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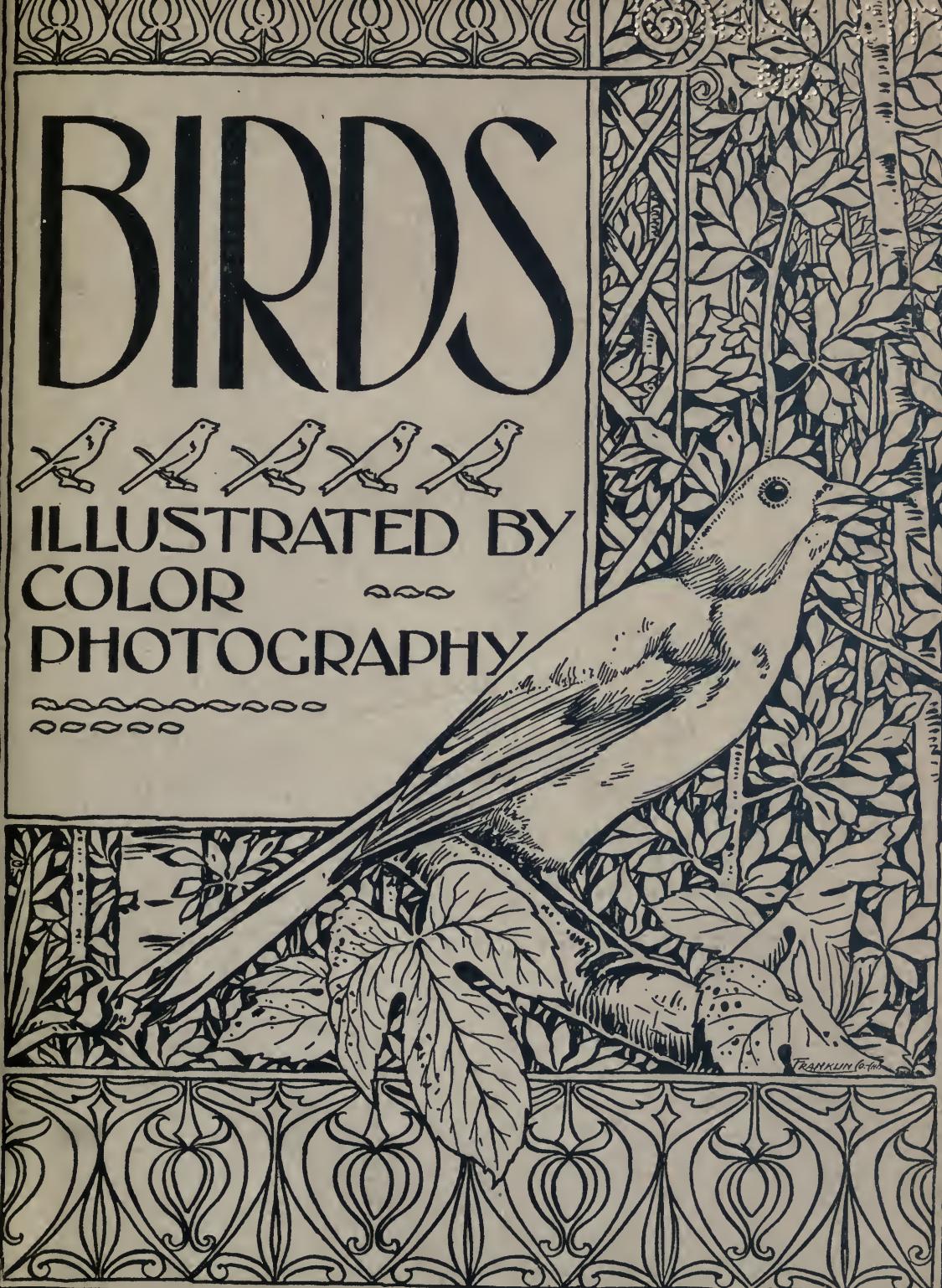
JANUARY, 1891.

NO. 1.

BIRDS



ILLUSTRATED BY
COLOR
PHOTOGRAPHY



FRANKLIN CO., LTD.

PUBLISHED BY

NATURE STUDY PUBLISHING COMPANY: CHICAGO.

YANKEE CHUBBY

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.



STATE OF NEW YORK

Department of Public Instruction
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Albany

December 26, 1896.

Stenographic Letter
Dictated by _____

W. E. Watt, President &c.,

Fisher Building,

277 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

My dear Sir:

Please accept my thanks for a copy of the first publication of "Birds." Please enter my name as a regular subscriber. It is one of the most beautiful and interesting publications yet attempted in this direction. It has other attractions in addition to its beauty, and it must win its way to popular favor.

Wishing the handsome little magazine abundant prosperity,
I remain

Yours very respectfully,

Charles R. Raymond
State Superintendent.

I. NO. I.

JANUARY, 1897.

PRICE 15 CENTS: \$1.50 A YEAR

ONCE A MONTH.

BIRDS

ILLUSTRATED BY
COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY



NONPAREIL.
LIFE SIZE.

NATURE STUDY PUBLISHING COMPANY

OFFICE: FISHER BUILDING

CHICAGO

BIRDS

ILLUSTRATED BY COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY

A MONTHLY SERIAL

DESIGNED TO PROMOTE

KNOWLEDGE OF BIRD-LIFE

"With cheerful hop from perch to spray,
They sport along the meads;
In social bliss together stray,
Where love or fancy leads.

Through spring's gay scenes each happy pair
Their fluttering joys pursue;
Its various charms and produce share,
Forever kind and true."

CHICAGO, U. S. A.

NATURE STUDY PUBLISHING COMPANY, PUBLISHERS

1896

PREFACE.

THIS has become a universal custom to obtain and preserve the likenesses of one's friends. Photographs are the most popular form of these likenesses, as they give the true exterior outlines and appearance, (except coloring) of the subjects. But how much more popular and useful does photography become, when it can be used as a means of securing plates from which to print photographs in a regular printing press, and, what is more astonishing and delightful, to produce the REAL COLORS of nature as shown in the subject, no matter how brilliant or varied.

We quote from the December number of the Ladies' Home Journal : "An excellent suggestion was recently made by the Department of Agriculture at Washington that the public schools of the country shall have a new holiday, to be known as Bird Day. Three cities have already adopted the suggestion, and it is likely that others will quickly follow. Of course, Bird Day will differ from its successful predecessor, Arbor Day. We can plant trees but not birds. It is suggested that Bird Day take the form of bird exhibitions, of bird exercises, of bird studies—any form of entertainment, in fact, which will bring children closer to their little brethren of the air, and in more intelligent sympathy with their life and ways. There is a wonderful story in bird life, and but few of our children know it. Few of our elders do, for that matter. A whole day of a year can well and profitably be given over to the birds. Than such study, nothing can be more interesting. The cultivation of an intimate acquaintanceship with our feathered friends is a source of genuine pleasure. We are under greater obligations to the birds than we dream of. Without them the world would be more barren than we imagine. Consequently, we have some duties which we owe them. What these duties are only a few of us know or have ever taken the trouble to find out. Our children should not be allowed to grow to maturity without this knowledge. The more they know of the birds the better men and women they will be. We can hardly encourage such studies too much."

Of all animated nature, birds are the most beautiful in coloring, most graceful in form and action, swiftest in motion and most perfect emblems of freedom.

They are withal, very intelligent and have many remarkable traits, so that their habits and characteristics make a delightful study for all lovers of nature. In view of the facts, we feel that we are doing a useful work for the young, and one that will be appreciated by progressive parents, in placing within the easy possession of children in the homes these beautiful photographs of birds.

The text is prepared with the view of giving the children as clear an idea as possible, of haunts, habits, characteristics and such other information as will lead them to love the birds and delight in their study and acquaintance.

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Bound
Periodical

NATURE STUDY PUBLISHING CO.

Jan - 3⁰⁰

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THE NONPAREIL.

I am called the Nonpareil because there is no other bird equal to me.

I have many names. Some call me the "Painted Finch" or "Painted Bunting." Others call me "The Pope," because I wear a purple hood.

I live in a cage, eat seeds, and am very fond of flies and spiders.

Sometimes they let me out of the cage and I fly about the room and catch flies. I like to catch them while they are flying.

When I am tired I stop and sing. There is a vase of flowers in front of the mirror.

I fly to this vase where I can see myself in the glass. Then I sing as loud as I can. They like to hear me sing.

I take a bath every day and how I do make the water fly!

I used to live in the woods where there were many birds like me. We build our nests in bushes, hedges, and low trees. How happy we were.

My cage is pretty but I wish I could go back to my home in the woods.

See page I5.

SWEET warblers of the sunny hours,
Forever on the wing,
I love thee as I love the flowers,
The sunlight and the spring.

They come like pleasant memories
In summer's joyous time,
And sing their gushing melodies,
As I would sing a rhyme.

In the green and quiet places,
Where the golden sunlight falls,
We sit with smiling faces
To list their silver calls.

And when their holy anthems
Come pealing through the air,
Our hearts leap forth to meet them
With a blessing and a prayer.

Amid the morning's fragrant dew,
Amid the mists of even,
They warble on as if they drew
Their music down from heaven.

How sweetly sounds each mellow note
Beneath the moon's pale ray,
When dying zephyrs rise and float
Like lovers' sighs away!"

THE RESPLENDENT TROGON.

A Letter to Little Boys and Girls of the United States.

Is it cold where you live, little boys and girls? It is not where I live. Don't you think my feathers grew in the bright sunshine?

My home is way down where the big oceans almost meet. The sun is almost straight overhead every noon.

I live in the woods, way back where the trees are tall and thick. I don't fly around much, but sit on a limb of a tree way up high.

Don't you think my red breast looks pretty among the green leaves?

When I see a fly or a berry I dart down after it. My long tail streams out behind like four ribbons. I wish you could see me. My tail never gets in the way.

Wouldn't you like to have me sit on your shoulder, little boy? You see my tail would reach almost to the ground.

If you went out into the street with me on your shoulder, I

would call *whe-oo, whe-oo*, the way I do in the woods.

All the little boys and girls playing near would look around and say, "What is that noise?" Then they would see you and me and run up fast and say, "Where did you get that bird?"

The little girls would want to pull out my tail feathers to put around their hats. You would not let them, would you?

I have a mate. I think she is very nice. Her tail is not so long as mine. Would you like to see her too? She lays eggs every year, and sits on them till little birds hatch out. They are just like us, but they have to grow and get dressed in the pretty feathers like ours. They look like little dumplings when they come out of the eggs.

But they are all right. They get very hungry and we carry them lots of things to eat, so they can grow fast.

Your friend,
R. T.



RESPLENDENT TROGON.

THE RESPLENDENT TROGON.

RESPLENDENT Trogons are natives of Central America. There are fifty kinds, and this is the largest. A systematic account of the superb tribe has been given by Mr. Gould, the only naturalist who has made himself fully acquainted with them.

Of all birds there are few which excite so much admiration as the Resplendent Tropic.

The skin is so singularly thin that it has been not inaptly compared to wet blotting paper, and the plumage has so light a hold upon the skin that when the bird is shot the feathers are plentifully struck from their sockets by its fall and the blows which it receives from the branches as it comes to the ground.

Its eggs, of a pale bluish-green, were first procured by Mr. Robert Owen. Its chief home is in the mountains near Coban in Vera Paz, but it also inhabits forests in other parts of Guatemala at an elevation of from 6,000 to 9,000 feet.

From Mr. Salvin's account of his shooting in Vera Paz we extract the following hunting story:

"My companions are ahead and Filipe comes back to say that they have heard a quesal, (Resplendent Tropic). Of course, being anxious to watch as well as to shoot one of these birds myself, I immediately hurry to the spot. I have not to wait long. A distant clattering noise indicates that the bird is on the wing. He settles—a splendid male—on the bough of a tree not seventy yards from where we are hidden. It sits almost motionless on its perch, the body remaining in the same position, the head only moving from side to side. The tail does not hang quite perpendicularly, the angle

between the true tail and the vertical being perhaps as much as fifteen or twenty degrees. The tail is occasionally jerked open and closed again, and now and then slightly raised, causing the long tail coverts to vibrate gracefully. I have not seen all. A ripe fruit catches the quesal's eye and he darts from his perch, plucks the berry, and returns to his former position. This is done with a degree of elegance that defies description. A low whistle from Capriano calls the bird near, and a moment afterward it is in my hand—the first quesal I have seen and shot."

The above anecdote is very beautiful and graphic, but we read the last sentence with pain. We wish to go on record with this our first number as being unreconciled to the *ruthless* killing of the birds. He who said, not a sparrow "shall fall on the ground without your Father," did not intend such birds to be killed, but to beautify the earth.

The cries of the quesal are various. They consist principally of a low note, *whe-oo*, *whe-oo*, which the bird repeats, whistling it softly at first, then gradually swelling it into a loud and not unmelodious cry. This is often succeeded by a long note, which begins low and after swelling dies away as it began. Other cries are harsh and discordant. The flight of the Tropic is rapid and straight. The long tail feathers, which never seem to be in the way, stream after him. The bird is never found except in forests of the loftiest trees, the lower branches of which, being high above the ground, seem to be its favorite resort. Its food consists principally of fruit, but occasionally a caterpillar is found in its stomach.

THE MANDARIN DUCK.

A Letter from China.

Quack! Quack! I got in just in time.

I came as fast as I could, as I was afraid of being whipped. You see I live in a boat with a great many other ducks.

My master and his family live in the boat too. Isn't that a funny place to live in?

We stay in all night. Waking up early in the morning, we cry Quack! Quack! until we wake the master.

He gets up and opens the gate for us and out we tumble into the water. We are in such a hurry that we fall over each other. We swim about awhile and then we go to shore for breakfast.

There are wet places near the shore where we find worms, grubs, and roots. When evening comes the master blows a whistle. Then we know it is time to come home.

We start as soon as we hear it, and hurry, because the last duck in gets a whipping. It

does not hurt much but we do not like it, so we all try to get home first.

I have web feet, but I perch like other birds on the branches of the trees near the river.

My feathers are beautiful in the sunlight. My wife always sits near me. Her dress is not like mine. It is brown and grey.

From May to August I lose my bright feathers, then I put on a dress like my wife's.

My master's family are Chinese, and they are very queer. They would not sell me for anything, as they would not like to have me leave China.

Sometimes a pair of us are put in a gay cage and carried to a wedding. After the wedding we are given to the bride and groom.

I hear the master's whistle again. He wants me to come in and go to bed. Quack! Quack! Good bye!



MANDARIN DUCK.
 $\frac{2}{3}$ Life-size.

THE MANDARIN DUCK.

AMORE magnificently clothed bird," says Wood, "than the male Chinese Mandarin Duck, can hardly be found, when in health and full nuptial plumage. They are natives of China and Japan, and are held in such high esteem by the Chinese that they can hardly be obtained at any price, the natives having a singular dislike to seeing the birds pass into the possession of Europeans."

Though web-footed, the birds have the power of perching and it is a curious sight to watch them on the branches of trees overhanging the pond in which they live, the male and female being always close together, the one gorgeous in purple, green, white, and chestnut, and the other soberly appareled in brown and grey. This handsome plumage the male loses during four months of the year, from May to August, when he throws off his fine crest, his wing-fans, and all his brilliant colors, assuming the sober tinted dress of his mate. The Summer Duck of America bears a close resemblance to the Mandarin Duck, both in plumage and manners, and at certain times of the year is hardly to be distinguished from that bird.

The foreign duck has been successfully reared in Zoological Gardens, some being hatched under the parent bird and others under a domestic hen, the latter hatching the eggs three days in advance of the former.

"The Chinese," says Dr. Bennett, "highly esteem the Mandarin Duck, which exhibits, as they think, a most striking example of conjugal attachment and fidelity. A pair of them are frequently placed in a gaily decorated cage and carried in their marriage processions, to be presented to the

bride and groom as worthy objects of emulation."

