

The creation of a Statutory body specially charged with the care of the poor removed this duty from Town Councils, but it is interesting to note that the majority of the recent Royal Commission on the Poor Laws consider that Town Councils should again be associated in the work with which, in time past, they showed much practical interest.

A perusal of these accounts does not add materially to the information contained in the existing histories of our Burgh, but they enable us to get some idea of the finances and general working of the Town Council some 200 years ago. In these days of Municipal enterprise it may seem to us that the matters dealt with by the Town Council of old were somewhat petty and trivial. But we must remember that 200 years ago Scotland was a poor country, the Royal Burghs were in an impecunious state, and Rothesay was no exception. The people could not and would not stand assessments; "the pleasant game of borrowing and spending the public money had not been dreamed of," and so the Councilors had to exercise the strictest economy in making ends meet: And if these old Councillors were content to acquiesce in things as they found them, they managed to preserve the dignity and privileges of the Royal Burgh until, when the Century had run half its course, the decay of the Burgh was arrested, a progressive policy was inaugurated, and the almost depopulated town became the thriving seaport.

SIERRA LEONE IN THE SIXTIES.

NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A J.P. AND MISSIONARY.

BY REV. C. T. BEALE.

[Read 14th February, 1911.]

I dare say no one here has been in the West Coast of Africa—indeed, if Colonial sayings be true, I am sure they have not—for, say the Colonists, "Nobody comes here who can help it—and of those who do come, nobody returns home alive." My own bit of knowledge, therefore, gleaned from the conversations, writings, and letters of those who actually spent their lives there, my father and grandfather, has a special interest. I might, if I liked, *take you in* to any extent! For instance, I might describe a Janneh, or a Tokka, or an Aku, or an Egba, and call them Ashantees, and few would know the difference. But you may rely upon my veracity. I will not attempt to say anything about the Ashantees, of whom I know nothing, but I will describe the races with whom my father really came in contact, and from them, their habits and country, you may learn something at least of the general character of the life on the West Shores of Africa—the then undisputed home of the malarial mosquito—the "White Man's Grave."

I will throw what I have to say into the form of a description of a journey. The starting point shall be my father's African home. Try then, please, to fancy yourselves 20 miles inland from the town and harbour of Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. I will not, here, say a word about that city or about the general history or character of the settlement; some member of our Society skilled with

the lantern might some day take this as his subject. For the present you must be content to be plunged down at once into the little village of Waterloo.

First.—Look at the structure which forms our starting point. The walls are wood, the roof shingle, and the habitable portion stands out on the top of stone pillars. The flight of steps leading up to the front door are good solid iron-stone, shaded by a luxuriant Passion flower vine. The garden that lies around is almost big enough and wooded enough to be called a park. Through the middle of the garden murmurs a tiny mountain stream. In one place it tumbles over a rock, with a fall of 10 or 12 feet. On the borders of this stream is gathered a wealth of tropical vegetation. There, near you, is a clump of canes, tall, straight, graceful. The rods at the base are as thick as a man's thigh and towering up into the air 40 feet and more. There are the bananas, and the plantations with their broad fan-like leaves and tempting clusters of fruit, some of which that little ebony-skinned rascal, our native house-boy, who watches us with such interest from the verandah, will secure for to-morrow's breakfast. Across the stream is a lemon tree, with lemons big enough to flavour 1000 puddings. There, too, are the cork-wood trees, with the pretty brown pigeons feeding among their leaves, and beside these bolder features there is a wealth of minute and beautiful detail which could occupy a curious mind; especially that of a botanist, for half a lifetime. Forty years ago this pretty place was in the heart of the forest, and that sparkling waterfall the darkest and most uncanny place in the neighbourhood—a place blighted with Heathen orgies—consecrated to the Devil. But the wilderness was invaded by a brave clergyman, and there, alone and unaided, he fought the battle of truth, and a marble slab in the wall of the church which he built, and this house planted in the very home of demons, bear witness to his victory. But if we are to form any idea of the country which we have set ourselves to explore we must not tarry in this reclaimed spot, but push on at once into the regions where the face of the white man is seldom seen

