

Correspondence.

NEST HUNTING.

SIR,—Recent communications which I received from Canadian and American Ornithologists leads me to think that former articles in your Journal have been read with interest; I think it may also be interesting to our Ornithological friends to make a few remarks regarding birds observed, and nests discovered during the present season. On the 24th of May, I was fortunate to discover the nest, and secure therefrom, a set of the eggs of the Pigeon Hawk, (*Falco columbarius*). This bird is rather rare in these parts of Canada where I have pursued my Ornithological researches; in fact, with the exception of the Red-tail, commonly called the Kite, or Chicken Hawk, none of this tribe are numerous in this region. Last summer, I noticed one of these hawks capture a pigeon in my garden; it flew with its victim towards a cedar swamp north of this town, where in April last I noticed several old nests which I supposed belonged to this species, or some of the hawk family. This led me to believe that the locality was a favourite nesting place of these birds, and I determined to revisit it later in the season. Accordingly on the above date, in company with my oldest son, I was again among the cedars. In the midst of a thick growth of evergreens, chiefly balsam and cedar, I discovered in a cedar tree, about forty feet from the ground, a new-made nest, from which upon throwing up a stick, I had the pleasure to start a hawk; and upon her return with her mate, I saw it was *Falco columbarius*, and these by their notes intimated that they regarded my presence as dangerous to their long undisturbed safety. To reach the nest was a work of considerable difficulty; I was not an expert climber, and a fall might be fatal. Having a shingling axe and some nails with me, I first made a rude ladder, about fourteen feet long; this brought me to the lower branches, whence I had to cut a number of small limbs as I progressed upward. In a short time, however, I found myself in reach of the nest, which was placed on several branches, close to the trunk of the tree, and formed of small dry sticks and bramble. In the slight hollow I found four eggs, which I soon transferred to my collect-

ing-box, and with them descended in safety to the ground, rejoicing over my prize—the first eggs of any of our Birds of Prey that I had yet secured—and which, though incubation had progressed several days, I found no difficulty in preparing, and placing at the head of my collection. The general colour of these eggs are white, variously marked by different shades of brown. No two of them are similarly marked, nor of a uniform size; two of them are almost round, being 3.5-8 x 3.3 inches in circumference. One is 3.3 x 4, the other which is more oblong, is 4 x 3.3. One of the round eggs is dark brown on one end; the more oblong one has an irregular band of a similar hue towards the centre; another is banded and blotched over the middle, and another which has less colouring than the rest, has its darkest shade on one side. Vennor, in "Our Birds of Prey," pages 11 and 16, describes this bird, but it seems that he was not acquainted with its nidification. On the 5th of April, I observed three pair of a species of hawk, new to me; they were moving westward, being at an elevation of several hundred feet, and seemed to be going through a regular waltzing gyration. The colour appeared to be greyish white; the body neat and slender and about the length of the Pigeon Hawk; the wings long and curving sometimes flapped, and again spread out as they circled round after the manner of the Red-tail. Again, on the 25th of the same month, about three miles east of this town, I observed at about an equal elevation, six birds similar to those seen on the 5th, going through similar evolutions, but moving in an opposite direction. Their notes which I heard on this occasion, at first sounded like those of the wild goose, but ended in a call similar in tone, but less loud than that of the Red-tailed Hawk. Perhaps these were the Broad-winged Buzzard. Robins are numerous here, this season, and many of their nests have been observed. The Blue Bird is now becoming scarce, I have not seen its eggs this season yet. It first made its appearance here on the second of March. The Crow-black birds are very numerous, nesting in the balsam shade-trees in the town, and in the willows and small cedars in the beaver meadows as well as the deserted holes of Hitholders, and hollows of trees. I have taken over a dozen sets of their eggs this month. The Northern Shrike (?) is becoming more common. On May 3rd, I collected from a nest in a