Granted that the antiquary in poring over some dusty relic of a by-gone age experiences a thrill of pleasure denied to others, or that the wealthy man filling his rooms with the finest efforts of the artist's pencil, and his cabinets with articles of rare and costly workmanship, thereby experiences a very high degree of gratification, or even that the man of pleasure, fulfilling the daily routine demanded by fashion, finds in it some irresistible attraction—yet what are these enjoyments compared with those daily and hourly offered to the student of nature! Does he not see in the growth of a blade of grass, or in the mechanism which enables the tiny gnat to effect the countless vibrations of its gauzy wings, or in the majestic ease of the soaring eagle, evidences of a power and skill immeasurably superior to those ever originated by man? Can he walk in the fields without seeing and hearing around him sights and sounds which, while tending to make him more and more thoughtful, deeply impress him with the sense of the wisdom, the power, and the beneficence of his Creator? That man who has passed his allotted time in ignorance of the teeming worlds of life around him, has had denied to him pleasures and delights the experience of which must have gone far to elevate the noblest of God's created beings. "The study of ornithology has always been a favourite one with me," says the late Mr. Wheelwright, "and is one of the few innocent pleasures of youth which follow a man into maturer years, and upon which he can look back in the decline of life with feelings of pure and unalloyed delight. Man's constant companions in every outdoor occupation, cheering him with their presence and their songs, and often affording him a principal means of subsistence, it is little wonder that the study of the habits and instincts of birds should be a favourite one with most persons; and to him whose time is quietly and happily spent in the forests and fields it adds one of the truest zests to rural life."

Notwithstanding the limitation of area implied in a work entitled 'The Birds of Great Britain,' the most elementary student of natural history must acknowledge that in numbers and in interest, if not in beauty of marking, our avifauna will bear a favourable comparison with that of other countries of similar extent. The one most closely approximating to it would appear to be that of Japan—a fact sufficiently surprising when we remember the vast continent embracing many degrees of longitude stretching between the two. But the resemblance may possibly be explained by the similiarity existing in their physical conditions and in the general character of their natural productions. Both countries are blessed with a temperate climate especially suited to similar forms of bird-life, some species identically the same occurring in each; but, in addition, Great Britain offers in its numerous islets, its rocky promontories and extensive marshes, its natural forests and heathy expanses, certain advantages of locality not perhaps enjoyed by Japan to the same extent, and which are singularly well adapted to forms of the most opposite kinds.

One feature of especial interest must always strike the naturalist in studying the birds of the temperate zone, viz. the alternation of its feathered immigrants, which lends such a charm to the scenery, a charm which is greatly enhanced when we reflect that these migratory movements are governed by certain infallible