nest, and the head of the bird upon it. After a round of a mile or two we reached the nearest point to it. I saw the white head of the bird, which almost immediately stood up, and then took to flight. It made a turn and uttered a musical kind of cry. The forester was sure it had eggs. I was thinly clad, and had been alternately hot and cold during the day, in the valley or on the mountain; but I was determined to swim to the nest, in spite of the remonstrances of the forester and of my men, none of whom could do so. Luckily, another of them arrived in time for me to use the string as I intended; I immediately stripped, put on the belt, which turned out a very inefficient assistance, and tied the string to the little nozzle of it in front, Lord Derby's little basket being fastened by a string behind me. After the first dip, it was so cold that I all but came out again. But I determined not to recede; so on I went, making good way till I came to the first ridge of rocks, some of which were under water. By this time I was very cold, and becoming exhausted. Just as I reached the first rock under water, the string was checked, being, as I supposed, come to an end. Knowing how a second plunge after being on land would chill me, I almost turned to swim back; for I feared they would let go the string rather than pull me back, when it would have been all up with me. However, to my great satisfaction, I saw them tying the thin rope to the end of the string. Then striking off again, after floundering amongst the sunk rocks, to the leeward of which for the sake of the string I resolved to keep as much as possible, I reached the peak. It was nearly perpendicular both above and below water, and no landing-place appeared. However, a bit of rock twice as big as a walnut projected; and higher up I stuck my claws into some roots of Polypodium, as in getting to an eagle's nest on a former occasion. My arms had hardly strength to hoist me up, but at last I reached the top and caught the cutting wind. At once I saw an egg, and in half a second two more, a little removed from the first—all beautiful. To my surprise the basket held all three. I had a little difficulty in tying the lid on, and even then one rolled out; the handle too became loose. However, for my life I durst not lose time. I tried to descend with my back to the rock, but it was no go, and I fell into the water. The peak might be twelve or fourteen feet high. One glance at the nest was all I could spare. It reminded me of a large wood-ant's, large and flat at the top, the sticks not nearly so big as those of an eagle's, but the upper part very compact, where it struck me as being composed entirely of moss—the interstices of the sticks seeming to be filled up with soil or turf, so as to make an almost solid mass. But I could not afford a second look. In tumbling off I did not strike against any sunk rock, so that my fall was easy. Somehow (I cannot exactly say how) the handle was quite off the basket, and my only way of saving it was by carrying it in my closed fist, which very much increased the difficulty of swimming. As soon as the men saw me fall into the water, they hauled hard upon the string; and I, coming across a sunk rock, disappeared beneath the surface. This frightened them, and they hauled the harder. As soon as I came to the top, I had just breath enough to shout 'Gently'! But on they dragged; and the wind blowing the water into white streaks of foam the waves washed over me, and the quantity of water I swallowed was something considerable. The pulling almost prevented my swimming, and as the string was fastened low it helped me very little through the water; I had long been afraid of its breaking, till at last I got sufficient breath to throw my 'Gently!' to their ears. Fortunately they took the hint and I gradually reached the shore quite exhausted, when they found me all scratched and bloody from the rocks. They had not guessed my condition until I was very near them, and they did not understand the danger of hauling too hard. All I could say for some time was, 'worse than an eagle's nest.' When they had dressed me and taken the eggs out of my hand, I started running to recover my circulation, but my legs were insensible, and I soon dropped in the long heather. Fortunately I saw the forester passing near me and gave him a hail. The others came up and held me on each side. They got me across several streams, and at length into a good road a few hundred yards from the house where we were expected. Here, with the assistance of a good fire and three or four tumblers of toddy, I was soon all right."

Is it not too probable that such escapades as this, for it is by no means the only one recorded of nearly equal peril and exposure, may have hastened the close of the career of this adventurous naturalist?

The following statistics of eagle population will, we think, be novel and surprising to most of our readers. Speaking of the finest of the family, the golden, or mountain eagle:—

"In Norway it is common, and, with the sea eagle, is so numerous, that from a statistical account of the sums paid each year by the government for the destruction of beasts and birds of prey, it appears that, in the five years ending December, 1850, there were paid for altogether no less than 10,715 eagles! The Sutherlandshire expedition of naturalists mention the number of eagles that had been paid for between March, 1831, and March, 1834, to have been 171, besides 53 nestlings or eggs. * * In the south-west of that country a clever gamekeeper trapped 15 eagles in three months of 1847, and about as many in the winter of 1850-1, almost all of them being Mountain eagles."

Of the extent and value of the collection itself some idea may be formed from the fact that it contains of the eggs of the golden eagle 38 specimens, of the gyr-falcon 81, and in those of other species a corresponding richness, and this independent of Mr. Newton's own collection.

The illustrations are of two kinds. First, there are nine plates, consisting of beautifully executed coloured figures of the eggs, and, secondly, the same number of landscapes, illustrating, for the most part, the situations in which the nests were found. In praise of the former too much cannot be said; they are, without exception, the best figures of birds' eggs we have ever seen, and they strikingly illustrate the necessity, in many cases, of examining a large number of the eggs of a species, without which it would be impossible to identify the different specimens, even taken from the same nest, as belonging to one and the same species. Thus there are twelve figures of the eggs of the golden eagle, twelve of the rough-legged buzzard, and six of the gyr-falcon, and not one of them superfluous, so diverse are they, not only in colour and marking, but even in form. The other set of illustrations, with the exception of two by Wolf and one by Mr. Wolley himself, are from the pencil of the editor, and are very interesting as well as artistic, but the lithography is not worthy of the drawing.

