

were called upon to contribute to the harmony of the harvest festival. One of these jokes is quoted by Miss Lois Fison in her "Merry Suffolk." Called upon to sing, John, who was no singer, at last stood up, cleared his throat several times, and shouted:

Larn tew be wise!
Larn tew be wise!
Laaarn tew be wise!

And then again—

Laaarn tew be wise!
each time raising his voice to a higher pitch. At last the rest of the farm-hands would call out, "Lawk, John, wa' can't you gon we no more than that?" and John, after a pause, during which he gazed round upon the company, would remark, "You larn that fust," and would then sit down to the accompaniment of loud laughter and cheering.

W. A. DUTT.

A NESTING REEVE IN NORFOLK.

It is eighteen years since the last reeve's nest was discovered in Norfolk; consequently excitement was intense when the keeper dropped suddenly into my cabin on the afternoon of June 13th, and announced the discovery of a reeve's nest containing four eggs near at hand. I soon gathered together my camera and accessories, stepped into the punt and in less than 10 min. was standing scarcely 8ft. from the sitting bird. At first she was invisible, so well did her plumage harmonise with the surroundings as, with head low down, she awaited the approach of the intruders. I sent the keeper back to the cabin for my hand camera, hoping to get a picture of her as she crouched. Meanwhile, there we remained, reeve and photographer, gazing at one another for a quarter of an hour, when suddenly the reeve relieved the tension by flying away. My mind had been filled with conflicting emotions. I was loth to disturb the bird's peace. Perhaps she would resent



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REEVE SITTING.

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the camera and not return; then I should be filled with regret. Might I not remain satisfied with having seen what



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SNIFE RUNS ACROSS THE FOREGROUND.

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no Nature-lover of my generation had seen? Being human, however, the desire to do what no one else had done overpowered my scruples, and, when the bird flew away, I did not hesitate to erect some sort of shelter. That day, owing to intense eagerness on my part to commence operations, the preparations were scanty and, as regards my own comfort, insufficient. The ground was swampy, and the nest placed in a tuft of rushes just out of the water. On the north side a wide dyke separated this tiny island from the marshes, while scarcely foyds. away there was a high-way for sailing craft, whose noisy occupants often interfered with my work and delayed the return of this very shy sitter. I simply threw down an armful of rough litter, sufficient to keep my plate-box out of the water, and, having erected the camera, sat on the box, under two reed-thatched hurdles which met over my head, all gaps being filled in with some cut grass. A heavy thunder-storm broke over the marshes, and rain fell in torrents for an hour, during which the reeve was never far away, for I could hear her somewhat heavy splashing through the water all round me, as she examined every feature of my shelter, and once alighted upon it.

Having satisfied herself that no real danger lurked beneath the heap, she suddenly ran on to the nest, sipping raindrops as she came. I let her settle, and dropped the shutter. Even then she did not move; but as I was slowly but surely sinking deeper into the swamp it became necessary for me to shift my position. This startled her, and she was off in an instant. Alas! my plate was useless, for though the rain had not actually touched the lenses, they were slightly fogged by the general moisture of the atmosphere. I had to leave the neighbourhood for three days, during which I possessed my soul in tolerable patience; but before going away we threw down the hurdles and covered them with a heap of litter. We also exchanged the reeve's eggs with those of a redshank, so that throughout I had no compunction in keeping the reeve off the eggs for several hours if necessary.

Returning on June 17th I tried again, this time lying down on an oilskin coat placed over thatched hurdles, which kept me well out of the swamp. I also wove an elaborate rush front for my camera, so that when all was covered with sedge and reeds there was nothing to alarm the bird. Still I had to wait from 1.30 till 4 p.m., and when the bird returned my eyes were blurred with long gazing through criss-cross strands of grass and my fingers rigid from want of use, so I failed to drop the shutter at the exact moment, and the bird flew away without settling on her nest. I returned to my cabin limp and depressed with my second failure. The next day I succeeded, the day being one of good omen, and secured the first picture of this series. On the 19th I was out at 6 a.m. and waited until eight o'clock. Just as the reeve returned, a snipe ran across the foreground when I dropped my

