

laws. Thus the arrival and departure of the Swallow, the Cuckoo, the Landrail, &c. are as strictly regulated as the recurrence of the seasons :

“Yea, the Stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times ; and the Turtle and the Crane and the Swallow observe the time of their coming.”

Besides being tenanted by about one hundred and fifty stationary species, Great Britain has migrants and occasional visitants from the four points of the compass. Thus in spring nearly fifty species visit us from the south ; whilst in the autumn our milder and more equable climate attracts a still larger number from the north, who instinctively know they will here find that food and shelter which the rigorous winters of more northern regions deny to them. In addition to this true and characteristic migration, our islands are occasionally resorted to by certain species which, from some unknown cause, make a movement from east to west ; whilst the pseudo-migration from west to east is exemplified in the rarely occurring American forms which from time to time have been recorded, and which, blown off from their native shore, find in the masses of seaweed, uprooted trees, and portions of wreck constantly approaching our coasts through the agency of the Gulf-stream, that means of rest and recruitment which finally enables a few of them to reach a welcome though far distant haven. A remarkable degree of capriciousness, which to me has always appeared mysterious, occurs in the choice of localities affected by certain of our migrants : thus the Pied Flycatcher will not rest until it has reached the middle and northern counties of England, while the Nightingale almost restricts its visit to the southern, eastern, and central ones, never favouring Cornwall with its presence, and but rarely going into Devonshire or Wales, or further north than Yorkshire or Durham. Again, some species, exemplified in many of the Plovers and Sandpipers, make our islands but a halting-place, pausing for rest only on their way to unknown and probably far distant regions.

The mysterious law or laws which govern migration must always be regarded by the naturalist with the utmost interest. Within our own islands hardly a month passes by without the movement of some species occurring to remind us of the existence of such a principle. In the early spring, before the Wheatear, that earliest of our visitors from the sunny south, has arrived, the Fieldfare and Redwing which during the winter have peopled our hedgerows and fields, the Geese, Ducks, and numerous wading-birds which have been frequenting our broads and rivers, have, in obedience to nature's prompting, commenced a movement northward, *en route* for localities better suited, by their quietude and by the nature of the food found there, for the propagation and rearing of their progeny. Then, as the rays of the life-inspiring sun strike upon our earth with daily increasing strength, we begin to welcome in quick succession those little feathered arrivals which make the spring and early summer seasons of so much enjoyment and anticipation to all true lovers of nature. March, besides the Wheatear, brings us the Chiffchaff and the Sand-Martin ; April's earliest days herald in the Swallow, Wryneck, and Martin ; by the middle of that month the Nightingale has made its