"I could more easily," wrote a friend of Dr. Bennett's in China to whom he had expressed his desire for a pair of these birds, "send you two live Mandarins than a pair of Mandarin Ducks."

Concerning their attachment and fidelity to one another, Dr. Bennett recites the following:

"Mr. Beale's aviary at Maceo one day was broken open and the male bird stolen from the side of its mate. She refused to be comforted, and, retiring to the farthest part of the aviary, sat disconsolate, rarely partaking of food, and giving no attention to her soiled and rumpled plumage. In vain did another handsome drake endeavor to console her for her loss. After some time the stolen bird was found in the quarters of a miserable Chinaman, and at once restored to its mate. As soon as he recognized his abode he began to flap his wings and quack vehemently. She heard his voice and almost quacked to screaming with ecstasy, both expressing their joy by crossing necks and quacking in concert. The next morning he fell upon the unfortunate drake who had made consolatory advances to his mate, pecked out his eyes and so injured him that the poor fellow died in the course of a few days."

According to Schrenck, this species appears in the countries watered by the Amoor about May, and departs again at the end of August; at this season it is always met with in small or large flocks, which are so extremely shy that they rarely come within gunshot. Whilst on the wing these parties crowd closely together in front, the birds in the rear occupying a comparatively free space.

THE GOLDEN PHEASANT

They call me the Golden Pheasant, because I have a golden crest. It is like a king's crown. Don't you think my dress is beautiful enough for a king?

See the large ruff around my neck. I can raise and lower it as I please.

I am a very large bird. I am fourteen inches tall and twenty-eight inches long. I can step right over your little robins and meadow larks and blue jays and not touch them.

Sometimes people get some of our eggs and put them under an old hen. By and by little pheasants hatch out, and the hen is very good to them. She watches over them and feeds them, but they do not wish to stay with her, they like their wild life. If they are not well fed they will fly away.

I have a wife. Her feathers are beginning to grow like mine. In a few years she will look as I do. We like to have our nests by a fallen tree.

THE well-known Chinese Pheasant, which we have named the Golden Pheasant, as well as its more sober-colored cousin, the Silver Pheasant, has its home in Eastern Asia.

China is pre-eminently the land of Pheasants; for, besides those just mentioned, several other species of the same family are found there. Japan comes next to China as a pheasant country and there are some in India.

In China the Golden Pheasant is a great favorite, not only for its splendid plumage and elegant form, but for the excellence of its flesh, which is said to surpass even that of the common pheasant. It has been introduced into Europe, but is fitted only for the aviary.

For purposes of the table it is not likely to come into general use, as

there are great difficulties in the way of breeding it in sufficient numbers, and one feels a natural repugnance to the killing of so beautiful a bird for the sake of eating it. The magnificent colors belong only to the male, the female being reddish brown, spotted and marked with a darker hue. The tail of the female is short. The statement is made, however, that some hens kept for six years by Lady Essex gradually assumed an attire like that of the males.

Fly-fishers highly esteem the crest and feathers on the back of the neck of the male, as many of the artificial baits owe their chief beauty to the Golden Pheasant.

According to Latham, it is called by the Chinese Keuki, or Keukee, a word which means gold flower fowl.

"A merry welcome to thee, glittering bird!
Lover of summer flowers and sunny things!
A night hath passed since my young buds have heard
The music of thy rainbow-colored wings—
Wings that flash spangles out where'er they quiver,
Like sunlight rushing o'er a river."



GOLDEN PHEASANT

THE NONPARIEL.

O full of fight is this little bird, that the bird trap-pers take advantage of his disposition to make him a prisoner. They place a decoy bird on a cage trap in the attitude of defense, and when it is discovered by the bird an attack at once follows, and the fighter soon finds himself caught.

They are a great favorite for the cage, being preferred by many to the Canary. Whatever he may lack as a songster he more than makes up by his wonderful beauty. These birds are very easily tamed, the female, even in the wild state, being so gentle that she allows herself to be lifted from the nest. They are also called the *Painted Finch* or *Painted Bunting*. They are found in our Southern States and Mexico. They are very numerous in the State of Louisiana and especially about the City of New Orleans, where they are greatly admired by the French inhabitants, who, true to their native instincts, admire anything with gay colors. As the first name indicates, he has no equal, perhaps, among the songsters for beauty of dress. On account of this purple hood, he is called by the French *Le Pape*, meaning The Pope.

The bird makes its appearance in the Southern States the last of April and, during the breeding season, which lasts until July, two broods are raised. The nests are made of fine grass and rest in the crotches of twigs of the low bushes and hedges. The eggs have a dull or pearly-white ground and are

marked with blotches and dots of purplish and reddish brown.

It is very pleasing to watch the numerous changes which the feathers undergo before the male bird attains his full beauty of color. The young birds of both sexes during the first season are of a fine olive green color on the upper parts and a pale yellow below. The female undergoes no material change in color except becoming darker as she grows older. The male, on the contrary, is three seasons in obtaining his full variety of colors. In the second season the blue begins to show on his head and the red also makes its appearance in spots on the breast. The third year he attains his full beauty.

Their favorite resorts are small thickets of low trees and bushes, and when singing they select the highest branches of the bush. They are passionately fond of flies and insects and also eat seeds and rice.

Thousands of these birds are trapped for the cage, and sold annually to our northern people and also in Europe. They are comparatively cheap, even in our northern bird markets, as most of them are exchanged for our Canaries and imported birds that cannot be sent directly to the south on account of climatic conditions.

Many a northern lady, while visiting the orange groves of Florida, becomes enchanted with the Nonpareil in his wild state, and some shrewd and wily negro, hearing her expressions of delight, easily procures one, and disposes of it to her at an extravagant price.

THE AUSTRALIAN GRASS PARRAKEET.

I am a Parrakeet. I belong to the Parrot family. A man bought me and brought me here.

It is not warm here, as it was where I came from. I almost froze coming over here.

I am not kept in a cage. I stay in the house and go about as I please.

There is a Pussy Cat in the house. Sometimes I ride on her back. I like that.

I used to live in the grass lands. It was very warm there. I ran among the thick grass blades, and sat on the stems and ate seeds.

I had a wife then. Her feathers were almost like mine. We never made nests. When we wanted a nest, we found a hole in a gum tree. I used to sing to my wife while she sat on the nest.

I can mock other birds. Sometimes I warble and chirp at the same time. Then it sounds like two birds singing. My tongue is short and thick, and this helps me to talk. But I have been talking too much. My tongue is getting tired.

I think I'll have a ride on Pussy's back. Good bye.

PARRAKEETS have a great fondness for the grass lands, where they may be seen in great numbers, running amid the thick grass blades, clinging to their stems, or feeding on their seeds.

Grass seed is their constant food in their native country. In captivity they take well to canary seed, and what is remarkable, never pick food with their feet, as do other species of parrots, but always use their beaks. "They do not build a nest, but must be given a piece of wood with a rough hole in the middle, which they will fill to their liking, rejecting all soft lining of wool or cotton that you may furnish them."

Only the male sings, warbling nearly all day long, pushing his beak at times into his mate's ear as though to give her the full benefit of his song. The lady, however, does not

seem to appreciate his efforts, but generally pecks him sharply in return.

A gentleman who brought a Parrakeet from Australia to England, says it suffered greatly from the cold and change of climate and was kept alive by a kind-hearted weather-beaten sailor, who kept it warm and comfortable in his bosom. It was not kept in a cage, but roamed at will about the room, enjoying greatly at times, a ride on the cat's back. At meals he perched upon his master's shoulder, picking the bits he liked from a plate set before him. If the weather was cold or chilly, he would pull himself up by his master's whiskers and warm his feet by standing on his bald head. He always announced his master's coming by a shrill call, and no matter what the hour of night, never failed to utter a note of welcome, although apparently asleep with his head tucked under his wing.



AUSTRALIAN GRASS PARAKEET



COCK-OF-THE-ROCK.

$\frac{6}{7}$ Life-size.

THE COCK OF THE ROCK.

THE Cock-of-the-Rock lives in Guiana. Its nest is found among the rocks. T. K. Salmon says: "I once went to see the breeding place of the Cock-of-the-Rock ; and a darker or wilder place I have never been in. Following up a mountain stream the gorge became gradually more enclosed and more rocky, till I arrived at the mouth of a cave with high rock on each side, and overshadowed by high trees, into which the sun never penetrated. All was wet and dark, and the only sound heard was the rushing of the water over the rocks. We had hardly become accustomed to the gloom when a nest was found, a dark bird stealing away from what seemed to be a lump of mud upon the face of the rock. This was a nest of the Cock-of-the-Rock, containing two eggs; it was built upon a projecting piece, the body being made of mud or clay, then a few sticks, and on the top lined with green moss. It was about five feet from the water. I did not see the male bird, and, indeed, I have rarely ever seen the male and female birds together, though I have seen both sexes in separate flocks."

The eggs are described as pale buff with various sized spots of shades from red-brown to pale lilac.

It is a solitary and wary bird, feeding before sunrise and after sunset and hiding through the day in sombre ravines.

Robert Schomburgh describes its dance as follows:

"While traversing the mountains of Western Guiana we fell in with a pack of these splendid birds, which

gave me the opportunity of being an eye witness of their dancing, an accomplishment which I had hitherto regarded as a fable. We cautiously approached their ballet ground and place of meeting, which lay some little distance from the road. The stage, if we may so call it, measured from four to five feet in diameter ; every blade of grass had been removed and the ground was as smooth as if leveled by human hands. On this space we saw one of the birds dance and jump about, while the others evidently played the part of admiring spectators. At one moment it expanded its wings, threw its head in the air, or spread out its tail like a peacock scratching the ground with its foot ; all this took place with a sort of hopping gait, until tired, when on emitting a peculiar note, its place was immediately filled by another performer. In this manner the different birds went through their terpsichorean exercises, each retiring to its place among the spectators, who had settled on the low bushes near the theatre of operations. We counted ten males and two females in the flock. The noise of a breaking stick unfortunately raised an alarm, when the whole company of dancers immediately flew off."

"The Indians, who place great value on their skins, eagerly seek out their playing grounds, and armed with their blow-tubes and poisoned arrows, lie in wait for the dances. The hunter does not attempt to use his weapon until the company is quite engrossed in the performance, when the birds become so pre-occupied with their amusement that four or five are often killed before the survivors detect the danger and decamp."

THE RED BIRD OF PARADISE.

My home is on an island where it is very warm. I fly among the tall trees and eat fruit and insects.

See my beautiful feathers. The ladies like to wear them in their hats.

The feathers of my wife are brown, but she has no long tail feathers.

My wife thinks my plumes are very beautiful.

When we have a party, we go with our wives to a tall tree. We spread our beautiful plumes while our wives sit and watch us.

Sometimes a man finds our tree and builds a hut among the lower branches.

He hides in the hut and while we are spreading our feathers shoots at us.

The arrows are not sharp. They do not draw blood.

When they dry the skins they take off the feet and wings. This is why people used to think we had neither feet nor wings.

They also thought we lived on the dews of heaven and the honey of flowers. This is why we are called the Birds of Paradise.

“ Upon its waving feathers poised in air,
Feathers, or rather clouds of golden down,
With streamers thrown luxuriantly out
In all the wantonness of winged wealth.”



RED BIRD OF PARADISE.

$\frac{1}{2}$ Life-size.

THE RED BIRD OF PARADISE.

BIRDS of Paradise are found only in New Guinea and on the neighboring islands. The species presented here is found only on a few islands.

In former days very singular ideas prevailed concerning these birds and the most extravagant tales were told of the life they led in their native lands. The natives of New Guinea, in preparing their skins for exportation, had removed all traces of legs, so that it was popularly supposed they possessed none, and on account of their want of feet and their great beauty, were called the Birds of Paradise, retaining, it was thought, the forms they had borne in the Garden of Eden, living upon dew or ether, through which it was imagined they perpetually floated by the aid of their long cloud-like plumage.

Of one in confinement Dr. Bennett says: "I observed the bird, before eating a grasshopper, place the insect upon the perch, keep it firmly fixed by the claws, and, divesting it of the legs, wings, etc., devour it with the head always first. It rarely alights upon the ground, and so proud is the creature of its elegant dress that it never permits a soil to remain upon it, frequently spreading out its wings and feathers, regarding its splendid self in every direction."

The sounds uttered by this bird are very peculiar, resembling somewhat the cawing of the Raven, but change gradually to a varied scale in musical gradations, like *he, hi, ho, how!* He frequently raises his voice, sending forth notes of such power as to be heard at a long distance. These notes are *whack, whack*, uttered in a barking tone, the last being a low note in conclusion.

While creeping amongst the branches in search of insects, he utters a soft

clucking note. During the entire day he flies incessantly from one tree to another, perching but a few moments, and concealing himself among the foliage at the least suspicion of danger.

In Bennett's "Wanderings" is an entertaining description of Mr. Beale's bird at Maceo. "This elegant bird," he says, "has a light, playful, and graceful manner, with an arch and impudent look, dances about when a visitor approaches the cage, and seems delighted at being made an object of admiration. It bathes twice daily, and after performing its ablutions throws its delicate feathers up nearly over its head, the quills of which have a peculiar structure, enabling the bird to effect this object. To watch this bird make its toilet is one of the most interesting sights of nature; the vanity which inspires its every movement, the rapturous delight with which it views its enchanting self, its arch look when demanding the spectator's admiration, are all pardonable in a delicate creature so richly embellished, so neat and cleanly, so fastidious in its tastes, so scrupulously exact in its observances, and so winning in all its ways."

Says a traveler in New Guinea: "As we were drawing near a small grove of teak-trees, our eyes were dazzled with a sight more beautiful than any I had yet beheld. It was that of a Bird of Paradise moving through the bright light of the morning sun. I now saw that the birds must be seen alive in their native forests, in order to fully comprehend the poetic beauty of the words Birds of Paradise. They seem the inhabitants of a fairer world than ours, things that have wandered in some way from their home, and found the earth to show us something of the beauty of worlds beyond."

THE YELLOW THROATED TOUCAN.

I am a Toucan and I live in a very warm country.

See my handsome black coat and my yellow vest.

My toes are like a parrot's, two in front and two behind.

They help me to hold to the limbs.

Look at my large beak. It looks heavy but it is not, as it is filled with air cells. These make it very light. Do you like my blue eyes?

My nest is very hard to find. If I tell you where it is, you will not take the eggs, will you? It is in a hollow limb of a very high tree.

I am very fond of fruit, and for this reason the people on the plantations do not like me very well.

I can fly very fast, but I cannot get along so well on the ground. I keep my feet far apart and hop.

I like to sit in the top of the tallest trees. Then I am not afraid. Nothing can reach me there but a rifle ball.

I do not like the owl, he is so ugly. When we find an owl we get in a circle around him and snap our great beaks, and jerk our tails up and down and scream. He is very much afraid of us.

The people where I live like our yellow breasts. They wear them on their heads, and also put them on the ends of their bows.

We sometimes sit together in a tree and snap our beaks and shout. This is why we have been called "Preacher Birds."

We can scream so loud that we may be heard a mile away. Our song is "Tucano! Tucano!"

I think it is a pretty song, but the people do not like it very much.



YELLOW THROATED TOUCAN.

$\frac{1}{6}$ Life-size.

THE YELLOW THROATED TOUCAN.

THE Toucans are a numerous race of South American birds, at once recognizable by the prodigious size of their beaks and by the richness of their plumage. "These birds are very common," says Prince Von Wied, "in all parts of the extensive forests of the Brazils and are killed for the table in large numbers during the cool seasons. Their eggs are deposited in the hollow limbs and holes of the colossal trees, so common in the tropical forests, but their nests are very difficult to find. The egg is said to be white. They are very fond of fruit, oranges, guavas and plantains, and when these fruits are ripe make sad havoc among the neighboring plantations. In return for these depredations the planter eats their flesh, which is very delicate."

