

FLYING FOXES.

(PTEROPUS EDWARDSI, P. MEDIUS, P. LEUCOCEPHALUS.)

Among the many anomalies presented by nature, that of a flying mammal has seemed strikingly incongruous, and has always left an impression on the popular mind generally the reverse of the truth. The fox bats are an example in point. Superstition has gathered about these strange creatures the wildest fears, and their uncouth and weird looks has strengthened a foolish credence in the stories of vampire and devil. They it was who settled at night upon the wearied sleeper and sucked his life blood, or with a malicious bite involved the souls of the virtuous in the terrors of their own lost estate.

The calm examinations of the naturalist long ago put to flight these romantic tales, but in their haunts, among the woods of Southern Asia, in Africa, Australia, Java, Sumatra, their black swarms and flying movements yet awaken dread and disgust. The flying foxes are ranged under the order of the Cheiroptera, or *hand-winged* mammals, and are grouped together in the sub-section of the fruit-eating bats, as distinguished from those feeding mostly upon insects.

Their depredations upon orchards and vineyards are notorious. Sailing through the air at sundown, and

thusiasm of his observations made upon one. The "fox" slept nearly all day, though regularly he devoted some time to the cleansing and preparation of his "flying machine," and occasionally bestirred himself for the enjoyment of a cherry or a sip of milk. At the approach of night he became restless and excited, stretched his wings, and vainly attempted to escape. He displayed temper, and would bite sharply any one whose familiarities he resented. The combats of these animals with one another are very relentless, and generally terminate with the death of one or both contestants.

The head in these bats is long and pointed, the ears moderately large, the nose without the appendages seen in the insectivorous bats, and the jaws armed with incisors, canines, and molar teeth.

They form in their habitat interesting spectacles, and their whirring progress through the air at night or the pendent throngs they present by day alike astonish the visitor to Ceylon and India. The bats are naturally regarded as one of the most distinctly marked groups of animals, and among them the flying foxes (*Pteropidae*) are easily identified. They have long been known in literature, and the ancient Herodotus speaks of them in Arabia, and says the inhabitants protected

tion, his family suffers from his deterioration, and general disaster ensues. The physician, with many other calls to make, hurries through the visit, neglecting some important symptom, and his patient dies; the lawyer hurries through his plea, and loses his case; the preacher hurries through the preparation of his sermon, and fails to make an impression; the artist hurries on his picture to completion, and his best conception is not there; the teacher hurries through a prescribed course of instruction, and the class is left destitute of the more important elements of knowledge. It is not too much to say that a large proportion of the unhappiness, the ignorance, the loss of property, and even the loss of life, that is endured in the world is to be directly traced to the hurry and drive which characterize so much of the labor performed.

Many persons not only drift into these hurried ways, but pride themselves upon them. They boast of their speed, and contrast it with the slower measures of their more deliberate neighbors. They flatter themselves upon their dispatch, and hold themselves of more value on that account. Slowness in work, lingering or loitering over what is to be done, is not to be recommended. On the contrary, energy and



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guided by an acute sense of smell, they will enter the plantations containing some plant upon which the fruit has reached maturity, and covering it in crowds, will revel in the delicious repast, leaving the tree or vine at dawn stripped of all its precious wealth. They fly rapidly, but never at any great height, and sometimes will traverse considerable spaces, migrating from island to island over intervening arms of the ocean. On the ground they are agile and curiously active. They climb trees with ease, and during the day hang by their hind limbs, their wing membrane wrapped around them, from the loftier boughs. So densely are they sometimes congregated that the tree seems a solid mass of black, motionless bags.

The species shown in our woodcut is distributed over East India, and finds also a favorable habitat in Madagascar. It lives in immense colonies, and its swarms have been compared to those of gnats, while the branches they infest sometimes break down with their great weight. They feed on dates, bananas, the guava fruit, and also eat insects, the young and eggs of birds, and apparently at times snakes. Their flesh is edible, and esteemed immensely by natives, who catch them in nets in the trees and kill them on the ground.

In flight, they can be brought down by a blow delivered on the expanded arms, covered with the flying membrane (patagium), as these are very weak. This species is seen more frequently in captivity than any other, and Brehm, from whose admirable *Thierleben* these notes are taken, speaks with characteristic en-

themselves against them in dresses of leather. Later classic authors allude to them, and many naturalists have in the East carefully observed their habits.

Hurry and Dispatch.

Among the many causes of poor and inefficient work is the habit of hurry, which takes possession of some busy people. Having or imagining they have more to do in a given time than can be done properly, they grow confused, agitated, and nervous; and, under this pressure, they proceed with the work in hand without requisite deliberation and care, perhaps omitting parts of it—sometimes important parts—and producing at last an imperfect and inferior performance, which can neither be permanent nor satisfactory.

There is hardly any employment, from the simplest manual work to the most complex and difficult mental labor, that does not suffer from this cause. The dwelling house in process of building is to be finished at a certain time. With proper forethought and system it would have been done, but the time approaches and the work is still incomplete. The future occupants are impatient, the contractor is anxious, the workmen are driven, the work is hurried through, and annoyance, discomfort, and sometimes danger ensue, and repairs are soon found necessary. The business man undertakes more than he can manage, the days are not long enough for his needs, he is agitated by the constant pressure, driven by conflicting claims, his business suffers for the want of a clear and cool head, his health suffers from continual and unrelaxed exer-

vigor will prompt the healthy and industrious man to labor steadily and rapidly, while neglecting nothing that is needed to perfect his work. But this is very different from the agitated and excited hurry which has been mentioned, and which is to be deprecated. —*Philadelphia Ledger*.

Enlargement of Sibley College, Cornell University.

During the past two years the growth of Sibley College, Ithaca, N. Y., has been unexpectedly large. The number of students in attendance has taxed the resources of the buildings to the utmost. The number registered has approached closely the maximum for which accommodations were provided. A new building has accordingly been commenced, and is now in progress. It is to be presented, when completed, to the university by its great benefactor, the Hon. Hiram Sibley. This will provide for fifty per cent more students, so that one hundred men will now be admitted to the freshmen class, a total of three hundred being provided for. The entrance examinations will maintain their high standard, and, to a certain extent, will operate to keep the number admitted to the courses for degrees within limits. The Sibley College is devoted to engineering, and its success is largely due to the energy and ability of its director, Dr. Robert H. Thurston. His standing in the profession has guaranteed a good engineering course, and his executive abilities and originality have found congenial scope in Cornell University.