

Sir Walter Buller said that in England he had seen the first part of the manuscript of the work on New Zealand entomology which Mr. Hudson proposed bringing out, also plates, which were much admired. On the whole, the work was highly spoken of, and he was quite sure it would be a success, and a valuable contribution to our colonial literature.

Mr. Travers added that the use of the spray-distributor, properly charged, would be of great advantage in getting rid of these pests. They could be kept working for a considerable time in the proper season.

Mr. Hulke would like Sir Walter Buller and other members of the Society to assist him in urging the Government to subscribe for, say, a hundred copies of Mr. Hudson's work for distribution in our schools. It would be most valuable to both teachers and scholars.

Mr. Hudson said that this would be a great help to him, as it was not easy to get the required amount subscribed. He thanked the President and members for their complimentary remarks regarding his proposed work.

2. "On a New and Sensitive Barometer," by T. Wakelin, M.A.

#### ABSTRACT.

The invention consisted of a long flexible indiarubber bag fixed half-way down a tube. The tube is fixed, air-tight, in a box having a capacity of a hundred times the tube, so that very slight variations of pressure would cause a considerable movement of the closed end of the bag up or down the tube, and enable registration of atmospheric disturbances to be made, which neither the mercurial nor the aneroid barometer was sensitive enough to show.

The President said that, theoretically, Mr. Wakelin's idea was a good one, but that indiarubber would not do for the moving part. He thought it would be better to have a very light thin glass tube inserted, floating in glycerine, contained in an annular reservoir in the external tube.

3. "Note on the Breeding-habits of the European Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) in New Zealand," by T. W. Kirk, F.R.M.S., F.L.S. (*Transactions*, p. 108.)

Mr. Travers said that Mr. Kirk's views regarding the food of the sparrow did not agree with those of naturalists in other countries. His experience led him to believe that their principal food was insects. The *Cicada* especially are caught in hundreds by them. It would be difficult to ascertain, as suggested, by dissection whether they contain insect-food or grain. If the increase were anything like what Mr. Kirk contends the air would be full of these birds. The increase really depends on the amount of food they get. That these birds are useful to the agriculturist is beyond question. The increase in crops is in proportion to the spread of the sparrow. The insects which used to swarm in the plains in the South have now almost disappeared owing to the sparrow, and the grain has increased. The caterpillars, once so numerous, are disappearing from the same cause. In Hungary they made war against the sparrows, but after a time they had to get them back again, so that they might protect the wheat from the insects. The sparrow was also a good scavenger. It was said that the sparrow destroyed the grape, but it turned out to be the *Zosterops*, or the minah. The hawk mentioned as being attacked by sparrows is the kind that never touches sparrows. He was an ardent admirer of the sparrow, and he did not think we should grudge the small amount of grain they consumed when they were in other ways so useful.

Sir Walter Buller said he was prepared to accept his full share of the responsibility for the introduction of the sparrow by the Wanganui Acclimatization Society in 1866. Whilst fully admitting and deploring the depredations committed by this bird on the settlers' crops at certain