

The
Bird - Fancier's
Companion.

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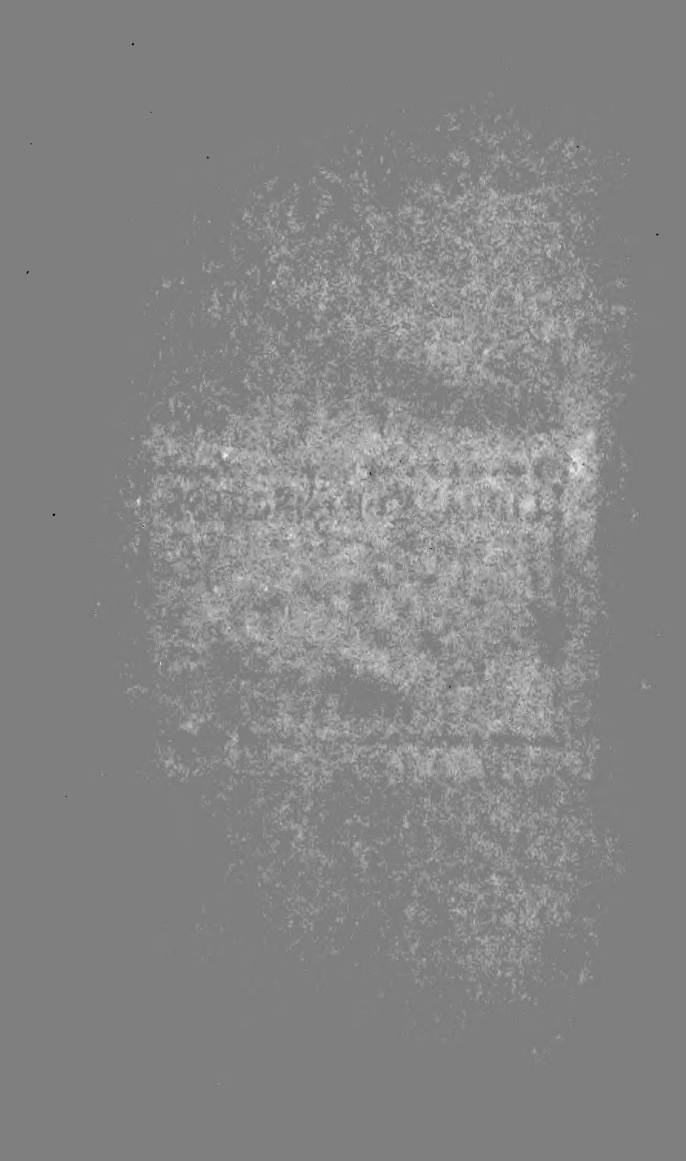
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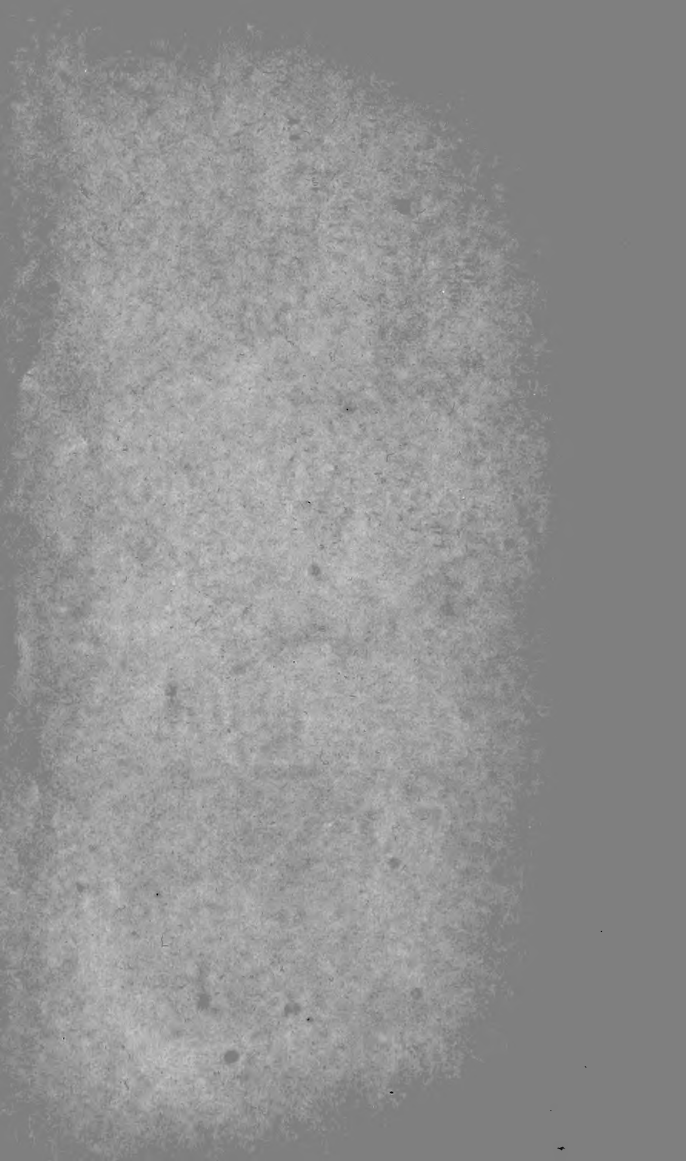
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The Bird Fancier's Companion.



Perfect Model of the
LONGBREED, OR FRENCH CANARY.

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THE

BIRD FANCIER'S COMPANION;

OR,

NATURAL HISTORY OF CAGE BIRDS;

THEIR

FOOD, MANAGEMENT, HABITS, TREAT-
MENT, DISEASES, ETC., ETC.

BY

CHARLES REICHE,

Late of Braunschweig, Germany.



TENTH EDITION.

„None so merry, so merry as we.“

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES REICHE & BROTHER,

At their Bird, Animal, Seed, and Cage Stores,

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INTRODUCTION.

WE all love Birds — Song birds especially. How can we help it? Are they not the most lovely and joyous of all God's creatures; and such fitting companions for our parlors, delighting us, as they do, with their charming and sweet harmony? And what can be more pleasant to the lovers of the beauty of nature, than to study their innocent and amusing habits; True as this is, we should at the same time not forget that, to enjoy this pleasure, these little warblers have to become our prisoners, and can only look to *us* for their necessaries. It is, consequently, our first duty to make *their* situation as comfortable as possible. To effect this, it is absolutely necessary to be acquainted with the proper treatment for such as we have selected for our fancy. This surely requires Some knowledge of which many persons are quite ignorant, especially of the European birds. This has induced me to draw up the following pages for the use of those who take delight in rearing them.

Having been brought up in the midst of these sweet songsters, in Germany; and always taken great delight in rearing them, from my youth; and been dealing in them, in

this country, nearly ten years, (having, during that time, brought over above twenty thousand birds,) it must be quite evident to every person, that I have had many opportunities to gather every information respecting their singing qualities and general treatment.

I now send forth this little book thro the American Bird Fancier, (with all its errors upon its head,) as well for *their* information and entertainment, as for *my own* reputation (and, I hope, profit) as a dealer in this department of Natural History, — hoping it will prove a useful and interesting (*multum in parvo*) volume, not only to the owner of cage birds, but also to the general reader, to while away a lonely hour, reading the history, habits, &c., &c., of those delightful specimens of God's wonderful works of nature.

I remain, very respectfully,

THE AUTHOR.

New York, March, 1853.



DISORDERS.

BIRDS, when properly taken care of, will seldom be attacked with any disease; I would, therefore, above all, recommend punctuality in feeding, and cleanliness; and most assuredly say that, nine times out of ten, if a bird take sick, it is by neglect of the above simple precautions. One thing is very essential: that is, to be very particular in selecting the *seed* given to them, which is fully particularized under the head of Treatment of the Canary. (See page 19).

1. *Moulting*.—The most of our cage birds shed their feathers yearly, in the month of September or October, lasting, with a healthy bird, from two to four weeks; and, though natural, it generally is accompanied with disease. They must at this time, be particularly taken care of. Being so much more bare of feathers, they are consequently more liable to take cold; should, therefore, be kept in rather a warmer place than usual; and above all, protect them from a draught of air. A good deal of room to fly about enables them to drop their feathers more easy. It is well to see that they do not get out of food, as they eat more when under the influence of moulting; and their food should be varied. For those birds that live on seeds, plenty of green food, some

bread and milk, and a little smoked bacon, scraped off with a knife, is very healthy. And for soft-bill birds, a meal worm dipped in sweet oil, some berries, and ant's eggs. Plenty of water for bathing should be given them. Birds that roll in sand (instead of bathing in water), such as larks, quails, &c., require plenty of very dry gravel.

If it happens that the wing or tail feathers do not drop, they may be pulled out, two or three every day. Some birds change their feathers *twice* a-year, (fall and spring.) These change their color also, being much handsomer in summer than in winter. They are chiefly natives of warm climates.

2. *Vermin*.—A great trouble to birds in confinement, are insects (small lice, of a reddish color), which often cause the death of a bird, though persons do not know what is the matter with them. They are generally produced by uncleanness, and will, particularly in a wooden cage, increase very fast. The symptoms are, that when the bird, during the day, is observed to be often picking itself, and the wing and shoulders becoming bald, the crevices and joinings of their cage becoming dirty outside. The insects hide themselves during the day, in those crevices, &c., creep out at night, crawl up to the birds, and torment them most unmercifully. They will suck the blood out of them, and prevent the poor things from resting all night. The bird thus tormented, will appear dull and heavy during the day; ceases singing; and if relief be not given them, it very often causes their death.

