

constant companion during days of toil by road and rail ; and I ultimately succeeded in bringing a living pair within the confines of the British Islands, and a single individual to London, where it lived for two days, when, from the want of proper food or the change of climate, it died.

Although so enthusiastically attached to the subject, I should not have formed a collection of the *Trochilidæ*, or attempted an account of their history, had not my late friend Mr. George Loddiges (whose many excellences are too universally known to need any comment from me) been prematurely removed from among us. Prior to his lamented death, whatever species I procured from my various correspondents were freely placed at his disposal ; and his collection was then unrivalled, and the pride of the owner as well as of his country, so far as a private collection could be considered of national importance. It was not until after Mr. Loddiges' decease that I determined upon forming the collection I myself possess, which now far surpasses every other, both in the number of species and examples. Ten years ago this collection was exhibited for a short time in the Gardens of the Zoological Society in the Regent's Park, and, I believe, afforded unmixed delight to the many thousands who visited those Gardens in the memorable year 1851. Many favourable notices of it appeared in the periodicals of the day ; and my friend Mr. Martin published a small popular work in express reference to it. During the period which has since elapsed I have been unceasing in my endeavours to obtain every species which has been discovered by the enterprising travellers of this country, of Germany, of France, and of America. It would be invidious were I to extol the exertions of one more than those of another, nor could I do so without committing injustice ; for the travellers of all these countries have shown equal intrepidity in their endeavours to bring to light the hidden treasures of the great primæval forests of the New World. Some of them, such as Azara, Spix, Bullock, Delattre, Floresi, Dyson, Hoffmann, and Mathews (the discoverer of the wonderful *Loddigesia mirabilis*), are no longer among us : of those living who have paid especial attention to the Humming-Birds I may mention the names of Prince Maximilian of Wied, Waterton, Gosse, Warszewicz, Linden, Bridges, Jameson, Wallace, Bates, Darwin, Reeves, Hauxwell, Skinner, Bourcier, Sallé, Salvin, Fraser, Gundlach, Bryant, Montes de Oca, &c. It is to these men, living and dead, that science is indebted for a knowledge of so many of these "gems of creation ;" and it is by their exertions that such collections as Mr. Loddiges' and my own have been formed. I regret exceedingly that I have not seen so much of this lovely group of birds in a state of nature as I could have wished : the traveller and the historian are seldom united ; and in this instance it would have been impossible. The constant personal attention and care necessary for the production of such a work as 'A Monograph of the *Trochilidæ*' could only be given in a metropolis ; for in no other place could such a publication be accomplished without