shutter. A moment later, both snipe and reeve stood side by side, erect, intent on the spot from which the sound proceeded. Had I waited the fraction of a second later, I should have secured a rare and doubly interesting picture, whereas the snipe now appears merely as a speckled heap in the foreground. Another attempt was made at 9.30, this time with a single lens. The reeve returned some minutes later, accompanied by a redshank. The latter bird sat on my rubbish heap whistling, calling and making little crooning noises, for whose benefit I do not know; but they evidently pleased the reeve, for she would look up at him from time to time and move her head from side to side, as if cheered by his neighbourliness, and finally settled down into the contented attitude shown in the last picture. I let this go on for some time, as it was pretty to watch. When at last I released the shutter, both birds flew off, the reeve uttering a curious guttural double note, something like a quack. Changing the plate, another two hours' wait followed with no result, though four redshanks and one snipe ran over me all together, calling loudly. Still my lady would not return. The creaking call-note of the snipe, heard at such close quarters, is very curious; it is almost possible to feel the vibrations of sound, as when some long-disused machinery is set in motion. My rubbish heap, whether containing me or not, was always a favourite preening-place for all the birds of the neighbourhood. This, though very interesting, made it doubly hard for me, as I dared scarcely breathe, much less stir to relieve an aching muscle. The next day for four long hours the reeve only ran about the marsh, and refused to approach the nest. She always seemed shy of the double lenses. However, on the 24th I secured the fourth and last picture of the bird actually running on to her nest, after which I left her alone, viewing her only from a distance occasionally. The eggs proved unfertile; all our scrupulous care of them was in vain, though they had been kept warm and watched almost night and day. The eggs were smaller than those of the redshank, more pointed, and more evenly marked all over with reddish brown spots. The ground colour of this particular clutch was light greyish green, one of the four being much lighter than the other three. The nest in no way differed from that of the redshank; the longer rushes were twisted together at the top, to form a kind of roof, but some of these had to be cut away before the bird could be photographed.

I saw no ruffs during the hours of waiting for the reeve, but on July 7th a ruff and reeve were seen in the vicinity of the nest, and later in the day two reeves. In the spring a few ruffs and reeves regularly return to their old haunts in Norfolk, and during the last two summers young birds have been seen, so that it is not improbable that these latter may have been home-bred birds.



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A PICTURE OF CONTENT.

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It is to be hoped that the efforts which are being made to induce these interesting birds to return and breed in their old quarters will be crowned with success, and that the Nature-lover may once more have the pleasure of watching those dancing parties and harmless duels with which the somewhat irresponsible ruff delights to while away his time.

E. L. TURNER.

IN THE GARDEN.

SOME OLD GARDEN ROSES.

OLD-FASHIONED Roses are so full of the memories of Old England as it used to be that it seems a pity to lose sight of them altogether. In one respect—that of fragrance—some of them far surpass the newer ones which have supplanted them in our affections; for surely no Rose of to-day can rival the delicious perfume of the old Provence or Cabbage Rose. We suspect that the dried leaves of these sweet old Roses formed the staple of the *pot pourri* beloved of our great-grandmothers; and if some of us have been disappointed in our attempts to follow their famous recipes, probably it is the fault neither of the recipe nor of the would-be maker, but that the secret was lost when the pink and white French Roses—badges of old of the Royal Houses of York and Lancaster—went out of fashion. The pink Cabbage Rose still lingers here and there, but hardly ever do we meet with the white Provence—the low bush, not over-robust, but tolerably well set, with creamy white flowers, often a little ragged and one-sided in their fulness, the delight of our childish hours, especially when we described a brilliant June beetle lying hid within the scented petals, and in those days, perhaps because of its delicacy, the pride of the manor no less than of the farmhouse or cottage garden. Such Roses as these fill a place well, and, grown as dwarf bushes, make a pleasant contrast to perennial plants in wide borders, where they will mostly be in flower before the Hybrid Perpetuals and Hybrid Teas come forward to detract from their modest old-world beauty. Several of these old Roses are worth growing if only for the sake of association. Besides the two Provence Roses already referred to, there is the true Maiden's Blush—Rose Céleste, with bluish foliage and pale pink flowers of most delicate scent; the favourite old pink Moss Rose, more elegant than any of its newer varieties, and its good white form, the little Rosa de Meaux—beloved beyond all others of the children—Rosa d'Amour, which has the credit of being the double form of the old Rosa lucida, though quite unlike it in most respects, but possessing the same attributes of bright, autumn-tinted foliage—and many another besides. Perhaps it is partly because this class of Rose has generally been left to grow at its own sweet will that it has gone out of favour. Most of them, nevertheless, are much better for being reverently cut back in spring with the rest of their more popular kindred, for otherwise the bushes become poor and straggling and give but few flowers. Unfortunately, they are all



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ON HER WAY TO THE NEST.

