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IN MEMORIAM: WILLIAM BREWSTER.

Born July 5, 1851 — Died July 11, 1919.

BY HENRY WETHERBEE HENSHAW.

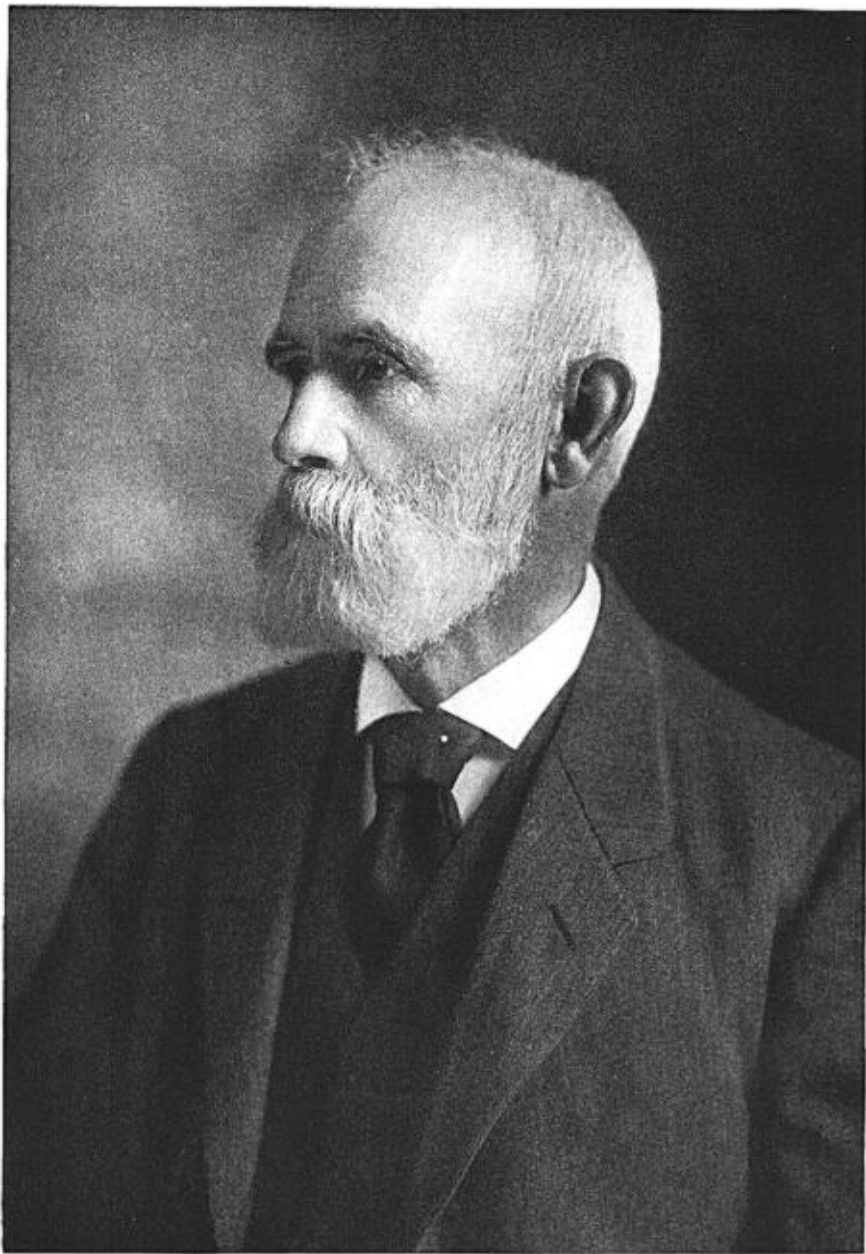
*Plates I and II.*

It has become the time honored custom of the Union, when one of its fellows has passed on to that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns, to briefly commemorate his life and services to the Union and to Science. It is peculiarly fitting that this should be done in the case of William Brewster, to whom more than to any other man is due the origin of the American Ornithologist's Union, and whose services to it began with its birth and terminated only with his death.

William Brewster was born in Wakefield, Massachusetts, July 5, 1851. He died in Cambridge July 11, 1919. His father, John Brewster, was born and brought up in Wolfboro, New Hampshire, and subsequently became well known as a successful Boston banker. His mother was Mrs. Rebecca Parker (Noyes), who was born in East Bradford (now Groveland) Massachusetts.

It was William's belief that the origin of the Brewster family was traceable to Elder Brewster of the Mayflower, but he was not much interested in such genealogical matters, and apparently never took the trouble to verify his belief.

On February 9, 1878, William was married to Caroline F. Kettell, of Boston, who survives him.



*William Brewster*  
*December, 1916.*

William was the youngest of four children. His sister and two brothers died in early childhood. They were old enough, however, to attract the notice of the poet, Longfellow, a near-by Cambridge neighbor, and who, no doubt, frequently saw them at play as he passed and repassed the old colonial mansion, shaded by venerable English lindens. It was the early death of the children that inspired the poem entitled 'The Open Window,' which begins:

"The old house under the lindens  
Stands silent in the shade."

In 1845 John Brewster bought the Riedesel mansion on the corner of Brattle and Sparks Streets, Cambridge. It was so called because the Baron Riedesel, with his wife, was quartered there after the surrender of Burgoyne. Brewster's father took pleasure in showing to his guests a window pane, not now in place, on which is scratched with a diamond the family name, Riedesel, presumably the work of the Baroness during her enforced residence. The history of the old house, supposed to date back to about 1750, would make interesting reading, but we may pause here only to note that Sewall, a Royalist, at one time occupied it, and was mobbed there during the stirring events of 1774, when loyalty to King George was treason to the States.

Brewster spent his boyhood in the historic mansion, the lower story of which was later replaced by his father with one containing the modern improvements. Later still, about 1887, an entirely new house was built on the site of the old one by William himself.

