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SOME GUESTS AT THE BANQUET OF BLOSSOMS.*

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In 1905, my first season of collecting, I went over to England at the end of June on a botany trip. I had already begun to watch for beetles on blossoms before leaving Canada, though my chief hunting-ground had been the bark of trees. In England I knew that the latter game-preserve was practically out of the question, as timber is far more scarce, and nearly all the woods are kept too clean for fallen timber to lie or wood to rot. If I meant to do any beetle-hunting, it must be by some other method, and I naturally made up my mind to combine hobbies by carrying a collecting-bottle out with me on my daily botanical rounds.

My first stay was on a small estate in Chislehurst, Kent. Here, in this garden within a garden, while wandering through a wood of hazel and oak I came on a large clump of tall umbellifers in full bloom. I knew already from Fowler's and other books that such blossoms were a favourite haunt of certain beetles, and I made my way cautiously along a hedge of rhododendrons towards the clump. As I did so, there rose from between my feet a dark brown hawk-like bird, that flew up into my face and hovered for some moments in front of me; it was a nightjar, the famous goat-sucker of popular superstition, menacing, but powerless to fulfil a threat, being, indeed, cousin-german to our night-hawk and whip-poor-will, with all the furtive movements and ghostly silence of the creatures that fly abroad by night and hawk beneath the light of the moon. Like the night-hawk, it builds no nest, but there among the round flint pebbles by an oak lay its pair of eggs.

When first I got to the clump of flowering plants and scanned their broad white discs of blossom, among numerous diptera and hymenoptera, nothing was to be seen except a few butterflies, but presently I saw a large black and yellow Longicorn settle on an umbel some distance off. On approaching I found two of the beetles feeding and succeeded in catching one in my hand. They were very active, as quick as sunflies and almost as wary, so that capture was far from easy. I managed, however, to get a

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