The flight of these birds is easy and graceful, sweeping with facility over the loftiest trees of their native forests, their strangely developed bills being no encumbrance to them, replete as they are with a tissue of air-filled cells rendering them very light and even buoyant.

On the ground they get along with a rather awkward hopping movement, their legs being kept widely apart. In ascending a tree they do not climb but mount from one branch to another with a series of jumps, ascending to the tops of the very loftiest trees, safe from every missile except a rifle ball. They have a habit of sitting on the branches in flocks, lifting their bills, clattering them together, and shouting hoarsely all the while, from which custom the natives call them Preacher-birds. Sometimes the whole party, including the sentinel, set up a simultaneous yell so deafeningly

loud that it can be heard a mile. They are very loquacious birds and are often discovered through their perpetual chattering. Their cry resembles the word "Tucano," which has given origin to the peculiar name.

When settling itself to sleep, the Toucan packs itself up in a very systematic manner, supporting its huge beak by resting it on its back, and tucking it completely among the feathers, while it doubles its tail across its back just as if it moved on hinges. So completely is the large bill hidden among the feathers, that hardly a trace of it is visible in spite of its great size and bright color, so that the bird when sleeping looks like a great ball of loose feathers.

Sir R. Owen concludes that the large beak is of service in masticating food compensating for the absence of any grinding structures in the intestinal tract.

Says a naturalist: "We turned into a gloomy forest and for some time saw nothing but a huge brown moth, which looked almost like a bat on the wing. Suddenly we heard high upon the trees a short shrieking sort of noise ending in a hiss, and our guide became excited and said, "Toucan!" The birds were very wary and made off. They are much in quest and often shot at. At last we caught sight of a pair, but they were at the top of such a high tree that they were out of range. Presently, when I had about lost hope, I heard loud calls, and three birds came and settled in a low bush in the middle of the path. I shot one and it proved to be a very large toucan. The bird was not quite dead when I picked it up, and it bit me severely with its huge bill."

THE RED RUMPED TANAGER.

I have just been singing my morning song, and I wish you could have heard it. I think you would have liked it.

I always sing very early in the morning. I sing because I am happy, and the people like to hear me.

My home is near a small stream, where there are low woods and underbrush along its banks.

There is an old dead tree there, and just before the sun is up I fly to this tree.

I sit on one of the branches and sing for about half an hour. Then I fly away to get my breakfast.

I am very fond of fruit. Bananas grow where I live, and I like them best of all.

I eat insects, and sometimes I fly to the rice fields and swing on the stalks and eat rice.

The people say I do much harm to the rice, but I do not see why it is wrong for me to eat it, for I think there is enough for all.

I must go now and get my breakfast. If you ever come to see me I will sing to you.

I will show you my wife, too. She looks just like me. Be sure to get up very early. If you do not, you will be too late for my song.

"Birds, Birds ! ye are beautiful things,
With your earth-treading feet and your cloud-cleaving wings.
Where shall man wander, and where shall he dwell—
Beautiful birds—that ye come not as well ?
Ye have nests on the mountain, all rugged and stark,
Ye have nests in the forest, all tangled and dark ;
Ye build and ye brood 'neath the cottagers' eaves,
And ye sleep on the sod, 'mid the bonnie green leaves ;
Ye hide in the heather, ye lurk in the brake,
Ye dine in the sweet flags that shadow the lake ;
Ye skim where the stream parts the orchard decked land,
Ye dance where the foam sweeps the desolate strand."



RED RUMPED TANAGER.
Life-size.

THE RED RUMPED TANAGER.

AN American family, the Tanagers are mostly birds of very brilliant plumage. There are 300 species, a few being tropical birds. They are found in British and French Guiana, living in the latter country in open spots of dwellings and feeding on bananas and other fruits. They are also said to do much harm in the rice fields.

In "The Auk," of July, 1893, Mr. George K. Cherrie, of the Field Museum, says of the Red-Rumped Tanager.

"During my stay at Boruca and Palmar, (the last of February) the breeding season was at its height, and I observed many of the Costa Rica Red-Rumps nesting. In almost every instance where possible I collected both parents of the nests, and in the majority of cases found the males wearing the same dress as the females. In a few instances the male was in mottled plumage, evidently just assuming the adult phase, and in a lesser number of examples the male was in fully adult plumage—velvety black and crimson red. From the above it is clear that the males begin to breed before they attain fully adult plumage, and that they retain the dress of the female until, at least, the beginning of the second year.

"While on this trip I had many proofs that, in spite of its rich plumage, and being a bird of the tropics, it is well worthy to hold a place of

honor among the song birds. And if the bird chooses an early hour and a secluded spot for expressing its happiness, the melody is none the less delightful. At the little village of Buenos Aires, on the Rio Grande of Terraba, I heard the song more frequently than at any other point. Close by the ranch house at which we were staying, there is a small stream bordered by low woods and under-brush, that formed a favorite resort for the birds. Just below the ranch is a convenient spot where we took our morning bath. I was always there just as the day was breaking. On the opposite bank was a small open space in the brush occupied by the limbs of a dead tree. On one of these branches, and always the same one, was the spot chosen by a Red-rump to pour forth his morning song. Some mornings I found him busy with his music when I arrived, and again he would be a few minutes behind me. Sometimes he would come from one direction, sometimes from another, but he always alighted at the same spot and then lost no time in commencing his song. While singing, the body was swayed to and fro, much after the manner of a canary while singing. The song would last for perhaps half an hour, and then away the singer would go. I have not enough musical ability to describe the song, but will say that often I remained standing quietly for a long time, only that I might listen to the music."

THE GOLDEN ORIOLE.

WE find the Golden Oriole in America only. According to Mr. Nuttall, it is migratory, appearing in considerable numbers in West Florida about the middle of March. It is a good songster, and in a state of captivity imitates various tunes.

This beautiful bird feeds on fruits and insects, and its nest is constructed of blades of grass, wool, hair, fine strings, and various vegetable fibers, which are so curiously interwoven as to confine and sustain each other. The nest is usually suspended from a forked and slender branch, in shape like a deep basin and generally lined with fine feathers.

"On arriving at their breeding locality they appear full of life and activity, darting incessantly through the lofty branches of the tallest trees, appearing and vanishing restlessly, flashing at intervals into sight from amidst the tender waving foliage, and seem like living gems intended to decorate the verdant garments of the fresh clad forest."

It is said these birds are so attached to their young that the female has been taken and conveyed on her eggs, upon which with resolute and fatal instinct she remained faithfully sitting until she expired.

An Indiana gentleman relates the following story:

"When I was a boy living in the hilly country of Southern Indiana, I

remember very vividly the nesting of a pair of fine Orioles. There stood in the barn yard a large and tall sugar tree with limbs within six or eight feet of the ground.

"At about thirty feet above the ground I discovered evidences of an Oriole's nest. A few days later I noticed they had done considerably more work, and that they were using horse hair, wool and fine strings. This second visit seemed to create consternation in the minds of the birds, who made a great deal of noise, apparently trying to frighten me away. I went to the barn and got a bunch of horse hair and some wool, and hung it on limbs near the nest. Then climbing up higher, I concealed myself where I could watch the work. In less than five minutes they were using the materials and chatted with evident pleasure over the abundant supply at hand.

"They appeared to have some knowledge of spinning, as they would take a horse hair and seemingly wrap it with wool before placing it in position on the nest.

"I visited these birds almost daily, and shortly after the nest was completed I noticed five little speckled eggs in it. The female was so attached to the nest that I often rubbed her on the back and even lifted her to look at the eggs."



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GOLDEN ORIOLE.
Life-size.

TESTIMONIALS.

CHICAGO, December 10th, 1896.

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Principal Tilden School.

ST. JOSEPH, MICH., January 4, 1897.

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DEAR SIR: Thanks for sample copy of "Birds." It is by far the finest thing I have ever seen in that line. I shall take great pleasure in presenting it to my teachers, and shall be glad to be of any assistance to you that I am able.

Yours,

GEORGE W. LOOMIS,

Superintendent City Schools.

DES MOINES, IOWA, January 5, 1897.

NATURE STUDY PUBLISHING COMPANY,

Fisher Building, Chicago.

I have just seen the January number of "Birds," illustrated by color photography; and think it instructive, delightful and beautiful.

Very sincerely,

MRS. MINNIE THERESA HATCH,

Principal Washington School.

LUTHER, MICH., December 31st, 1896.

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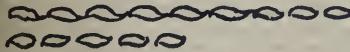
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STATE OF NEW YORK

Department of Public Instruction
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Albany December 26, 1896.

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Dictated by _____

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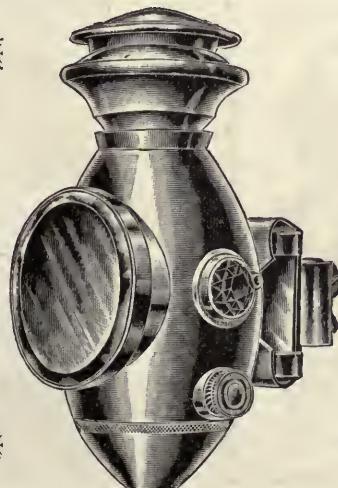
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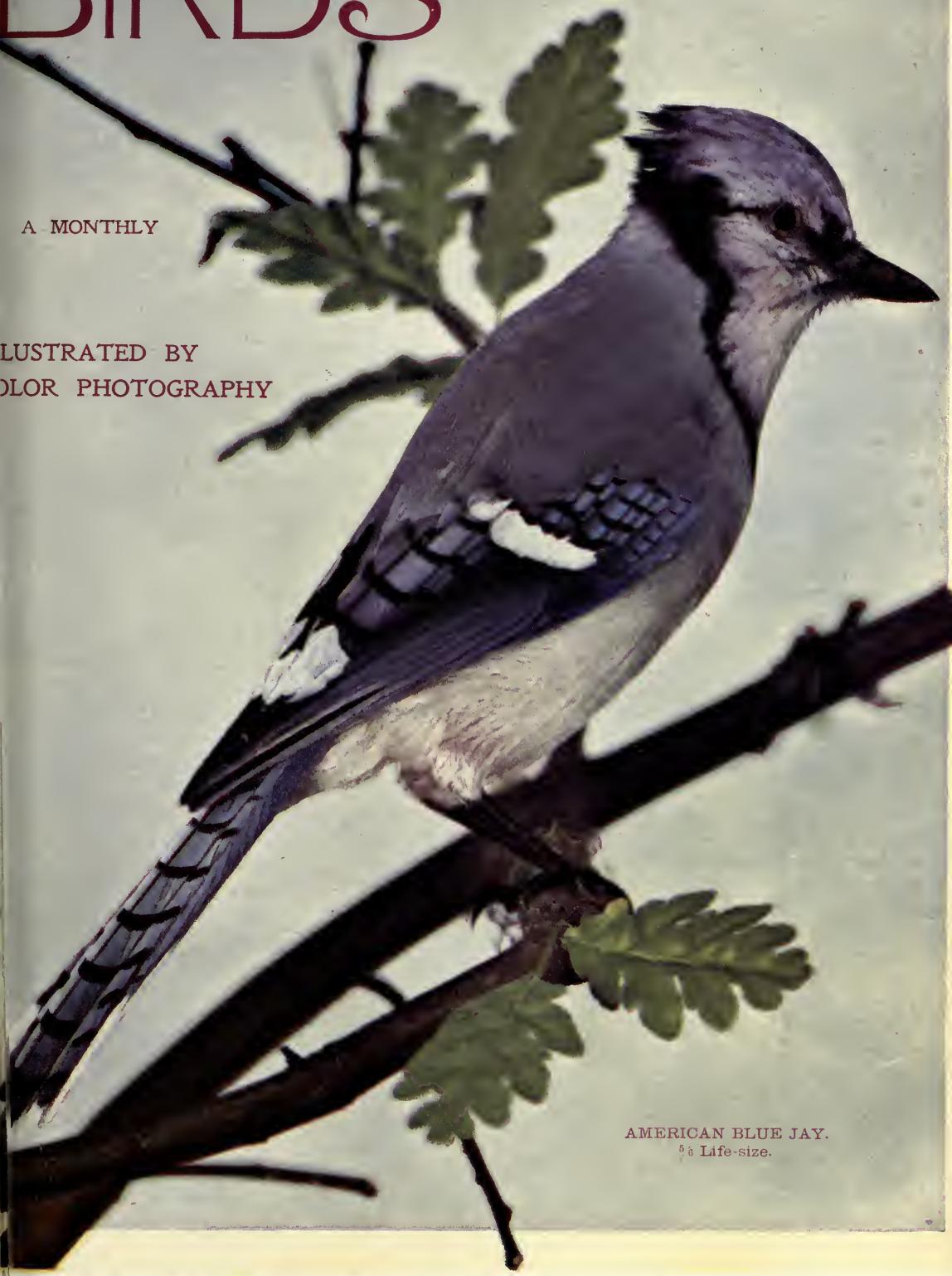
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AMERICAN BLUE JAY.
5 1/2 Life-size.

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THE BLUE JAY.

DURING about three-fourths of the year the American Jay is an extremely tame, noisy and even obtrusive bird in its habits. As the breeding season approaches he suddenly becomes silent, preparing the nest in the most secluded parts of his native forests, and exercising all his cunning to keep it concealed. He is omnivorous but is especially fond of eggs and young birds. The Jay may be regarded as eminently injurious though in spring he consumes a number of insects to atone for his sins of stealing fruit and berries in autumn. He is a professional nest robber, and other birds are as watchful of him as is a mother of her babe. He glides through the foliage of the trees so swiftly and noiselessly that his presence is scarcely suspected until he has committed some depredation. The Robin is his most wary foe, and when the Jay is found near his nest will pursue him and drive him from the neighborhood. He is as brave as he is active, however, and dashes boldly in pursuit of his more plainly attired neighbors who venture to intrude upon his domain.

The Jay has a curious antipathy toward the owl, perching on trees above it and keeping up a continual screeching. Some years ago an Ohio gentleman was presented with a magnificent specimen of the horned owl,

which he kept for a time in a large tin cage. In favorable weather the cage was set out of doors; when it would soon be surrounded by Jays, much in the manner described of the Toucan, and an incessant screeching followed, to which the owl appeared indifferent. They would venture near enough to steal a portion of his food, the bars of his cage being sufficiently wide apart to admit them. On one occasion, however, he caught the tail of a Jay in his claws and left the tormentor without his proud appendage.

The Jay remains with us throughout the year. He is one of the wildest of our birds, the shyest of man, although seeing him most. He makes no regular migrations at certain seasons, but, unless disturbed, will live out his life close to his favorite haunts. His wings show him to be unfitted for extended flight.

Jays are most easily discovered in the morning about sunrise on the tops of young live oaks. Their notes are varied. Later in the day it is more difficult to find them, as they are more silent, and not so much on the tree tops as among the bushes.

The Jays breed in woods, forests, orchards, preferring old and very shady trees, placing their nests in the center against the body, or at the bifurcation of large limbs. The nest is formed of twigs and roots; the eggs are from four to six.

THE BLUE JAY.

Something glorious, something gay,
Flits and flashes this-a-way!
'Thwart the hemlock's dusky shade,
Rich in color full displayed,
Swiftly vivid as a flame--
Blue as heaven and white as snow--
Doth this lovely creature go.
What may be his dainty name?
"Only this"--the people say--
'Saucy, chattering, scolding Jay!'

THE SWALLOW-TAILED INDIAN ROLLER.

SWALLOW-TAILED Indian Rollers are natives of North-eastern Africa and Senegambia, and also the interior of the Niger district. The bird is so called from its way of occasionally rolling or turning over in its flight, somewhat after the fashion of a tumbler pigeon. A traveller in describing the habits of the Roller family, says :

"On the 12th of April I reached Jerichio alone, and remained there in solitude for several days, during which time I had many opportunities of observing the grotesque habits of the Roller. For several successive evenings, great flocks of Rollers mustered shortly before sunset on some dona trees near the fountain, with all the noise but without the decorum of Rooks. After a volley of discordant screams, from the sound of which it derives its Arabic name of "schurk-rak," a few birds would start from their perches and commence overhead a series of somersaults. In a moment or two they would be followed by the whole flock, and these gambols would be repeated for a dozen times or more.