He was educated in the public schools of Cambridge. From the Washington Grammar School he went to the Cambridge High School, taking there the usual preparatory course for Harvard, which, however, he was destined not to enter. Never robust, he suffered much during youth and early manhood from impaired sight, which, sometimes for considerable periods, precluded all reading and study. In consequence, during his last and most important year in school, he was able to read very little, and his devoted mother read aloud to him many of his lessons, which he committed to memory as best he could. Small wonder was it that, under these circumstances, he finally decided to relinquish all idea of a college education. Though he did not underrate the advantages of a scholastic train-

ing it may be doubted if the lack of it hampered his career to any appreciable extent. Little of the knowledge he himself prized and sought was to be gained in college or gleaned from books.

As a boy Brewster appears to have been much like the average lad of his time but of gentler mold than most. Though in no respect effeminate he never cared for rude or boisterous sports, and although occasionally he was a contestant on the football field his was usually the part of the onlooker rather than of the participant. In fact, even in later years, his interest in and knowledge of games of any sort, as cards, billiards and the like was of the slightest, though he had no objection to them on moral grounds.

His-life long friend, Ruthven Deane, informs me that in his boyhood William was very fond of horseback riding, and that they frequently rode together before breakfast. He must have relinquished this form of exercise early, since I never saw him on horseback or heard of his riding after I knew him. Ruthven also recalls the fact that in the early seventies Brewster joined the Cambridge Rifle Club, became fond of target shooting, and for a time was a regular attendant at the contests among the members and with the Harvard Rifle Club.

He never greatly cared for the theater, although, on the rare occasions when he went, he showed that he could enjoy a well-acted play, or good concert, as well as most. He attended dancing school as a youth, but apparently cared little for this social accomplishment, and after a time entirely gave up dancing.

It is always of interest to trace the influences that have induced a man to follow a given career or to take up a certain line of study. Brewster seems to have given no signs of any special bent towards the study of Nature until he was about ten years old, when he made the acquaintance of Daniel C. French who was about the same age. During the next four years he and Dan came to be close comrades, and in that period was laid the foundation of a life time intimacy and friendship.

Mr. French has kindly communicated to me some interesting facts in regard to this period of Brewster's life when they were inseparable chums. William's father, it appears, in his younger days had been something of a sportsman. When William was about ten his father gave him a single barreled gun, and taught him

how to use it without undue peril to himself and other people. It happened that Daniel's father, also somewhat of a sportsman, had learned to stuff and mount birds, and in his house were two cases of specimens of his taxidermic skill. These at once attracted Brewster's attention, and here we have the very beginning of his interest in birds and the genesis of his ornithological career. How natural it was that a little later he and his chums should be keen to utilize the opportunity presented to learn how to stuff birds, particularly since they had the means of obtaining specimens.

In his 'Birds of the Cambridge Region' Brewster gives us the exact date of his first lesson, and says: "On January 1, 1862, my friend Mr. Daniel C. French called at our house to give me my first lesson in taxidermy, an art known in those days to but very few persons save the professional bird stuffers." Mr. French no doubt proved a willing teacher and presently we find a number of lads, Will Brewster, Dan French, Ruth Deane, and Dick Dana, all neighbors and of about the same age, on the alert to collect eggs and stuff such birds as their skill enabled them to bring to bag.

The other boys soon gave up active ornithological pursuits, one to attain fame in the exacting career of a sculptor, another to successfully pursue the no less exacting career of a lawyer, the third to devote himself to business pursuits. Other tastes and duties led them to different fields, but Brewster unknowingly had found his life's work, which he was to follow to the end. He must have set to work to study and collect birds with great ardor, for when I first met him in 1865 he had several cases of birds mounted on stands, the work of his own hands, with many nests and eggs, while his knowledge of local Massachusetts birds was accurate and extensive.

It was not until several years later that he learned how to make skins. These were so quickly fashioned and so easily stored that Brewster soon abandoned the mounting of birds when his collection must have numbered several hundred.

Brewster's esthetic sense would not permit him to be content with the unsightly, shapeless bird skins which too often found their way into the museum cabinets of that day. He was a careful collector, and the newly shot bird was lifted from the ground tenderly and its ruffled plumage cleaned and gently smoothed as of some precious thing, which indeed it was in his eyes. He soon became

a cunning craftsman in the art of making skins, and he never begrudged the time and labor necessary to shape the specimen into a thing of beauty. In his eyes it thus served two purposes, as a scientific specimen to be labelled and laid away for study, and as an object of beauty to satisfy the esthetic sense.

There were few books on American birds in those days, and the student of the present time with his command of almost limitless literature can hardly realize how difficult to travel were the ornithological paths of that period. Fortunately in Mr. French's library was a copy of Nuttall, and Brewster, as soon as his tastes were declared, received from his father a copy of the octavo edition of Audubon. There was little within the covers of these two treatises that he had not soon made his own, so far, at least, as the accounts related to New England birds.

Brewster and I became acquainted in 1865, in the Cambridge High School, where we took the same preparatory course for college. Our tastes proved to be very similar, and the acquaintance soon ripened into a firm and enduring friendship, which was interrupted only by his death.

The several years that followed 1865 were very happy years for both William and myself. Our studies were not very exacting, and all our spare time was given up to scouring field and forest for birds and eggs. The health of neither of us was on a firm basis, and this fact, which we perhaps made the most of, reconciled our parents to our outdoor life, especially after a college career was closed to us.

It was our custom to start for the woods soon after daybreak, often afoot, sometimes in a buggy, for the Fresh Pond swamps (a favorite haunt), or for Belmont, Waverley, Lexington, or Concord. Occasionally we were joined on these trips by Ruthven Deane or Henry Purdie, when they could get away from business. As the result of this activity Brewster's collection grew apace until it contained all but a few of the local species. It ultimately became one of the largest private collections ever made in this country, and in some respects it is by far the most valuable. It is a pleasure to state that in accordance with long cherished plans Brewster left it in its entirety to the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy of Harvard University.

