

THE WAY THINGS WERE

*An extract from BIRD ROOM AND AVIARY, by the Rev. C.D. Farrar
Published early last century by F.V. White & Co., Ltd.
Link House, Greville Street, E.C.1*

This extract is taken from the chapter headed "*The Feeding of Birds*"

"Soft food, because it is my very own, is the very best that can be had. You try it and see. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

Here is my recipe:

Buy 6 lbs. of tea biscuits from your grocer.

Add 3 lbs. of dried flies and 2 lbs. of best ants' eggs, then 1lb. of Cressel. Pound up three cuttle-fish bones and mix with the other ingredients. You will, of course, pound up the biscuits. Let the youngsters jump on them—they love to destroy something, and it will give them plenty of exercise.

Then go to the cook, if you have one, and borrow her best bread bowl, and mix all the ingredients well together. Next get 1 lb. of the best beef dripping; mind it is quite fresh. Melt it in the oven, and when it is properly liquid, pour it on the mass and thoroughly mix it until it is just evenly damp. It is a dirty job, so if you are careful about your nails, get cook to do it for you. To her it is nothing.

Next get half a pound of the best honey, liquefy it and add it to the whole, thoroughly mixing it and leaving no lumps. If properly mixed, it will pass quite easily through your hands.

Place the mixture in a big biscuit tin and it will keep for years in a dry cupboard. All birds eat it eagerly and thrive on it.

Never damp the mixture with water.

On the mixture and a few mealworms daily any sort of bird will do well.

When you have read these remarks, I hope you won't say to me what an old lady did to a friend who had just delivered a public lecture. 'I am so glad to see you again; it reminds me of old times when we were so much with Mr. Gladstone^{*}. Of course, it's an immense privilege to have known him so well as you and I did, and to have heard him speak so often, but the drawback is this, it makes all other speaking so very dull and commonplace.'"

^{*}The Right Honourable William Ewart Gladstone, British Prime Minister 1868-74, 1880-85, 1886 and 1892-94.