Everywhere it takes its perch on some conspicuous branch or on the top of a rock, where it can see and be seen. The bare tops of the fig trees, before they put forth their leaves, are

in the cultivated terraces, a particularly favorite resort. In the barren Ghor I have often watched it perched unconcernedly on a knot of gravel or marl in the plain, watching apparently for the emergence of beetles from the sand. Elsewhere I have not seen it settle on the ground.

Like Europeans in the East, it can make itself happy without chairs and tables in the desert, but prefers a comfortable easy chair when it is to be found. Its nest I have seen in ruins, in holes in rocks, in burrows, in steep sand cliffs, but far more generally in hollow trees. The colony in the Wady Kelt used burrows excavated by themselves, and many a hole did they relinquish, owing to the difficulty of working it. So cunningly were the nests placed under a crumbling, treacherous ledge, overhanging a chasm of perhaps one or two hundred feet, that we were completely foiled in our siege. We obtained a nest of six eggs, quite fresh, in a hollow tree in Bashian, near Gadara, on the 6th of May.

The total length of the Roller is about twelve inches. The Swallow-tailed Indian Roller, of which we present a specimen, differs from the European Roller only in having the outer tail feathers elongated to an extent of several inches."



SWALLOW-TAILED INDIAN ROLLER.
3½ Life-size.



THE RED HEADED WOODPECKER.

PERHAPS no bird in North America is more universally known than the Red Headed Woodpecker. He is found in all parts of the United States and is sometimes called, for short, by the significant name of Red-Head. His tri-colored plumage, red, white and black, glossed with steel blue, is so striking and characteristic, and his predatory habits in the orchards and corn-fields, and fondness for hovering along the fences, so very notorious, that almost every child is acquainted with the Red Headed Woodpecker. In the immediate neighborhood of large cities, where the old timber is chiefly cut down, he is not so frequently found. Wherever there is a deadening, however, you will find him, and in the dead tops and limbs of high trees he makes his home. Towards the mountains, particularly in the vicinity of creeks and rivers, these birds are extremely numerous, especially in the latter end of summer. It is interesting to hear them rattling on the dead leaves of trees or see them on the roadside fences, where they flit from stake to stake. We remember a tremendous and quite alarming and afterwards ludicrous rattling by one of them on some loose tin roofing on a neighbor's house. This occurred so often that the owner, to secure peace had the roof repaired.

They love the wild cherries, the earliest and sweetest apples, for, as is said of him, "he is so excellent a connoisseur in fruit, that whenever an apple or pear is found broached by him, it is sure to be among the ripest and best flavored. When alarmed he seizes a capital one by striking his open bill into it, and bears it off to the woods." He eats the rich, succulent, milky young corn

with voracity. He is of a gay and frolicsome disposition, and half a dozen of the fraternity are frequently seen diving and vociferating around the high dead limbs of some large trees, pursuing and playing with each other, and amusing the passerby with their gambols. He is a comical fellow, too, prying around at you from the bole of a tree or from his nesting hole therein.

Though a lover of fruit, he does more good than injury. Insects are his natural food, and form at least two thirds of his subsistence. He devours the destructive insects that penetrate the bark and body of a tree to deposit their eggs and larvae.

About the middle of May, he begins to construct his nest, which is formed in the body of large limbs of trees, taking in no material but smoothing it within to the proper shape and size. The female lays six eggs, of a pure white. The young appear about the first of June. About the middle of September the Red Heads begin to migrate to warmer climates, travelling at night time in an irregular way like a disbanded army and stopping for rest and food through the day.

The black snake is the deadly foe of the Red Head, frequently entering his nest, feeding upon the young, and remaining for days in possession.

"The eager school-boy, after hazarding his neck to reach the Woodpecker's hole, at the triumphant moment when he thinks the nestlings his own, strips his arm, launches it down into the cavity, and grasping what he conceives to be the callow young, starts with horror at the sight of a hideous snake, almost drops from his giddy pinnacle, and retreats down the tree with terror and precipitation."

THE WOODPECKER.

The Drummer Bird.

My dear girls and boys:

The man who told me to keep still and look pleasant while he took my picture said I might write you a letter to send with it. You say I always keep on the other side of the tree from you. That is because someone has told you that I spoil trees, and I am afraid that you will want to punish me for it. I do not spoil trees. The trees like to have me come to visit them, for I eat the insects that are killing them. Shall I tell you how I do this?

I cling to the tree with my strong claws so sharply hooked. The pointed feathers of my tail are stiff enough to help hold me against the bark. Then my breast bone is quite flat, so that I may press close to the tree. When I am all ready you hear my r-r-rap—just like a rattle. My head goes as quickly as if it were moved by a spring. Such a strong, sharp bill makes the

chips fly! The tiny tunnel I dig just reaches the insect.

Then I thrust out my long tongue. It has a sharp, horny tip, and has barbs on it too. Very tiny insects stick to a liquid like glue that covers my tongue. I suppose I must tell you that I like a taste of the ripest fruit and grain. Don't you think I earn a little when I work so hard keeping the trees healthy?

I must tell you about the deep tunnel my mate and I cut out of a tree. It is just wide enough for us to slip into. It is not straight down, but bent, so that the rain cannot get to the bottom. There we make a nest of little chips for our five white eggs.

I should like to tell you one of the stories that some boys and girls tell about my red head. You will find it on another page of the book. Now I must fly away to peck for more bugs.

Your loving friend,
WOODPECKER.



RED HEADED WOODPECKER
Life-size.



MEXICAN MOT MOT.
 $\frac{2}{3}$ Life-size.



MEXICAN MOT MOT.

MOT MOTS are peculiar to the new world, being found from Mexico throughout the whole of Central America and the South American continent. The general plumage is green, and the majority of the species have a large racket at the end of the center tail feathers, formed by the bird itself.

The Houton, (so called from his note,) according to Waterson, ranks high in beauty among the birds of Demerara. This beautiful creature seems to suppose that its beauty can be increased by trimming its tail, which undergoes the same operation as one's hair in a barber shop, using its own beak, which is serrated, in lieu of a pair of scissors. As soon as its tail is fully grown, he begins about an inch from the extremity of the two longest feathers in it and cuts away the web on both sides of the shaft, making a gap about an inch long. Both male and female wear their tails in this manner, which gives them a remarkable appearance among all other birds.

To observe this bird in his native haunts, one must be in the forest at dawn. He shuns the society of man. The thick and gloomy forests are preferred by the Houton. In those far extending wilds, about day-break, you hear him call in distinct and melancholy tone, "Houton, Houton!" An

observer says, "Move cautiously to the place from which the sound proceeds, and you will see him sitting in the underwood, about a couple of yards from the ground, his tail moving up and down every time he articulates "Houton!"

The Mot Mot lives on insects and berries found among the underwood, and very rarely is seen in the lofty trees. He makes no nest, but rears his young in a hole in the sand, generally on the side of a hill.

Mr. Osbert Salvin tells this curious anecdote: "Some years ago the Zoological Society possessed a specimen which lived in one of the large cages of the parrot house by itself. I have a very distinct recollection of the bird, for I used every time I saw it to cheer it up a bit by whistling such of its notes as I had picked up in the forests of America. The bird always seemed to appreciate this attention, for although it never replied, it became at once animated, hopped about the cage, and swung its tail from side to side like the pendulum of a clock. For a long time its tail had perfect spatules, but toward the end of its life I noticed that the median feathers were no longer trimmed with such precision, and on looking at its beak I noticed that from some cause or other it did not close properly, gaped slightly at the tip, and had thus become unfitted for removing the vanes of the feathers."

KING PARROT OR KING LORY.

LORY is the name of certain birds, mostly from the Moluccas and New Guinea, which are remarkable for their bright scarlet or crimson coloring, though also applied to some others in which the plumage is chiefly green. Much interest has been excited by the discovery of Dr. A. B. Meyer that the birds of this genus having a red plumage are the females of those wearing green feathers. For a time there was much difference of opinion on this subject, but the assertion is now generally admitted.

They are called "brush-tongued" Parrots. The color of the first plumage of the young is still unsettled. This bird is a favorite among bird fanciers, is readily tamed, and is of an affectionate nature. It can be taught to speak very creditably, and is very fond of attracting the attention of strangers and receiving the caresses of those whom it likes.

There are few things a parrot prefers to nuts and the stones of various fruits. Wood says he once succeeded in obtaining the affections of a Parisian Parrot, solely through the medium of peach stones which he always saved for the bird and for which it regularly began to gabble as soon as it saw him coming. "When taken freshly from the peach," he says, "the stones are very acceptable to the parrot, who turns them over, chuckling all the while to show his satisfaction, and picking all the soft parts from the deep indentations in the stone." He used to crack the stone before giving it to the bird, when his delight knew no bounds. They are fond of hot condiments, cayenne pepper or the capsicum pod. If a bird be ailing, a capsicum will often set it right again.

The parrot is one of the hardest of birds when well cared for and will live to a great age. Some of these birds

have been known to attain an age of seventy years, and one seen by Vailant had reached the patriarchal age of ninety-three. At sixty its memory began to fail, at sixty-five the moult became very irregular and the tail changed to yellow. At ninety it was a very decrepit creature, almost blind and quite silent, having forgotten its former abundant stock of words.

A gentleman once had for many years a parrot of seemingly rare intelligence. It was his custom during the summer to hang the parrot's cage in front of his shop in a country village, where the bird would talk and laugh and cry, and condole with itself. Dogs were his special aversion and on occasions when he had food to spare, he would drop it out of the cage and whistle long and loud for them. When the dogs had assembled to his satisfaction he would suddenly scream in the fiercest accents, "Get out, dogs!" and when they had scattered in alarm his enjoyment of it was demonstrative. This parrot's vocabulary, however, was not the most refined, his master having equipped him with certain piratical idioms.

According to authority, the parrot owner will find the health of his pet improved and its happiness promoted by giving it, every now and then, a small log or branch on which the mosses and lichens are still growing. Meat, fish, and other similar articles of diet are given with evil effects.

It is impossible for anyone who has only seen these birds in a cage or small inclosure to conceive what must be the gorgeous appearance of a flock, either in full flight, and performing their various evolutions, under a vertical sun, or sporting among the superb foliage of a tropical forest which, without these, and other brilliant tenants, would present only a solitude of luxuriant vegetation.



KING PARROT

$\frac{2}{3}$ Life-size.



THE AMERICAN ROBIN.

"Come, sweetest of the feathered throng."

UR American Robin must not be confounded with the English Robin Redbreast, although both bear the same name. It is the latter bird in whose praiseso much has been written in fable and song. The American Robin belongs to the Thrush family; the Mocking bird,Cat-bird and Brown Thrush, or Thrasher, being other familiar children. In this family, bird organization reaches its highest development. This bird is larger than his English cousin the Redbreast and many think has a finer note than any other of the Thrush family.

The Robin courts the society of man, following close upon the plow and the spade and often becoming quite tame and domestic. It feeds for a month or two on strawberries and cherries, but generally on worms and insects picked out of the ground. It destroys the larvae of many insects in the soil and is a positive blessing to man, designed by the Creator for ornament and pleasure, and use in protecting vegetation. John Burroughs, the bird lover, says it is the most native and democratic of our birds.

It is widely diffused over the country, migrating to milder climates in the Winter. We have heard him in the early dawn on Nantucket Island welcoming the coming day, in the valleys of the Great and the Little Miami, in the parks of Chicago, and on the plains of Kansas, his song ever cheering and friendly. It is one of the earliest heralds of Spring, coming as early as March or April, and is one of the latest birds to leave us in Autumn. Its song is a welcome prelude to the general concert of Summertime.

"When Robin Redbreast sings,
We think on budding Springs."

The Robin is not one of our most charming songsters, yet its carol is sweet, hearty and melodious. Its principal song is in the morning before sunrise, when it mounts the top of some tall tree, and with its wonderful power of song, announces the coming of day. When educated, it imitates the sounds of various birds, and even sings tunes. It must be amusing to hear it pipe out so solemn a strain as Old Hundred.

It has no remarkable habits. It shows considerable courage and anxiety for its young, and is a pattern of propriety when keeping house and concerned with the care of its offspring. Two broods are often reared out of the same nest. In the Fall these birds become restless and wandering, often congregating in large flocks, when, being quite fat, they are much esteemed as food.

The Robin's nest is sometimes built in a corner of the porch, but oftener it is saddled on the horizontal limb of an orchard tree. It is so large and poorly concealed that any boy can find it, yet it is seldom molested. The Robin is not a skillful architect. The masonry of its nest is rough and the material course, being composed largely of leaves or old grass, cemented with mud. The eggs number four to six and are greenish blue in color.

An observer tells the following story of this domestic favorite:

"For the last three years a Robin has nested on a projecting pillar that supports the front piazza. In the Spring of the first year she built her nest on the top of the pillar—a rude affair—it was probably her first effort. The same season she made her second nest in the forks of an Oak, which took her only a few hours to complete.

[Continued on page 59]

THE AMERICAN ROBIN.

The Bird of the Morning.

Yes, my dear readers, I am the bird of the morning. Very few of you rise early enough to hear my first song. By the time you are awake our little ones have had their breakfast, Mrs. Robin and I have had our morning bath and we are all ready to greet you with our morning song.

I wonder if any of you have seen our nest and can tell the color of the eggs that Mrs. Robin lays. Some time I will let you peep into the nest and see them, but of course you will not touch them.

I wonder, too, if you know any of my cousins—the Mocking bird, the Cat bird or the Brown Thrush—I think I shall ask them to have their pictures taken soon and talk to you about our gay times.

Did you ever see one of my cousins on the ground? I don't

believe you can tell how I move about. Some of you may say I run, and some of you may say I hop, and others of you may say I do both. Well, I'll tell you how to find out. Just watch me and see. My little friends up north won't be able to see me though until next month, as I do not dare leave the warm south until Jack Frost leaves the ground so I can find worms to eat.

I shall be about the first bird to visit you next month and I want you to watch for me. When I do come it will be to stay a long time, for I shall be the last to leave you. Just think, the first to come and last to leave. Don't you think we ought to be great friends? Let us get better acquainted when next we meet. Your friend,

ROBIN.

HOW do the robins build their nest?
Robin Red Breast told me,
First a wisp of yellow hay
In a pretty round they lay;
Then some shreds of downy floss,
Feathers too, and bits of moss,
Woven with a sweet, sweet song,
This way, that way, and across:
That's what Robin told me.

Where do the robins hide their nest?
Robin Red Breast told me,
Up among the leaves so deep,
Where the sunbeams rarely creep,
Long before the winds are cold,
Long before the leaves are gold
Bright-eyed stars will peep and see
Baby Robins—one, two, three:
That's what Robin told me.



AMERICAN ROBIN
Life-size.



She reared three broods that season; for the third family she returned to the piazza, and repaired the first nest. The following Spring she came again to the piazza, but selected another pillar for the site of her domicile, the construction of which was a decided improvement upon the first. For the next nest she returned to the Oak and raised a second story on the old one of the previous year, but making it much more symmetrical than the one beneath. The present season her first dwelling was as before, erected on a pillar of the piazza—as fine a structure as I ever saw this species build. When this brood was fledged she again repaired to the Oak, and reared a third story on the old domicile, using the moss before mentioned, making a very elaborate affair, and finally finishing up by festooning it with long sprays of moss. This bird and her

mate were quite tame. I fed them with whortleberries, which they seemed to relish, and they would come almost to my feet to get them."

The amount of food which the young robin is capable of absorbing is enormous. A couple of vigorous, half-grown birds have been fed, and in twelve hours devoured ravenously, sixty-eight earth worms, weighing thirty-four pennyweight, or forty-one per cent more than their own weight. A man at this rate should eat about seventy pounds of flesh per day, and drink five or six gallons of water.