As in his life time it was always within the reach of the earnest bird student for purposes of study, so he desired it to be after his death.

Brewster's father was, as stated, a keen business man and a very successful banker, and it was natural that he should desire to pass on to his only child a highly lucrative and successful business, the fruits largely of his own energy and sagacity. William was a dutiful son and loved his father who, though no naturalist, sympathized with his son's tastes and was always ready to grant his every reasonable desire. In response to his father's earnest wish that he should at least give business a trial he entered his father's office in 1869, when he was about 19, with the understanding that if, after a year's trial, he found himself unfitted for a business life, he was to have his liberty and follow the bent of his own mind. Otherwise, after he was duly qualified, he was to enter the firm as a partner and ultimately to succeed his father on his retirement. With an aim of mastering the business from top to bottom he started in as messenger, and after a short time was promoted to a more responsible position. But it is not necessary to follow his short business experience further than to say, that in something less than a year he had convinced himself, and incidentally his father, that he had no interest in a business life and was not fitted for it. The experiment therefore terminated. Nevertheless I am persuaded that Brewster possessed the making of a successful business man had necessity compelled him to adopt business as a means of livelihood. In after years he proved himself in his own affairs to be keen and of sound judgment, and to be an excellent judge of character, while his prudence and sagacity enabled him, not only to keep what his father and mother left to him, but to somewhat augment his inheritance. If Brewster's father was disappointed by the failure of his hopes he showed no signs of it, but ever treated his son with the same invariable kindness and sympathy.

This would seem to be a fitting place in which to speak of Brewster's connection with the Brewster Free Academy of Wolfboro, New Hampshire. After due provision for his son and others of his relatives, his father left the balance of his large estate to found and perpetuate this school. He seems to have had a strong affection for the place of his nativity, and to have believed that a well

endowed academy in a rather remote rural district would be productive of great and lasting good.

The plan was not a hasty one but had been in his mind for many years, and had been considered from many points of view. William had long been aware of the disposition his father intended to make of the greater part of his wealth and, while in nowise opposed to his plans, was by no means sure of the wisdom of the act. As time went on, however, he wholly changed his mind, and came to the conviction that his father had shown sound judgment and that, on the whole, his wealth could not have been better bestowed. He served faithfully till his death as a trustee of the Academy, to which his father had appointed him, and always took great interest in the welfare of the school and in carrying out his father's plans so far as he was able.

In the minds of many Brewster is almost as inseparably connected with Concord as Thoreau, but the inception of what may be termed the Concord experiment was largely accidental. Brewster was always fond of the place, and for years its woods, meadows, and its picturesque winding river were familiar haunts to him. He made frequent hunting trips there, often in company with one or the other of his two friends, Dan French and Jim Melvin, both of whom lived in the town. Indeed William and his wife spent two consecutive summers, 1886 and 1887, in the old Manse, redolent with memories of Hawthorne, and which has become immortalized in his 'Mosses from an old Manse.' It is of interest to know that this book was written, or at least prepared for the press, in the same apartment in which Emerson had penned his 'Nature' six years before, surely enough honor for the little cramped room known as the "Manse study."

About 1890, learning that Davis' Hill, on the Concord, which was covered with large and venerable pines, was to be sold, he purchased it for the sole purpose of preserving its timber from certain destruction. Charmed with the locality he afterwards acquired the adjoining Ball's Hill, which is one of Concord's landmarks and was mentioned by Thoreau, if, indeed, it was not one of his haunts. Subsequently Brewster built several log cabins on the river bank in which he and his friends could camp. Later still he enlarged his holdings by the purchase of the John Barrett



farm and still later the 'Ritchie Place,' so that finally he possessed some three hundred acres, mostly woodland, which he called collectively "October Farm."

Its timber consisted chiefly of pines, oaks and birches, and it was a sore trial to him when, despite a large yearly expenditure in their behalf, the brown tails and 'gypsies' killed practically all the oaks. They were his joy and pride, and the place was never quite the same to him after their glory had departed and their bare branches were raised to him as if in mute appeal for aid.

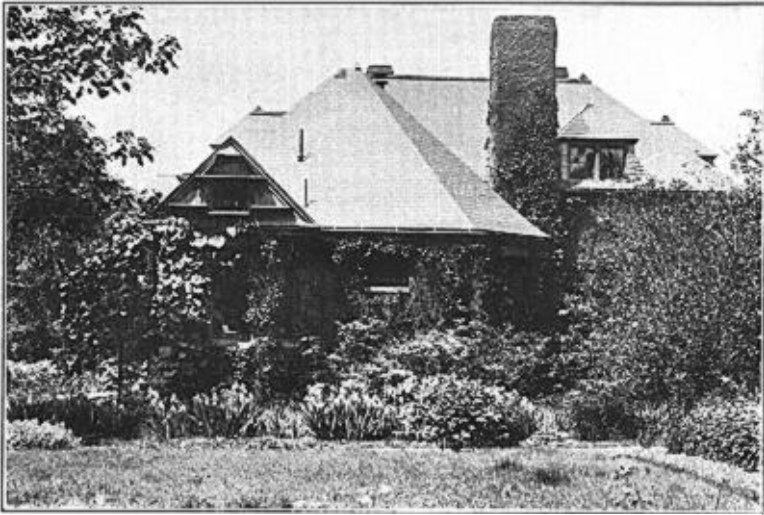
Not the least valued of his farm possessions was the old but still well preserved Barrett farm house, which dated back at least two centuries, and between the old house, shaded by venerable elms, and the river camp, on the banks of the classic Concord, no lover of Nature could ask to be more favorably placed.