Suppose the hour to be 5 a.m. It certainly is high time for the traveller to be off, for, though the light upon the Eastern Horizon looks grey and cool, yet in an incredible short space the heavens will be blazing like the mouth of a furnace. I should like to offer you a horse for the journey, or at least a bullock, such as Livingstone found so useful on his travels. But neither horse nor bullock will live in Sierra Leone. True, doctors and high officials, whose duty requires speed, are obliged to keep horses, but the poor beasts lead a sad life, and at the end of five or six months die of loin disease, or as some say, of consumption. We must therefore be content either to walk or to trust the hard skulls and brawny limbs of the negro carriers. There you see them as you descend the stone staircase. There seem a good many waiting for you, but their number is accounted for by the fact that each traveller requires four at least for his own use. They are generally fine big fellows these carriers, exceedingly good natured—much like the Irish gillies in temperament. Well proportioned, their muscles standing out like carved ebony—they are willing to do any amount of work provided you pay and feed them well. Our men, I see, have their hammocks ready. These are curious looking inventions—a net of twisted grass 10 feet long by 5 feet wide, gathered up at the two ends and securely bound to a light pole. But once inside they are comfortable enough when you get used to them and afford a very grateful help in that exhausting climate. Clad in white linen overalls, on our heads a light pith helmet with ample brims and neck protection, we give the word, and away we go into the heart of the forest. The air at 5 a.m. is cool, almost chilly. The damp of night is not yet gathered up, and to the languid European the twilight seems a time for repose more than for travel! But we have work before us, and so secured in our wide meshed string bag we jog along the narrow path in single file—the hammock poles cleverly balanced on the skulls of our black carriers. In a mile or two fresh men are called up, they are soon alongside, and with the pole deftly poised on the head they continue the forward march. The journey is not without incident, however, a scorpion with tail poised for the strike

stands in the way. A man is stung, down drops the pole, a howl of anguish echoes through the forest, and you yourself head over heels fall thud into the ousy half stagnant marsh. I may say that my father was gifted with a remarkably persuasive voice, and with a little parliamentary language added to give it proper weight, order is quickly restored. Reclining full length, each in his own net, we are borne rapidly to the first halting place. I might say in passing that the road over which we are moving is of the most primitive in conception and make. It is simply a path, about a foot wide. It is formed by one person pushing his way through the Bush in a particular direction. For the sake of convenience the next person going the same way has followed the same track, and so on till the road was made. As a quondam surveyor of these roads my father feels it necessary to stand up for them. He points out in one of his letters that they have there two undoubted advantages which are seldom attained by surveyors at home—they are always pretty and they add nothing to the rates! (even the designer of Craigmore Road fails here!) On either side of the pathway as the traveller moves along is a dense impenetrable wall of vegetation, everywhere a bewildering tangle of fruit and flowers, ferns and moss. From this sea of living green the trees start up like thickly clustering islands. In one place is a grove of date palms, stamping the scene at once as tropical. In another is the giant cotton tree, which, in a single human lifetime, will reach 100 or 150 feet in height. Among all the wonders of nature which surround the traveller here is something still more full of wonder, for the cotton tree is sheathed in spiked armour and strengthened with huge natural buttresses. If it be at the end of the dry season its opening pods will flood the air with seeming snow-flakes, and though it be such a giant, yet it sometimes grows on ground where other trees would quickly die. But besides palms and cotton trees you will meet with plums, laburnums, and acacias, besides a multitude of others less familiar. Many of them are enwreathed with the most extraordinary parasites, turned and twisted into the most elaborate and sometimes grotesque patterns. Now and then we pass some old forest giant, whose tremendous girth dwarfs all the rest.

The annual bush fires have spared him, and so like an affectionate father he spreads out his great arms over his children.

“My own feeling of reverence and awe,” writes my father, “was strongly excited when passing for the first time down these dim aisles of Nature’s own Cathedral. At first the height seemed unreal, and then when the mind grasped the fact, the littleness of our own inventions at home, trees stuck down in hideous rows, dwarfed, stunted, leafless, yet the hall-mark of suburban horticultural science!”

Though my father knocked about all over the country by water and by land, by day and by night, sleeping sometimes without cover, sometimes in a ruined hut, sometimes in a native village in the very heart of the Bush, yet he never records seeing more than a 12-foot cobra, which he shot on his own door-step, the whip snake (now secured in a bottle and always in high spirits!) and an alligator, which certainly would not have been seen had he not been asleep! In the mountains antelopes, harness-deer, and even larger game abound. Inland, elephants abound. In the darker recess of the woods leopards fix their lair. In the trees that line the water courses monkeys swing and chatter. In the swamps wild hogs wallow. But all these creatures shun the face of man, and unless you take great pains to seek, they will certainly take greater pains to keep out of your way.