It is easier to guard against these insects, than to get rid of them when once nestled. Persons purchasing cages should, therefore, be careful to have them perfectly new; and then, by keeping them clean, with plenty of dry gravel on the bottom of the cage, and a daily bath for the bird, there is but little danger of being troubled with the above.

If, however, by neglect of these precautions, insects should have got into the cage, it is best to put the bird into a clean one, and let the infected one be scalded. In the winter season, leaving it out a night or two will answer the same purpose.

I have found the use of hollow sticks, or reeds, as perches, to be a great preventative of these troublesome insects increasing, as they creep and hide themselves in these hollows during the day; so that taking them out occasionally, and scalding them, is sure to destroy the insects. Those perches then may be replaced. All other remedies, I have found to be of little account

3. *Epilepsy*.—Too rich food is generally the cause of this disease. The bird, when attacked by it, should be dipped into cold water; or blooded, which is done by cutting the hind claw, just far enough to draw blood, then holding the foot in lukewarm water, till it ceases bleeding.

4. *Consumption*.—This disease is more common in birds (especially canaries) than any other. The symptoms differ: sometimes the feathers on the bird sticking

out, and its eating an unusual quantity; the eyes looking heavy, &c. At another time giving a kind of hiccup, appearing as if it had something sticking in its throat, which it would like to have removed. If any of these symptoms appear, some green food, such as lettuce, chickweed, cabbage, or sweet apple, according to the season; some stale bread, soaked in water, well pressed, and mixed with fresh cream; a frequent bath; and a rusty iron nail in their drinking water, are what we recommend.

5. *Asthma, or hard breathing.* — This is generally brought on by keeping a bird in too warm, or unventilated, a room; where the delicate lungs of these little creatures get injured. Soft food, such as soaked summer rape seed; bread boiled in milk; and less canary seed than usual, — these we have found to be the best remedy.

We have also found linseed tea, made very thin, to be good, both for asthma and consumption, in healing the affected parts. It is given to them, for a day or two, instead of water: and renewed after a few days if not found effective.

6. *Costiveness.* — This is discovered when the bird is unable to relieve itself. In such case, it should be taken out of the cage, and a drop of castor oil administered to it, by opening its bill, and dropping it in; be sure you observe that the bird has swallowed it. Or a small quantity of rhubarb (pulverised), about the size of a

grain of canary seed, mixed with soaker bread and sugar. This they will eat freely, being sweet. If the disease is light, plenty of green food will generally remove it.

For *soft-bill* birds, a few meal worms, dipped in sweet oil, will have the desired effect.

7. *Hoarseness, or loss of voice.*—This sometimes comes on by the bird taking cold, or oversinging itself. Rock candy, pounded very fine, put into their drinking water, or mixed with the yolk of a hard-boiled egg, added to their food, is very good. If the bird is discovered to be sneezing, and his nostrils stopped up, they may be cleared by passing a small quill, pulled out of their wing, *through it*.

8. *The Rump Gland.*—This gland, which is on the rump, contains the oil for anointing the feathers. People ignorant of this fact, call it a disease, and often open it to let out the matter. This is quite wrong, as it is necessary for all birds, and nature has taught them to manage it themselves. If the bird gets sick, the gland sometimes becomes swollen, by the bird not being able to extract the oil. In this case, it is well to pull a few feathers from each side *of the tail*; if necessary, the whole. The new feathers growing out of the tail again, will then draw oil enough to relieve the bird.



EUROPEAN SONG BIRDS.

THE CANARY.

„THE UNIVERSAL PARLOR BIRD.“

THIS bird has its origin from the Canary Islands, where its color is of a greenish gray, but has, owing to its domestication, changed into a much more beautiful plumage. We now find some of a greenish gray; some yellow spotted, some light yellow, and some deep yellow. The latter color is generally the most admired.

They were first introduced into Europe about the sixteenth century,* where their notes, particularly in Germany, were greatly improved, by raising them in rooms, where other birds, such as nightingales, wood-larks, sky-larks, &c., &c., were commonly kept. Adding

* The arrival of the canary into Europe is thus described, A vessel which besides its merchandise, was bringing a number of these birds to Leghorn, was shipwrecked on the coast of Italy, opposite the Island of Elba, where these little birds, having been set at liberty, took refuge. The climate being favorable, they increased and would have become naturalized, had not the wish to possess them occasioned their being caught in such numbers, that at last they were extirpated from their country. From this cause, Italy was the first European country where the canary was reared:

to this by a frequent use of a little pipe or other instrument played to them, the young ones had sufficient opportunity of being fully educated. They would take some notes from each bird in whose neighborhood they happened to be located ; and by agreeably mixing these notes, the canary has attained such a beautiful and varied song, which each family transmits to its descendants.

When the composed song of the canary was thought completed, the use of other birds was not deemed necessary, as the young ones now learned from their parents ! but great care has been taken to hold up the most agreeable and varied song, also to avoid all false and unpleasant notes, which the bird, on hearing, is very apt to take up. Instead of a succession of noisy bursts, the bird must know how, with a silvery, sonorous voice, to descend regularly through all the tones of the octave. The most admired notes are the bow-trill (bow-roll), the bell note, the flute, the water-bubble, the nightingale note, wood-lark note, &c. ; the whole song must consist of about twenty different notes. It is necessary that, to raise such birds, the breeder must be a good judge himself ; he must look out not to put any birds to breed who have unpleasant notes ; he must also keep one or two of the very best singers in a single cage near the breeding-room, which will be the teachers of the young. Owing to long practice and experience, the German breeders have been able to gather much information respecting their singing qualities and general management. This is the reason that the *German* canaries are much superior in singing to any others.

The best singers have been raised, within the last century, on the Harz Mountain, in the kingdom of Hanover, and in Thuringia, in Saxony, and have become quite an article of merchandise. They raise annually no less than *fifty thousand* in that country which are disposed of over the greater part of the earth, and sometimes at extraordinary prices. In the present year (1853), there were no less than ten thousand German canaries brought over to the United States.*

The manner they are bred there is as follows : a room of about 10 to 15 feet square is chosen ; plenty of nest-boxes are hung around the walls, and perches placed across the room. Then they put in 6 to 10 males, and about three times as many females. The month of March is when they are mated, so as to have three or four broods, one each month in succession.

The young ones, so soon as they are able to feed themselves, are taken away and put into another room, where they are left flying about until the dealer makes his purchase — which is as soon as they are done shedding, and fit to be transported, say in the month of October. The dealer now examines the birds and selects those he thinks best suited for his market ; as to the price, it varies according to the singing qualities and plumage, often bringing nearly double as much as the general run. This always raises a great excitement

* Since the above, the fancy has increased so much in this country, that in the last year, 1871, sixty thousand canary birds found their way to this market, of which forty-eight thousand were imported by ourselves.

among the breeders, as all dealers are anxious to procure the best birds, so as to dispose of them at higher prices.

If there is one breeder known to possess superior birds over another in the place, the latter tries watchfully to procure some of the former's stock, and if successful in doing so, is compelled to pay a very high price.

This desire to procure some of those first-rate birds is often carried to a great extent.

There has been lately a great number of canaries raised in this country, but the breeders, not having the opportunity, as they have in Germany, of introducing the young ones into the society of the nightingale, the skylark, &c., &c., have failed of producing such very sweet singers — although considered by many to be equal. Their notes are generally so shrill and unpleasant that many cannot bear them in the room with them.

The qualities of the canary, such as its melodious song, beautiful plumage, and docility, have long made it a great favorite. If this bird were not so common among us, we would appreciate it more than we do. What can be more delightful on a winter's day, when confined to our room by the weather, or any other cause, than to have a couple of those sweet warblers, who seem to thake particular delight to cheer us with their song, as if by instinct they knew we wanted something to enliven us, and cause the time to pass away more cheerfully? Or, again, what can be more amusing than to have a pair of them breeding, to observe how active they are in building their nest, how attentive to their young ones; how quick they come down to the cup when fresh food is put in, take a beakful,

and fly off again to their little ones, to feed them, before they eat any themselves?

TO A CANARY BIRD.

God bless thee and thy joyous throat
 Thy trill, thy churr, thy piercing note
 My tweet Canary.
 Thou gush of song, thou waterbrook
 Of joy, thou poem, doctrine, boock,
 Vocabulary :
 Thou caged up treasure of delight !
 That knowst to make a prison bright,
 Through music's mystery ;
 To — swell thy rich notes in full tide
 Anon, the highest reach of sound divide
 Like Paganini.
 Where did'st thou gain this wondrous lore ?
 Where that, which I admire yet more,
 The glad Philosophy.
 That smiles at iron bars and doors,—
 In loneliness a spirit pours
 Of mirthful minstrelsy.

LINES ON A BIRD'S NESS.

„But most of all it wins my admiration,
 To wiew the structure of this little work,
 A bird's Nest. Mark it well, within, without :
 No tool had he that wrought, no knife to cut,
 No neil to fix, no bodkin to insert,
 No glue to join : his little beak was all ;
 And yet how neatly finished ! What nice hand,
 Whit every implement and means of art,
 An twenty years' apprenticeship to boot,
 Could make me such another ? Fondly, then,
 We boast of excellence, whose noblest skill
 Instinktive genius foils.“

THEIR TREATMENT.

