on their geographical range and habits, gathered from other authors, and theories more or less well-founded, appearing in a popular and scientific manner, but deficient perhaps in the main point, which, in an undertaking like this, is alone worth anything—personal experience. Moreover, our readers, and the public at large, are tired of it. The correspondents of THE FIELD be invited to join in the discussion, and each one to contribute his observations to the stock of facts and habits he really knows something. We shall then have facts, not theories, to work upon; and, unscientifically as the matter may be put together, we shall doubtless have truth and experience for the bases.

Never, as you properly remarked a few months since, has such an opportunity been afforded to naturalists for the investigation of the wide field of nature as by the establishment of your paper. No man is denied a voice in the discussion of it. Its pages are open to all, and the glaring errors which are promulgated by books and copied from one to another till they become, from its grave aspect of fact, would be impossible to remain long uncontradicted in your pages. The very peculiar manner in which a correspondent is treated (no matter how trifling his question or opinion appears to be in the eyes of those who are the more perfect masters of his subject) induces many a man who before would have thought twice into print to contribute his small quota and add them to the general sheaf; and it is of such small gleanings that the larger sheaves are often composed. Although many a question may appear trivial, and an observation or remark may be considered by some to the young naturalist who communicates it may be as "old as the hills" to some other of your correspondents, nothing should be not slighted on that account; and I shall not easily forget the fine feeling and good nature manifested in your pages some two or three few months since. True it is, as the old song says, "Grizzly locks the brain doth clear;" and although many of us have gained experience in our years, yet we never forget, and we do not always remember ourselves, and probably not one of us but would willingly part with much of what clear-headed experience he could lay claim to, "for the good of boy," and for one short season exchange the cold calculating doubts and fears of manhood for the fresh enjoyments and careless freedom of his less experienced but happier early days.

This subject of acclimatisation is an important one, and immense national benefit may be the result of the discussion of its subject; and as it is in close association of all this that I am induced to trouble you with this long preface, I hope, Mr. Editor, that your readers will, and my suppositions unfounded, and would willingly have seen the subject handled by one of your abler correspondents. But this letter may probably lead to further discussion, and I shall consider that the task will finish what I have begun. All I have to beg is this, that my aim is not dogmatism, but information; and if I should be in error, I dislike what I have stated, it will be done with a friendly feeling, and in the same spirit as this letter is written. AN OLD BUSHMAN.

THE ACCLIMATISATION SOCIETY.

THE CHINESE GROUSE presented to this society by J. R. Dyce, Esq., Bombay, is a very pretty specimen of the genus *Ortyx*, or of *Syrrhaptes paradoxus*; they live among the sandy deserts of northern China; the colour of the feathers is such that they could very difficult to distinguish when crouching among the sands; the legs are covered down to the extremity of the toes with short, stiff feathers; the tail is very short and flat, the wing very long, and, in a strong slide, covered with projecting horny *papillæ* a wonderful provision for preventing them from sinking into the sand (as they would do prevent it (when heated by the sun) injuring the feet. There is no hind toe; the nails are strong, broad, and flattened. The specimens seen were hardly ripe, but, from its native habits, it is likely to have very small feathers; these have been worn off in the journey. They are exceedingly wild, and require great care to prevent their injuring themselves. There is an admirable description and figure of this bird in *The Ibis*, No. 27, April 1st, 1859, by Dr. Jerdon. Mr. Dyce, Esq., from which it appears that a specimen was shot in Wales in 1859, and was the first on the Continent about the same time. For an account of these facts I would refer to *The Ibis*, No. 27, April 1st, 1859. Specimens of the Grouse in Wales was found to have been feeding on seeds; no trace of insect food was discovered.

I have received the following letter from J. R. Dyce, Esq., relative to these birds:—

"Sir,—I am glad to hear the birds arrived safe, though I was not afraid, as they have stood a great deal of roughing already on board ship. One thing I forgot to mention, which may be of some use to you, is the kind of food which they eat a quantity. I never once across those birds till the frosts had set in at Lahore, and then they were feeding on the ripe millet seed, which, but they never alighted, so I did not then know what they were. However, next season I intend to make a trial of them, and shall have a few pairs and birds, and I shall a couple of them, and found them very good eating. They were very wild, and could not consider I had succeeded in shot them enough to fire. Afterwards, on my way overland to Tien Tsin, I saw two or three immense flocks on the sandy plains of Tartary, but they were too wild to enough to escape the severe winters of the north of China. The ground about Tien Tsin, and for some distance, consists of hard sand, with a very little vegetation resembling heather, but with very little for any animal to live on, and yet on the sand they were very wild and very difficult to get at. They are gaudy, but running short of that I gave them bespeed and other small seeds which undoubtedly they eat. After some reaching, I find that the millet seed rice, when they are very wild, and above reaching. England a mixture of millet and other small seeds, and I think they will do well. I have no doubt they will do well in Scotland, and I hope they will do well in Wales, and I think they would be better of having a wing clipped, as they do not fly the highest start, and, as you may see, two of the birds were injured by striking the top of the cages. They used frequently to eat out of my hand, everyway, and seemed to be very tame and confiding. I hope, Sir, you have a fear of their doing well in this country if they can only be got to breed. I shall be very happy to do anything in my power for you in this or any other service, if I can, during the course of your voyage: they of course require water by the way.—J. R. DYCE (May 19).

H.R.H. The Prince Consort has been graciously pleased to accept, on behalf of the Society, the birds which Mr. Dyce presented, and gave instructions that they shall be placed in the Royal aviary at Windsor. I have accordingly deposited them there to-day. F. T. BUCKLAND, 2nd Life Guards, Secretary to the Society.

I have received on behalf of this society a small box of the Chinese Grouse, *Dicrurus macrocercus*, the gift of Lieutenant Colonel Gallaher, Calcutta, at Paris. This vegetable has recently been introduced into France, and also into Algeria, and Mr. Mogulo-Tandon, the representative of this society a paper by M. Mogulo-Tandon, detailing the means used for acclimatising it. We read—

"Tar oil is the oil of the tuberculiferous plants which belong to the family of *Salanacæ*, only one has hitherto been cultivated in Europe, the potato, or *Solanum tuberosum*. Other tuberculiferous plants have been found to have a table analogous tt the in value and utility, and the only one that seems to deserve the name of *Solanum Dioscorea* is the Dioscorea, which is now in flowering, when raw, a taste not disagreeable, resembling that of a nut. When cooked it is much more agreeable, marrowy and good, and it tastes as the *Chumbrelia Rhabia*, but more so than the potato. There is nothing bitter or aspacia, or acrid, or poisonous in it. It is a very good food for man, the ass, and the domestic animals eat of it fresh or dried, cooked or uncooked. It answers the purpose of a substitute for the potato, and is not so exacting as the Wheresa, six years ago it was as precious as gold, it is now sold as the rate of 25 francs the kilogramme. It is a very good food for man, and it is a good food for cattle, and it is a very good food for man, and it is a good food for cattle, and it is a very good food for man, and it is a very good food for man, and it is a very good food for man