

The splendid large Bird-winged Butterfly, with brilliant green and velvety black wings (*Ornithoptera poseidon*), was common in the woods, but flew high and was difficult to catch. I shot one or two with dust shot, without their being utterly damaged. I once, however, was lucky enough to find a flock of about a dozen males, fluttering round and mobbing a single female. They were then hovering slowly, quite close to the ground, and were easily caught.

The female had thus a large body of gaudy admirers from which to make her choice. Interesting results might possibly be derived from a series of experiments, in which, in the case of brightly coloured and decorated butterflies, the colours should be rubbed off the wings of a few amongst a number of males, or painted over of a black or brown colour. It might be tested whether the females would always prefer the brightly coloured ones. Dark-coloured butterflies might possibly have the wings of the male touched up with a little colour.

Similar experiments might be made with more chance of success in the case of gaudy birds, the features of the cock being dyed dark, or enhanced in colouring in the case of a little decorated male. The hen might be kept in a cage between two males, and it might be noted to which she gave the preference; and then, whether an alteration in the colours of the plumage caused a change in her inclination. If the artificial increase of colouring succeeded as an experiment, then experiments might be made to learn what colours, or mixture of colours, is most attractive in various cases.\*

A party visited Wanumbai, Mr. Wallace's old hunting-ground, in the ship's steam-pinnace. We steamed across a sort of lagoon, shut in by the islands, passing on the way a large Sea Snake on the top of the water, and made our way up the remarkable canal-like channel, for the formation of which Mr. Wallace found it difficult to account. The people of Wanumbai were very much scared at the appearance of the pinnace, full of men with guns, but we had taken some Malays from Dobbo with us to act as pilots, and introduce us, and they jumped on shore and addressed the people of Wanumbai ("Orang Wanumbai, Ye men of Wanumbai,"), and soon made matters right. They told them that we had only come to shoot

Mr. Tegetmeier stained some pigeons with magenta at Mr. Darwin's request, but the birds were not much noticed by the others. Mr. Darwin cites the case of the pied peacock, and that of the silver pheasant which had its plumage spoiled, and which was then rejected by the hens. No systematic experiments, however, seem to have been made on this subject, though they could easily be carried out in the case of birds. C. Darwin, "The Descent of Man," Vol. II., pp. 118, 120. London, Murray, 1871.