

found in *Meyenia Plumosa*, Carter may be considered an exception.

These biotules in the present collection average one third longer than those before examined, and are in every way more robust. The speaker was gratified in finding this confirmation of a rule which he has long since observed to hold amongst the infinite variations of size and form noticeable in collections of the same species from various localities, viz: that the spicules of all species increase regularly in size and solidity as we descend from high attitudes towards the sea level, where is found the extreme limit of the series. He does not attribute this gradation to a change of climatic conditions, but more probably to a gradual and constant improvement in the food supply, or in the siliceous constituents of the water. He had traced the working of the rule more particularly, through the very variable species *Spongilla lacustris* and *S. fragilis*, in *Meyenia fluviatilis*, in *Heteromeyenia argyrosperma* and *H. Ryderi*, and, lastly and most conspicuously, in *Tubella Pennsylvanica*. The extremes in this last series differ so widely that they would hardly be taken to belong to the same species; but the intermediate grades have all been collected largely from the same stream, and as a result several species named in this and other cases have relapsed into synonyms.

BIRDS IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

I never saw birds so scarce as they are this winter. Even the ubiquitous Snow Buntings that come with the snow wreaths, mimicking their driven purity with the white beauty of their arctic plumes, are much less abundant than usual. In November we had some small flocks of Redpoles feeding among the strobiles of the great yellow birches, and making the forest arches cheery with their musical peals. A few Crossbills wandered restless from one spruce grove to another at the same time and some solitary Grosbeaks strayed about the quiet autumn landscape. There were no fir or spruce seeds for them, and the poor birds had to go to the shores for a meal or content themselves with eating the buds of the trees.

It is this exceeding scarcity of forest seeds which makes the usual winter visitants so uncommon. There are literally no fir cones and not one spruce tree in a hundred has a cluster of rich brown pendants to adorn its emerald spire. Yellow birch seeds also are very scarce.