capercailzie cock weighs sixteen pounds. Speaking of this bird, as it exists in Sweden, Mr. Lloyd says,@@1 “The favour­ite haunts of the capercali are extensive fir woods; in coppices or small cover he is seldom or never found. The principal food of the capercali, when in a state of nature, consists of the leaves of the Scotch fir ; he very rarely, however, feeds upon those of the spruces ; he also eats juniper berries, cran­berries, blaeberries, and other berries common to the north­ern forests ; and occasionally also, in the winter time, the buds of the birch, &c. The young capercali feed principal­ly at first on ants, worms, insects, &c.” It was the felling of the timber, aided, perhaps, by the cross-bow, which is not ill-adapted to the purpose, that exterminated this pri­meval habitant of the old Caledonian forests. Some years since an attempt was made to re-introduce this bird to its ancient haunts in Scotland, but without success. “ It is a pity,”; continues Mr. Lloyd, “ that attempts are not made once more to introduce the capercali into the United Kingdom, for, if the experiment was undertaken with judgment, it would most probably be attended with success ; the climate, soil, &c. in Scotland, at least, not being very disimilar, in many respects, to the south of Sweden. In Scotland, be­sides, independently of the natural forests, there are now considerable tracks of land planted with pines, from which trees, when the ground is covered with snow, those birds obtain nearly the whole of their sustenance.” Since this was written, several brace of these birds have been sent over from Sweden ; and on the estates of the Marquis of Bread-albane the experiment of localising them is in course of trial. We believe they were procured by Mr. Lloyd him­self, and under his auspices, from his knowledge of the habits of the bird, we doubt not that the cock of the wood will be­come permanently established in the Highlands. It may be inferred that the same description of country (the heaths and forests being on a more extended scale,) which suits the blackcock, would likewise suit the capercailzie, since, as Mr. Lloyd observers, “ the capercali occasionally breed with the black game ; the produce of which partake of the lead­ing characteristics of both species. Their size and colour, however, greatly depend upon whether the connexion was between the capercali cock and the grey hen, or *vice versâ.”* In winter, the male birds congregate in packs after the manner of black game. In Sweden the capercailzie is usual­ly shot with the rifle.

*The Ptarmigan.* We have now for some time travers­ed, with the reader, the highest hills that are covered with heather, but there are heights beyond. The poet says,

For Liberty ! go seek

Earth’s highest rocks and ocean's deepest caves ! Go where the eagle and the sea-snake dwell!@@,

It may be admissible in poetry to give the highest cliffs to the king of birds, but zoology assigns a lower elevation to “ the eagle’s birth-place yes, you may ascend above the äerie of the eagle, where the croak of the raven is never heard, where the fox and the weazel but seldom disturb the lonely habitants. You may ascend until, in the glowing language of Mr.Mudie,@@3 “you begin at last to feel alone, severed entirely from the world of society, of life, and of growth, and commit­ted to the solitude of the ancient hills and immeasurable sky. The snow lies thick on the side of the summit, and even peers over the top, defying the utmost efforts of solstitial

heat. There is no plant under your feet, save lichen on the rock, apparently as hard and as strong as that to which it adheres—it can hardly be said to grow—and moss in some crevice, undistinguishable from the dull and cold mud into which the storms of many winters have abraded the granite. You are above the reach of all sound from the inhabited parts of the country.” And what do we find in this re­gion of snow ? “A few mottled pebbles, or at least what appear to be such, each about twice the size of your hand, lie at some distance, where the decomposed rock, and the rudiments of what may be called the most elevated moun­tain vegetation, just begin to ruffle the surface. By and by a cloud shadows the sun, the air blows chill as November, and a few drops fall, freezing or melting in their descent, you cannot well tell which. The mottled pebbles begin to move ; you throw a stone at them to shew that you can move pebbles as well as the mountain. The stone hits be­yond them ; they run toward your feet, as if claiming your protection ; they are birds, ptarmigan, the uppermost tenants of the island, whom not even winds, which could uproot forests, and frosts, which could all but congeal mer­cury, can drive from these their mountain haunts. It has often been observed, that of all the human inhabitants of the earth, the mountaineer, be his mountain ever so barren, is the last to quit ; and the same holds true of the mountain bird.” The same writer traces the different elevations at which various species of game is found, beginning with the pheasant, as the tenant of the lowermost woods ; the par­tridge, of the plain ; the blackcock, of the confines of culti­vation ; the grouse, of the lesser hills and mountain-side ; and the ptarmigan, of the snow-crowned summits. He also adds, “ in these birds we trace a sort of resemblance to the general colour of the places which they inhabit, though we know not well the cause of the colour in either case. The ptarmigan is mossy rock in summer, hoar frost in autumn, and snow in winter. Grouse are brown heather, black game are peat-bank and shingle, and partridges are clods and withered stalks all the year round.” And we will add, the capercailzie is the black branch of the pine. A similar scale is applicable to the seasons at which these birds are hatched. Although, taking each species individually, we find the earliest birds in the warmest country and on the richest land : collectively, the order is reversed ; the higher their location, the earlier do they arrive at their full growth. The ptarmigan is ready for the table before the period at which it may be legally shot, the twelfth of August. De­scending the hill, we find the red grouse not three parts grown at that period. A little lower, and the scarcely- fledged black-cock rises almost helpless, on the twentieth of August. Lower still, on the fertile plain, the young par­tridge does not assume his grey mantle and purple crescent until long after the first of September. And in the warm woods the pheasant does not don his panoply of gold until the fall of the leaf.

Few are the sportsmen who climb the granite cliffs, and wade the winter snows in which ptarmigan delight to bury themselves. A ramble there, is a journey of curiosity or observation, rather than a sporting excursion. It is a pil­grimage to the loftiest Highland altitudes. The fowling- piece becomes converted into the palmer’s staff ; and the sportsman merges in the adventurer, the enthusiast, the worshipper of Nature ! (b. x.)

@@@, Field Sports of the North of Europe.

@@@’ Rienzi, a Tragedy, (1st edition.) London.

@@@• The Feathered Tribes of the British Islands. By Robert Mudie. 2d edition. 1835. London, Whittaker.