

their eggs in a perfectly exposed nest, under the very eyes of two carrion crows who occupied the first floor of the same tree, an alder, without the least molestation, seems to confirm this view.

In this Garden of Eden, however, all sorts of anomalous things seem to have been done by birds. In a cleft branch of a fir tree, twenty-four feet from the ground, a peahen built her nest, through which piece of ambition, since falling is much easier than flying, she lost all her young ones. In the branch of an oak, twelve feet from the ground, a wild duck nested, and brought down all her brood in safety to their natural element. A pair of coots built their nest on the extreme end of a willow branch closely overhanging the water; but the weight of the materials, and especially of the birds themselves, depressed it so that their habitation rested on the very surface of the water, and its contents rose and fell with every ripple; and, finally, another pair of coots who had built their house on what they considered *terra firma*, found themselves altogether adrift one stormy morning, and continued so, veering with the fickle breeze for many days, until at last the eggs were hatched, and their young family became independent, and could shift for themselves. All these minutæ were carefully watched by the squire. An excellent telescope enabled him to perceive from his drawing room window the manoeuvres of both land and water fowls. "You could carefully scrutinize their form, their color, their plumage, the color of their legs, the precise form and hue of their mandibles, and not unfrequently even the color of the iris of the eye: also their mode of walking, of swimming, and of resting. You could see the herons, the water hens, the coots, the Egyptian and the Canada geese, the carrion crows, the ringdoves (occasionally on their nests), the wild duck, teal, and widgeon." No less than eighty-nine descriptions of land bird, and thirty of water fowl, sojourned in the grounds or about the lake of Walton Hall. In winter when the lake was frozen, it was literally a fact that the ice could sometimes not be discerned; it was so crowded by the thousands of water fowl that huddled together upon it without sound or motion.

Mr. Waterton, it may be easily imagined, was himself no sportsman; but it was his custom to supply his own table on a fast day (he was a Roman Catholic) with fish shot by himself with a bow and arrow. Otherwise, he made war on no living creature, except the rat: the "Hanoverian" rat, as he designated him with bitterness: and even him he preferred to exile rather than destroy. On his return home from his famous wanderings in South America, he found the hall so infested with rats that nothing was safe from them. But having caught a fine specimen of the "Hanoverian" in a "harmless trap," he carefully smeared him over with tar, and let him depart. This astonished and highly-scented animal immediately scoured all the rat passages, and thus impregnated them with the odor of all others most offensive to his brethren, who fled by hundreds in the night across the narrow portion of the lake and were no more seen. Though very bigoted in religious matters, the squire was indeed a most tolerant and tender-hearted man. He built a shelter upon a certain part of the lake expressly for poor folks,

who were permitted to fish whether for purposes of sale or for their own dinners; and notwithstanding that it was his custom to dress like a miser and a scarecrow, and to live like an ascetic, sleeping upon bare boards with a hollowed piece of wood for a pillow, and fasting much longer than was good for him, he was very charitable and open handed to others.

It must be confessed however, we gather from this volume that the great naturalist was, out of his profession, by no means a wise man, and certainly not a witty one. He loved jokes of a school boy sort, and indulged in sarcasms more practical than delicate. The two knockers of his front door were cast, from bell metal, in the similitude of human faces, the one representing mirth, and the other misery. The former was immovably fixed to the door, and seemed to grin with delight at your fruitless efforts to raise it; the latter appeared to suffer agonies from the blows inflicted on it. In the vestibule was a singularly conceived model of a nightmare, with a human face, grinning and showing the tusks of a wild boar, the hands of a man, Satanic horns, elephant's ears, bat's wings, one cloven foot, one eagle's talon, and with the tail of a serpent; beneath it was the following motto:—

ASSIDENS PRÆCORDIIS
FAVORE SOMNOS AUFERAM.

It was his humor, more than once, when between seventy and eighty years of age, to welcome the author, when he came to dinner, by hiding on all fours under the hall table, and pretending to be a dog. He made use of his wonderful taxidermic talents to represent many individuals who took a leading part in the Reformation by loathsome objects from the animal and vegetable creation, and completed the artistic group with a sprinkling of "composite" demons. He was seriously vexed, and behaved very rudely to a stranger under his own roof, who had profanely designated his favorite (stuffed) Bahia toad as "an ugly brute."

These and similar instances of bad taste we think Dr. Hobson might have left unrecorded with advantage. Still, there was much to like as well as to admire about the great Naturalist. No museum of natural history elsewhere could compare with the beauty and finish of the specimens, prepared by the squire's own hand with wonderful skill and patience, which adorned the inside of Walton Hall. "Not even living nature," says our author, "could surpass the representations there displayed." In attitude, you had life itself: in plumage, the lustrous beauty that death could not dim; "in anatomy, every local prominence, every depression, every curve, nay, the slightest elevation or depression of each feather." The great staircase glowed with tropical splendour. At the top of it was the vertical cayman mentioned in the Wanderings, on which the squire mounted in Essiquibo, and the huge snake with which he contended in single combat. Doubts have been thrown on both these feats, but Dr. Hobson relates instances of presence of mind and courage shown by the squire in his presence, quite as marvelous as these. Wishing to make experiment as to whether his Woorali poison, obtained in 1812 from the Macoushi Indians, was more efficacious than