The following poem by the good Quaker poet Whittier is sweet because he wrote it, interesting because it recites an old legend which incidentally explains the color of the robin's breast, and unique because it is one of the few poems about our American bird.

THE ROBIN.

My old Welsh neighbor over the way
Crept slowly out in the sun of spring,
Pushed from her ears the locks of gray,
And listened to hear the robin sing.

Her grandson, playing at marbles, stopped,
And—cruel in sport, as boys will be—
Tossed a stone at the bird, who hopped
From bough to bough in the apple tree.

"Nay!" said the grandmother; "have you
not heard,
My poor, bad boy! of the fiery pit,
And how, drop by drop, this merciful bird
Carries the water that quenches it?"

"Prayers of love like rain-drops fall,
Tears of pity are cooling dew,
And dear to the heart of Our Lord are all
Who suffer like Him in the good they do."

"He brings cool dew in his little bill,
And lets it fall on the souls of sin:
You can see the mark on his red breast still
Of fires that scorch as he drops it in.

"My poor Bron rhuddyn! my breast-burned
bird,
Singing so sweetly from limb to limb,
Very dear to the heart of Our Lord
Is he who pities the lost like Him."

"Amen!" I said to the beautiful myth;
"Sing, bird of God, in my heart as well:
Each good thought is a drop wherewith
To cool and lessen the fires of hell.

THE KINGFISHER.

Dear Children:

I shall soon arrive from the south. I hear that all the birds are going to tell stories to the boys and girls.

I have never talked much with children myself for I never really cared for people. They used to say that the dead body of a Kingfisher kept them safe in war and they said also that it protected them in lightning.

Even now in some places in France they call us the moth birds, for they believe that our bodies will keep away moths from woolen cloth.

I wish that people would not believe such things about us. Perhaps you cannot understand me when I talk. You may think that you hear only a child's rattle.

Listen again! It is I, the Kingfisher. That sound is my way of talking. I live in the deep woods. I own a beautiful stream and a clear, cool lake. Oh, the little fish in that lake are good enough for a king to eat! I know, for I am a king.

You may see me or some of my mates near the lake any

pleasant day. People used to say that we always brought pleasant weather. That is a joke. It is the pleasant weather that always brings us from our homes. When it storms or rains we cannot see the fish in the lake. Then we may as well stay in our nests.

My home once belonged to a water rat. He dug the fine hall in the gravel bank in my stream. It is nearly six feet long. The end of it is just the kind of a place for a nest. It is warm, dry and dark. In June my wife and I will settle down in it. By that time we shall have the nest well lined with fish bones. We shall put in some dried grass too. The fish bones make a fine lining for a nest. You know we swallow the fish whole, but we save all the bones for our nest.

I shall help my wife hatch her five white eggs and shall try in every way to make my family safe.

Please tell the people not to believe those strange things about me and you will greatly oblige,

A neighbor,
THE KINGFISHER.



KINGFISHER.

56 Life-size.

THE KINGFISHER.

The Lone Fisherman.

THE American species belongs to the true group of Kingfishers. It occupies the whole continent of North America and although migrating in the north, he is a constant resident of our southern states. The belted Kingfisher is the only variety found along the inland streams of the United States. Audubon declares that "belted" should apply only to the female however.

Like most birds of brilliant plumage, the Kingfisher prefers a quiet and secluded haunt. It loves the little trout streams, with wooded and precipitous banks, the still ponds and small lakes, ornamental waters in parks, where it is not molested, and the sides of sluggish rivers, drains and mill-ponds.

Here in such a haunt the bird often flits past like an indistinct gleam of bluish light. Fortune may sometimes favor the observer and the bird may alight on some twig over the stream, its weight causing it to sway gently to and fro. It eagerly scans the shoal of young trout sporting in the pool below, when suddenly it drops down into the water, and, almost before the observer is aware of the fact, is back again to its perch with a struggling fish in its beak. A few blows on the branch and its prey is ready for the dexterous movement of the bill, which places it in a position for swallowing. Sometimes the captured fish is adroitly jerked into the air and caught as it falls.

Fish is the principal food of the Kingfisher; but it also eats various kinds of insects, shrimps, and even small crabs. It rears its young in a hole, which is made in the banks of the stream it frequents. It is a slatternly bird, fowls its own nest and its peerless eggs. The nesting hole is

bored rather slowly, and takes from one to two weeks to complete. Six or eight white glossy eggs are laid, sometimes on the bare soil, but often on the fish bones which, being indigestible, are thrown up by the bird in pellets.

The Kingfisher has a crest of feathers on the top of his head, which he raises and lowers, especially when trying to drive intruders away from his nest.

The plumage is compact and oily, making it almost impervious to water. The flesh is fishy and disagreeable to the taste, but the eggs are said to be good eating. The wings are long and pointed and the bill longer than the head. The voice is harsh and monotonous.

It is said that few birds are connected with more fables than the Kingfisher. The superstition that a dead Kingfisher when suspended by the throat, would turn its beak to that particular point of the compass from which the wind blew, is now dead. It was also supposed to possess many astonishing virtues, as that its dried body would avert thunderbolts, and if kept in a wardrobe would preserve from moths the woolen stuffs and the like contained in it.

"Under the name of "halcyon," it was fabled by the ancients to build its nest on the surface of the sea, and to have the power of calming the troubled waves during its period of incubation; hence the phrase "halcyon days."

A pair of Kingfishers have had their residence in a bank at the south end of Washington Park, Chicago, for at least three seasons past. We have watched the Kingfisher from secluded spots on Long Island ponds and tidal streams, where his peculiar laughing note is the same as that which greets the ear of the fisherman on far inland streams on still summer days.

THE BLACKBIRD.

“I could not think so plain a bird
Could sing so fine a song.”

One on another against the wall
Pile up the books—I am done with them all;
I shall be wise, if I ever am wise,
Out of my own ears, and of my own eyes.

One day of the woods and their balmy light—
One hour on the top of a breezy hill,
There in the sassafras all out of sight
The Blackbird is splitting his slender bill
For the ease of his heart:

Do you think if he said
“I will sing like this bird with the mud colored back
And the two little spots of gold over his eyes,
Or like to this shy little creature that flies
So low to the ground, with the amethyst rings
About her small throat—all alive when she sings
With a glitter of shivering green—for the rest,
Gray shading to gray, with the sheen of her breast
Half rose and half fawn—

Or like this one so proud,
That flutters so restless, and cries out so loud,
With stiff horny beak and a top-knotted head,
And a lining of scarlet laid under his wings—”
Do you think, if he said, “I’m ashamed to be black!”
That he could have shaken the sassafras-tree
As he does with the song he was born to? not he!

—ALICE CARY.

“Do you ne’er think what wondrous beings these?
Do you ne’er think who made them—who taught
The dialect they speak, where melodies
Alone are the interpreters of thought?
Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Sweeter than instrument of man ere caught!
Whose habitation in the tree-tops even
Are half-way houses on the road to heaven!

* * * * *

“You call them thieves or pillagers; but know,
They are the winged wardens of your farms,
Who from the cornfields drive the insidious foe,
And from your harvest keep a hundred harms;
Even the blackest of them all, the crow,
Renders good service as your man-at-arms,
Crushing the beetle in his coat of mail,
And crying havoc on the slug and snail.”

—FROM “THE BIRDS OF KILLINGWORTH.”



BLUE MOUNTAIN LORY.
 $\frac{3}{4}$ Life-size.

BLUE MOUNTAIN LORY.

THIS bird inhabits the vast plains of the interior of New South Wales. It is one of the handsomest, not only of the Australian Parrots, but takes foremost place among the most gorgeously dressed members of the Parrot family that are to be met with in any part of the world. It is about eleven or twelve inches in length. The female cannot with certainty be distinguished from her mate, but is usually a very little smaller. The Lory seldom descends to the ground, but passes the greater part of its life among the gum trees upon the pollen and nectar on which it mainly subsists. In times of scarcity, however, it will also eat grass seeds, as well as insects, for want of which it is said, it often dies prematurely when in captivity.

Dr. Russ mentions that a pair obtained from a London dealer in 1870 for fifty dollars were the first of these birds imported, but the London Zoological Society had secured some of them two years before.

Despite his beauty, the Blue Mountain Lory is not a desirable bird to keep, as he requires great care. A female which survived six years in an aviary, laying several eggs, though kept singly, was fed on canary seed, maize, a little sugar, raw beef and carrots. W. Gedney seems to have been peculiarly happy in his specimens, remarking, "But for the terribly sud-

den death which so often overtakes these birds, they would be the most charming feathered pets that a lady could possess, having neither the power nor inclination to bite savagely." The same writer's recommendation to feed this Lory exclusively upon soft food, in which honey forms a great part, probably accounts for his advice to those "whose susceptible natures would be shocked" by the sudden death of their favorite, not to become the owner of a Blue Mountain Lory.

Like all the parrot family these Lories breed in hollow boughs, where the female deposits from three to four white eggs, upon which she sits for twenty-one days. The young from the first resemble their parents closely, but are a trifle less brilliantly colored.

They are very active and graceful, but have an abominable shriek. The noise is said to be nearly as disagreeable as the plumage is beautiful. They are very quarrelsome and have to be kept apart from the other parrots, which they will kill. Other species of birds however, are not disturbed by them. It is a sort of family animosity. They have been bred in captivity.

The feathers of the head and neck are long and very narrow and lie closely together; the claws are strong and hooked, indicating their tree climbing habits. Their incessant activity and amusing ways make these birds always interesting to watch.

THE RED WING BLACK BIRD.

The Bird of Society.

The blackbirds make the maples ring
With social cheer and jubilee ;
The redwing flutes his o-ka-lee.—EMERSON.

THE much abused and persecuted Red Wing Black Bird is found throughout North America, from the Atlantic to the Pacific; and it breeds more or less abundantly wherever found. In New England it is generally migratory, though instances are on record where a few have been known to remain throughout the winter in Massachusetts. Passing, in January, through the lower counties of Virginia, one frequently witnesses the aerial evolutions of great numbers of these birds. Sometimes they appear as if driven about like an enormous black cloud carried before the wind, varying every moment in shape. Sometimes they rise suddenly from the fields with a noise like thunder, while the glittering of innumerable wings of the brightest vermillion, amid the black cloud, occasion a very striking effect. At times the whole congregated multitude will suddenly alight in some detached grove and commence one general concert, that can plainly be distinguished at the distance of more than two miles. With the Redwings the whole winter season seems one continued carnival. They find abundant food in the old fields of rice, buckwheat and grain, and much of their time is spent in aerial movements, or in grand vocal performances.

The Redwings, for their nest, always select either the borders of streams or low marshy situations, amongst thick bunches of reeds. One nest was found built on a slender sapling at the distance of fourteen feet from the ground. The nest was pensile, like that of the Baltimore Oriole.

They have from one to three or more broods in a season, according to locality.

In the grain growing states they gather in immense swarms and commit havoc, and although they are shot in great numbers, and though their ranks are thinned by the attacks of hawks, it seems to have but little effect upon the survivors.

On the other hand, these Black Birds more than compensate the farmer for their mischief by the benefit they confer in the destruction of grub worms, caterpillars, and various kinds of larvæ, the secret and deadly enemies of vegetation. It has been estimated the number of insects destroyed by these birds in a single season, in the United States, to be twelve thousand millions.

The eggs average about an inch in length. They are oval in shape, have a light bluish ground, and are marbled, lined and blotched with markings of light and dark purple and black.

BLACKBIRD.

'Tis a woodland enchanted!
By no sadder spirit
Than blackbirds and thrushes,
That whistle to cheer it
All day in the bushes,
This woodland is haunted ;
And in a small clearing,
Beyond sight or hearing
Of human annoyance,
The little fount gushes.—LOWELL.



RED WINGED BLACK BIRD.

THE BIRD OF SOCIETY.

The blackbird loves to be one of a great flock. He talks, sings or scolds from morning until night. He cannot keep still. He will only stay alone with his family a few months in the summer. That is the reason he is called the "Bird of Society." When he is merry, he gaily sings, "Conk-quer-ree." When he is angry or frightened he screams, "Chock ! Chock !" When he is flying or bathing he gives a sweet note which sounds like ee-u-u. He can chirp—chick, check, chuck, to his little ones as softly as any other bird. But only his best friends ever hear his sweetest tones, for the Blackbirds do not know how to be polite. They all talk at once. That is why most people think they only scream and chatter. Did you ever hear the blackbirds in the cornfields? If the farmers thought about it perhaps they would feel that part of every corn crop belongs to the Blackbirds. When the corn is young, the farmer cannot see the grubs which are eating the young plants. The Blackbirds can. They feed them to their babies—many thousands in a day. That is the way the crops are saved for the farmer. But he never thinks of that. Later when the Blackbirds come for their share of the corn the farmer

says, "No, they shall not have my corn. I must stop that quickly." Perhaps the Blackbirds said the same thing to the grubs in the spring. It is hard to have justice for everyone.

In April the Blackbird and his mate leave the noisy company. They seek a cosy home near the water where they can be quiet until August. They usually choose a swampy place among low shrubs and rushes. Here in the deep nest of coarse grass, moss and mud the mother bird lays her five eggs. They are very pretty—light blue with purple and black markings. Their friends say this is the best time to watch the blackbirds. In the flock they are all so much alike we cannot tell one from another. You would like to hear of some of the wise things Blackbirds do when they are tame.

One friend of the birds turned her home into a great open bird cage. Her chair was the favorite perch of her birds. She never kept them one minute longer than they wanted to stay. Yet her home was always full. This was Olive Thorne Miller. If you care to, you might ask mother to get "Bird Ways" and read you what she says about this "bird of society" and the other birds of this book.

THE AMERICAN RED BIRD.

AMERICAN RED BIRDS are among our most common cage birds, and are very generally known in Europe, numbers of them having been carried over both to France and England. Their notes are varied and musical; many of them resembling the high notes of a fife, and are nearly as loud. They are in song from March to September, beginning at the first appearance of dawn and repeating successively twenty or thirty times, and with little intermission, a favorite strain.

The sprightly figure and gaudy plumage of the Red Bird, his vivacity, strength of voice, and actual variety of note, and the little expense with which he is kept, will always make him a favorite.

This species is more numerous to the east of the great range of the Alleghanies, but is found in Pennsylvania and Ohio, and is numerous in the lower parts of the Southern States. In January and February they have been found along the roadsides and fences, hovering together in half dozens, associating with snow birds, and various kinds of sparrows. In the northern states they are migratory, and in

the southern part of Pennsylvania they reside during the whole year, frequenting the borders of rivulets, in sheltered hollows, covered with holly, laurel, and other evergreens. They love also to reside in the vicinity of fields of Indian corn, a grain that constitutes their chief and favorite food. The seeds of apples, cherries, and other fruit are also eaten by them, and they are accused of destroying bees.

Early in May the Red Bird begins to prepare his nest, which is very often fixed in a holly, cedar or laurel bush. A pair of Red Birds in Ohio returned for a number of years to build their nest in a honeysuckle vine under a portico. They were never disturbed and never failed to rear a brood of young. The nest was constructed of small twigs, dry weeds, slips of vine bark, and lined with stalks of fine grass. Four eggs of brownish olive were laid, and they usually raised two broods in a season.

In confinement they fade in color, but if well cared for, will live to a considerable age. They are generally known by the names: Red Bird, Virginia Red Bird, Virginia Nightingale, and Crested Red Bird. It is said that the female often sings nearly as well as the male.

THE REDBIRDS.

Two Redbirds came in early May,
Flashing like rubies on the way;
Their joyous notes awoke the day,
And made all nature glad and gay.