Although the canary, as a domesticated bird, is the easiest of all others to take care of, his treatment the most simple, and certainly the best known, notwithstanding this, there are many persons whose idea on this subject is but very limited, and what is worse, very erroneous. As to their food, the more simple and natural I have always found to be the most productive of good health and cheerfulness: while, on the other hand, I have invariably found that mixtures, introduced by many, such as rape, millet, hemp, canary, poppy, lettuce, oatmeal, oats, sugar, sweet-cake, biscuit, and such like, so far from being wholesome, is very injurious: it spoils their taste for their natural food, weakens the stomach, renders them feeble, sickly, and incapable of bearing moulting, under which they frequently die. I have known in Germany many persons who breed birds for sale, who are poor, and cannot afford to procure these delicacies, and therefore obliged to feed their birds on the most simple food, which is rape-seed alone, raise great numbers of the most healthy and strong birds. I have found the best food to be a mixture of rape and canary seed. A little fresh green food, such as chick-weed, lettuce, or cabbage, in season, or sweet apple in winter, will be found very healthy.

The MAIN POINT is to obtain pure and fresh seed for them. Rape seed, when old, or kept too long in a damp place, becomes musty, gets a bitter taste, and won't agree at all with birds. The canary seed must be

clean and of a glossy hue, feel heavy, be free from musty smell, and have a sweet taste.

The best rape-seed is the German summer rape ; this has a nut-like flavor in distinction from the English rape, which tastes somewhat like mustard.

The cage must be daily supplied with fresh water, both for bathing and drinking, and their cage cleaned out at least once a week, and the bottom covered over with dry gravel, which birds will freely pick, and which helps digestion. Their perches should be kept clean. Their feet must be occasionally examined, and if found dirty, the bird should be carefully taken out of the cage, the feet soaked in lukewarm water, and the dirt washed off. In catching a bird for the above operation it is well to darken the cage first to prevent him being frightened. The claws, if too long, should be cut with a sharp scissors, but care should be taken not to draw blood ; the same with an overgrown bill. Persons keeping canaries for their singing only, should keep them in cages of about a foot in diameter, either round or square ; as in a large cage they will not sing so well or constant, having too much room to fly about and amuse themselves, which in a great degree takes away their attention from singing. It is *not* necessary to keep these birds in a very warm room in the winter season, as they can endure a great deal of cold without injury ; but they should be kept in as equal a temperature as possible, and not removed from a cold room to a warm one, or *vice versa*. They should be hung where they will be free from a draught, which is

likely to give them cold. It is very good to keep the bird in the summer season, during the day, in the fresh air, but should be taken indoors when it is at all likely to storm ; they should also be shaded from a very hot sun. Many persons are apt to hang these birds out in the spring and fall, when the weather is rough and cold, or in the summer, when excessively warm in a hot sun, against a wall which attracts heat, without the least covering over their cages ; birds cannot live under such careless treatment ; and it causes much trouble and annoyance to the owner as well as those who sold them, as they get sickly and delicate ; persons then think they have been imposed upon by obtaining a bad bird. These things should not be so.

B R E E D I N G .

This is a very important item, as well as amusing, in the history of the canary, as there is no bird so easily reared in the cage ; at the same time requiring some knowledge for the proper management. Birds for this purpose should be selected in good healthy condition ; they should not be over six years old. The male birds for this occasion may be kept in small cages, so that we may enjoy their song fully until the breeding season comes round. But the females should be left flying in a large cage, so as to give them plenty of room to exercise ; this prepares them for the purpose intended.* If

* When, in the mating season, several male and female canaries are kept in one room, so that they can see and hear

intended to breed several birds in a room flying about, two or three females may be put to every male, the nest-boxes hung round the room — two for each female, as they will commence building the nest for the second brood in a fresh box, before the first young ones leave the nest they were hatched in. Sufficient perches must be placed in the room, and some of them low enough to enable the young ones, which have just left their nests, to fly up to them. Plenty of stuff for nesting, such as deer's hair, fine moss, manilla cut up to about an inch in length, paper shavings, &c., should be strewed on the floor. As soon as the young ones are enabled to feed themselves, they should be removed from the room, as they are apt to annoy the younger brood.

To breed them in a cage, I would recommend but each other, it is often the case that some of them will mate together, although they are separate from each other. Now if all these birds are let loose in a room to breed together, nothing will hinder the union of those that are already mated. But when we put them by the pairs to breed in single cages, it is but seldom that we just happen to place those mated ones together. The consequence then is, that such male generally dislikes the females that are put with him, always longing for his old mate, which he sees in with another bird; and she, likewise, is indifferent to the male that is put in with her. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder if the breeder is unsuccessful in raising a great number of birds. We therefore recommend any persons that wishes to breed more than one pair in cages, to place them, before the breeding season commences, so that the males and females can neither see nor hear each other.

one female to one male, for two females will seldom agree well together. The breeding cage must be at least two feet long, high and depth in proportion, hung up in a quiet place out of view, and disturbed as little as possible. The nest-boxes are best of tin or wire, as wooden ones are more liable to create insects, which are very annoying to the little birds, and often cause their death. To prevent this, it is well, as soon as the young ones are hatched, to make a fresh nest for them and remove them carefully into it, and let the old nest be thrown away.

A short time before the birds are put to breed, we should commence feeding them with higher food, such as hard boiled egg, chopped up fine, white and yolk together; this, of course, to be exclusive of their general seed.

Some birds have defects; for instance, some males are dull and melancholy, always sad and seldom singing. indifferent to their mates, which are equally so to them. Others are so passionate, that they beat and even sometimes kill their mate and their young. Some are too ardent, and annoy their mate while she is sitting on the nest—destroying the eggs, tear the nest, or excite the female so much that they often abandon their little flock. Some females, in like manner are so ardent, that as soon as they lay their eggs, they abandon them without sitting at all. Others again, neglect to feed their young ones; beat them, and pick out their feathers. Vexing as this may be, yet there is no remedy to cure these defects; the best plan is to remove the vicious

bird and put another in its place. Good birds, when put together, will generally mate within a week, which is easily known by their attention to each other. After mating, they commence building the nest, and in about a week the hen begins to lay, from 2 to 6 eggs, one each day in succession, on which she will sit 13 days, when the young ones will come out, one after the other. It is wrong to take the eggs from under her while she is laying, as many ignorantly do, for the purpose of hatching them at one time; it is best to let nature have its way in this case.

As soon as the little ones are hatched they may be fed, besides their general seed, with the following food: egg, boiled hard, chopped up fine, and an equal quantity of grated cracker, mixed together with the egg into a paste. This food must be given to them fresh three or four times a day; for the old birds will be more inclined to feed the young when fresh food is handed them. An extra cup should be handed them containing soaked rape-seed. They also require fresh green food daily. If the old ones will not feed the young, they may be brought up by hand.* When the young birds feed themselves,

* The nest to be taken out of the cage, or room, kept in a warm place, and fed about every hour with *a quill spoonful* of the above mentioned paste; to which should be added some rape-seed, soaked in warm water for at least an hour; then the water drained off and the seed well bruised on a board, so as to separate the hulls from the kernels; then the kernels mixed together with the paste. Two or three quill-spoonfulls is sufficient at a time.

and are put into another apartment, they must still for a short time be supplied with the soft food above mentioned ; for their digestive organs are rather weak as yet. In about a month this may be dropped off gradually.

The young males will commence warbling as soon as they leave the nest, and improve daily for 8 or 9 months, when their singing quality will depend very much upon the birds they are placed near.*

The male bird is distinguished from the female by having a larger and flatter head ; its color, particularly around the eye, is of a brighter hue, and its action also differs from the female ; these distinctions, however, are only known by an experienced judge.

The canary will breed with other birds, such as goldfinches, linnets, and siskins : for this purpose we must take a female canary and a male of one of the above species ; for a female of the latter cannot be induced to lay in an artificial nest.

* If you want to learn them a particular air from an organ, or other instrument, they must be put, when very young, into a separate apartment, in a dark place, out of hearing of any birds, and the air played to them several times a day.



THE LONG BREED, OR FRENCH CANARY.

THIS bird is not as generally known as the common canary, not being very many years introduced into this country. We will, therefore, try and give a correct account of its origin and history.

The canary may, as well as any other domesticated animal, be improved in shape and size by a certain way of mating them. The idea of this plan of improvement was first thought of in Belgium and France—from which circumstance they are commonly called French or Belgian canaries.

While the fanciers and breeders of Germany were desirous of improving the *song*, those in France and Belgium were equally desirous of improving their *size* and form. For this purpose they selected the largest male and female for breeding: by this method, after years of care and study, they were enabled to produce these birds to the length of *seven inches* to seven and a half; this, however, being the longest point achieved. The general length of the canary is five inches. The improvement in length being conquered, their next view was to improve their *shape*.

For this purpose they mated those male and female birds which came nearest the form they wished to produce, the model of which was as follows; the head small and round; neck thin, projecting in from the back; shoulders high, and the back from thence to the

end of the tail a bow-like form; the chest projects out, and from thence the end of the tail forms a bow inwards. The particular features of the long-breed canary may be immediately discovered by examining the engraving which we have placed as a frontispiece in this book.

The tail feathers must lie close together, and the end of the wing close to the rump. A very particular feature in this bird is the length of its legs, which should be nearly straight, and their feet as close together as their knees. The feathers must all lie on the body smooth. This process of improving their shape also occupied many years of attention.

At this time, there being great an excitement among the breeders, vying with each other to produce the best birds, caused the fanciers in several towns in Belgium to form a society for holding an annual exhibition, at which premiums were adjudged to the breeders of the first, second, and third class birds. These exhibitions are still held with great interest. Besides these, a general exhibition is annually held, where the fanciers of the whole kingdom of Belgium meet; and valuable premiums awarded to the holders of the best birds. Prize birds at this exhibition are much thought of, and, if sold, brings high prices — we ourselves having seen a pair in Antwerp sold for 700 *francs*.

