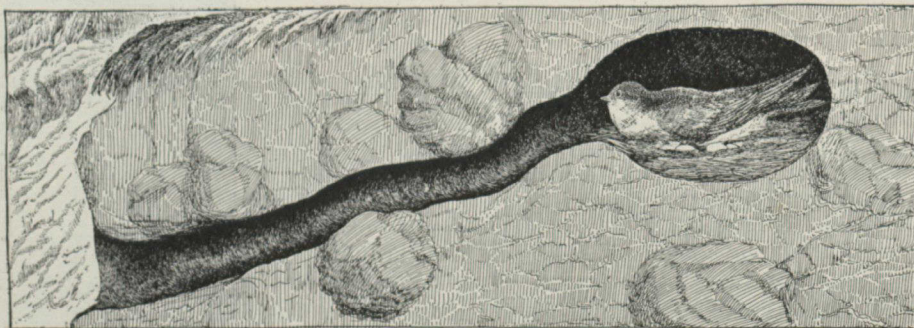


bird-lover, on a tramp, will take care to approach a settlement cautiously, and is there any suggestion of a new prospector at work he will ensconce himself, with his opera glasses, as comfortably as may be for the next hour or so. A whisk of feathers and a dribble of sand will be all that is visible about the old holes when an inhabitant has once darted in, but the new digger may be seen clinging to the perpendicular cliff face with its long sharp claws, the tail pressed firmly down as a fulcrum, and all the force of its small body thrown into an attack on the earth with its little rigid beak as a pickaxe. A small hole soon shows, and now circling round and round with its beak pressed against the side of this minute drill it scrapes the earth away till a cuplike depression appears, pegging and scraping proceeds strenuously till the work-

er's mate flutters to the spot. There is a pause, observations are interchanged, and the digger sweeps off into space to recruit while his partner promptly attacks the cavity. Turn and turn about, the workers plod on till some time before noon when it is generally quit for the day. Their little concentrations of energy will have by that time, apparently, spent their operating force, and lying on the cliff-side will be a measure of their daily capacity, in sixteen or twenty ounces of excavated soil.

On the second day the small miners will be comfortably standing in a circular hole, pegging with the beak, scraping with feet, and fluttering out dust with wings, and will soon be invisibly deep in the earth, appearing but now and then



BANK SWALLOW'S NEST