The law only applies to real property, which, by the Norman custom, was divided in certain proportions among all the children; and this right of "retrait," as it is technically termed, was doubtless intended to counteract in some measure the too minute division of land, and to preserve inheritances in families. It must be exercised within a year of the purchase. For further information on the subject, Berry's History of Guernsey, p. 176., may be consulted. 

Honoré de Mareville.

Latin Inscription on Lindsey Court-house (Vol. ix., pp. 492. 552.). — I cannot but express my surprise at the learned (?) trifling of some of your correspondents on the inscription upon Lindsey Court-house. Try it thus:

"Fiat Justitia, 1619,
Hae domus
Odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, jura, bonos."

which will make two lines, an hexameter and a pentameter, the first letters, O and N, having perhaps been effaced by time or accident. 

NEGLIGENCE.

[That this emendation is the right one is clear from the communication of another correspondent, B. R. A. Y., who makes the same, and adds in confirmation, "The following lines existed formerly (and do, perhaps, now) on the Market-house at Much Wenlock, Shropshire, which will explain their meaning:

"Hic locus
Odit, amat, punit, conservat, honorat,
Nequitiam, pacem, crimina, jura, bonos."

The O and N, being at the beginning of the lines as given by your correspondent, were doubtless obliterated by age."

The restoration of this inscription proposed by me is erroneous, and must be corrected from the perfect inscription as preserved at Pistoia and Much Wenlock, cited by another correspondent in p. 552. The three inscriptions are slightly varied. Perhaps "amat pacem" is better than "amat leges," on account of the tautology with "conservat jura." 

Myrtle Bee (Vol. ix., p. 205. &c.). — I have carefully read and reread the articles on the myrtle bee, and I can come to no other conclusion than that it is not a bird at all, but an insect, one of the hawkmoths, and probably the humming-bird hawkmoth. We have so many indefatigable genuine field naturalists, picking up every straggler which is blown to our coasts, that I cannot think it possible there is a bird at all common to any district of England, and yet totally unknown to science. Now, insects are often exceedingly abundant in particular localities, yet scarcely known beyond them. The size C. Brown describes as certainly not larger than half that of the common wren. The humming-bird (H. M.) is scarcely so large as this, but its vibratory motion would make it look somewhat larger than it really is. Its breadth, from tip to tip of the wings, is twenty to twenty-four lines. The myrtle bee's "short flight is rapid, steady, and direct," exactly that of the hawkmoth. The tongue of the myrtle bee is "round, sharp, and pointed at the end, appearing capable of penetration," not a bad popular description of the suctorial trunk of the hawkmoth, from which it gains its generic name, MacroGLOSSA. Its second pair of wings are of a rusty yellow colour, which, when closed, would give it the appearance of being "tinged with yellow about the vent." It has also a tuft of scaly hairs at the extremity of the abdomen, which would suggest the idea of a tail. In fact, on the wing, it appears very like a little bird, as attested by its common name. In habit it generally retires from the midday sun, which would account for its being "put up" by the dogs. The furze-chat, mentioned by C. Brown, is the Saxicola rubetra, commonly also called the whinchat. Wm. Hazel.

Mousehunt (Vol. ix., p. 65. &c.). — G. Tenneyson identifies the mousehunt with the beech-martin, the very largest of our Mustelidae, on the authority of Henley "the dramatic commentator." Was he a naturalist too? I never heard of him as such.

Now, Mr. W. R. D. Salmon, who first asked the question, speaks of it as less than the common weasel, and quotes Mr. Colquhoun's opinion, that it is only "the young of the year." I have no doubt at all that this is correct. The young of all the Mustelidae hunt, and to a casual observer exhibit all the actions of full-grown animals, when not more than half the size of their parents. There seems no reason to suppose that there are more than four species known in England, the weasel, the stoat or ermine, the polecat, and the martin. The full-grown female of the weasel is much smaller than the male. Go to any zealous gamekeeper's exhibition, and you will see them of many gradations in size.

Wm. Hazel.

Longfellow's "Hyperion" (Vol. ix., p. 495.). — I would offer the following rather as a suggestion than as an answer to Mordan Gillett. But it has always appeared to me that Longfellow has himself explained, by a simple allusion in the work, the reason which dictated the name of his Hyperion. As the ancients fabled Hyperion to be the offspring of the heavens and the earth; so, in his aspirations, and his weakness and sorrows, Fleming (the hero of the work) personifies, as it were, the mingling of heaven and earth in the heart and
mind of a man of true nobility. The passage to which I allude is the following:

"Noble examples of a high purpose, and a fixed will! Do they not move, Hyperion-like, on high? Were they not likewise sons of heaven and earth?"—

Book iv. ch. 1.

SELECTUS.

Benjamin Rush (Vol. ix., p. 451.).—Inquirer asks "Why the freedom of Edinburgh was conferred upon him?" I have looked into the Records of the Town Council, and found the following entry:

"4th March, 1767. The Council admit and receive Richard Stockton, Esquire, of New Jersey, Counsellour at Law, and Benjamin Rush, Esquire, of Philadelphia, to be burgesses and gild brethren of this city, in the most ample form."

But there is no reason assigned.

JAMES LAMIE, Conjoint Town Clerk.

Quakers executed in North America (Vol. ix., p. 305.).—A fuller account of these nefarious proceedings is detailed in an abstract of the sufferings of the people called Quakers, in 2 vols., 1733; vol. i. (Appendix) pp. 491-514., and in vol. iii. pp. 195-232.

E. D.

For the purpose of inserting as many Replies as possible in this, the closing Number of our Ninth Volume, we have this week omitted our usual Notes on Books and Lists of Books WANTED TO PURCHASE.

W. W. (Malta). Received with many thanks.


Mr. Long's easy Calotype Process reached us too late for insertion this week. It shall appear in our next.

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