At one time he found much pleasure in canoeing, in which he became expert, and he made himself familiar with every muskrat house for miles above and below his camp and with the haunts of the rails, bitterns and ducks in the marshes. He was very fond of sojourning for weeks at a time in his log cabin until the river was invaded by power boats, the incessant throb of whose motors proved torture to his sensitive ears. As time went on, too, the water of the Concord became polluted by the refuse of the mills along its banks, which resulted in the practical extermination of its water plants and fish, and he ceased to care for his old river haunts.

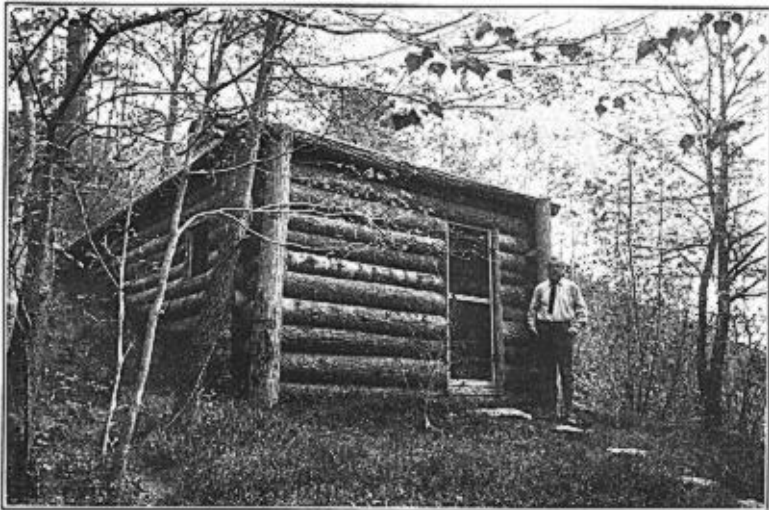
Later, when in Concord, he lived in the farm house often in company with Henry Purdie, of whom he was very fond. Here, as elsewhere, the comfort of himself and his guests were looked after by "Gilbert," his factotum and friend, and he came to be very fond of the faithful, zealous, and efficient colored man who for years did his bidding and ministered to his needs.

Brewster had furnished the farm house with old fashioned belongings befitting its age. These he collected with great taste and judgment, so that everything looked in keeping and as though a part of its surroundings.

The times on the farm which I recall with the greatest pleasure were our daily strolls in the near-by woods, and the evenings, which we spent, each in an arm chair, before the open fire of gray birch



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1. THE BREWSTER MUSEUM AT CAMBRIDGE.

2. THE CABIN AT CONCORD.

logs. He devoted his evening hours to his always voluminous correspondence, and to writing up his bird notes for the day. But he was never too much engrossed to pause long enough to discuss a paragraph in one of Thoreau's books, of which naturally *Walden* was his favorite, or to listen to anything of moment out of the book I was reading. For the writings of Thoreau he had high regard, and was very familiar with them, as he was also with his old haunts by pond and river.

Being untrained in farming and having no zest for manual labor, Brewster always employed a practical farmer and his wife to care for his poultry, of which he had a fine flock, to look after the cows, and to raise vegetables sufficient for the needs of his own family and for distribution among his many friends. The surplus, never very great, was sold; but he never tried to make the farm pay, or even to make it self supporting. When the birds and squirrels raided his beans, corn and strawberries, his reply to the complaint of his farmer always was; "all right; remember to next year plant more; plant enough for all of us." For he reckoned his bird and mammal tenants as partners in the concern and, as such, entitled to whatever they chose to appropriate. To meet a gray squirrel homeward bound a half mile or more from Brewster's corn patch, with a big ear of corn in his mouth, was a frequent occurrence; and the vituperative remarks addressed to the rightful owner by the enraged squirrel at being interrupted in his attempt to make an honest living were, as Brewster used to say, "worth more than a dozen ears of corn."

The little interest he took in farming chiefly centered in the restoration and care of a small apple orchard, many of the trees when they came into his possession being superannuated and decayed. These he doctored and grafted to superior kinds of fruit and sprayed carefully until he brought them into vigorous bearing. He was very proud of his apples. He was also much interested in the construction of roads through the woods, which he laughingly explained were for use when he and his friends became so decrepit as to be unable to walk.

Though never a professed botanist Brewster had an excellent speaking acquaintance with the bulk of New England trees and shrubs, and, to a lesser extent, with its flowering plants. He

greatly admired shapely oaks and stately pines, and cut many vistas through his woods so as to bring into prominent view trees whose glories otherwise would have been hidden. He also took great pleasure in transplanting to his woods rare shrubs and flowering plants from contiguous localities, or from remote parts of the State, and they rooted and grew into his very fiber and became a part of him. He visited them often, and always as shrines before which he gave praise and offered worship.

He also cultivated about the house garden-flowers of the old fashioned type, of which he was very fond. Naturally he was very successful with them, so that most of the summer the old home borrowed the freshness of youth from the blaze of floral color around it. It was down the old cow lane back of the house, resplendent on either side with asters, golden rods, and various flowering shrubs, that William most delighted to walk. The lane opened into a winding woodland path which led to the "birch pasture," a favorite resort of the migrating warblers, and he said that, though he followed this path daily, and sometimes several times a day, he never tired of it, and that it was always as fresh in his eyes as if newly discovered.

But none of the things mentioned appealed to Brewster's interest as strongly as the birds, and the chief value of the place to naturalists rests upon the bird notes he made here. Nowhere else was the same experiment with bird life ever tried, at least for an equal length of time. For twenty years no gun was ever fired on October Farm, nor a bird or mammal ever molested by man. Hawks, crows, bluejays, skunks, foxes and other birds and beasties, if not equally welcome in Brewster's eyes, were never molested. Each lived its own life according to its instincts, and Nature was allowed to work out her own problem in her own way. Beyond providing boxes for the hole-building species to nest in and planting seed plants for their sustenance, Brewster interfered with them not at all.

