

CORRESPONDENCE.

1. "OSPREYS."

102, *Cheyne Walk, Chelsea,*
London, S.W.

SIR,—In our Journal for July, 1899, p. 493, Mr. F. W. Thomas translates "kūṭājvara 'fever caused by hooting of ospreys.'" I venture to suggest that the bird referred to may not be the "osprey" of English naturalists (*Pandion haliaetus*). This, although not at all a *dumb* bird, is perhaps the least noisy of all birds of prey, especially in India, where it seldom breeds, and therefore has not often to address a mate or young.

I suppose that if you polled India to-morrow you would not find an hundred men who could describe the call of the osprey in writing, in any language.

Perhaps there is some such joke in the word as in the phrase "horns of a hare," which seems to occur all over India. But more probably it is to be classed with our own term "Brain-fever Bird" applied to a certain black cuckoo; and the bird referred to was one of the fishing-eagles (*Haliaetus*), which are very familiar and vociferous in some places, and will even build, year after year, in towns and villages. It may, indeed, have been their poor relation, the red-and-white 'Brahmani Kite' (*Haliastur*), which is almost as noisy, more abundant, even bolder in habit, and a known object of other queer beliefs.

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