

## SOME WESTERN HORIZONS. No. II.

The last stop on the overland trip was made at Julesburg, a prairie hamlet in the north-eastern corner of Colorado. Here the Platte River struggles with its shifting sands, and low bluffs follow the general trend of its course on either side. The rest is just prairie and wind. I mention the wind because on the day of our visit there was about twice as much of it as there was of prairie and it had more to do with ornithological operations. Altho it was the 17th of May, the wind was so strong and so searching that I frequently lay down on the ground to rest and get warm.

The willow-clad islands of the Platte afforded some protection for the birds, and it was here that most of them were found. These islands are a characteristic feature for many miles. They consist of a core or raised portion covered with thick, stunted scrubbery, such as rose brier and Labrador tea, with a willow fringe surrounding the whole. Between these islands the river flows or not according to its high pleasure and the season of the year. From the midst of one of these patches I put up an American Bittern from a nest containing two eggs. The nest consisted merely of a trifling amount of grass scratched together.

The one impressive feature of this day's experience of bird life was found in the Lark Bunting. He was everywhere, and always a pleasant sight. He is made for the prairie, and it makes no difference to him if it is a wind-swept prairie. Ever and anon he launches into the wind and flutters up some ten or twenty feet, singing the while, then he makes a parachute of his wings, bat fashion, or like a V, and settles to the ground again, still singing. The song is not loud but is a pleasing repetition of several very different phrases. By phrases I mean a short succession of notes of one quality. Thus one phrase will consist of four similar double notes, "*We'o, we'o, we'o, we'o,*" and another, perhaps immediately succeeding, will be a trill like that of the Grasshopper Sparrow. Evidently the buntings were not nesting yet as there were ten males to be seen to one female. Besides, several mixed flocks of forty or fifty birds were seen, and these were manifestly late arrivals.

The following horizon of twenty-nine species was observed between 4:30 P. M., May 16 and 4:30 P. M., May 17.

## THE JULESBURG HORIZON.

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| American Bittern.     | Western Meadowlark.          |
| Western Sandpiper.    | Western Vesper Sparrow.      |
| Solitary Sandpiper.   | Western Grasshopper Sparrow. |
| Bartramian Sandpiper. | Western Lark Sparrow.        |
| Spotted Sandpiper.    | Clay-colored Sparrow.        |
| Killdeer.             | Lark Bunting.                |
| Belted Piping Plover. | Purple Martin.               |
| Mourning Dove.        | Barn Swallow.                |
| Marsh Hawk.           | Tree Swallow.                |
| Swainson's Hawk.      | Yellow Warbler.              |
| Burrowing Owl.        | Western Yellow-throat.       |
| Kingbird.             | Yellow-breasted Chat.        |
| Desert Horned Lark.   | Brown Thrasher.              |
| Cowbird.              | Short-billed Marsh Wren.     |
| Red-winged Blackbird. |                              |

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## NOTES ON THE COMMON TERN.

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It has been my privilege to spend six weeks in the laboratories of the U. S. Fish Commission at Wood's Hole, Mass., this summer. A pressure of work on invertebrates has not given much time for birds, but some opportunities did come to study the terns.

The Common Tern is abundant at Wood's Hole and it would hardly be possible to look out over the water in any direction on a summer day without seeing at least one and more likely a half dozen or more of these beautiful birds wheeling and circling here and there, every few minutes dropping like lead head first into the water in a seemingly tireless search for something edible. They are a never failing source of delight to a bird lover.

Among the few colonies of terns on the Atlantic coast that still survive the ravages of the millinery trade are two near Wood's Hole. A large one is at Perkin's Island and a smaller one at Wocpecket Islands.

It was my good fortune on July 20th to accompany Mr. Frank M. Chapman on a trip to Penikese Island, not with guns and egg cases but carrying cameras, tripods and plate holders. A two hour ride on the