

By J. Sutton.

An Optical Illusion.—On returning home on 9th May, 1938, at 4.57 p.m., with L. E. Roake, the motor-car was stopped at the back of the house in the shade, and on getting out he drew my attention to some birds at a great height, about 1,000 feet. I could just distinguish that they were birds, and on getting my field-glasses I saw five birds circling around slowly and gaining height. Two of the birds were larger than the other three, and the latter occasionally flapped their wings, and on one occasion a bird seemed to attack another. As all these birds turned towards the west the whole of the underparts appeared red. My stepson, who has normal sight, said to me, "They are red underneath." I could distinguish the extended "fingers" of the primaries in the wings of the two larger birds, but I was greatly puzzled about their identity until after watching for five minutes I heard the far-off calls of the Whistling Eagle three times. After ten minutes from the first sighting the Whistling Eagles disappeared towards the west (the sea-coast). Sunset was at 5.26 p.m., and evidently the rays of the setting sun produced the seemingly reddish colour of the under parts on the birds.

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