Before the year 1840, these birds were hardly known in this country; but since that time have become much more sought after, particularly as a society has been

formed, and an exhibition held similar to that we have just mentioned.* Persons breeding these birds must be very careful in mating them, if they wish to secure first-rate ones. For instance, a high-colored, either male or female, should be put with a pale bird (mealy); for if two high-colored birds are mated together, small, delicate, and thin-feathered birds will generally be produced: and, on the other hand, if two pale ones are mated together, their young will lose greatly in beauty of color. Loosed-feathered birds — that is, birds whose feathers do not lie smooth — are apt to throw out young ones very inferior in size to their parents; if, therefore, we possess such, and for its shape and other good qualities still like to breed from it, great care should be taken to procure a very smooth-feathered mate for it. And again, if we have a favorite bird, combining *all* the requisite qualities, with the exception of *one* or *two*, we must then procure a mate for it who possesses these qualities to perfection. If these qualities are neglected, the long breed bird, being an artificial one, as to its length and shape, may degenerate to their original size.

By this little history of the long-breed canary, we show that the fancy for them differs very much from those of the common German Birds — the latter being educated and taught in their singing qualities, and kept by the lovers of birds to please the *ear* with their de-

* This exhibition was first introduced in New York in 1846, and generally takes place in the month of January, which is announced in the daily papers. Since this, a similar exhibition is annually held in Philadelphia, Boston, &c.

lightful melody ; while the former are brought up for their peculiar shape, length, and beautiful color, to please the eye.

A perfect bird of the long breed brings a much higher price than the German canary, they being so much more difficult to breed ; this leads a number of persons, ignorant of the fact, to suppose they must consequently be much better singers ; but this is not the fact — the song of this bird is much inferior to the other ; and persons can easily perceive it by referring to the history of both birds, as already given in this little book.* The treatment of this bird is the same as that of the common canary.

* It is quite an interesting item in the history of the long-breed canary, how *art* has rivaled *nature* in producing this peculiar shape and size, so different from the original ; and this it is that causes the amateur to follow up the trouble consequent on rearing these birds ; but a number of persons, on the other hand, do it for the sake of traffic.



THE BULLFINCH.

Loxia Pyrrhula.

THIS bird is a native of Europe, where it is very generally spread all over.

DESCRIPTION. The male bird: top of the head, wings, and tail are black; the back, dark gray; the breast, blood-red; the rump, white; its length, six inches. The female is easily distinguished from the male, for what is *red* on him is *gray* on her.

It has no natural song, but is gifted with the ability of imitating, with an astonishing accuracy, in a sweet and flute-like tone, almost any air that is whistled or played to them on an instrument. This has made him a great favorite among bird-fanciers.

In Germany, particularly in Hesse and Saxony, a great number of these birds are taught, and by the dealers brought to various parts of the world. The raising and teaching is generally accomplished by shoemakers, tailors, and weavers, being so much confined to their rooms at their work, and thus enabled to take care of them—as at this time they require much attention. The manner is thus: they are taken from their nest when very young—sometimes not more than a day old, such is the anxiety to get them—brought home, and fed with the yolk of hard-boiled eggs, soaked white bread, and soaked rape-seed, which is prepared as we have already described in the note at the foot of page 24. This food is made fresh twice a day, as it soon

turns sour, and would then kill the birds. They are fed every two hours regularly; from two to four quill-spoonfuls, according to size and age. As the birds grow older, the quantity of seed is increased, and the egg decreased, till the bird can feed itself. They are by this time already put into separate cages, about a foot square, and the whole rape-seed, merely soaked, given to them, and by degrees brought on to the hard seed. The teaching begins from the first day they are taken into the house. The tune that is intended they should learn is whistled to them—*whistling* preferred, as instruments are generally too shrill—several times a day, more particularly in the morning and evening. The tune must be whistled always in the same key, and no other whistled in the hearing of the bird, which is kept in rather a dark place during the process of training.

There is a great difference in the capacity of the bullfinch; some can be taught a couple of tunes in three months, while others will take nine months; some, again, will only learn a part of a tune, while others will not learn at all. What they have not taken up when nine months old, they will never learn. I have thus been particular in giving an account of their treatment after being taken from the nest, for the information of such persons as wish to breed them in cages in this country, which can be done by putting a pair of healthy and lively birds in a large cage or room, in which a small pine-bush should be placed, and fine moss, dry grass, and bristles given them for the purpose of nesting. The breeding season is in May, June, and July.

GENERAL TREATMENT. The bullfinch should be fed principally on summer rape-seed, to which may be added a little canary and hemp seed; sugar, sweet-cakes, or such like delicacies, spoil their taste, and should not be given to them. A little greens in the summer, or sweet apple in the winter, is very wholesome, both of which must be fresh. The cage should not be very large, a foot square is sufficient, with a flat top—bell shaped ones they do not like so well. They should be cleaned weekly, the bottom covered with dry gravel. Those that like to bathe must be supplied with an extra cup of water. Their claws must be cut at least twice a year. They must always be handled very gently, as they are easily frightened, harsh treatment often causing their death. As this bird becomes very much attached to its feeder; it is recommended that the owner will undertake this care himself, which enables him to cause the bird to come out of the cage, sit on his finger, and whistle at his command, which is very amusing.

The general disorders of the bullfinch are moulting (which is in the month of September), costiveness, hoarseness, and epilepsy; if attacked with such, they may be treated as is described under the head of diseases. When properly treated, this bird will attain the age of five or six years.



THE GOLDFINCH.

Fringilla Carduelis.

DESCRIPTION. Length, five inches and three-quarters; the beak, whitish and very pointed; front of the head is a fine crimson; cheeks, white; the top of the head is black, which extends downwards from the nape towards the breast; the back is brown; the under part of the body, whitish; on each side of the breast, brownish; wings, black and yellow spotted; tail, black, with white spots. When a year old, the female is distinguished from the male by being smaller, having less red on the head, and the shoulders being brown instead of black.

This is one of the handsomest of all wild birds in Europe, and the most known and admired of the finch family, and deservedly so, alike from its beautiful plumage, remarkable cleverness, proved docility, together with its sweet song. This little funny fellow has such a way of turning his body rapidly from side to side, as he utters his sprightly notes, and so many amusing tricks, that one cannot help being pleased with him. The goldfinch is found all over Europe in the summer; but in the fall and winter they assemble in flocks and seek such localities where they find plenty of food, which consists of all kinds of small seed: at this time they are caught on bird-lime and exported to other countries. When caged, the best food is a mixture of rape, hemp,

canary, and maw (poppy) seed, to which must be added occasionally some greens, such as chickweed, lettuce, &c.

The cage may be of the same size and shape as we have already described for the bullfinch. They must also have plenty of bathing-water.

THE SISKIN.

Fringilla Spinus.

THIS is one of the species used in crossing with the Canary. Its head and throat are black ; neck, back, and sides green, the back slightly spotted with black. In Europe it is a favorite caged bird, and really a beautiful plumaged one. Their song is short and low, though very agreeable, and they imitate with facility the notes of various birds. Caged, they should be fed on poppy seed, mixed with crushed hemp ; their native food being the seeds of the pine, thistle, fir, burdock and alder ; also the buds of trees. As they are a greedy bird care must be taken not to feed them too much. In health or sickness, their treatment, except feeding, should be the same as the Canary.



THE LINNET (GRAY).

Linaria Cannabina.

DESCRIPTION. Length, five inches; its color, in the wild state, when one year old, grayish brown on the back; wings, rather darker; breast, red; belly, light gray. After they moult in cages the red breast turns gray.

This bird, though inferior in beauty of plumage to the goldfinch, is yet very much kept in cages; it being of a hardy constitution, and a most lovely singer, uttering many very sweet, flute-like notes, and singing almost throughout the year, which makes it a very pleasing household companion.*

* „What can be more interesting than the affection of the two linnets we are about to mention? A nest containing four young ones, scarcely fledged, was found by some children, who resolved to carry them home, for the purpose of rearing and taming the young birds. The old ones, attracted by their chirping, continued fluttering round the children, till they reached the house, when the nest was carried up-stairs to the nursery, and placed outside the windows. The old birds soon afterwards made their appearance, approached the nest, and fed the family without showing alarm. This being noticed, the nest was soon afterwards placed on a table in the middle of the apartment, and the window left open. The parent-birds came boldly in and fed their offspring as before. Still further to put their attachment to the test, the nest and young ones were placed within a bird-cage; still the old one

To have the benefit of its song fully, it is well to keep it in rather a small cage, say about ten inches long, and hight and depth in proportion, with flat top. Its Food is to be summer rape and canary seed, an equal quantity, and plenty of green food. It must have water for bathing and plenty of dry gravel on the bottom.

The general disorders of the linnet are costiveness and epilepsy, in which case they may be treated as we have already described under the head of disorders. They will, however, seldom take sick, and generally live from eight to ten years.

returned, entered boldly within the cage, and supplied the wants of their brood as before, and towards evening actually perched on the cage, regardless of the noise made around them by several children. This continued for several days, when an unlucky accident put an end to it. The cage had been again set on the outside of the window, and was unfortunately left exposed to a sudden and heavy fall of rain; the consequence was, that the whole of the young were drowned in the nest. The poor parents, who had so boldly and indefatigably performed their duty, continued hovering round the house, and looking wistfully in at the window, for several days, and then disappeared.



THE LINNET (GREEN).