The results will surprise many. They certainly surprised Brewster. For, at the expiration of some twenty years, there were apparently as many birds on the place as there were at the beginning of the experiment, *but no more*. True, there had been changes in the distribution of the species, since the brushy haunts of the

warblers and vireos had grown up, and the shrubbery loving species had shifted their quarters elsewhere. But the number of partridges, for instance, had not increased over the original eight or ten, although each year they nested and reared most, if not all, their young. For many years also a pair of great crested flycatchers nested in the cavity of a certain apple tree and every year brought out a brood of young. Nevertheless only one pair came back each spring, and he was unable to find any in the surrounding territory. So it was with other species. Brewster's explanation in the case of the partridges was that the old birds, with the authority of vested rights, drove away the younger ones which, had they been allowed to remain, would have overstocked the place according to their own formula. But he found it difficult to thus explain the failure of increase in bird life generally on the farm. He was decidedly of the opinion, however, that his experiment proved that to increase the number of small birds in a given area one must at least do police duty and destroy the predacious birds and mammals, large and small. And this he pointed out had been the experience on the large game estates of England and Scotland, where no small part of the keeper's business is to keep down the vermin.

Brewster greatly regretted that all interest in his Concord place was destined to lapse when he was through with it, and he frequently debated some possible use it might be put to. At one time he thought of offering it to the town of Concord, but deemed that its remoteness from the town center would militate against its usefulness as a local park. He also discussed its availability for a duck and game breeding place, or for a bird refuge. But its availability for any of these uses, for one reason or another, seemed questionable, and finally in despair of finding a promising scheme, he dropped consideration of it.

Throughout the earlier years of his life Brewster was a keen and enthusiastic sportsman. When a boy in the high school, dawn often found him sculling his skiff over the placid surface of the near-by Fresh Pond in quest of waterfowl. He was a good shot and cherished his gun and dog with an abiding love. He was rarely without a serviceable pointer or setter, which, more often than not, he himself had trained. He never wholly outgrew his love for sport and one of the last pictures of him that lingers in my memory was as

he stood in the old farmhouse one evening after we had been recalling past hunting experiences, and, taking from the rack his favorite double-barrel, he threw it to his shoulder and wondered if, as in former days, he could still cut down an old cock partridge as it flew through the brush. He not only loved sport but he loved sportsmen, and delighted to exchange experiences with the old hunters he used to meet in Maine or with the "marsh gunners" of the Atlantic coast. As he advanced in years, like many other sportsmen, he ceased to shoot simply because shooting necessarily involved the taking of life, and this finally became impossible for him.

When the Cambridge place became his own, on the death of his father in 1886, one of his first improvements was a cat proof fence, upon the construction of which he spent much time and thought. This proved an effective barrier against the tabbies of the neighborhood, and insured the safety of all birds that visited the spacious garden, which included something like two acres. Soon there were hosts of birds to whom were born the glad tidings of food and safety awaiting them when they stopped there on their passage north and south, and many of the rarer small birds of the region sooner or later were noted from the windows of his study. A serviceable supply of water for drinking and bathing was provided, as well as berry-bearing shrubs and seed-bearing plants for food, and the "Brewster Tavern" exclusively for the accommodation of birds became very popular among his avian friends.

Another important improvement was the museum, which he built in 1886-1887, a small brick and fire-proof structure in the rear of his house for the safe accommodation of his books and of his growing collection of birds, and to serve as a study where he afterwards did his writing. This was the home of the Nuttall Club and here it held its semi-monthly meetings for many years, or until his death.

As his library increased in size and his collection of birds grew the routine work demanded more and more of his time, and in 1897 he was so fortunate as to secure the services of Walter Deane, an old and tried friend of whom he was very fond. As Assistant in Charge, he was able not only to relieve Brewster of much of the museum work but to materially aid him with his correspondence. He continued to assist him until 1907.

It will surprise many who are familiar with Brewster's writings and have admired his smoothly flowing periods and felicitous methods of expression, to know that he wrote only with great difficulty and labor. Whatever success he achieved as an author, and much may be said of the excellence of his literary work, was done with much pain and travail. The standard he set for himself was very high, and frequently, in order to attain it, he had to reshape or rewrite an article several times before he was willing to commit it to print, and then usually not without doubts and painful misgivings. At times, too, he had to contend with ill health which, often for considerable periods, made writing, never easy, doubly difficult or impossible. Thus was prevented the preparation of many papers he had planned to write and publish. Under the circumstances the wonder is not that he published so little but that he published so much. His wife rendered important aid in his literary efforts, not only by timely encouragement and wise criticism, but by typewriting much of his manuscript. This coöperation he greatly prized and it was a direct and an important stimulus to production.

Though he never wrote many reviews Brewster, nevertheless, was a model reviewer, being careful, fair and conscientious, always weighing the merits and demerits of a book with scrupulous impartiality. That he had the capacity of a successful editor is not open to doubt as was shown when he was chosen to edit Minot's 'Land and Game Birds of New England.' In dealing with the book he showed wise restraint in the use of the editorial pen, and left the author, so far as possible, to tell his story in his own way. On almost every page, however, he made important annotations in the form of foot notes, which, it is not too much to say, added greatly to the value of the work. His total scientific output amounted to upwards of three hundred papers of all kinds, some of them, as his 'Birds of Lower California' and 'Birds of the Cambridge Region,' being volumes of considerable size and forming notable contributions to faunal literature.

His productivity was greatest in the period from 1876 to 1900, after which he produced much less, though some of his most important publications appeared after 1900. He published practically everything he wrote in scientific journals, and apparently was never

tempted to increase the number of his readers by publishing in popular magazines and, indeed, with characteristic modesty, thought he was unequal to this form of writing. As a consequence he is less widely known as a writer than he deserves to be, few indeed outside of the ranks of ornithologists being aware of the literary treasures hidden away over his name in the journals and proceedings of scientific societies.