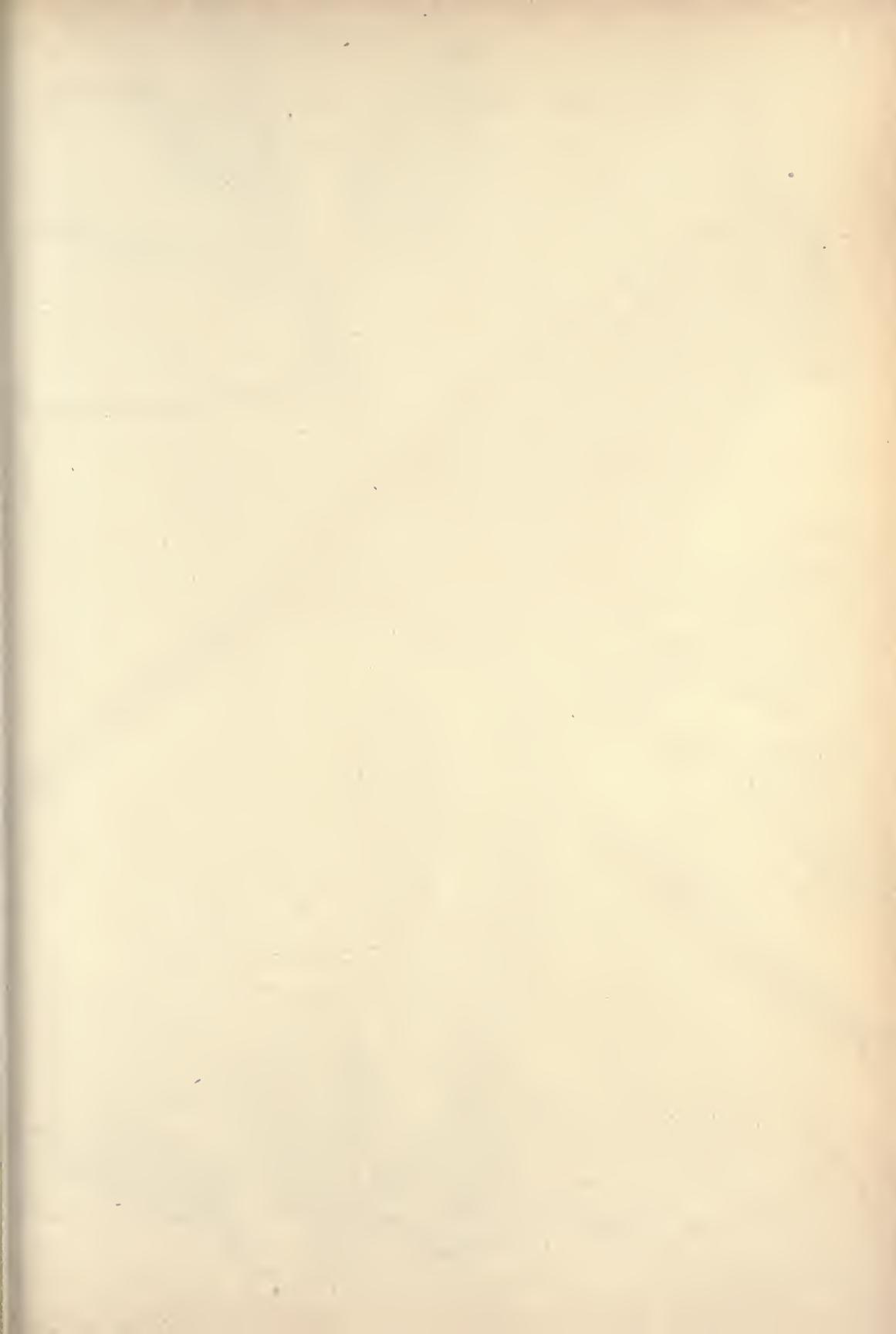
Thrice welcome! crested visitants;
Thou doest well to seek our haunts;
The bounteous vine, by thee possessed,
From prying eyes shall keep thy nest.

Free as the circumambient air
Do thou remain, a perfect pair,
To come once more when Proserpine
Shall swell the buds of tree and vine.

--C. C. M.

Sing to us in the early dawn;
'Tis then thy scarlet throats have drawn
Refreshing draughts from drops of dew,
The enchanting concert to renew.

No plaintive notes, we ween, are thine;
They gurgle like a royal wine;
They cheer, rejoice, they quite outshine
Thy neighbor's voice, tho' it's divine.





AMERICAN RED BIRD.

$\frac{3}{8}$ Life-size.

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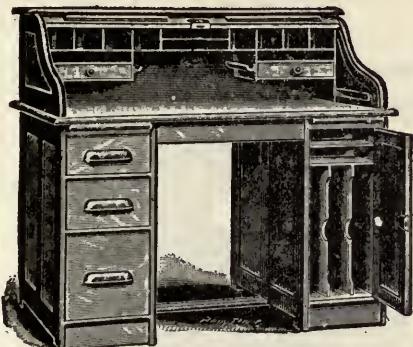
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TESTIMONIALS.

FRANKFORT, KY., February 3, 1897.

W. J. BLACK, Vice-President,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: I have a copy of your magazine entitled "Birds," and beg to say that I consider it one of the finest things on the subject that I have ever seen, and shall be pleased to recommend it to county and city superintendents of the state.

Very respectfully,

W. J. DAVIDSON,
State Superintendent Public Instruction.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., January 27, 1897.

W. J. BLACK, ESQ.,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: I am very much obliged for the copy of "Birds" that has just come to hand. It should be in the hands of every primary and grammar teacher. I send herewith copy of "List of San Francisco Teachers."

Very respectfully,

M. BABCOCK.

LINCOLN, NEB., February 9, 1897.

W. J. BLACK,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: The first number of your magazine, "Birds," is upon my desk. I am highly pleased with it. It will prove a very serviceable publication—one that strikes out along the right lines. For the purpose intended, it has, in my opinion, no equal. It is clear, concise, and admirably illustrated.

Very respectfully,

W. R. JACKSON,
State Superintendent Public Instruction.

NORTH LIMA, OHIO, February 1, 1897.

MR. W. E. WATT,

Dear Sir: Sample copy of "Birds" received. All of the family delighted with it. We wish it unbounded success. It will be an excellent supplement to "In Birdland" in the Ohio Teachers' Reading Circle, and I venture Ohio will be to the front with a good subscription list. I enclose list of teachers.

Very truly,

C. M. L. ALTDOERFFER,
Township Superintendent.

MILWAUKEE, January 30, 1897.

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Stenographic Letter
Dictated by _____

STATE OF NEW YORK
Department of Public Instruction
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Albany December 26, 1896.

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LITTLE BOY BLUE.

Boys and girls, don't you think that is a pretty name? I came from the warm south, where I went last winter, to tell you that Springtime is nearly here.

When I sing, the buds and flowers and grass all begin to whisper to one another, "Springtime is coming for we heard the Bluebird say so," and then they peep out to see the warm sunshine. I perch beside them and tell them of my long journey from the south and how I knew just when to tell them to come out of their warm winter cradles. I am of the same blue color as the violet that shows her pretty face when I sing, "Summer is coming, and Springtime is here."

I do not like the cities for they are black and noisy and full of those troublesome birds called English Sparrows. I take my pretty mate and out in the beautiful country we find a home. We build a nest of

twigs, grass and hair, in a box that the farmer puts up for us near his barn.

Sometimes we build in a hole in some old tree and soon there are tiny eggs in the nest. I sing to my mate and to the good people who own the barn. I heard the farmer say one day, "Isn't it nice to hear the Bluebird sing? He must be very happy." And I am, too, for by this time there are four or five little ones in the nest.

Little Bluebirds are like little boys—they are always hungry. We work hard to find enough for them to eat. We feed them nice fat worms and bugs, and when their little wings are strong enough, we teach them how to fly. Soon they are large enough to hunt their own food, and can take care of themselves.

The summer passes, and when we feel the breath of winter we go south again, for we do not like the cold.

THE BLUE BIRD.

I know the song that the Bluebird is singing
Out in the apple tree, where he is swinging.
Brave little fellow! the skies may be dreary,
Nothing cares he while his heart is so cheery.
Hark! how the music leaps out from his throat,
Hark! was there ever so merry a note?

"Dear little snow-drop! I pray you arise;
Bright yellow crocus! come open your eyes;
Sweet little violets, hid from the cold,
Put on our mantles of purple and gold;
Daffodils! daffodils! say, do you hear,
Summer is coming! and springtime is here!"

Listen a while, and you'll hear what he's saying,
Up in the apple tree swinging and swaying.
"Dear little blossoms down under the snow,
You must be weary of winter, I know;
Hark! while I sing you a message of cheer,
Summer is coming, and springtime is here!"



BLUE BIRD.
Life-size.



THE BLUE BIRD.

Winged lute that we call a blue bird,
You blend in a silver strain
The sound of the laughing waters,
The patter of spring's sweet rain,
The voice of the wind, the sunshine,
And fragrance of blossoming things,
Ah! you are a poem of April
That God endowed with wings.

E. E. R.

LIKE a bit of sky this little harbinger of spring appears, as we see him and his mate househunting in early March. Oftentimes he makes his appearance as early as the middle of February, when his attractive note is heard long before he himself is seen. He is one of the last to leave us, and although the month of November is usually chosen by him as the fitting time for departure to a milder clime, his plaintive note is quite commonly heard on pleasant days throughout the winter season, and a few of the braver and hardier ones never entirely desert us. The Robin and the Blue Bird are tenderly associated in the memories of most persons whose childhood was passed on a farm or in the country village. Before the advent of the English Sparrow, the Blue Bird was sure to be the first to occupy and the last to defend the little box prepared for his return, appearing in his blue jacket somewhat in advance of the plainly habited female, who on her arrival quite often found a habitation selected and ready for her acceptance, should he find favor in her sight. And then he becomes a most devoted husband and father, sitting by the nest and warbling with earnest affection his exquisite tune, and occasionally flying away in search of food for his mate and nestlings.

The Blue Bird rears two broods in the season, and, should the weather be mild, even three. His nest contains three eggs.

In the spring and summer when he is happy and gay, his song is ex-

tremely soft and agreeable, while it grows very mournful and plaintive as cold weather approaches. He is mild of temper, and a peaceable and harmless neighbor, setting a fine example of amiability to his feathered friends. In the early spring, however, he wages war against robins, wrens, swallows, and other birds whose habitations are of a kind to take his fancy. A celebrated naturalist says: "This bird seems incapable of uttering a harsh note, or of doing a spiteful, ill-tempered thing."

Nearly everybody has his anecdote to tell of the Blue Bird's courage, but the author of "Wake Robin" tells his exquisitely thus: "A few years ago I put up a little bird house in the back end of my garden for the accommodation of the wrens, and every season a pair have taken up their abode there. One spring a pair of Blue Birds looked into the tenement, and lingered about several days, leading me to hope that they would conclude to occupy it. But they finally went away. Late in the season the wrens appeared, and after a little coqueting, were regularly installed in their old quarters, and were as happy as only wrens can be. But before their honeymoon was over, the Blue Birds returned. I knew something was wrong before I was up in the morning. Instead of that voluble and gushing song outside the window, I heard the wrens scolding and crying out at a fearful rate, and on going out saw the Blue Birds in possession of the box. The poor wrens were in despair and were forced to look for other quarters."

THE SWALLOW.

"Come, summer visitant, attach
To my reedroof thy nest of clay,
And let my ear thy music catch,
Low twitting underneath the thatch,
At the gray dawn of day."

SURE harbingers of spring are the Swallows. They are very common birds, and frequent, as a rule, the cultivated lands in the neighborhood of water, showing a decided preference for the habitations of man. "How gracefully the swallows fly! See them coursing over the daisy-bespangled grass fields; now they skim just over the blades of grass, and then with a rapid stroke of their long wings mount into the air and come hovering above your head, displaying their rich white and chestnut plumage to perfection. Now they chase each other for very joyfulness, uttering their sharp twittering notes; then they hover with expanded wings like miniature Kestrels, or dart downwards with the velocity of the sparrowhawk; anon they flit rapidly over the neighboring pool, occasionally dipping themselves in its calm and placid waters, and leaving a long train of rings marking their varied course. How easily they turn, or glide over the surrounding hedges, never resting, never weary, and defying the eye to trace them in the infinite turnings and twistings of their rapid shooting flight. You frequently see them glide rapidly near the ground, and then with a side-long motion mount aloft, to dart downwards like an animated meteor, their plumage glowing in the light with metallic splendor, and the row of white spots on the tail contrasting beautifully with the darker plumage."

The Swallow is considered a life-paired species, and returns to its nesting site of the previous season, building a new nest close to the old one. His nest is found in barns and out-

houses, upon the beams of wood which support the roof, or in any place which assures protection to the young birds. It is cup-shaped and artfully moulded of bits of mud. Grass and feathers are used for the lining. "The nest completed, five or six eggs are deposited. They are of a pure white color, with deep rich brown blotches and spots, notably at the larger end, round which they often form a zone or belt." The sitting bird is fed by her mate.

The young Swallow is distinguished from the mature birds by the absence of the elongated tail feathers, which are a mark of maturity alone. His food is composed entirely of insects. Swallows are on the wing fully sixteen hours, and the greater part of the time making terrible havoc amongst the millions of insects which infest the air. It is said that when the Swallow is seen flying high in the heavens, it is a never failing indication of fine weather.

A pair of Swallows on arriving at their nesting place of the preceding Summer found their nest occupied by a Sparrow, who kept the poor birds at a distance by pecking at them with his strong beak whenever they attempted to dislodge him. Weary and hopeless of regaining possession of their property, they at last hit upon a plan which effectually punished the intruder. One morning they appeared with a few more Swallows—their mouths filled with a supply of tempered clay—and, by their joint efforts in a short time actually plastered up the entrance to the hole, thus barring the Sparrow from the home which he had stolen from the Swallows.



THE BROWN THRUSH.

"However the world goes ill,
The Thrushes still sing in it."

THE Mocking-bird of the North, as the Brown Thrush has been called, arrives in the Eastern and Middle States about the 10th of May, at which season he may be seen, perched on the highest twig of a hedge, or on the topmost branch of a tree, singing his loud and welcome song, that may be heard a distance of half a mile. The favorite haunt of the Brown Thrush, however, is amongst the bright and glossy foliage of the evergreens. "There they delight to hide, although not so shy and retiring as the Blackbird; there they build their nests in greatest numbers, amongst the perennial foliage, and there they draw at nightfall to repose in warmth and safety." The Brown Thrasher sings chiefly just after sunrise and before sunset, but may be heard singing at intervals during the day. His food consists of wild fruits, such as blackberries and raspberries, snails, worms, slugs and grubs. He also obtains

much of his food amongst the withered leaves and marshy places of the woods and shrubberies which he frequents. Few birds possess a more varied melody. His notes are almost endless in variety, each note seemingly uttered at the caprice of the bird, without any perceptible approach to order.

The site of the Thrush's nest is a varied one, in the hedgerows, under a fallen tree or fence-rail; far up in the branches of stately trees, or amongst the ivy growing up their trunks. The nest is composed of the small dead twigs of trees, lined with the fine fibers of roots. From three to five eggs are deposited, and are hatched in about twelve days. They have a greenish background, thickly spotted with light brown, giving the whole egg a brownish appearance.

The Brown Thrush leaves the Eastern and Middle States, on his migration South, late in September, remaining until the following May.

THE THRUSH'S NEST.

"Within a thick and spreading hawthorn bush
That overhung a molehill, large and round,
I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
Sing hymns of rapture while I drank the sound
With joy—and oft an unintruding guest,
I watched her secret toils from day to day;
How true she warped the moss to form her nest,
And modeled it within with wood and clay.
And by and by, with heath-bells gilt with dew,
There lay her shining eggs as bright as flowers,
Ink-spotted over, shells of green and blue:
And there I witnessed, in the summer hours,
A brood of nature's minstrels chirp and fly,
Glad as the sunshine and the laughing sky."

THE BROWN THRUSH.

Dear Readers :

My cousin Robin Redbreast told me that he wrote you a letter last month and sent it with his picture. How did you like it? He is a pretty bird—Cousin Robin—and everybody likes him. But I must tell you something of myself.