THIS bird is rarely brought to this country, being inferior in song to the gray linnet. Its length is six inches ; the prevailing color, yellowish green, lighter on the lower part of the body, still more so on the rump. The first nine wing-feathers are partly bright yellow. The female is distinguished by being smaller, and her color an ashy green. The treatment is the same as for the gray linnet.

THE CHAFFICH.

Fringilla Cœlebs.

DESCRIPTION. Fore part of the head, dark brown ; upper part, gray blue ; upper part of the back and shoulders, brown ; under part, greenish ; cheeks and breast, red brown ; lower part of the belly, white. It is a most delightful singer, and, in certain parts of Germany, esteemed over all other birds. It is generally kept in a foot-square cage, the top darkened with a piece of cloth, and hung outside of the window in spring and summer, where it sings much better than inside.

The treatment is the same as for the linnet.

THE NIGHTINGALE.*

Sylvia Luscinia.

„Night from her ebon throne stoops down to listen
To this, the sweetest songster of the grove:
And pulses thrill, and eyes with rapture glisten,
As forth she pours her plaintive song of love.”

DESCRIPTION. Its length is five inches. The top of the head and back is of a grayish brown, breast ash gray, more light on the belly, and throat white. Wings and tail dark brown. This bird is decidedly the most melodious of all singing birds.

The compass, flexibility, prodigious variety, and harmony of his voice, make it the greatest favorite of the

* To show the value that was laid upon the Nightingale by the inhabitants of some of the Rhinish provinces, according to the *Cologne Gazette*, the following ordinance was issued a few years ago by the Prussian Minister of the interior, complying with a petition from the inhabitants of these provinces:—

„After the publication of these presents, it is forbidden to catch nightingales, under the penalty of a fine of five thalers or eight days imprisonment. Whoever keeps, or wishes to keep in a cage a nightingale, brought from abroad, is bound to give information of it, within eight days, to the police, and to pay, for the benefit of the poor, five thalers yearly. Whoever shall neglect to make this declaration annually, and pay the said tax, shall be liable to a fine of ten thalers, or imprisonment for fifty days.”

lovers of the beauty of nature. *Coleridge* says thus of this bird ;

„—————The merry nightingale
That crowds and hurries and precipitates,
With fast, thick warble, his delicious notes,
As if he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music.“

He will sometimes dwell for several seconds on a strain, composed of only two or three melancholy tones, beginning in an under voice, and swelling it gradually by a most superb crescendo, to the highest point of strength, he ends it by a dying cadence. His very striking musical talent, surpassing all other singing birds, has acquired for him the name of the KING OF SONGSTERS.

The Nightingale is found all over Europe, in the summer season, more particularly in places that are shady and cool, but not cold. In the winter they emigrate to a southern climate, such as Asia and Africa, and return about April. At this time they will sing throughout the night, which drops off as soon as they are mated ; after which they sing only in the day time, till the month of June, when they stop singing altogether for the season.

When caged, and well treated, they will sing for six or eight months during the year ; some begin in December, some in January, and some in February, and sing till the month of July.

Their cage should be at least 15 inches long and a foot high, in which are placed three perches, two below and one above. The top of the cage should be of green

muslin, or such like, instead of wire, which prevents the bird from injuring its head, by flying up, which it is in the habit of doing during the season of migrating. The muslin should hang down from the top over the wire of the side of the cage, far enough to reach down to the upper perch, on which the bird most generally sings; this precaution keeps them shaded from view, as they are of a timid nature. Its situation to be changed as seldom as possible, and punctual treatment is expressly necessary for this bird more than any other.

The cage must be cleaned at least twice a week, and the bottom well covered with dry gravel, and a daily bath given. Their feet being very tender should be looked after occasionally, and if found dirty washed with lukewarm water; likewise the perches must be cleaned. By neglecting this, their feet would become sore, and cause lameness. In the winter they must be kept in a warm room. If more than one is kept in a room, it is well to place them so that they cannot see each other. In the wild state, these birds feed on small insects and their eggs, also chrysalis, elderberries, and currants. In cages they are best fed as follows:— carrot, hard-boiled egg, stale roll or biscuit, boiled sheep's or calf's heart. An equal quantity of each of the above is grated (the juice of the carrot squeezed out), to which is added half as much ants' eggs* as the whole of the above, and then

* The ants' eggs are gathered in Germany in great quantities, dried, and prepared for exportation: being a very wholesome food for all soft-bill birds, we import them, and ve them on sale at our store.

all mixed up well. This food, of course must be made fresh every morning, otherwise it would spoil. It is, consequently, well to find out the proper quantity they are able to consume in a day, as more than that will go to waste ; for what is left in the morning must be thrown away.

It is not *absolutely* necessary to mix the above mentioned artikles at all times ; some of them, except the ants' eggs, may be left off occasionally — for instance, in the summer, the eggs and meat, which are very apt to get spoiled at that time. I have seen Nightingales thrive well on ants' eggs and carrot only. Some fanciers will mix wheat bran, moistened with milk ; others bruised hemp-seed ; also currants or elderberries : all these, if the bird will eat them, will not injure it.

In Belgium and France, the Nightingale are commonly fed as follows : one pound of yellow pea-meal, half pound of honey, half pint of sweet almonds (pounded fine), and half ounce of sweet butter, or in larger or smaller preparation, mashed well together, and made into cakes, formed similar to a sausage an inch thick, and four inches long — these, after they are well dried, will keep good for many months. Before fed, they are grated, and mixed with an equal part of ants' eggs. Fanciers there assure me that the bird thrives very well on this food. This shows that Nightingales are not such delicate birds as they are often thought in this country. Whatever they are fed on, from three to

six meal worms* given them daily proves very beneficial.

Disorder. Moulting generally amounts, with a Nightingale, to a disease. At this period they must be well taken care of. The ants' eggs, before mixed with the other food, are better to be soaked in hot water. The number of meal-worms should be increased by two or three. A spider now and then given to them is very wholesome. As to the other disease, we refer to pages 9, &c. If good care is taken of them, they will generally attain the age of four to eight years.

*Meal worms can easily be raised, as follows : A box, that will hold about a peck, lined with tin, so that the worm cannot crawl out—or an earthen jar—is to be nearly filled with wheat-bran, oatmeal, old woollen rags, a little old leather, and brown sugar-paper. Into this are to be put about a couple of hundred of meal worms,—the box to be covered with a piece of cloth, or a board with a few holes to admit some air. By keeping them in a quiet and warm place for three months they will change into beetles. These insects soon propagate by eggs, which renews and increases the stock considerably.



THE BLACKCAP.

Sylvia Atricapilla.

DESCRIPTION. Length, six inches; the top of the head black; upper part of the body, breast, wings, and tail, ash-colored; lighter under the belly. With the female, the top of the head is brown instead of black.

This bird is found all over Europe in the summer season; in the winter it migrates to a more southern climate.

It is a most delightful singer, and is called the next best to the Nightingale. Its notes, though quite different from the Nightingale's, are no less admirable, and are heard throughout the year, during the whole day, except in the moulting season. He begins quite piano, with several strains of warbling, and ends with loud, most joyful, flute-like notes.

It should be kept in a cage similar to that we described for a Nightingale. Being a very free singer, it may be placed at any part of a room. Food and general treatment may be quite the same as described for the Nightingale.



THE SKY LARK.

Alauda Arvensis.

The crested herald of the morn, that springs
Up from his grassy flight,
Seeming to rain down music from his wings,
And bathe his plumage in the fount of light.

DESCRIPTION. The upper part of the body is brownish, mixed with dark spots. The breast and sides are of a gray brown, spotted; underneath the belly, a muddy white. *Length*, seven inches, to seven and a half. This color, however, sometimes changes, when caged, according to the food given him, and the room where kept in. This beautiful warbler is spread all over Europe, and has the most peculiar manner of flying of any of the feathered tribe, its movement being invariably upwards, in a perpendicular line; after leaving his grassy abode, beginning his melodious song, which he continues unceasingly till nearly out of sight (sometimes completely out of sight), looking like a mere speck, towards the heavens, and even then you may hear his sweet voice dying away, as if in the clouds; when he descends, in like manner, still continuing to gratify his hearers below with his own peculiar melody, till within a short distance from his nest,—then silently alighting, hiding himself in the grass, fearing as if by instinct, some straggling wanderers were watching his movements, and find out the spot to „rob a bird’s nest,“ when he creeps along, quite unseen, to visit his home and little family.

Many a time have we ourselves sat in the meadow where they build their nests, and watched with much delight their journeying through the air, and back again, counting from ten to fifteen minutes, and sometimes, even longer than that, all the time continuing its most thrilling and extatic notes. The Skylark, when caught young, or brought up from the nest, will make a most excellent cage-bird, singing during the whole winter, spring, and summer. When caught old, it seldom answers for a cage, being too timid, and very difficult to tame.

It should be fed with a mixture of maw seed (poppy) or bruised hemp seed, pounded biscuit, and a little hard-boiled egg, chopped up, to which may be added occasionally a little raw beef, lean, scraped fine, or a couple of meal worms. Some larks will eat canary and millet seed, groats of oats. An extra dish, with this food, may be placed in their cage, which, if the bird eats, will prove very good for them. A little green food occasionally, chopped up, agrees well with them.