At last we come to the site of a native town—almost suddenly we descend upon it. A single turn of the footpath and you find yourself in the midst of a wide clearing dotted over with what look like well thatched stooks of grain in a farm yard. These are the villas and boarding-houses of the people. The roof is formed of straw-coloured grass, meeting in a tuft at the top, just as a skilful thatcher at home adorns his handywork. Coming nearer you perceive that the house wall is formed of mud. Likely enough at the very moment of your entrance some housewife will be busy repairing or even building a home for her family—their way of conducting

a Spring cleaning—and the men? Well, in Africa at least, the rights of women are fully recognised. Never on any occasion do the men relieve them of hard work! Close by the house that is to be mended or built, a hole has been scooped in the earth. Into this water has been poured, and a mixture formed of suitable consistency, and this mortar is then smeared over a wickerwork frame, and so almost before a Scotchman would bargain for his ground, an African has built and gone into residence. There is no order in a village of this class. Land is of no value, and these barbarians do not consider the laws of hygiene. Everyone therefore selects his own site and builds on his own plan, and if they are less frequently poisoned by want of drains and the presence of pestiferous pools than we are, it is because fresh air is abundant and overcrowding an impossibility.

We will now enter one of the huts. These people are always courteous, and welcome a guest with smiling politeness. Our choice of seats is limited. On one side is a heap of earth, on another a simple mat, on a third a sort of rough, 3-legged stool, whilst the fourth side, furthest from the door, is occupied by a wooden bedstead, formed somewhat after the pattern of an old-fashioned English crib, minus one side. The rest of the furniture is easily described. A Calabash drinking cup or two, one lead spoon, an iron pot, a huge log-hollowed pestle and mortar for rice, a grass hammock in which the lord of the mansion may swing himself while his wife sweeps the house, and the inventory is complete. Whilst we have been talking within in the hut, the family and friends will have gathered round the outside in an excited, quizzical crowd. I really dare not describe the cut of their working clothes—indeed I cannot—for really there is nothing to describe! When I tell you that a yard of calico and a couple of red handkerchiefs will clothe a whole family, I have exaggerated on the side of propriety. The toilet of a Chief is a far different matter. Indeed, his dignity demands it. He is usually the most able man in the tribe. I not not quite know the mode of appointment, sometimes hereditary. But for the

most part it would seem, “whoever can, keeps it!” We are sometimes inclined to despise the majesty of an African Prince. His condition is so thoroughly different from ours, but when we think of a man as holding in his hand the lives and fortunes of men and women, beset by countless dangers by night and by day—always on the alert and with his ear to the ground—our respect for him grows, and we arrive at a more just conclusion. But to return to the dress. Most of the leading people in the bush are Mohametans, and as such wear a peculiar dress. This consists of an extensive garment cut very much in the shape of a modern surplice. There is an opening in the top through which the wearer thrusts his head, full sleeves, and a moderately tight body flowing down somewhat below the knee. Beneath this upper garment short full trousers are worn, for which pink is a favourite colour. The feet are protected by sandals decorated with embroidered leather, and the head by a red or black turban. As an ornament or charm, both in one, a piece of the koran sewn up in leather is jauntily stuck on the side of the head dress, or worn as a necklace. The general effect of such a dress must be highly becoming, set off by the graceful bearing and stately carriage of the wearer. The women, as I have hinted, are kept very much in the background, especially the wives of the leading men—their condition is sadly degraded, from all accounts. The ordinary mode of dress shows this. You may sometimes see a man robed even in silk and velvet, but the commonest materials are reserved for the women. The usual dress for a negro woman is three shawls and a handkerchief, with the former she envelopes her person, and that not ungracefully, and if she be a mother with a child to carry, before the last twist of the final shawl is made, she slips the baby in behind her shoulders, a little black foot visible on either side, and then completing the wrap, she carries the baby without further trouble. Ah! I nearly forgot the handkerchief. It is usually highly coloured cotton, except on great days and Mohammedan festivals, when it is changed for a white one. But in any case, it forms an adornment for the head which, as far as description goes, would bear comparison with many a grand English bonnet,

On their heads they balance any load that they have to carry—sometimes it will be a huge basket containing rolls of linen or cloth, or fruit for sale, sometimes a curiously shaped glass bottle filled with palm oil, carried perfectly erect too. The more civilised even carry their books in this way, if they have any, not under their arm, but always on their heads.