And here a subject may be touched upon that the young ornithologists of the present day may well take to heart. Brewster began to keep a diary at an early age, and he made it a rule to take as much pains in writing of the day's happenings as though he were writing for the printer. It is quite possible that this habit resulted from his knowledge of Thoreau's methods. In any event his day's tasks were never deemed ended until a page in his diary had been written. And we may be very sure that to his habit of keeping a diary and carefully committing his notes on birds every day to paper were largely due his felicitous style, discrimination in the nice choice of words, and general success as a writer.

There is no need here to tell in detail of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, of which he was the president for so many years, or the prominent part he played in its origin and career. It came into being in 1873 as a natural consequence of the enthusiastic interest in birds on the part of a small coterie of young fellows in and around Cambridge, and the interest has grown rather than lessened as the years have gone by.

Inspired by the example and success of the Nuttall Club, in due course the American Ornithologists' Union was established on a national basis, and rapidly grew into a strong organization. Though his interest in and love for the Nuttall Club was in nowise weakened, from the very first Brewster took great interest in the Union, and was one of the three to issue the call for the convention which met in New York, September 26, 1883. After the organization was effected he was appointed one of the committee of five to assist in a revision of the classification and nomenclature of North American birds. He served until his death upon this important committee, and his extensive knowledge of the birds of New England and of other regions enabled him to perform invaluable service in connection with it. In 1895 he was elected President



of the Union and served till 1898. For several years, 1880–1889, Brewster was connected with the Boston Society of Natural History, and had charge of its bird and mammal collections. Later, in 1885–1900, he took charge of the same departments in the Cambridge Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, and, after 1900 until his death, was in charge of the Museum's collection of birds.

His connection with Harvard University through its museum was a source of great satisfaction to him, not only because of his congenial duties, but because through them he was brought into personal relations with Alexander Agassiz, for whom he had great admiration and regard. Upon his death in 1910, Agassiz was succeeded as Curator of the Museum by Samuel Henshaw, with whom Brewster had long been on terms of intimacy and for whom he had the most cordial regard.

Brewster was always greatly interested in the movement for the protection and increase of North American birds, and rendered very important service in connection therewith. In 1886 he was appointed a member of the Committee on Bird Protection of the American Ornithologist's Union, and as such was one of the organizers of the first Audubon Society. He was a member of this Committee for many years, and later became one of the Directors of the National Association of Audubon Societies. Later he served for a number of years as President of the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

After serving on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Fish and Game Protective Association a number of years, in 1906 he was elected its President, retaining the office for two years.

He was much interested in the movement which led to the formation of the American Game Protective and Propagation Association. When this was organized in 1911 he was appointed a member of the Advisory Committee on which he served till his death.

Far too modest and doubtful of his merits to push himself into the limelight as a seeker of honors, he was greatly pleased with those which were bestowed on him, and the more so that they came entirely unsought. Amherst conferred on him the honor of A. M. in 1880, and Harvard that of A. M. in 1889.

Brewster had comparatively little of the spirit of the pioneer and explorer. With all the world open to him he liked best to

follow well beaten paths and to revisit year after year the scenes and localities already endeared to him by familiarity and association. This explains in part why he spent so much time in Concord and why he revisited Umbagog for so many successive years. Because of this habit he was enabled to gather an unparalleled amount of data on the birds of these respective regions, and it is doubtful if the birds of any single locality elsewhere have been so intensively studied as those of Concord and of Umbagog Lake by Brewster. His plans included the publication of several volumes based on these notes. Fortunately his notes and manuscripts were bequeathed to Harvard University, for this justifies the belief that, not only will his 'Birds of Umbagog Lake' be published, the first volume of which was left by him practically completed, but that all his voluminous notes made in Cambridge, Concord and elsewhere will also be printed, so far as this can be done. And what more acceptable and fitting monument than this could be erected to commemorate his life's long and fruitful activity in the field of ornithology that he loved so well?

While thus by preference Brewster cultivated near-by fields, nor cared greatly to penetrate remote districts or the untrodden wilderness, he was by no means content to stay wholly within the limits of New England, much as he loved his native soil. On the contrary he made several journeys far afield and usually in company with one or more friends. Thus he made three trips to England: in 1891, 1909 and 1911, and one to the continent in 1897. He visited Scotland more than once, and spent some time there with Harvie-Brown, to whom he was much attached. Most of the time abroad, however, was spent in England, where he devoted much attention to outdoor observations and to getting acquainted with English birds, which he had hitherto met only in books, and in listening to their songs and studying their habits.

He was greatly pleased with England, and his visits there, as he said, were much like going home after a long absence. Apparently in England he never felt like a stranger in a strange land. He specially admired its broad estates, its well kept roads and hedges, and its general air of thrift and tidiness. He was enthusiastic also over the English character and found the men cordial, hospitable and lovable.

In illustration of Brewster's charm of manner and his ability to enlist the attention and interest of strangers, an incident may be related that occurred when he was at Lyndhurst in the New Forest in the midsummer of 1909. Visiting the smoking room of the Inn the evening after his arrival, he found there several men smoking and reading their papers, each at a separate table. Singling out the one who seemed to him to have the most interesting face, he made his way to his table and, as the gentleman glanced up to see who the intruder was, he introduced himself, as an American who wanted to ask a few questions about the New Forest. The questions duly answered, a long conversation of a humorous and discursive character followed in which, among other things, the respective characteristics of Englishmen and Americans were discussed, apparently to the great interest and amusement of the other guests. It was not until the stranger had left the room that Brewster learned he had been conversing with the famous author, Kipling. During the following days he met Kipling frequently, found him a most genial companion as well as a most interesting conversationalist, was introduced to his wife, and finally received an invitation to visit them in their English home.