The Lark's cage should be from twelve to eighteen inches long ; hight and depth in proportion ; the *top*, instead of wire, may be of cloth, or if bordered or wired should be lined with such, to prevent their hurting themselves by flying upwards, as they are apt to do. No perches are required in the Lark's cage, as they never perch, their claws being stiff, not like other birds. The bottom of the cage should be covered with dry sand or gravel, *half an inch deep*, in which they will roll and dust themselves. They do not bathe in water as

other birds. In the middle of the cage should be placed a little table, about two inches high, on which is kept a green sod; this the bird will much enjoy while singing. The boxes for feeding from, and for water, must be outside the cage, which prevents the feed from getting dirtied by the gravel, which they scatter about as above. In fine weather they may be hung out in the open air. With proper care the Lark often lives to ten years of age.

THE WOOD LARK.

Alauda Arborea.

THIS bird resembles the Skylark in color, but is smaller, measuring six inches to six and a half, and is one of the sweetest singers in Europe — his song being a combination of beautiful, thrilling and soft, flute-like notes, and quite free from any shrill or unpleasant ones.

Its food may be the same as the Skylark. The cage may be the same, but with the addition of perches instead of the green sod.



THE ROBIN REDBREAST.

Sylvia Rubecula.

DESCRIPTION. The upper part of the body, wings, and tail are of an olive brown; the forehead, throat, and breast, of an orange-red; belly, white; length, five inches and three quarters. This bird is thought very much of in Europe, particularly in England, being so lively and very handsome a bird; it is easily tamed, so as to let it out of its cage, and play about a room. It possesses a sweet warbling song.

Its *food* may be the same as that of the Nightingale, already mentioned; it will also eat freely of the poppy seed and bruised hemp, when mixed with the other food. Its cage should be at least eighteen inches long, and in proportion wide and high. This bird is very fond of bathing, and should therefore be daily provided with a bath; but when allowed to fly about a room, care must be taken not to leave a pitcher, or any large vessel with water within its reach as they are very apt to make to such, and frequently get drowned: we have known several such instances occur, to our own knowledge.

The following beautiful lines are from the pen of Bishop Doane, of New Jersey.

ROBIN REDBREAST.

„ Sweet Robin, I have heard them say
 That thou wert there, upon that day
 That Christ was crowned in cruel scorn,
 And bore away one bleeding thorn ;
 That so the blush upon thy breast,
 In shameful sorrow was impressed ;
 And thence thy genial sympathy
 With our redeemed humanity.

„ Sweet Robin, would that I might be
 Bathed in my Savior's blood like thee ;
 Bear on my breast, whate'er the loss,
 The bleeding blazon of the cross ;
 Live, ever, with thy loving mind,
 In fellowship with human kind ;
 And take my pattern still from thee,
 In gentleness and constancy.“

The following verse is an extract from a very pretty and pathetic poem, written on the far-famed story of „The Death of the Babes in the Wood :“

„ No burial these pretty babes
 Of any man receives ;
 But Robin Redbreast painfully
 Did cover them with leaves.“



THE SONG THRUSH.

Turdus Musicus.

A flute-like melody is thine, O Thrush !
 Full of rich cadences, and clear and deep :
 Upon the sense it cometh like a gush
 Of perfume stolen from the winds that sweep
 Where spice-isles gem the bosom of the deep.

DESCRIPTION. Upper part of the body is olive-gray; wings and tail-brown; breast and sides, yellow with numerous oval-shaped dark-brown spots; length, eight inches and a half.

The Song Thrush is a most melodious singer, being gifted with a more powerful tone than any of the feathered choristers of the European forest. This speckled musician pleases with delight, and satisfies, as it were, the very soul of thee listeners. In the wild state it only sings during the spring; but when caged, and properly treated, will sing eight or nine months of the year, commencing about December or January. It is for this reason, as well as for its beautiful song, that the thrush is so much kept in cages, and domesticated. In the spring of the year its voice becomes too loud to be in a room; it is therefore hung up outdoors, where it pleases the whole neighborhood.

Their food may be of two different kinds, viz.: A piece of a roll (stale), soaked in water for a few minutes and then pressed out, is mixed with the same quantity of coarse barley or oatmeal; to this is added enough of

fresh milk, so as to make a thin paste of it. This paste must be made fresh for them every morning, as it is likely to get sour, and the birds refuse to eat it. The other mixture (which I have found the best) is, bruised hemp seed, carrots grated and the juice squeezed out, and stale roll or rusk (grated); an equal quantity of each mixed up well. This food will not turn sour so easily as the former, neither are the birds so liable to dirty the cage after it. A little hard boiled egg, chopped up, may be put with either of the above mixtures; also a little fresh meat (lean) given to them occasionally will prove very good for them. An extra dish, with dried currants, well washed, may be constantly left in their cage. These they are generally very fond of, and are very healthy for them.

The cage for the Thrush should be at least two feet and a half long, and high in proportion; the perches three quarters of an inch thick. The Thrush is also very fond of bathing.



THE STARLING.

Sturnus Vulgaris.

DESCRIPTION. The color of this bird is of a blackish hue, changing to purple towards the front of the body and to green towards the hind part. The feathers on its body are all tipped with white, less on the head than the other parts. Its length is eight inches and a half.

The natural song of a Starling is rather poor, but he has a wonderful good memory. He will learn to repeat several airs that are played to him, with great ease ; nay, more, he learns to pronounce words very distinctly, or imitate the song of other birds, or any sounds when repeatedly heard. Besides this, he becomes very tame in the house, so as to be let out of the cage, and walk about the room. He soon knows all the persons in the house, is always gay and wakeful, and as docile and cunning as a dog. I have one at the present time that whistles three different airs very correctly, and speaks about fifteen German words quite distinctly.

The Starling, when brought up in a cage, will learn until two years old ; other birds seldom learn after one year old.

His *food* and treatment may be the same as that of the Thrush. They are a very hardy bird, and will sometimes attain the age of fifteen years.

I have thus far given description of the European Song Birds, with the exception of a few that are little

sought after — such as the Sparrow, the Redpole, &c., which are *hard-bill* birds, and live on seed, and may be treated same as the Goldfinch,—besides, the Fawnette, the Field Fare, and a few others, which are *soft* bill birds, and may be treated as the Thursh.

THE BLACKBIRD.

Turdus Merula.

DESCRIPTION. This bird is of a pure velvety black, with an orange-yellow bill. Its length is nine inches and a half.

The notes of the Blackbird, though not so various as of the Thrush, still are of a more sweet, flute-like tone; besides this, he possesses the ability of imitating airs which are whistled to him; this he executes to great perfection. When in a wild state, this bird only sings about three months in the year; but when caged, sings nearly throughout the year. His food and treatment may be the same as we described for the *Thrush*.

We consider the Blackbird, when in full plumage, and in good health, a very handsome bird, and therefore are scarcely inclined to agree with an anonymous poet who says:

„I could not think so plain a bird
Could sing so sweet a song.“

AMERICAN AND OTHER BIRDS.

MY experience being rather limited with American birds, I can say but little on the subject. However, what I do know of them, I will explain to the best of my ability.

With the exception of a few, the American birds are, in general, inferior for their singing qualities to the European; notwithstanding this, they are much kept in cages and in aviaries, for their great beauty of plumage. The best of all American birds is decidedly

THE MOCKING BIRD.

Tardus Polyglottis, Audobon.

SWEET Songster! Yea, Nightingale of America! This unrivalled songster is a native of the Southern States, where thousands of them are taken from the nest before they are fledged, and reared by hand, and sold for fabulous prices.

The celebrated poet, Cowper's expression of the nightingale:

“Ten thousand warblers cheer the day,
And *one* the live-long night.”

Is equally appropriate to our Mocking Bird. Who, on passing through the streets of any large city on a bright night in June, has not heard the shrill scream of the Eagle, the mourning note of the Turtle Dove, the delicate warble of the Blue Bird, the cackling of the domestic Hen, followed by the quarreling of a dozen or more *Grimalkins*, each seeming to vie with the other as to the quantity of noise; then the cry of the Katy-did, the mellow whistle of the Cardinal, the grunt of the maternal porker searching for her juveniles, the creaking of some rusty swing sign-board, the pipe of the canary, and the cry of some lost puppy wailing in the mid-night air, and each succeeding the other with a rapidity that the listener wonders if such a variety can come from so small an object.

The Mocking Bird is a general favorite, and deserves to be attentively cared for. He is particular, and should be fed and watered at the same time *every day*. His cage should be large, and kept very clean, with plenty of gravel. His food should be the PREPARED MOCKING BIRD FOOD, and during moulting season feed him plentifully with berries, *grasshoppers* and *spiders*, with occasionally a meal worm or two, and keep him out of all draughts of air, and with these precautions the bird's average life is ten years.



BLUE ROBIN.

Sialia Nilsonii.

DESCRIPTION. Length, six and a half inches ; breast, rust brown ; belly, muddy brown ; top of the head, back, wing, and tail, a beautiful blue.

It is a native of the United States ; stays and breeds with us in the summer season, but migrates southward when cold weather is coming on. It lives on insects, berries, &c. In the cage it thrives best on the paste No. 2, as prescribed under the head of **GENERAL REMARKS**. It is merely for their beauty of plumage that the Blue Robin is kept in cages ; their song is of no account.

THE ROBIN, OR RED-BREASTED THRUSH.

Turdus Migratorius.

DESCRIPTION. Length, 8 inches ; throat white ; breast, red ; the other part of the body dark gray ; still darker on the head, wings, and tail.

The Robin is found all over the United States. They return from the South early in spring, and breed in our State in great number.

It is principally for his ability in imitating different tunes, which are whistled to him when young, that he is kept in cages ; for his natural song consists but of a few broken notes. This bird is generally treated the same as the Mocking Bird. Those I have kept, I fed on the same mixture as described for Thrushes, which I have found very good for them.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE.*

Icterus Baltimore.

