

seasons plenty of the latter ; but just now, only a few were to be found, and they were breeding. I saw two nests. In the thicker bushes are so-called "pheasants" (*Francolinus*). There are introduced true pheasants about the foot of Table Mountain in considerable numbers, preserved for shooting.

A large shrike, with a yellowish breast, is the commonest and most conspicuous of the smaller birds ; but the most beautiful are the little *Nectarinidæ* or Honey-birds, which here take the place of the Humming-birds of South America, and in their splendid gold and green colouring are almost equal to them. Above Simons Town is a sort of small gorge or chasm in the mountain-side, where there is a waterfall with beautiful ferns growing about it, and where above, on the cliffs, nest hundreds of swallows. I used as a boy to wonder how chimney swallows and house martins managed to nest before there were any houses.

The sandy flats and fields about the sea-shore are covered with mole-hills, and bored in all directions with tunnels, large enough to admit the hand and arm easily, by the huge Sand-mole (*Bathyergus suilus*). *Bathyergus* is a Rodent, with an excessively long pair of projecting lower gnawing teeth. It is a foot long, and covered with a light grey-brown silky fur.

There is another similar Rodent mole of about half the size (*Georychus capensis*), which rather affects higher land, but occurs also sometimes with *Bathyergus*.

The two together are in such abundance as to cover the country in all directions with mole-hills, and in galloping over the sand one is very apt to be thrown headlong by one of their galleries giving way under the horse's feet. I had two such falls in one day. A clever horse, brought up in the country, learns, however, whilst turned out on the run, to lift his foot out of a hole without stumbling.

It is the custom to call the moles, such as we have in Europe, the *true* moles, and to regard these Rodent moles as animals which in some extraordinary way have adopted habits not proper to Rodents, but natural and what is to be expected in a certain group of Insectivora. But in reality, there seems to be no reason why the one set should be the *true* moles rather than the other, excepting merely as a matter of home nomenclature and prejudice. The South American Rodent mole, the "*tucutuco*" (*Ctenomys*), is familiar as described by Darwin in his Journal. And besides this, there are all the *Spalacini*, or Blind-moles, of which there are nine genera, including *Bathyergus* and *Georychus*, forming steps towards the ground squirrels, *Geomys*.

Of the *true* moles, or Insectivora, with the habits and outward