Their ordinary employment is, of course, field work, you may call it as an act of courtesy—agriculture. On the low grounds they plant rice, on the richer soils yams and ground nuts, and on the hill sides cassada. The yam, of course, is a bulb something like a potato, and weighs up to five or six pounds, according to the soil. The top is like a hop vine, and as each plant is supported with a pole, a yam plantation in Africa reminds one very much of a Kentish hop garden. The ground nut is about the size and appearance of an acorn. It grows beneath the soil, and its top closely resembles clover. Cassada is a root like a carrot, and when washed, peeled, and pounded makes a thick starch. On this, with a relish of palm oil and dried fish, the poor chiefly live. The process of farming is very simple. Towards the close of the dry season, a native walks out into the forest, reaching a likely spot where the trees are tall and the undergrowth luxurious, he breaks a branch so that it hangs down in full view of the passerby. This is the sign that the land is claimed. A month later when the rains have softened the earth, he returns to the place with a rough sort of cutlass or scythe, and with this inferior tool he breaks down the trees and bushes, leaving the stumps only standing 3 feet high. The sun quickly dried the heaps of severed boughs, and on a light being applied the clearing is rapidly completed. Having next scratched over the ground with a hoe, he drops the seeds here and there between the tree trunks, and covering them roughly with soil awaits the harvest. It appears that the same land is never used on two successive years—indeed, seven years is considered a necessary rest by the most careful.

But now pass from work to play—
From housekeeping to the chase,

The passion for field sports is not confined to these islands at home. In every African village there are found men and boys who revel in the excitement of sport. Scarcely any make big-game hunting a business, but every now and then, like devotees of the Twelfth, they issue forth into the forest intent on destruction. If the sportsman is of a patient nature he selects a tree, the fruit of which is attractive to the game. Hoisting himself on to a strong branch he quietly waits for his prey. He does not open fire twice, his gun being crammed to the muzzle with stones and broken bits of iron, and experience has taught him to wait until he nearly touches the victim, then deliver a broad-side. Leopard shooting is, I am told, more dangerous work. The hunter first marks down the beast, and then, erecting a small hut of leafy boughs, ties up a kid within shot and waits development. Enticed by the cries of the kid, the leopard stealthily approaches. At the moment of the spring the hunter fires, and then, without waiting for the result, drops to the ground and hastily retreats—a wise precaution, for the guns (the second-hand worn out weapons of passing travellers) are seldom true—and as time is no object, wounded or dead, the beast is easily secured in the morning. Sometimes the hunters are many and the sport assumes a more serious character. "I was once out" (my father relates) "with a party of 16 guns. We started well before daybreak for a belt of thick scrub which fringed the seashore. All the arrangements were hastily completed, for on these occasions the natives know the meaning of obedience to a leader. One after another the guns were told off to surround the wood. All now ready, half-a-dozen dogs with bells and tins round their necks, and a couple of beaters, quite naked and armed with huge knives, were turned in to windward. In another moment the sport began in hot earnest. The forest rings with shouts, the barking of dogs and the clatter of tom-toms and bells, whilst at intervals the report of distant guns showed that game was plentiful and moving. At 10 a.m. we all met on the further side of the bush, and as the hunters threw down their loads we found the bag a varied one—7 good sized gazelles, 3 bush cats, and a miscellaneous collection of smaller trophies in fur and feather. It was reported

that a splendid herd of harness deer escaped by a ravine—you may believe this or not as you like—the natives are never behind hand in ‘fishermen’s tales’!”