DESCRIPTION. Length, seven and a half inches. Head, throat, and back, black; wing feathers, dark brown; the two middle tail feathers, dark brown; the others, brown above, and yellow on the end; the upper covert (shoulder) orange; the greater covert, black, with white ends; breast, belly, and rump, orange color, a little darker on the breast.

The name of this beautiful bird denotes its being a native of the South; however, it visits us here in the North, in the spring, where it remains, breeds, and returns in the fall to its warm quarters. They live in the wild state, on insects, berries, &c. When caged, the paste, No. 2, as prescribed under head of GENERAL REMARKS, answers for them, and agrees very well.

The song of this bird, although low and short, will be found agreeable; but it is more for their beautiful plumage that they are kept in cages.

*These birds have a very peculiar manner of building their nest: They choose the utmost branch of a high tree, from one of the twigs of which they hang a nest, in the shape of a little bag, weaved beautifully together with strings of twine, dry grass, small roots, &c.: indeed, so artfully and so cunningly out of the reach of the hands of their enemies, that we must look with amazement, and ponder and admire what wonders the Almighty has wrought for this species of his creation.

THE CAT-BIRD,

OR, BLACK-CAPPED THRUSH.

Orpheus Felivox.

DESCRIPTION. Length, eight inches ; prevailing color, dark gray ; black underneath ; top of the head black, and some reddish-brown feathers underneath the tail,—these are more red on the male than on the female (the only distinction). This bird is a native of the United States, and is found in Canada in the summer season. Its song, although low, is quite pleasant. It will, also, in a certain degree, try to imitate the notes of other birds. Their treatment may be the same as that described for the Mocking Bird. They require a large cage, and a frequent bath.



THE BLUE JAY.

Ganulus Glandarius.

DESCRIPTION. Length, ten and a half inches ; bill, black ; tuft on the head, blue (which the bird can raise or fall at will) ; throat, cheeks, and breast, light gray ; belly, white ; a black ring round the neck down to the chest ; back, light blue ; wing, wing coverts and tail, light and dark blue, with black stripes across, white edged.

This bird has no natural song, but will, when reared in a cage, to a certain degree, imitate an air that is whistled to him. They require a large-sized cage, and live very well on the paste No. 1, prescribed under head of GENERAL REMARKS. They are fond of a little beef, as mentioned on same page.

RED-BREASTED GROSBEAK.

Guarica Ludoviciana.

THIS very elegant bird is but little known, yet but few of our domestic birds much surpass it in sweetness of song, or beauty of its plumage. It sings by night as well as by day, and its notes are very clear and mellow. Its great rarity in the wild state accounts for the fact that it is so seldom seen caged, yet no bird can be more highly prized, its bright carmine breast, and deep black and snowy white body forming such a rich contrast. During the summer it wanders into the high northern latitudes, wintering in the Middle States. Caged, their food is the same as the Red Bird.



RED-WING STARLING.

Stumus Vulgaris.

DESCRIPTION. Length, eight inches. The male, when two years old, is black all over, with the exception of the wing coverts (shoulders), which are yellow and red. When young, the black is mingled with small brown spots, and less on the coverts. The female resembles the young male bird, but no red at all.

This bird, a native of this country, arrives here early in the spring; breeds here, and returns for the winter, back South.

Their song is of little variety, being a succession of chattering notes, but when assembled together in large flocks, as we have often seen them, filling the branches of a large tree, and all joining together with their notes, form a concert not less to be admired by the lovers of nature, than one performed by a band of amateurs.

In the wild state this bird lives on berries, insects, &c., as well as on seeds. We have fed them in cages on canary and hemp seed, and observed them to do very well, another time we have kept them on the paste No. 2, as prescribed under head GENERAL REMARKS. They require a large-sized cage, and a frequent bath.



THE RED BIRD.

OR, VIRGINIA NIGHTINGALE.

Guarica Cardinalis.

THIS bird is a native of the Southern States, and one of the handsomest birds of the New World. Its color is of a brilliant red, with the exception of the throat, and the part round the beak, which is black. The head is ornamented with a tuft; this he is capable of raising, which gives him a very commanding appearance. Its length is eight inches.

Together with its beautiful plumage, this bird is gifted with a very sweet, pleasing song, though of rather a low tone.

Being a very hardy bird, and easily taken care of, he is much kept in cages in this country, as well as in Europe, where we have frequently seen him in aviaries, as well as cages. He commands a high price there, for his great beauty. He should be kept in a good-sized cage, and fed with a mixture of canary and hemp seed, and rough (unhusked) rice, to which may be added, a little fresh green food, or a piece of apple, occasionally. When properly treated, this bird often attains the age of fifteen years.



THE BLUE, OR INDIGO BIRD.

Spiza Cyanea.

THIS bird is of the same size as the Canary. Its plumage is of a most beautiful blue — still more brilliant on the head. It is a native of the Southern States, but in the warm season visits some of the Northern. It arrives in our neighborhood about the beginning of May, and remains with us till the cold weather comes on, when it returns to its more congenial quarters. It has quite an agreeable song, which may sometimes be heard in the middle of the night.

The Indigo Bird changes its color twice a year, turning to a grayish color in the winter. The female may be easily distinguished from the male, being always of a gray color, and still more in winter.

They thrive well on being fed on canary, rape, and millet seed. They like a little green food, and are fond of bathing.



THE NONPAREIL.

Spiza Ciris.

THIS very handsome bird is found in the warm States, and often brought on here by saylors from Savannah, Mobile, and other seaports. Its color (that is, of the male, when three years old) on the head and neck is a most beautiful violet ; the back, yellowish green ; tail, brown ; breast and underpart of the body, bright red ; length, five and a half inches. The color of a female is dull green on the upper part, and yellowish green on the lower part of the body, being the same as the male when one year old.

Its song is similar to that of the Indigo Bird. Its food and general treatment may also be the same.

BOB-O-LINK.

THIS bird has received his name from a peculiar song of his own, in which he expresses very distinctly the words „*bob-o-link*“ several times in succession. They are found in our State, in the summer season, in great numbers ; but migrate southerly when cold weather arrives. As to his singing qualities, he is generally considered to be the next best to the Mocking Bird ; indeed, what I have seen of him, inclines me to give the same opinion. It is principally fed on canary, millet and rape seed, to which must be added plenty of green food, and frequently a bath given him.

THE YELLOW BIRD,

OR AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.

Carduelis Americana.

DESCRIPTION. The length of this lively little bird is only four and a half to four and three-quarter inches. They change their feathers twice a year. In the winter their prevailing color is a kind of olive-green, which in the summer they change into a much more beautiful plumage — viz., top of head, wing and tail, black; back, rump, breast, and belly, bright yellow. The prevailing color of the female is a muddy gray.

This beautiful bird is found all over the United States, and lives on all kinds of small seed. In cages they are generally fed on yellow-bird seed, but will live on a mixture of canary, millet and poppy seed just as well; to which may be added a little green food occasionally. They must have gravel in the bottom of their cage, and water for bathing. Their song is very limited, yet its lively appearance and beautiful plumage renders him a favorite cage bird.

SOUTH AMERICAN TROOPICAL.

THIS richly plumaged bird presents a similar appearance to the Baltimore Oriole, or, what is called in the Northern States, Golden Robin. The chief difference

being that it is much larger in size, and the orange of the body, being more of a yellow. It is one of the feathered tribe of the tropics, gifted with great powers of song ; being extremely docile, they are great favorites for the cage, and in confinement become so tame that they will hop on your hand at call.

Their song is a very powerful, yet pleasant whistle of clear and varied notes. They are extremely active, and very graceful in their movements, and require a cage the same size that a Mocking Bird is usually confined in. In their wild state, their food consists of insects and berries ; caged they require the same food as the Mocking Bird.

THE JAVA SPARROW,

OR RICE BIRD.

Loxia Orizyvoræ.

THIS bird is about the size of a Canary, its length being five inches. The beak is thick, and of a fine rose color ; head, throat, and tail black ; cheeks white ; the belly, purple gray ; and the rest of the body fawn color. It is merely for their beauty that these birds are kept in cages, their song being of small account. They are natives of the East Indies ; and are often brought in great numbers from the Island of Java, to this country and to Europe. They feed on rough rice (unhulled), hemp and canary seed. They are particularly fond of bathing.

THE AMANDAVA.

Fringilla Amandava.

THIS beautiful little bird is brought from Bengal, Java, Malacca, and other tropical countries of Asia. It is one of the smallest birds that is caged, its length being only from two and a half to three inches. The color of the male, when two years old, is of a bright red, with white spots; when younger, its plumage is not so bright, being more of a grayish color. The female is smaller, and of the same color as the young males. Their song is very low. In cages, they are best kept by the pair, and not single; as they are in the habit, when on their perch, to keep very close together, for warmth. It is quite amusing to see a number of these sweet little creatures in a row, close to each other, while the outer ones, after a short time, make their way into the middle of the lot; and so each one must take its turn to sit outside. The cage for these birds must be made expressly for them; the wires requiring to be much closer together than the Canary's cage. The best seed for them is millet and canary; and a little lettuce and sweet apple occasionally. They also like to bathe. By this treatment, they thrive well in cages. They are exported to this country and to Europe, even so far north as Russia, where we ourselves have met with them. Their diminutive size and great beauty renders these birds general favorites with fanciers.

PARROTS.

Psitticina.