Folks call me by different names—some of them nicknames, too.

The cutest one of all is Brown Thrasher. I wonder if you know why they call me Thrasher. If you don't, ask some one. It is really funny.

Some people think Cousin Robin is the sweetest singer of our family, but a great many like my song just as well.

Early in the morning I sing among the bushes, but later in the day you will always find me

in the very top of a tree and it is then I sing my best.

Do you know what I say in my song? Well, if I am near a farmer while he is planting, I say: "Drop it, drop it—cover it up, cover it up—pull it up, pull it up, pull it up."

One thing I very seldom do and that is, sing when near my nest. Maybe you can tell why. I'm not very far from my nest now. I just came down to the stream to get a drink and am watching that boy on the other side of the stream. Do you see him?

One dear lady who loves birds has said some very nice things about me in a book called "Bird Ways." Another lady has written a beautiful poem about my singing. Ask your mamma or teacher the names of these ladies. Here is the poem:

THERE'S a merry brown thrush sitting up in a tree.

He is singing to me! He is singing to me!

And what does he say—little girl, little boy?

"Oh, the world's running over with joy!

Hush! Look! In my tree,

I am as happy as happy can be."

And the brown thrush keeps singing, "A nest, do you see,
And five eggs, hid by me in the big cherry tree ?

Don't meddle, don't touch—little girl, little boy—

Or the world will lose some of its joy !

Now I am glad! now I am free !

And I always shall be,

If you never bring sorrow to me."

So the merry brown thrush sings away in the tree
To you and to me—to you and to me;

And he sings all the day—little girl, little boy—

"Oh, the world's running over with joy !

But long it won't be,

Don't you know? don't you see?

Unless we're good as good can be."





THE JAPAN PHEASANT.

RIGINALLY the Pheasant was an inhabitant of Asia Minor but has been by degrees introduced into many countries, where its beauty of form, plumage, and the delicacy of its flesh made it a welcome visitor. The Japan Pheasant is a very beautiful species, about which little is known in its wild state, but in captivity it is pugnacious. It requires much shelter and plenty of food, and the breed is to some degree artificially kept up by the hatching of eggs under domestic hens and feeding them in the coop like ordinary chickens, until they are old and strong enough to get their own living.

The food of this bird is extremely varied. When young it is generally fed on ants' eggs, maggots, grits, and similar food, but when it is full grown it is possessed of an accommodating appetite and will eat many kinds of seeds, roots, and leaves. It will also eat beans, peas, acorns, berries, and has even been known to eat the ivy leaf, as well as the berry.

This Pheasant loves the ground, runs with great speed, and always prefers to trust to its legs rather than to its wings. It is crafty, and when alarmed it slips quickly out of sight behind a bush or through a hedge, and then runs away with astonishing rapidity, always remaining under cover until it reaches some spot where it deems itself safe. The male is not domestic, passing an independent life during a part of the year and associating with others of its own sex during the rest of the season.

The nest is very rude, being merely a heap of leaves and grass on the ground, with a very slight depression. The eggs are numerous, about eleven or twelve, and olive brown in color. In total length, though they vary considerably, the full grown male is about three feet. The female is smaller in size than her mate, and her length a foot less.

The Japan Pheasant is not a particularly interesting bird aside from his beauty, which is indeed brilliant, there being few of the species more attractive.

THE FLICKER.

AGREAT variety of names does this bird possess. It is commonly known as the Golden Winged Woodpecker, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Yellow Hammer, and less often as High-hole or High-holer, Wake-up, etc. In suitable localities throughout the United States and the southern parts of Canada, the Flicker is a very common bird, and few species are more generally known. "It is one of the most sociable of our Woodpeckers, and is apparently always on good terms with its neighbors. It usually arrives in April, occasionally even in March, the males preceding the females a few days, and as soon as the latter appear one can hear their voices in all directions."

The Flicker is an ardent wooer. It is an exceedingly interesting and amusing sight to see a couple of males paying their addresses to a coy and coquettish female; the apparent shyness of the suitors as they sidle up to her and as quickly retreat again, the shy glances given as one peeps from behind a limb watching the other—playing bo-peep—seem very human, and "I have seen," says an observer, "few more amusing performances than the courtship of a pair of these birds." The defeated suitor takes his rejection quite philosophically, and retreats in a dignified manner, probably to make other trials elsewhere. Few birds deserve our good will more than the Flicker. He is exceedingly useful, destroying multitudes of grubs, larvæ, and worms. He loves berries and fruit but the damage he does to cultivated fruit is very trifling.

The Flicker begins to build its nest about two weeks after the bird arrives from the south. It prefers open country, interspersed with groves and orchards, to nest in. Any old stump, or partly decayed limb of a tree, along

the banks of a creek, beside a country road, or in an old orchard, will answer the purpose. Soft wood trees seem to be preferred, however. In the prairie states it occasionally selects strange nesting sites. It has been known to chisel through the weather boarding of a dwelling house, barns, and other buildings, and to nest in the hollow space between this and the cross beams; its nests have also been found in gate posts, in church towers, and in burrows of Kingfishers and bank swallows, in perpendicular banks of streams. One of the most peculiar sites of his selection is described by William A. Bryant as follows: "On a small hill, a quarter of a mile distant from any home, stood a hay stack which had been placed there two years previously. The owner, during the winter of 1889-90, had cut the stack through the middle and hauled away one portion, leaving the other standing, with the end smoothly trimmed. The following spring I noticed a pair of flickers about the stack showing signs of wanting to make it a fixed habitation. One morning a few days later I was amused at the efforts of one of the pair. It was clinging to the perpendicular end of the stack and throwing out clipped hay at a rate to defy competition. This work continued for a week, and in that time the pair had excavated a cavity twenty inches in depth. They remained in the vicinity until autumn. During the winter the remainder of the stack was removed. They returned the following spring, and, after a brief sojourn, departed for parts unknown."

From five to nine eggs are generally laid. They are glossy white in color, and when fresh appear as if enameled.

The young are able to leave the nest in about sixteen days; they crawl about on the limbs of the tree for a couple of days before they venture to fly, and return to the nest at night.



THE BOBOLINK.

"When Nature had made all her birds,
And had no cares to think on,
She gave a rippling laugh,
And out there flew a Bobolinkon."

PO American ornithologist omits mention of the Bobolink, and naturalists generally have described him under one of the many names by which he is known. In some States he is called the Rice Bird, in others Reed Bird, the Rice or Reed Bunting, while his more familiar title, throughout the greater part of America, is Bobolink, or Bobolinkum. In Jamaica, where he gets very fat during his winter stay, he is called the Butter Bird. His title of Rice Troopial is earned by the depredations which he annually makes upon the rice crops, though his food "is by no means restricted to that seed, but consists in a large degree of insects, grubs, and various wild grasses." A migratory bird, residing during the winter in the southern parts of America, he returns in vast multitudes northward in the early Spring. According to Wilson, their course of migration is as follows: "In April, or very early in May, the Rice Buntings, male and female, arrive within the southern boundaries of the United States, and are seen around the town of Savannah, Georgia, sometimes in separate parties of males and females, but more generally promiscuously. They remain there but a short time, and about the middle of May make their appearance in the lower part of Pennsylvania. While here the males are extremely gay and full of song, frequenting meadows, newly plowed fields, sides of creeks, rivers, and watery places, feeding on May flies and caterpillars, of which they destroy great quantities. In their passage, however, through Virginia at this season, they do great damage to the early wheat and barley while in their milky

state. About the 20th of May they disappear on their way to the North. Nearly at the same time they arrive in the State of New York, spread over the whole of the New England States, as far as the river St. Lawrence, and from Lake Ontario to the sea. In all of these places they remain during the Summer, building their nests and rearing their young."

The Bobolink's song is a peculiar one, varying greatly with the occasion. As he flys southward, his cry is a kind of clinking note; but the love song addressed to his mate is voluble and fervent. It has been said that if you should strike the keys of a piano-forte haphazard, the higher and the lower singly very quickly, you might have some idea of the Bobolink's notes. In the month of June he gradually changes his pretty, attractive dress and puts on one very like the females, which is of a plain rusty brown, and is not reassumed until the next season of nesting. The two parent birds in the plate represent the change from the dark plumage in which the bird is commonly known in the North as the Bobolink, to the dress of yellowish brown by which it is known throughout the South as the Rice or Reed Bird.

His nest, small and a plain one, too, is built on the ground by his industrious little wife. The inside is warmly lined with soft fibers of whatever may be nearest at hand. Five pretty white eggs, spotted all over with brown are laid, and as soon

"As the little ones chip the shell
And five wide mouths are ready for food,
'Robert of Lincoln' bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for this hungry brood."

BOBOLINK.

Other birds may like to travel alone, but when jolly Mr. Bobolink and his quiet little wife come from the South, where they have spent the winter, they come with a large party of friends. When South, they eat so much rice that the people call them Rice Birds. When they come North, they enjoy eating wheat, barley, oats and insects.

Mr. and Mrs. Bobolink build their simple little nest of grasses in some field. It is hard to find on the ground, for it looks just like dry grass. Mrs. Bobolink wears a dull dress, so she cannot be seen when she is sitting on the precious eggs. She does not sing a note while caring for the eggs. Why do you think that is?

Mr. Bob-Linkum does not wear a sober dress, as you can see by his picture. He does not need to be hidden. He is just as jolly as he looks. Shall I tell you how he amuses his mate

while she is sitting? He springs from the dew-wet grass with a sound like peals of merry laughter. He frolics from reed to post, singing as if his little heart would burst with joy.

Don't you think Mr. and Mrs. Bobolink look happy in the picture? They have raised their family of five. Four of their children have gone to look for food; one of them—he must surely be the baby—would rather stay with his mamma and papa. Which one does he look like?

Many birds are quiet at noon and in the afternoon. A flock of Bobolinks can be heard singing almost all day long. The song is full of high notes and low, soft notes and loud, all sung rapidly. It is as gay and bright as the birds themselves, who flit about playfully as they sing. You will feel like laughing as merrily as they sing when you hear it some day.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

The birds used in preparing our plates were obtained from the Chicago Academy of Sciences and from the private collection of F. M. Woodruff, the Ornithologist of the Academy.

We desire to express our appreciation of the courtesies extended to us by them.

Mr. Woodruff has one of the finest, if not the finest collection, of Home Birds that it has been our privilege to see.

THE BLUE BIRD.

“Drifting down the first warm wind
That thrills the earliest days of spring,
The Bluebird seeks our maple groves
And charms them into tasselling.”

“He sings, and his is Nature’s voice—
A gush of melody sincere
From that great fount of harmony
Which thaws and runs when Spring is here.”

“Short is his song, but strangely sweet
To ears aweary of the low
Dull tramps of Winter’s sullen feet,
Sandalled in ice and muffled in snow.”

“Think, every morning, when the sun peeps through
The dim, leaf-latticed windows of the grove,
How jubilant the happy birds renew
Their old, melodious madrigals of love !
And when you think of this, remember, too,
’Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

“Think of your woods and orchards without birds !
Of empty nests that cling to boughs and beams
As in an idiot’s brain remembered words
Hang empty ’mid the cobwebs of his dreams !
Will bleat of flocks or bellowing of herds
Make up for the lost music, when your teams
Drag home the stingy harvest, and no more
The feathered gleaners follow to your door?”

FROM “THE BIRDS OF KILLINGSWORTH.”

THE CROW.

Caw! Caw! Caw! little boys and girls. Caw! Caw! Caw. Just look at my coat of feathers. See how black and glossy it is. Do you wonder I am proud of it?

Perhaps you think I look very solemn and wise, and not at all as if I cared to play games. I do, though; and one of the games I like best is hide-and-seek. I play it with the farmer in the spring. He hides, in the rich, brown earth, golden kernels of corn. Surely he does it because he knows I like it, for sometimes he puts up a stick all dressed like a man to show where the corn is hidden. Sometimes I push my bill down into the earth to find the corn, and at other times I wait until tiny green leaves begin to show above the ground, and then I get my breakfast without much trouble. I wonder if the farmer enjoys this game as much as I do. I help him, too, by eating worms and insects.

During the spring and summer I live in my nest on the top of a very high tree. It is built of sticks and grasses and straw and string and anything else I can pick up. But in the fall, I and all my relations and friends live together in great roosts or rookeries. What good times we do have—hunting all day for food and talking all night. Wouldn't you like to be with us?

The farmer who lives in the house over there went to the mill to-day with a load of corn.

One of the ears dropped out of the wagon and it didn't take me long to find it. I have eaten all I can possibly hold and am wondering now what is the best thing to do. If you were in my place would you leave it here and not tell anybody and come back to-morrow and finish it? Or would you fly off and get Mrs. Crow and some of the children to come and finish it? I believe I'll fly and get them. Goodbye. Caw! Caw! Caw!



COMMON CROW.
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THE COMMON CROW.

*'The crow doth sing as merry as the lark,
When neither is attended.'*

FEW birds have more interesting characteristics than the Common Crow, being, in many of his actions, very like the Raven, especially in his love for carrion. Like the Raven, he has been known to attack game, although his inferior size forces him to call to his assistance the aid of his fellows to cope with larger creatures. Rabbits and hares are frequently the prey of this bird which pounces on them as they steal abroad to feed. His food consists of reptiles, frogs, and lizards; he is a plunderer of other birds' nests. On the seashore he finds crabs, shrimps and inhabited shells, which he ingeniously cracks by flying with them to a great height and letting them fall upon a convenient rock.

The crow is seen in single pairs or in little bands of four or five. In the autumn evenings, however, they assemble in considerable flocks before going to roost and make a wonderful chattering, as if comparing notes of the events of the day.

The nest of the Crow is placed in some tree remote from habitations of other birds. Although large and very conspicuous at a distance, it is fixed upon one of the topmost branches quite out of reach of the hand of the adventurous urchin who longs to secure its contents. It is loosely made and saucer shaped. Sticks and softer substances are used to construct it, and it is lined with hair and fibrous roots. Very recently a thrifty and intelligent Crow built for itself a summer residence in an airy tree near Bombay, the material used being gold, silver, and steel spectacle frames, which the bird had stolen from an optician of that city. Eighty-four frames had been used for this purpose, and they were so ingeniously woven

together that the nest was quite a work of art. The eggs are variable, or rather individual, in their markings, and even in their size. The Crow rarely uses the same nest twice, although he frequently repairs to the same locality from year to year. He is remarkable for his attachment to his mate and young, surpassing the Fawn and Turtle Dove in conjugal courtesy.

The Somali Arabs bear a deadly hatred toward the Crow. The origin of their detestation is the superstition that during the flight of Mohammed from his enemies, he hid himself in a cave, where he was perceived by the Crow, at that time a bird of light plumage, who, when he saw the pursuers approaching the spot, perched above Mohammed's hiding place, and screamed, "Ghar! Ghar!" (cave! cave!) so as to indicate the place of concealment. His enemies, however, did not understand the bird, and passed on, and Mohammed, when he came out of the cave, clothed the Crow in perpetual black, and commanded him to cry "Ghar" as long as Crows should live.

And he lives to a good old age. Instances are not rare where he has attained to half a century, without great loss of activity or failure of sight.

At Red Bank, a few miles northeast of Cincinnati, on the Little Miami River, in the bottoms, large flocks of Crows congregate the year around. A few miles away, high upon Walnut Hills, is a Crow roost, and in the late afternoons the Crows, singly, in pairs, and in flocks, are seen on the wing, flying heavily, with full crops, on the way to the roost, from which they descend in the early morning, crying "Caw! Caw!" to the fields of the newly planted, growing, or matured corn, or corn stacks, as the season may provide.

THE RETURN OF THE BIRDS.

"Everywhere the blue sky belongs to them and is their appointed rest, and their native country, and their own natural home which they enter unannounced as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival."