Religion.—First I will describe a curious system called “Parroah”—half political, half religious—existing among the Timneahs Tribes up country. The Parroah, according to rumour (for we have no other source of information, only one European up to the time my father left Africa having entered the Society, and he was an American), is a secret Society presided over by an order of men who trade upon the religious instincts of the people. The entrance into the order is most carefully guarded. For six months a neophyte must live in strict retirement in the heart of the forest. During that time no human eye must rest upon him. He must be a stranger even to the members of his own family. Then at the end of this period he is circumcised, and the nape of the neck is punctured with a pattern something like a fleur-de-lys. The ceremonies concluded, the neophyte becomes a full brother, and is bound body and soul to the rule of his order. On the occasion of such an initiation, the whole country is moved with fraternal rejoicing. The Parroah men come together in crowds, and the country people, nothing loth, join in the merriment. I once, says my historian, accidentally intruding upon such a festive gathering, heard the sound of a drum in the distance, and quickening my pace, a sudden turn in the road brought us right into the circle. There sat the drummer pounding away upon a deer-skin stretched over the mouth of a hollow log, in front of him were ranged half a score of sable dancers. On their heads they wore turbans, striped red and white, their loins with like material, both feet and hands adorned with silver rings, and their skins shone with oil. In a dense circle the crowd stood, eagerly beating time to the monotonous music. The worst features of these festivals is the unrestrained license. The Parroah groves are the scenes of the wildest passion. Even children, they say, have been murdered and eaten at these banquets. And if we are to judge from the gloomy character of their sanctuaries, hidden from the light in heart of the primeval

forest and enclosed by gigantic forest trees, we may believe the rumour true. There is a society for women something like the Parroah called “Bundoo,” but I am not able to give you any reliable details. The Timneah people, unlike the interior tribes, have no idols. They worship stones and sticks and relics of the dead. They may have some latent notion of existing goodness, but for all practical purposes they are devil worshippers of the lowest grade. As an illustration, I may mention that my father once met a large party of chiefs at a village. “We held our conference under a tree. A few weeks after, I visited the same place, and on enquiring for the tree heard that the people had discovered it to be haunted. In the dead of night, therefore, amidst drumming and firing and maddening dances, they had set fire to and consumed that which was doing God’s work so much better than themselves. The interior tribes, however, have idols. One is called ‘Shango,’ and is worshipped by the Aku people. This fellow [exhibited] was once really worshipped, and was given to my grandfather by a convert at the time of his baptism. On his head is a thunder bolt, which, like the classical Jove, he rolls through the sky, and when the people hear the roar they rush out into the storm, and by dint of counter noise try to silence the thunder clap. Others again worship the moon. They call him “Orisha.” When the new moon is expected there is a general turn out of his devotees. Women, men, children all stand in breathless expectation, and as soon as he appears over the tops of the forest trees the stillness of the night is broken by a perfect roar of sound. Every voice simultaneously is raised in praise. After the salutation comes prayer. Here is a specimen given me by one who actually heard it, and translated it:—

“O moon, thou hast appeared favourably; be, I pray thee, very good to me. I know now that nothing can harm me; grant that no injury may happen to anybody belonging to me. I pray thee, O moon, to protect me, guard my father, my mother, my sisters, my brothers, and my brother’s children.”

Warriors worship the God of War. "When I was on the coast," relates my father, "the Governor of Sierra Leone determined to give back to the natives a slice of territory which in years past had been taken from them. The matter got abroad and raised a great excitement among the heathen, and they determined to have a great sacrifice. I got news of this, and being ill myself, sent down a man to make observations." Here then are the facts translated from notes taken at the time:—"On the 26th I reached Malangor, a town on the River Ribby. A crowd of Sherbro people were massed upon the banks. In their midst stood a child wrapped in white. After much speaking in Sherbro, a canoe put out from shore with the child on board. Slowly they pulled into mid stream, and then in unbroken silence they deliberately dropped the child overboard as an offering to the gods." I could give other facts from my own personal knowledge, but I prefer rather to borrow again from the note book of my friend—"Not far from my house the following terrible scene was enacted. A man in the prime of life was led out upon the hill side for sacrifice. For many days he had been in preparation for the event. When all the worshippers were assembled the Chief administered a strong poison which speedily took effect. Around the prostrate body the warriors gathered and poured out their prayers. Some prayed for safety, some for success, some for spoil. Next came the townsfolk, and each one in turn shouted his petition in the ear of the senseless sacrifice. Then the throng tore off his head as he lay upon the ground, and bore it in wild procession to the top of a lofty hill. What followed I know not—but any body who has mingled with savages can imagine the scene of ghastly revelry which then ensued. I think I see them around the corpse. Like tigers that have tasted blood they gloat upon the sacrifice. They dance the dance of devilry, and so all through the hot tropical night they defile God's air with awful sounds of wickedness."