THERE are a vast number of species of the Parrot, (ornithologists say 200). They all are natives of tropical climates, and may be distinguished by their bill being large, and the upper mandible very much hooked. Their tongue is thick, round, and fleshy; which enables some of them to articulate so distinctly. Their claws differ from most other birds, being directed two forward and two behind.

These birds, in the wild state, feed principally on fruit, grain, &c. They are very injurious to the orange orchard, and other delicate fruit-trees, which they often destroy by gnawing with their strong beak. In confinement, the best food for them is stale white bread, soaked in milk, or merely water; beside which is given a mixture of hemp and canary seed, and corn. With this food they do not require any drinking water; but when fed on seeds and dry cracker, of which they also eat freely, then they require water. A piece of sweet apple may be given them. They are best kept in tin cages, as they generally gnaw the wooden ones. They are all very hardy birds, and will attain to an old age. The Gray Parrot is said to live to a century.

Those which are mostly kept in cages, are the following :

THE GRAY, OR AFRICAN PARROT.

This bird is of a fine ashy-gray color, with a red tail, white face, and black bill. It is decidedly the best species of all the parrots for its capability of talking, whistling, &c., so perfect ; and is devoid of that unpleasant screeching, which some of the other parrots are much in the habit of practicing.

THE YELLOW-HEADED GREEN PARROT, OR AMAZON.

The head of this bird is all yellow ; bill, white ; body all green, with a few blue and red feathers in the tail and wing ; shoulders, red. It is a native of South America, and soon tamed, and learned to say almost any thing. This is the next best to the Gray Parrot, which we have just described.

THE COMMON YELLOW-HEADED PARROT.

This bird is somewhat smaller than the last we spoke of ; it is only yellow on the forehead ; but with some of this species it is partly blue ; their bill is gray. They are very active and lively birds, and learn to repeat a great many words ; but some of them are found to be noisy, and addicted to screeching.

THE WEST INDIA PARROT.

There are several species of this parrot ; but they are all dark green ; some of them have a red forehead ; some a white forehead ; and some with a white forehead and red throat, which latter are the most apt to learn.

The very great variety of the Green Parrots, renders it impossible to describe them all.

There are very few of this color that will learn to talk, with the exception of those we have already mentioned.

The small species of these birds are called Parrakeet ; the most favorite of which are the red-faced ones (Love Birds). They are but little larger than the Bullfinch. Their color is light green ; the tail feathers partly red ; front part of the head and throat is red ; bill, flesh color. The female is distinguished by the head and throat being of a yellowish red. Although this bird cannot learn to talk, we cannot but admire them for their beauty and great attachment to each other. They must be kept in pairs, for their affection is so great, that one will not thrive well without a companion.



GENERAL REMARKS.

WHEREVER we have mentioned *soaked bread*, we would recommend *rolls* (stale), they being generally of a better quality of flour, and not so sour.

These rolls, split in two, and put into an oven, until they become hard enough to be pounded, answer better than biscuit or crackers.

*Universal Food for Soft-Bill Birds.**

Paste No. 1.— Two-fifths white bread (stale), well soaked in water, and then pressed out; two-fifths barley or oat-meal; one-fifth hard-boiled egg, chopped fine. The whole to be mixed with milk and water, and made into a paste.

Paste No. 2.— One-third white bread (stale), well soaked in water, and then pressed out; or biscuit pounded; one-third carrot, grated, and the juice squeezed out; one-sixth of hard-boiled egg and one sixth of bruised hemp-seed. All mixed up and made into a paste.

These pastes will agree with all soft-bill birds; it must, however, be made fresh every day. As a change of diet, a little lean beef, boiled or raw, but scraped or chopped very fine, may be added to the above paste. Also, some dried currants, or raisins washed clean, and chopped up fine, are very good for those that eat them. A small addition of ants' eggs is most excellent, especially for those birds that live solely on insects. From two to six meal worms daily is also very good for them.

*By soft-bill birds we mean those that live on fruit, insects, berries, &c. We may distinguish them by their long bill.

Seed birds live on all kinds of seeds, their bill is generally thick and short.

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Black Birds,	“ West India,
Starlings,	Red Crested Parrot,
Mocking Birds,	Whiskered Parrot,
Troopials,	Pavouan Parrot,
Black Caps,	Great Green Macaw,
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Sky Larks,	Great Red Crested Cockatoo,
Wood Larks,	Parrakeets, Australian (or Shell),
White Throat,	“ African (or Love Birds),
Purple Finch,	“ West India,
Song Sparrow,	“ South America.

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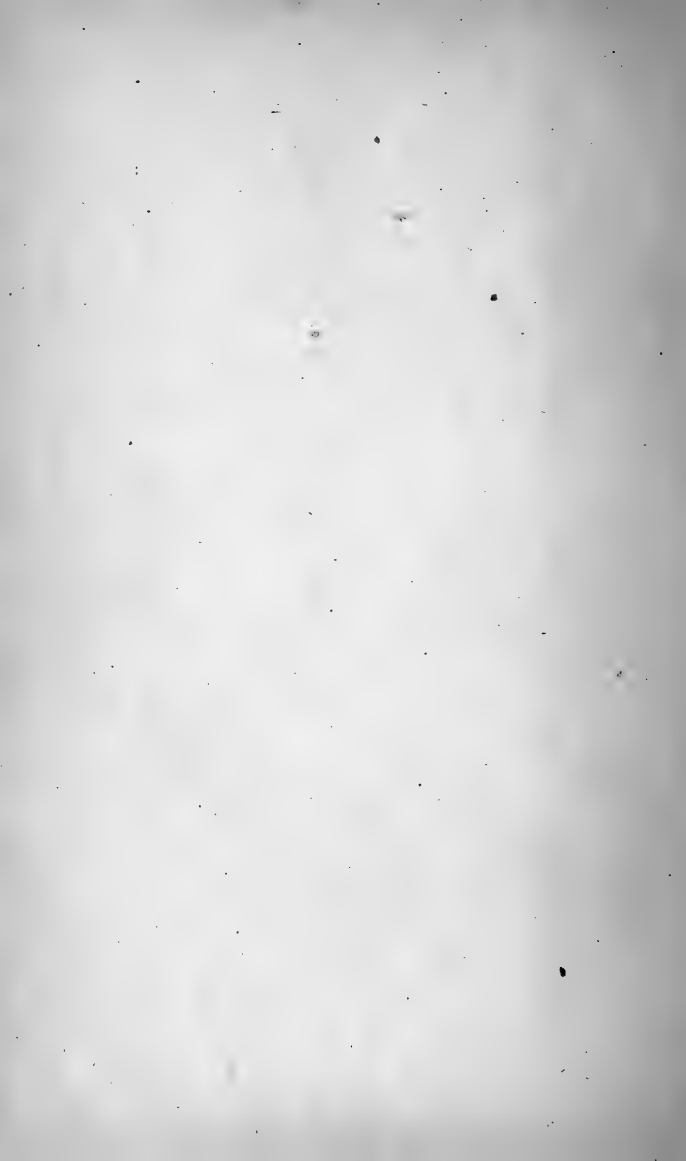
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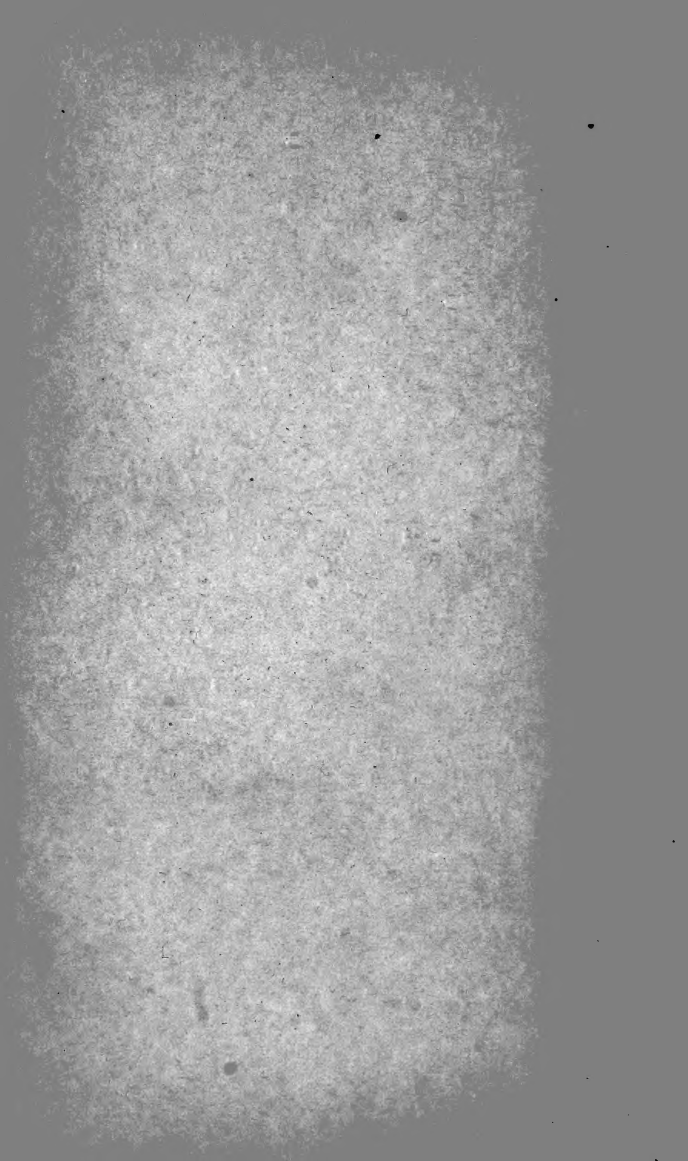
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