

fall. The Horned Owls being more of woodland birds, are not so easily seen or procured when the snow is deep, but it is evident that all the species of STRIGIDÆ are abundant this winter. It would be well to investigate why these day owls appear in the neighbourhood of civilization during the months of December and January just for a short season, and then disappearing until the next cold fall sets in again.—C.

### Correspondence.

SIR,—At the present time, when so much excitement prevails at home and abroad, regarding the prospective wealth of our country, and when so much capital and energy are being expended in developing its resources, it is pleasant to notice that those branches of its Natural History which are not directly associated with the acquisition of wealth, are not being forgotten, and that while hundreds are striving to gain possession of the most productive lands, the richest mineral deposits or the most valuable timber limits, a quieter class of workers are equally busily engaged collecting, and identifying such specimens of Natural History as come within the range of their observation throughout the country; the results of their researches are being placed on record, and when the excitement attendant on the first settlement of the new country now being opened up, has subsided, it will be a pleasant pastime for the rising generation to read therein the names and habits of the beautiful birds and flowers which surround their homes. I have been led to make these remarks on reading in recent numbers of your magazine, a list of birds of Western Ontario, by J. E. Morden and W. E. Saunders, of London; a list which I am sure will be valued by many a lover of birds throughout the country. It is very complete, yet it is by no means a compilation of the labours of others as such lists frequently are; on the contrary it bears (with very few exceptions) the impress of direct personal contact with the objects described. Great diligence and perseverance must have been bestowed on the subject to enable the collectors to bring it before the public in so complete a shape; yet I can also imagine their having much real enjoyment and many a pleasant ramble, which only the enthusiastic student of nature can understand. In 1866, I published a list of birds observed near Hamilton, and on

placing the two side by side, it is astonishing to notice how closely they agree; the differences arising chiefly from stragglers which may have appeared at one point and not at the other. The following are the principal points of difference which it taken along with the recent list, may help to complete our knowledge of the subject. In the Hamilton list the total number of specimens enumerated was 241; in the London list the total number is 236. In the London list the following sixteen species are included which do not appear in the Hamilton list.—Swallow-tailed Kite; Cardinal Grosbeak; Red Phalarope; Little Yellow Rail; Scoter Duck; Tennessee Warbler; Hooded Fly-catching Warbler; English Sparrow; Mocking Bird; Common Tern; Wilson's Phalarope; Forster's Tern; Blue-gray Gnat-catcher; Long-billed Marsh Wren; Rough-winged Swallow; Banded three-toed Woodpecker. The Swallow-tailed Kite is a southern species, but a wanderer of powerful wing, who may occur again as a visitor. The Cardinal and Mocking birds are from the south, but come so close to the frontier that these may be only the pioneers of larger numbers yet to come. The little Yellow Rail; the two Terns, and the Long-billed marsh Wren, seem to prefer the greater retirement and shallower warmer water of the St. Clair Flats to the cooler inlets of Burlington Bay where I have not yet observed them. The Scoter, Tennessee Warbler, Hooded Warbler and Blue-gray Gnat-catcher, I have met with since writing my list. The Rough-winged Swallow had probably not appeared in Canada in 1866, as I find it was not met with in New England till 1875, when only one specimen was found; since that time it occurs breeding in little communities throughout the Eastern States. For the same reason, the English Sparrow was not named, as he was not introduced here till about 1873; since that time, he has passed through the different stages of rare, common, exceedingly abundant; what his next stage will be, may be affected to some extent by the members of the Fruit-growers Association, as I notice it as a matter announced for their consideration during the coming year. Wilson's Phalarope is a bird of the Prairie ponds which may again be found in suitable localities. The Red Phalarope and the Woodpecker are uncertain visitors from the north. Referring to the Blue-gray Wren, the London list says: "they arrive from the north in October, and in mild winters remain." I was aware that