I have a curious head-dress which I keep as a proud trophy of what the Christian religion can overcome. It came into my grandfather's hands under peculiar circum-

stances. He was resident in Sierra Leone 70 years ago—in 1841—and at the beginning of his work as a Christian Missionary he was exposed to many trials from which settlers are now free. Of these, the Egugu processions were perhaps the most provoking—other evils were stationary, but the Egugu roamed from morning till night disturbing the native villagers with his drums and his dances, and spreading terror and unrest wherever he went. No woman who looked upon Egugu devil was permitted to live; she was instantly struck down with a sabre. At last my grandfather, losing all patience, determined to put a stop to the whole thing, even if it cost him his life. When next the torment appeared, on a Sunday it was, alone he rushed out into the road from the little mud church and seized the wooden mask. It was a daring thing to do, for round him surged an excited crowd of many thousands drawn from every village in the neighbourhood. There, too, were the Aku devil's bodyguard, with weapons and stout staves in their hands. But the suddenness of the action took them by surprise, and before they could recover the devil impostor was pulled within the compound, stripped, and shown up in his native ugliness. For days after the people watched my father, expecting to see him sicken and die, but when he proved rather better than otherwise for the exercise, their faith in the whole system of devil worship was violently shaken. From that day the Egugu worship lost its power, and Christianity obtained a foothold. The result of this cult on the natives was extraordinary. I have seen (my father writes now) Egugus so worked by rum and excitement that they seemed possessed. I have seen them surrounded by a circle of sympathetic friends, wallowing and biting the earth in maddened ecstasy. Passion breathed through every pore, and each word and frantic gesture suggested a startling similarity between himself and that which he only tried to imitate. The life of a heathen is at all times saturated with his creed. They believe heart and soul in what they profess. So in this case they absolutely trusted the power of evil, and in the power of charms to neutralise his influence. Here is a charm taken from the head dress of a society debutante. It is nothing but a few shells; but a bit of leather or a string of

beads will mean more to a mother as she ties it round the neck of her child than her own care, a better protection than her own arms. There are charms everywhere: around the houses, in the farms, even in the field a long stick may be seen with a rag flying from the top. The neck of a bottle with a stone slung inside it, tinkling in the hot air like a bell, a broken branch, a broken stone from the roadside—all have a place. But they are really the expression of the deepest feelings of this fallen race.

Of course the Africans believe strongly in witch-craft—no one ever sickens or dies without the intervention of a neighbour with an evil eye. The cry is, in such a case, "He is witched!" "He is witched," and as they used to do in the days of the "Moss Hags," they seize some inoffensive person and subject them to the trial by ordeal. In conclusion, I might recall a curious instance of this recorded in my father's notebook:—"A man had a dream; he dreamt that the second man in the village had 'witched him.' If he had kept the dream to himself there would at once have been an end of the matter, but he told it to his neighbour, and in about an hour it was the talk of the village. According to native custom, this amounted to a criminal charge against the Chief, and if I had not happened to be in the vicinity he would have been compelled to mount a platform, and in the sight of his relations and neighbours, to drain a cup of poison—but as it was, I was obliged, as J.P., to settle the matter, and give them a scolding all round."

THE FEEDING OF WILD BIRDS IN CONFINEMENT.

BY JAMES CLARK.

[Read 28th February, 1911.]

Goldfinches are fairly plentiful in Bute. In a state of Nature they feed on spear plume thistle, milk thistle, knapweed, groundsel, dandelion, cornflower, shepherd's purse. In confinement feed on the following mixture—2 parts canary seed, 1 part teasel, 2 parts hemp, a pinch of inga, and maw seed once or twice a week, also the above mentioned weeds in season.

Bullfinches are plentiful, and make delightful pets. They feed on the buds of larch, plums, black currants, hawthorn, flowering heads of dandelion, groundsel, shepherd's purse, ragwort, forget-me-nots, dock, meadow sweet, heather, privet, rowan and black currant berries. In confinement feed on 2 parts canary, 1 part teasel, 1 part German rape, a pinch of hemp and sunflower twice a week. Don't give much hemp as it darkens the plumage, and sometimes it turns the feathers jet black.

Siskins are fairly plentiful. In a wild state they feed on spear plume thistle, groundsel, ragwort, knapweed, milk thistle, and alder berries. In confinement feed on 2 parts canary, 1 part teasel, a pinch of maw, inga and hemp twice a week. Hemp should be sparingly given. Should they get too fat it is a good plan to let them fly about the room for a day or or two.

Brown Linnets are very plentiful. They feed on shepherd's purse, chickweed, spear plume thistle, knapweed, daisies and