Ocean by those coming from the north may occupy a short night\*. It is interesting to note that some of our migrants effect the passage to our shores during the night, and others by day: as a rule, it is the small sylvan birds which come at the former time, as is evidenced by numbers being found at the base of the various lighted beacons of our southern and south-eastern coasts, against which, attracted by the light, they have flown and killed themselves; the Swallows, the Cuckoo, and the Turtle Dove, on the other hand, wing their way across in broad day-light.

Besides the regular migration of certain species, a remarkable shifting of locality occurs with others, not only in our own, but in many other parts of the world, the cause of which is totally unknown. Starlings are now very abundant in Cornwall, and Missel-Thrushes in Scotland—in which they were formerly not to Such interchanges of locality are doubtless occasionally due to alterations in the face of the country: but this was not the cause in the case of Cornwall; for no county can have undergone less alteration; as it was in the days of Julius Cæsar, so it is now, unless we except the operations of mining, which naturally only affect the surface of a district to a small extent. The sudden appearance of Pallas's Sandgrouse (Syrrhaptes paradoxus) in our islands and on various parts of the Continent, in 1859-60, must be in the recollection of every one. This irruption of a strange bird from the distant country of Siberia, perhaps from China, was very astonishing; and it well illustrates my meaning, which may be further exemplified by the mention of two similar occurrences in Australia. In the year 1839 the whole of the southern and eastern portion of that country was suddenly visited by millions of the little Grass-Parrakeet (Melopsittacus undulatus); and a year or two later swarms of a species of Water-hen (Tribonyx ventralis) spread themselves like a cloud over the Swan-River district, destroying fields of corn and garden-produce and committing ravages unheard of before; and both these species have kept their hold until the present day, but of course in much smaller numbers. Although not necessarily bearing upon the preceding

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<sup>\*</sup> As an evidence that birds are capable of taking very long flights with apparent ease, I may quote a letter to 'The Times' of June 27, 1872, which further shows that the electric telegraph has not wholly deprived us of the usefulness of the Carrier Pigeon. The communication alluded to runs as follows:—

<sup>&</sup>quot;SIR,—The promoters of the system of electric telegraphy insist on its immense superiority over the older plan of pigeon-despatches. How far these pretensions are founded on facts is shown by the results of the pigeon-race to Brussels, which started from the Crystal Palace on Thursday last, when 72 birds were flown at noon. Immediately on their departure I telegraphed to the secretary of the society whose members had forwarded the birds, announcing their departure. The first birds arrived in Brussels at 5.28 P.M., and the telegram at 5.30 P.M.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Another example, and I have done. During the Crimean War the intelligence was conveyed to Colombo, Ceylon, 70 miles north of Point de Galle, where the ships to India landed their despatches; and the salute fired on the news of the fall of Sebastopol resulted from information brought by them. The electric telegraph was established, and the pigeon-post abolished. I have recently been requested to restock Colombo with Belgian "voyageurs," as the information brought by the electric wire is neither so speedy nor so correct as that conveyed by the birds. The Prussians, wise in their generation, have taken lessons from the Parisians, and established pigeon-posts in Metz and their other fortified towns. In the event of a war in which we may be engaged, what would be the value of birds that would convey messages to Jersey, Guernsey, &c. when the telegraphic wires had been cut by the enemy!

W. B. TEGETMEIER."