It was very fortunate that early in his career Brewster became acquainted with the Umbagog Lake region. He first visited it in June 1870, when C. J. Maynard, Ruthven Deane and Henry Purdie also were there. The region was little known in those days, save to disciples of good old Isaac Walton, and possessed manifold attractions in its deep forests, its beautiful lake and waterways, abounding in fish and an ample supply of large and small game. In the eyes of a Massachusetts ornithologist it possessed an added attraction in a long list of warblers and other birds which here found a summer home, but elsewhere to the south were known chiefly or only as migrants. Brewster at once became strongly attached to the place, which not only satisfied his longings as an ornithologist but strongly appealed to the artistic and aesthetic side of his nature. For many years he rarely missed sojourning at the Lake during the summer or fall, and here he gathered an unparalleled harvest of notes and data, especially on the water birds, which found in these comparative solitudes ideal opportunities to nest.

For several years he maintained a most attractive camp on Pine

Point, near the foot of the Lake, where numbers of his ornithological friends visited him. He also had built for service on the Lake a houseboat designed with reference to comfort and his special needs as a student of bird life. He cultivated a wide acquaintance with the guides and lumbermen of the district, and not the least of its many attractions was the opportunity afforded of meeting these men annually on their own ground and hearing from their lips the story of their experiences and of still earlier days in the wilderness. He was particularly fond of canoeing on the Lake and made much use of the canoe in his daily trips. Indeed some of the accounts of birds which he wrote for his 'Birds of Umbagog Lake' were penned as he floated here and there on the Lake's placid bosom, with the setting of the bird biographies he was engaged upon spread out before his very eyes.

With the lapse of time, however, Brewster's interest in that region lessened, chiefly because of the influx of visitors and campers, who were attracted in ever increasing numbers by the growing fame of the region. Aloofness and solitude had been its chiefest charms, and when these departed little was left to a man of Brewster's temperament, so that during the later years of his life, after 1900, he never revisited it.

Brewster made a trip to Ritchie County, West Virginia, in 1874, in company with Ruthven Deane and Ernest Ingersoll. They were there from April 25 to May 9, and the party secured many nests, eggs and bird skins. Brewster published a paper in the *Annals of the Lyceum of Natural History of New York* on the results obtained in this, then little known, region. As was the case with most of his faunal papers, this article contained copious notes on the habits and songs of many of the species included.

In April 1878, he visited his friend Robert Ridgway, at Mount Carmel, Illinois, and spent a month or more with him in collecting birds and gathering notes on a number of species until then unknown to him. Notable among the strangers was the beautiful Prothonotary Warbler, which inspired the greatest enthusiasm. For an interesting account of this bird, written in his best vein, the reader is referred to his article in the *Bulletin of the Nuttall Club* for October 1878. He always dwelt with great pleasure on the incidents of this trip, and spoke fondly of the delightful comradeship of Ridgway.

In the spring of 1881, Brewster was invited to make one of a party organizing for a trip to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The expedition, as stated by him, was "undertaken partly for pleasure, but chiefly for scientific exploration and the collection of fossil birds, insects and plants." The party consisted of the following persons: Professor Alpheus Hyatt, Mr. Samuel Henshaw, Messrs. E. G. Gardiner, W. H. Kerr, N. R. Warren and himself, and sailed from Annisquam, Massachusetts, in the *Arethusa*, a schooner-rigged yacht of seventeen tons.

He published an account of the trip in the Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History, Vol. 12, 1882-83, from which the following is quoted:

"The trip, as a whole, was attended by about the usual mixture of pleasure and hardship, success and disappointment. Its drawbacks and failure were mainly unavoidable, for our plans had been made with care and forethought, and the vessel equipped to a fault; while the social composition of our party proved exceptionally pleasant and harmonious. But we started too late in the season and the weather during most of the summer was simply abominable."

Most of the ornithological specimens accruing from this trip were given to the Boston Society.

In the spring of 1882 Brewster joined J. A. Allen in Colorado, who was there on a collecting trip undertaken out of considerations of health. He spent six weeks with him, collecting the birds of the region, studying their habits and making notes of the spring migration in this interesting region of plains, foothill and canyon. This is as far west as he ever travelled, and he always looked back with great satisfaction to this journey, rich as it was in new experiences, and to the first hand knowledge he thereby gained of the plains region and of its wild life, so unlike that with which he had hitherto been familiar.

In May 1883 Brewster visited South Carolina, making his headquarters at Charleston. His special errand was to look for the Swainson's Warbler, a species discovered in 1832, but lost sight of for over half a century. In his search he was assisted by Arthur T. Wayne, of whom he became very fond. Although unsuccessful the first season they were entirely successful the two following years, and Brewster was enabled to secure a large number of specimens and to

obtain a very full knowledge of the bird's song and habits. He also secured its nest and eggs.

He was much interested in bird migration, and was an earnest student of its varied phenomena. In 1885 he made a trip to Point Le Preaux in the Bay of Fundy for the express purpose of studying the behavior of birds during the migration as seen from a light house. He remained there from August 13 to September 26, living with the light house keeper, and making notes on migration. It was doubtless largely the interesting data obtained on this trip that stimulated him to produce his only formal paper on bird migration, which was published as the first 'Memoir' of the Nuttall Ornithological Club in 1888. This has been well termed a classic.

On his return north from Charleston in 1885 he visited Asheville, North Carolina, May 23. From there he made a wagon trip into the mountains, during which were recorded many interesting observations on the habits of the birds. His account of the birds seen on this trip is to be found in the *Auk*, Vol. 3, 1886.

In 1890 (March 19-April 1), he joined Frank Chapman in a trip down the Suwanee River, Florida, in a houseboat. A satisfactory collection of birds was made and many interesting notes obtained of the local and migrating species. The results of the trip appear in a joint paper in 'The Auk' for 1892.