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arisen called "Violetta," the foundation of which was laid by the late Dr. Stuart of Chirside. We owe Mr. D. B. Crane of Highgate much praise for having, from Dr. Stuart's beginning, created a group which should have much influence on the English gardens of the future. At this time the rock garden is usually a dry waste; the Alyssums, Aubrietias and flowers which splash the home of alpine with colour have long since flown, and it is then the Violetta Pansies—sweet little garden Violets, if we may so call them—will take the place of the plants that have ceased to bloom. There is much of the true Violet character in the flowers; the growth is tufted—that is, compact, strong, and the flowers are borne in such profusion that scarcely a leaf is visible, while the fragrance is that of the hedgerow wilding—a sweet, delicious, alluring scent, more pronounced perhaps in some varieties than in others, but never absent. The Violetta Pansies are very easily grown; the growth is vigorous, and if an increase of plants is desired the best way to effect this is by dividing—that is, splitting up the roots in spring, or by cuttings in late August. The cuttings should be simply the growths taken off with a little root attached if possible; if not, cut just beneath a joint and insert in a shallow box or a pot filled with light soil. As a rule, Pansy cuttings are quite safe in the open garden; but the "Violettas" are still rare, and a greater regard to detail is advisable. The flowers are exquisite. Not only is the scent agreeably strong; but the form is perfect, and the colouring varies greatly, without any crude contrasts. A few of the most beautiful are as follows: Diana is yellow, richer on the lower petals than the upper; Robinia, white, with a suffusion of yellow, and the flower less than $\frac{1}{2}$ in. across; Gertrude Jekyll, a "bicolor," the flower being half primrose and half yellow, the two colours quite distinct; Vestal, pure white, except the little yellow eye, as it is called, in the centre; Lavinia, bluish lavender, the most fragrant of all; Sweetness, very sweet, as the name suggests, and in colour a bluish white, the stem long, and the fragrance powerful—one of the most useful of the group; Olivia, bluish, very free; and Thibbe, bluish lilac, with yellow eye, a lovely flower, and dense in growth. These are the gems of their race, and we hope they will be much seen in the rock gardens of the future.

AN EXTRAORDINARY FOXGLOVE.

We have received many flowers of a Foxglove which the senders think unusual. We well remember this Foxglove years ago; it was then called a "freak"; but now it may be purchased from well-known firms under the name of *Monstrous*. It is simply an abnormal form of the wilding of our woods, a flower which suggests the Canterbury Bell, with this difference, that the Canterbury Bell-like flower only appears at the apex of the stem. We dislike this monstrosity, but we like the variety of Foxglove called *Gloxiniifolia*, a flower that is in shape like the Foxglove of the woods, but the colour is white, with deep brown spots—a charming group, which we believe originated with Messrs. Vilmorin of Paris. This is the season to sow Foxgloves, and nothing contributes more to the beauty of the woodland than such flowers as the Foxglove, the Loosestife and many others we could name.

RANDOM NOTES.

Sweet Pea St. George.—We mentioned recently in some general notes a new Sweet Pea called *St. George*, which was raised by the famous firm of Messrs. Hurst and Son, Houndsditch. Some flowers before us confirm an opinion already expressed that this is one of the finest novelties of the year. It is a colour we desire, a brilliant scarlet; more scarlet than *Scarlet Gem*, to which it has been compared, and the growth is more vigorous. This novelty, we believe, will be sent out next spring, and should be noted now as one of the annual flowers to obtain.

A New Tea Rose.—The Royal Horticultural Society recently gave their Award of Merit to a Tea Rose called *Hugo Koller*, raised by Messrs. William Paul and Son of Waltham Cross. It is probably the most distinct pure Tea Rose raised of recent years, and, fortunately, there is plenty of strong colour in the flower. It may be compared with *Marie Van Houtte*; there is the same creamy white in the centre, but the outer petals are quite crimson, a remarkable contrast. Fragrance, distinct colouring, freedom and vigorous growth are the attributes of this beautiful English-raised Tea Rose.

THE VIOLETTA PANSIES.

The Pansy, Heartsease or Viola—it is known under the three names—is a flower that contributes much beauty to the English garden; but a race has