OUR SQUIRRELS.

By J. Ballantyne.

(Read 1st March, 1888.)

As has already been announced, I have undertaken to read a short paper concerning the squirrels which are to be seen, more or less frequently, in the neighborhood of Ottawa.   When I undertook to do so I was well aware of the fact that the Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club held in its membership a number of persons who were, perhaps, better acquainted with the subject than I was myself, and were consequently better fitted to speak about it.   From an anatomical point of view, I know very little about them.   My observations have been of a verd casual kind, and have been restricted to their outward appearance and some of their habits.   As, however, what I have to say is from personal observation, it may possibly be of some interest to those persons who, for want of opportunities or from other causes, have paid even less attention to the study of the wild animals existing round about us than I have myself.   From my own experience I am sure that much can be added to the enjoyment of life by cultivating the acquaintance and getting ourselves on a friendly footing with many of our wild neighbors.   Most of them quickly respond to kind treatment and manifest their confidence and trust in various ways ; among some of our birds this pleasing trait is very marked.   As an instance, I may say that we have had three different kinds of wild birds build their nests and bring out their young, at the same time, within a few feet of each other all under our verandah, and almost within reach from a door which we were constantly using.   Some of them came into the house quite frequently, and showed very little fear.   We took a great deal of pleasure in watching them in their nest-building and rearing of their young.   The birds were not the only animals whose company we enjoyed. We derived no little pleasure from seeing about, the clean, active and graceful little rodents which are the subject of this paper.   .

Before attempting to describe the different Squirrels seen in this vicinity, it may be well in the first place to outline, in a general way

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