celebrated heronry on the property of Sir George Musgrave, Bart., at Eden Hall, in Cumberland, which comprises about one hundred nests, and the estate of W. Amhurst T. Amhurst, Esq., at Didlington Park, in Norfolk. Older and more interesting colonies of birds are to be seen, such as those of the Black-headed Gulls, in various counties, particularly at Scoulton and other meres in Norfolk.

With respect to the receptacles for their eggs when laid, birds offer many interesting peculiarities. Some will content themselves with the bare ledge of a rock, the pyriform shape of their eggs being the only safeguard against their falling over the precipice; others deposit their eggs on a mass of sea-weed or in a floating nest composed of rotten aquatic plants, as is the case with the Grebes. Where a more ambitious structure is erected, we find every degree of complication, from the loosely-built platform of the Wood-Pigeon to the elegant lichen-crested nest of the Long-tailed Tit. Each species shows in its nesting a most perfect adaptation to the exigencies of the situation. Where, like the nest of the Sedge-Warblers, it is swayed to and fro amidst the reeds by every passing wind, the deep purse-like shape of the interior is a safe provision against the eggs being blown out; under our eaves the homely Martin plasters its nest of mud; the Goldcrest hangs its hammock-like cradle beneath the tip of a pendent fir bough; and in holes of trees and walls the Tits delight to construct their felted nests.

I should fatigue my readers and exceed the latitude allowed me in this introduction, were I to dwell longer upon the situations affected by various species in their nidification, or the wondrous forms shown in the construction of their homes. Otherwise I might dilate upon the ingenuity displayed in the dome-like nests of the Magpie, in the approach to that shape seen in those of the common House-Sparrow when built in trees, or in the fish-bone floor of the Kingfisher's retreat; but all these will be found more fully dwelt upon in the descriptions attached to the representation of each species in the body of the work. I may, however, remark in passing that the structural skill displayed by many of our birds is far surpassed by that of certain foreign species; and we are struck with astonishment when we gaze upon such nests as those of the Tailorbird, the Sociable Grosbeak, the Weaverbird, the *Icteri* or Hang-nests.

In writing upon subjects connected with ornithology I find the associations of my boyhood ever flitting before me. Well can I recollect the dried body of the brightly coloured Kingfisher hanging from the cottager's ceiling, and supposed by its movements to point the direction of the wind*—a superstition now, like many others, happily abandoned. Well do I recollect also the particoloured strings of eggs with which I and my companions delighted to festoon the walls, and which were rigorously destroyed in our games before the termination of the year, in order to ward off the ill-luck otherwise supposed to ensue. I can still

* "But how now stands the wind?

Into what corner peers my halcyon's bill?"

MARLOWE'S Jew of Malta.