Two years later, in 1893, we find Brewster and Chapman in the island of Trinidad, where Brewster was not only introduced to a new fauna but harvested an entirely new crop of experiences. This was his first and only visit to the Tropics. He treasured his experiences there as among the most interesting of his life, and in after years never tired of recalling the varied scenes and incidents of his stay there.

Besides the trips mentioned, made for the double purpose of collecting specimens and of acquainting himself with the habits of rare or little known birds in their native haunts, Brewster, from time to time sent out, at his own expense, collectors whose chief errand was the exploration of comparatively unknown territory and the acquisition of birds to fill gaps in his collection. Some of these were remarkably successful, and by this means he not only secured priceless cabinet material but added greatly to ornithological knowledge. The collections thus made, with the notes made by the collectors, furnished the basis of a number of important papers.

Thus he sent the well known collector, Frank Stephens, to California and Arizona in 1881 and 1884. In May and June of 1883 George Ower Welsh made a collecting trip for him to Newfoundland.

In 1883, 1884 and 1885, R. R. McCleod collected for him in Chihuahua, Mexico.

In 1887 he sent Mr. Abbott Frazer to the peninsula of Lower California.

In January and June of the same year Mr. John C. Cahoon visited Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, and made extensive collections.

In many respects Brewster was unusually well equipped as a naturalist and a student of birds.

He did some excellent systematic work. He possessed a keen eye for distinctive differences and described many new species of American birds. So sound and conservative was his judgment in proposing new forms that practically all the birds named by him have proved valid.

Nevertheless by preference he was not a closet student but was an outdoor man, to whom the dried skin was merely a symbol and the living creature of infinitely more interest and importance. Naturally deliberate and slow of movement, he was a good and untiring walker in his youth, and possessed excellent eyesight for outdoor work. Indeed his eyesight improved as he grew older, and he was never compelled to have recourse to distance glasses, even during the last years of his life. His hearing was extraordinarily acute, and his ability to recognize the notes of birds at a distance and amid other and confusing sounds was little less than marvelous, and far exceeded that of any one I ever knew. Along with his phenomenal hearing went a good memory for bird notes and songs, the study and analysis of which always greatly interested him. Indeed he was attracted by the notes and calls of all living creatures, and deemed no time wasted that was spent in tracing them to their sources.

Here I cannot refrain from a short quotation from his 'Voices from a New England Marsh,' one of many similar paragraphs in his happiest vein, which illustrates his interest in the voices of his humble friends and the emotions they awakened in his soul. After speaking of the songs of the Rusties and of those of the Song and Tree Sparrows he adds:

"These voices with, perhaps, the tender, plaintive warble of some passing bluebird or at evening, towards the close of the month, the merry peeping of Pickering's hylas are the characteristic March sounds of the Fresh Pond marshes as well as of many similar places in eastern Massachusetts. How they smooth and refresh the senses after the long silence of winter, breathing to every one of refined sensibilities the very essence of early spring! To those who have long known and loved them they are inexpressibly grateful and precious, touching the chords of memory more subtly than do any other sounds, recalling past associations, albeit often saddened ones, and filling the heart with renewed courage and hope for the future."

He was a patient and untiring observer, and his intense interest in bird and other outdoor life never knew abatement. Summer and winter, in sickness and in health, from youth to old age his interest continued undiminished, and only death itself sealed to him the Book of Nature. Indeed in his last moments, when the voices of the friends about him awakened no response, he roused himself sufficiently to listen to the song of a robin which came to his ears from the linden tree outside his window, fitting requiem to the passing soul of the ornithologist.

William Brewster was tall and well proportioned, and when he developed into full manhood was a strikingly dignified and handsome man. His habitual expression was kindly and engaging, and few people met him who were not at once drawn toward him by his kindly bearing and courteous manners. He did not mature early, but when he came into his own, and his mind expanded, and his experience widened he became a charming and very interesting talker.

While Brewster possessed none of the gifts of the orator and made no effort to cultivate public speaking, he was entirely self possessed when he rose to address an audience and spoke interestingly and to the point, chiefly perhaps, because he always had something definite and illuminating to say.

He had a genius for friendships, and made many friends whom he grappled to his soul with hooks of steel. He had a peculiar reverence for womankind, always treated them with the utmost deference, and always spoke of them with respect.

He had a well developed sense of humor and liked to exchange repartee with his friends, and always enjoyed a witty story. But



stories of the grosser sort had no interest for him and were, indeed, abhorrent, and his friendship included none who were given to them, or to gross practices.

He was charitably disposed to all, and inclined to judge the delinquent leniently and with forbearance. He never spoke ill of any man. He was generously inclined, and, within his means, gave freely to those less fortunate than himself, though of his beneficence he said nothing, preferring that it should remain unknown.

He was calm of manner and temperate of speech, and kept his temper under excellent control. He found his everyday vocabulary sufficient for all his needs, and never indulged in oaths or expletives of any sort.

He was singularly abstemious, drank neither tea nor coffee, and scarcely knew the taste of wine or other alcoholic liquor. Yet he never inveighed against their moderate use by others.

Brewster was sociably inclined and greatly loved the companionship of true and tried friends. His sympathies were broad and included an appreciation of and interest in the work and affairs of others, especially of young men, who never sought him for aid and counsel in vain.

He possessed the judicial temperament and in his anxiety to be just and make no mistake was sometimes long in making up his mind. Once convinced, however, of the righteousness of a cause, he never after wavered but upheld it with heart and soul and without fear of consequences.

He was absolutely truthful, habitually refrained from all exaggeration, and falsehood and evasion were foreign to his nature. As he was sincere and truthful, so was he honorable and pure minded, and his conversation reflected the thoughts and imaginings of a pure soul. Of him, if of any man, may we say, "blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God."

*The Ontario, Washington, D. C.*