. The engineer footed up the latitudes and departures of the courses run, and made a calculation of of the course home, and all struck for the home camp. When they reached the end of their course, night had overtaken them, and they found themselves, not in the home camp, but in the woods, with no objects or land-marks that any of the party could recognize. As the engineer took no "back-sights," or check bearings, he said that local attraction somewhere in their journey had thrown him off a little, and that they were in the neighborhood of the home camp. At this, the driver turned one of his mules loose, which went directly to the camp, about three-quarters of a mile distant. As the mules were not allowed to run at large, for fear of wandering off or being stolen by Indians, this mule had never before been over that route, and must have had a sense of direction. It was a joke on the engineer which he did not relish, though it had great "staying qualities."

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For three years I have made a special study of the habits of the yellow-bellied, or sap-sucking woodpecker (*Sphyrapicus varius*), as found in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, writes Mr. Frank Balles in Science. The birds arrive in that region near the middle or 20th of April, and remain until about the middle of October. During the whole of this period they derive the more important part of their food-supply from sap-yielding holes which they drill through the bark of red maples, red oaks, poplars, white and gray birches, the white ash and some other trees and shrubs. In every instance where I have found a well-marked drinking-place established by the sap-suckers, humming-birds have been regular attendants upon it during the summer months. I have paid hundreds of visits to these "orchards" of the sap-suckers, and have watched them for many hours at a time. By so doing I have ascertained that, as a rule, one individual humming-bird seems to acquire a sort of easement in the sap-fountains of the woodpeckers, and if another ruby-throat attempts to drink sap at his spring violent resistance is offered. The humming birds, at "orchards" where they are not molested by the woodpeckers, drink scores of times in the course of the long summer day. When not drinking they are usually perched on twigs a few yards from the holes, keeping their nervous heads wagging from side to side while watching for intruders. In a few instances I have seen humming-birds perch upon the bark below the holes in order to drink long without being forced to keep their wings moving while enjoying the sweet sap. In some cases I have placed small birch-bark cups upon trees frequented by the sap-suckers and their guests, and in each such instance the humming-birds have been as quick as the woodpeckers to discover the diluted maple syrup with which the cups were filled, and to drink it in considerable quantities. I remember seeing one drink for sixty seconds, with a ten seconds' rest in the middle of the minute. Most of the "orchards" at which I have seen humming-birds as visitors from year to year have been composed of red maples or gray birches. At one of the birch orchards I shot two humming-birds, a male and a female, in order to ascertain whether more of their kind were visiting the holes. Only nine minutes elapsed before another was at the holes drinking.

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