From the style in which the work is "got up," and the expensive character of the illustrations, it can scarcely fall within the reach of a large number of practical naturalists; but we are confident that no ornithologist whose means will justify its purchase, and no public library of natural history, will long be without it.

SOCIETIES.

GEOGRAPHICAL.—*Nov.* 14.—Sir Roderick Impey Murchison, President, in the chair.—The President opened the business with a brief address.—Capt. R. F. Burton read a paper 'On Lake Tanganyika, Ptolemy's Western Lake-reservoir of the Nile.' He commenced by acknowledging his recognition of the many noble qualities of Capt. Speke; his courage, energy, and perseverance. But he could not accept his "settlement" of the Nile. There were five objections to deriving the true Nile from the supposed Victoria Nyanza: 1, the difference of the levels in the upper and lower part of the lake; 2, the Mwerango River rising from the hills in the middle of the lake; 3, the road through the lake; 4, the inundation of the southern part of the lake for 13 miles, when the low northern shore is never flooded; 5, the swelling of the lake during the dry periods of the Nile, and *vice versâ*. It might, however, be observed that, whilst refusing to accept the present settlement of the great problem, he in nowise proposed to settle the question: this must be left to time.

GEOLOGICAL.—*Nov.* 9.—W. J. Hamilton, Esq., President, in the chair.—F. Braby, Esq. was elected a Fellow.—The following communications were read:—'Notes on the Geology of Jamaica; with descriptions of new Species of Cretaceous, Eocene, and Miocene Corals,' by Mr. P. M. Duncan and Mr. G. P. Wall.—'On the Correlation of the Irish Cretaceous Strata,' by Mr. R. Tate.—'On the Recent Earthquake at St. Helena,' by Sir C. Elliot.

STATISTICAL.—*Nov.* 15.—Col. W. H. Sykes, President, in the chair.—The following gentlemen were elected Fellows:—W. S. Jevons, M.A., and G. P. Ivey.—The paper read was, 'On the Commercial Progress of the Colonies,' by Mr. E. T. Blakely.

ZOOLOGICAL.—*Nov.* 8.—Prof. T. H. Huxley in the chair.—The Secretary announced to the meeting the Head Keeper's safe return from Calcutta in July last, with a valuable collection of animals, brought together for the Society by the Baboo Rajendra Mullick, Mr. A. Grote, Dr. J. Squire, and Mr. W. Dunn, amongst which were a pair of Rhinoceroses and several species of Birds new to the collection.—The Secretary exhibited a collection of Birds' Eggs made in India and presented to the Society by Lieut. R. C. Beavan.—Mr. Gould exhibited a specimen of the *Emberiza pusilla* of Pallas.—The Rev. H. B. Tristram exhibited a pair of Sanderlings from Grimsey Island, Iceland.—Prof. Huxley read a memoir 'On the Structure of the Skull of Man, the Gorilla, the Chimpanzee, and the Orang-Utan, during the period of the First Dentition.'—The Rev. H. B. Tristram read a Report 'On the Birds collected during his recent Expedition in Palestine. Mr. Tristram enumerated 322 species as having been ascertained to occur in that country, of which twenty-seven, so far as our present knowledge extended, were peculiar to Palestine, and the districts immediately adjacent. Nine of these were now described for the first time, and several others had not before been brought to England.—Mr. W. H. Flower read some 'Notes on the Skeletons of the *Balænidæ*, as observed by him during a recent visit to the principal Museums of Holland and Belgium.'—Mr. A. Newton read a paper entitled 'Notes on the Zoology of Spitzbergen,' made during a recent visit to that country.—A Report was read by Dr. Günther 'On the Reptiles and Fishes collected during Mr. Tristram's recent Expedition to Palestine.' Dr. Günther described three new Batrachians from Western Africa.—Four papers were read by Dr. Gray. The first of these was entitled 'Notes on a Revision of the Specimens of Viverrine Animals in the collection of the British Museum, with descriptions of some new Genera and Species,' by which it appeared that about 102 species of this family were known to science, of which upwards of eighty were represented in the British Museum. Dr. Gray's second paper was a notice of a new variety of Galago from Quillimane, proposed to be called *Otagale crassicaudata*, var. *Kirkii*. The third was a note on the Clawed Toads (*Dactylethra*) of Africa; and the fourth a general revision of the genera and species of the Lizards of the family *Chameleonidæ*.—Mr. Sclater pointed out the characters of a new Duck from Madagascar, proposed to be called after its discoverer, Dr. Meller, *Anas Melleri*.—A paper was read, by Mr. E. Blyth, entitled 'Notes on sundry Mammalia.'—Mr. O. Salvin characterized twenty-two new species of Birds lately received from Costa Rica, amongst which was a new form of the family Cotingidæ, proposed to be called *Carpodectes nitidus*.—A communication was read, from Dr. J. C. Cox, of Sydney, New South Wales, describing