

Jan 26. 28.

CRIPPS'S CORNER,

FOREST ROW,

SUSSEX.

Dear Fisher.

Thanks for yours about cuckoos. My bird love is not profound, so you must not trust to me too much. I had not thought of some of the effects of parasitism which you suggest. When the parasitism is complete, the parental care vanishes altogether. Is the Rhea parasitic? I thought it was only communal. I have not seen the paper about cuckoos and 2 types of hosts. Let me know if you get it, or its name. Not that I suspect really

to work at such problems. (2)

As to territory, many birds congregate out of the breeding season. 150,000 Starlings in one place in Dublin? I suppose for protection. For they so, during the day, with other birds, crows, &c. Pigeons are very strictly monogamous. They congregate by hundreds or thousands in the winter. But I do not think they are very gregarious during nesting times, but am not sure. Chaffinches congregate after the breeding season; the two sexes a good deal separated. Why? a relic of the territory instinct?

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I don't know about non-parasitic cuckoos, except that they lay few eggs.

Do not ever give rise to some nice selective problems as regards fecundity. The ordinary ideas do not apply to sterile offspring. If the young females originally had their maternal instincts developed abnormally young, and began to look after their young brothers and sisters, we see how a beginning might have been made. Then if some were sterile, so much the better. And does not such a state of things put a stop to

the ordinary check a faculty?
 Here is a nice thing to
 think about.

How is Pearl going to
 blow us all to atoms? Did
 he let out? In a letter to
 me he says he is very dissatisfied
 with the way in which the
 differential fertility question
 has been left by Pearson and
 Heron.

No answer needed

Yours sincerely

Lancelot D. Brown