THE return of the birds to their real home in the North, where they build their nests and rear their young, is regarded by all genuine lovers of earth's messengers of gladness and gayety as one of the most interesting and poetical of annual occurrences. The naturalist, who notes the very day of each arrival, in order that he may verify former observation or add to his material gathered for a new work, does not necessarily anticipate with greater pleasure this event than do many whose lives are brightened by the coming of the friends of their youth, who alone of early companions do not change. First of all—and ever the same delightful warbler—the Bluebird, who, in 1895, did not appear at all in many localities, though here in considerable numbers last year, betrays himself. "Did he come down out of the heaven on that bright March morning when he told us so softly and plaintively that, if we pleased, spring had come?" Sometimes he is here a little earlier, and must keep his courage up until the cold snap is over and the snow is gone. Not long after the Bluebird, comes the Robin, sometimes in March, but in most of the northern states April is the month of his arrival. With his first utterance the spell of winter is broken, and the remembrance of it afar off. Then appears the Woodpecker in great variety, the Flicker usually arriving first. He is always somebody's old favorite, "announcing his arrival by a long, loud call, repeated from the dry branch of some tree, or a stake in the fence—a thoroughly melodious April sound."

Few perhaps reflect upon the difficulties encountered by the birds themselves in their returning migrations. A voyager sometimes meets with

many of our common birds far out at sea. Such wanderers, it is said, when suddenly overtaken by a fog, completely lose their sense of direction and become hopelessly lost. Hummingbirds, those delicately organized, glittering gems, are among the most common of the land species seen at sea.

The present season has been quite favorable to the protection of birds. A very competent observer says that not all of the birds migrated this winter. He recently visited a farm less than an hour's ride from Chicago, where he found the old place, as he relates it, "chucked full of Robins, Blackbirds, and Woodpeckers," and others unknown to him. From this he inferred they would have been in Florida had indications predicted a severe winter. The trees of the south parks of Chicago, and those in suburban places, have had, darting through their branches during the months of December and January, nearly as many members of the Woodpecker tribe as were found there during the mating season in May last.

Alas, that the Robin will visit us in diminished numbers in the approaching spring. He has not been so common for a year or two as he was formerly, for the reason that the Robins died by thousands of starvation, owing to the freezing of their food supply in Tennessee during the protracted cold weather in the winter of 1895. It is indeed sad that this good Sainaritan among birds should be defenseless against the severity of Nature, the common mother of us all. Nevertheless the return of the birds, in myriads or in single pairs, will be welcomed more and more, year by year, as intelligent love and appreciation of them shall possess the popular mind.



THE BLACK TERN.

"**T**HE TERN," says Mr. F. M. Woodruff, of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, "is the only representative of the long-winged swimmers which commonly nests with us on our inland fresh water marshes, arriving early in May in its brooding plumage of sooty black. The color changes in the autumn to white, and a number of the adult birds may be found, in the latter part of July, dotted and streaked here and there with white. On the first of June, 1891, I found a large colony of Black Terns nesting on Hyde Lake, Cook County, Illinois. As I approached the marsh a few birds were seen flying high in the air, and, as I neared the nesting site, the flying birds gave notes of alarm, and presently the air was filled with the graceful forms of this beautiful little bird. They circled about me, darting down to within a few feet of my head, constantly uttering a harsh, screaming cry. As the eggs are laid upon the bare ground, which the brownish and blackish markings so closely resemble, I was at first unable to find the nests, and discovered that the only way to locate them was to stand quietly and watch the birds. When the Tern is passing over the nest it checks its flight, and poises for a moment on quivering wings. By keeping my eyes on this spot I found the nest with very little trouble. The complement of eggs, when the bird has not been disturbed, is usually three. These are laid in a saucer shaped structure of dead vegetation, which is scraped together, from the surface of the wet, boggy ground. The bird figured in the plate had placed its nest on the edge of an old muskrat

house, and my attention was attracted to it by the fact that upon the edge of the rat house, where it had climbed to rest itself, was the body of a young dabchick, or piedbilled grebe, scarcely two and one-half inches long, and not twenty-four hours out of the egg, a beautiful little ball of blackish down, striped with brown and white. From the latter part of July to the middle of August large flocks of Black Terns may be seen on the shores of our larger lakes on their annual migration southward."

The Rev. P. B. Peabody, in alluding to his observation of the nests of the Tern, says: "Amid this floating sea of aquatic nests I saw an unusual number of well constructed homes of the Tern. Among these was one that I count a perfect nest. It rested on the perfectly flat foundation of a small decayed rat house, which was about fourteen inches in diameter. The nest, in form, is a truncated cone (barring the cavity), was about eight inches high and ten inches in diameter. The hollow—quite shallow—was about seven inches across, being thus unusually large. The whole was built up of bits of rushes, carried to the spot, these being quite uniform in length—about four inches." After daily observation of the Tern, during which time he added much to his knowledge of the bird, he pertinently asks: "Who shall say how many traits and habits yet unknown may be discovered through patient watching of community-breeding birds, by men enjoying more of leisure for such delightful studies than often falls to the lot of most of us who have bread and butter to earn and a tiny part of the world's work to finish?"

THE MEADOW LARK.

"Not an inch of his body is free from delight.
Can he keep himself still if he would? Oh, not he!
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree."

THE well known Meadow or Old Field Lark is a constant resident south of latitude 39, and many winter farther north in favorite localities. Its geographical range is eastern North America, Canada to south Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Ontario to eastern Manitoba; west to Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, eastern Kansas, the Indian Territory, and Texas; south to Florida and the Gulf coast, in all of which localities, except in the extreme north, it usually rears two or three broods in a season. In the Northern States it is only a summer resident, arriving in April and remaining until the latter part of October and occasionally November. Excepting during the breeding season, small flocks may often be seen roving about in search of good feeding grounds. Major Bendire says this is especially true in the fall of the year. At this time several families unite, and as many as two dozen may occasionally be flushed in a field, over which they scatter, roaming about independently of each other. When one takes wing all the others in the vicinity follow. It is a shy bird in the East, while in the middle states it is quite the reverse. Its flight is rather laborious, at least in starting, and is continued by a series of rapid movements of the wings, alternating with short distances of sailing, and is rarely protracted. On alighting, which is accompanied with a twitching of its tail, it usually settles on some fence rail, post, boulder, weedstock, or on a hillock in a meadow from which it can get a good view of the surroundings, and but rarely on a limb of a tree. Its favorite resorts are meadows, fallow fields, pastures, and clearings, but in some sections, as in northern

Florida, for instance, it also frequents the low, open pine woods and nests there.

The song of the Meadow Lark is not much varied, but its clear, whistling notes, so frequently heard in the early spring, are melodious and pleasing to the ear. It is decidedly the farmers' friend, feeding, as it does, on noxious insects, caterpillars, moths, grasshoppers, spiders, worms and the like, and eating but little grain. The lark spends the greater part of its time on the ground, procuring all its food there. It is seldom found alone, and it is said remains paired for life.

Nesting begins in the early part of May and lasts through June. Both sexes assist in building the nest, which is always placed on the ground, either in a natural depression, or in a little hollow scratched out by the birds, alongside a bunch of grass or weeds. The nest itself is lined with dry grass, stubble, and sometimes pine needles. Most nests are placed in level meadows. The eggs and young are frequently destroyed by vermin, for the meadow lark has many enemies. The eggs vary from three to seven, five being the most common, and both sexes assist in the hatching, which requires about fifteen or sixteen days. The young leave the nest before they are able to fly—hiding at the slightest sign of danger. The Meadow Lark does not migrate beyond the United States. It is a native bird, and is only accidental in England. The eggs are spotted, blotched, and speckled with shades of brown, purple and lavender. A curious incident is told of a Meadow Lark trying to alight on the top mast of a schooner several miles at sea. It was evidently very tired but would not venture near the deck.



THE MEADOW LARK.

I told the man who wanted my picture that he could take it if he would show my nest and eggs. Do you blame me for saying so? Don't you think it makes a better picture than if I stood alone?

Mr. Lark is away getting me some breakfast, or he could be in the picture, too. After a few days I shall have some little baby birds, and then won't we be happy.

Boys and girls who live in the country know us pretty well. When they drive the cows out to pasture, or when they go out to gather wild flowers, we sit on the fences by the roadside and make them glad with our merry song.

Those of you who live in the city cannot see us unless you come out into the country.

It isn't very often that we can find such a pretty place for a

nest as we have here. Most of the time we build our nest under the grass and cover it over, and build a little tunnel leading to it. This year we made up our minds not to be afraid.

The people living in the houses over there do not bother us at all and we are so happy.

You never saw baby larks, did you? Well, they are queer little fellows, with hardly any feathers on them.

Last summer we had five little birdies to feed, and it kept us busy from morning till night. This year we only expect three, and Mr. Lark says he will do all the work. He knows a field that is being plowed, where he can get nice, large worms.

Hark! that is he singing. He will be surprised when he comes back and finds me off the nest. He is so afraid that I will let the eggs get cold, but I won't. There he comes, now.

THE LONG-EARED OWL.

THE name of the Long-Eared Owl is derived from the great length of his "ears" or feather-tufts, which are placed upon the head, and erect themselves whenever the bird is interested or excited. It is the "black sheep" of the owl family, the majority of owls being genuine friends of the agriculturist, catching for his larder so many of the small animals that prey upon his crops. In America he is called the Great Horned Owl—in Europe the Golden Owl.

Nesting time with the owl begins in February, and continues through March and April. The clown-like antics of both sexes of this bird while under the tender influence of the nesting season tend somewhat to impair their reputation for dignity and wise demeanor. They usually have a simple nest in a hollow tree, but which seems seldom to be built by the bird itself, as it prefers to take the deserted nest of some other bird, and to fit up the premises for its own use. They repair slightly from year to year the same nest. The eggs are white, and generally four or five in number. While the young are still in the nest, the parent birds display a singular diligence in collecting food for them.

If you should happen to know of an owl's nest, stand near it some evening when the old birds are rearing their young. Keep quiet and motionless, and notice how frequently the old birds feed them. Every ten minutes or so the soft flap, flap of their wings will be heard, the male and female alternately, and you will obtain a brief glimpse of them through the gloom as they enter the nesting place. They remain inside but a short time, sharing the food equally amongst their brood, and then are off again to hunt for

more. All night, were you to have the inclination to observe them, you would find they pass to and fro with food, only ceasing their labors at dawn. The young, as soon as they reach maturity, are abandoned by their parents; they quit the nest and seek out haunts elsewhere, while the old birds rear another, and not infrequently two more broods, during the remainder of the season.

The habits of the Long-Eared Owl are nocturnal. He is seldom seen in the light of day, and is greatly disturbed if he chance to issue from his concealment while the sun is above the horizon. The facial disk is very conspicuous in this species. It is said that the use of this circle is to collect the rays of light, and throw them upon the eye. The flight of the owl is softened by means of especially shaped, recurved feather-tips, so that he may noiselessly steal upon his prey, and the ear is also so shaped as to gather sounds from below.

The Long-Eared Owl is hardly tamable. The writer of this paragraph, when a boy, was the possessor, for more than a year, of a very fine specimen. We called him Judge. He was a monster, and of perfect plumage. Although he seemed to have some attachment to the children of the family who fed him, he would not permit himself to be handled by them or by any one in the slightest. Most of his time he spent in his cage, an immense affair, in which he was very comfortable. Occasionally he had a day in the barn with the rats and mice.

The owl is of great usefulness to gardener, agriculturist, and landowner alike, for there is not another bird of prey which is so great a destroyer of the enemies of vegetation.



GREAT HORNED OWL.
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THE OWL.

We know not alway
Who are kings by day,
But the king of the night is the bold brown owl!

I wonder why the folks put my picture last in the book. It can't be because they don't like me, for I'm sure I never bother them. I don't eat the farmer's corn like the crow, and no one ever saw me quarrel with other birds.

Maybe it is because I can't sing. Well, there are lots of good people that can't sing, and so there are lots of good birds that can't sing.

Did you ever see any other bird sit up as straight as I do? I couldn't sit up so straight if I hadn't such long, sharp claws to hold on with.

My home is in the woods. Here we owls build our nests—most always in hollow trees.

During the day I stay in the nest or sit on a limb. I don't like day time for the light hurts my eyes, but when it begins to grow dark then I like to stir around. All night long I am

wide awake and fly about getting food for my little hungry ones. They sleep most of the day and it keeps me busy nearly all night to find them enough to eat.

I just finished my night's work when the man came to take my picture. It was getting light and I told him to go to a large stump on the edge of the woods and I would sit for my picture. So here I am. Don't you think I look wise? How do you like my large eyes? If I could smile at you I would, but my face always looks sober. I have a great many cousins and if you really like my picture, I'll have some of them talk to you next month. I don't think any of them have such pretty feathers though. Just see if they have when they come.

Well, I must fly back to my perch in the old elm tree. Good-bye.

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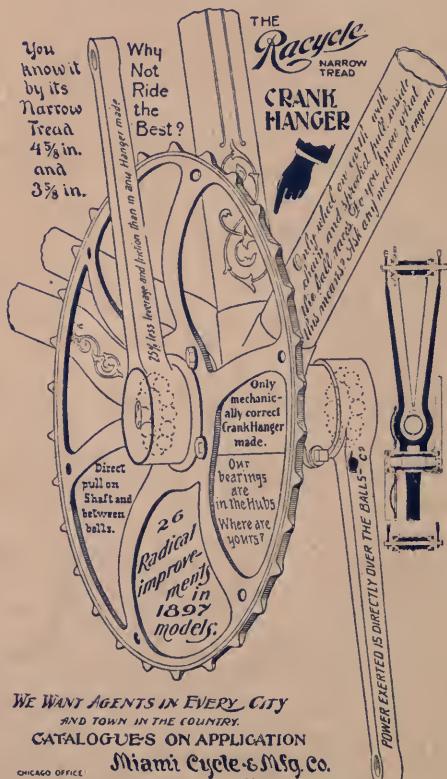
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TESTIMONIALS.

FRANKFORT, KY., February 3, 1897.

W. J. BLACK, Vice-President,

Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: I have a copy of your magazine entitled "Birds," and beg to say that I consider it one of the finest things on the subject that I have ever seen, and shall be pleased to recommend it to county and city superintendents of the state.

Very respectfully,

W. J. DAVIDSON,
State Superintendent Public Instruction.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., January 27, 1897.

W. J. BLACK, ESQ.,

Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: I am very much obliged for the copy of "Birds" that has just come to hand. It should be in the hands of every primary and grammar teacher. I send herewith copy of "List of San Francisco Teachers."

Very respectfully,

M. BABCOCK.

LINCOLN, NEB., February 9, 1897.

W. J. BLACK,

Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: The first number of your magazine, "Birds," is upon my desk. I am highly pleased with it. It will prove a very serviceable publication—one that strikes out along the right lines. For the purpose intended, it has, in my opinion, no equal. It is clear, concise, and admirably illustrated.

Very respectfully,

W. R. JACKSON,
State Superintendent Public Instruction.

NORTH LIMA, OHIO, February 1, 1897.

MR. W. E. WATT,

Dear Sir: Sample copy of "Birds" received. All of the family delighted with it. We wish it unbounded success. It will be an excellent supplement to "In Birdland" in the Ohio Teachers' Reading Circle, and I venture Ohio will be to the front with a good subscription list. I enclose list of teachers.

Very truly,

C. M. L. ALTDOERFFER,
Township Superintendent.

MILWAUKEE, January 30, 1897.

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227 Dearborn Street, Chicago.

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Principal 2nd Dist. Primary School, Milwaukee, Wis.

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No. 4.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.



STATE OF NEW YORK

Department of Public Instruction.

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Albany December 26, 1896.

Stenographic Letter
Dictated by _____

W. E. Watt, President &c.,

Fisher Building,

My dear Sir:

Please accept my thanks for a copy of the first publication of "Birds." Please enter my name as a regular subscriber. It is one of the most beautiful and interesting publications yet attempted in this direction. It has other attractions in addition to its beauty, and it must win its way to popular favor.

Wishing the handsome little magazine abundant prosperity,
I remain

Yours very respectfully,

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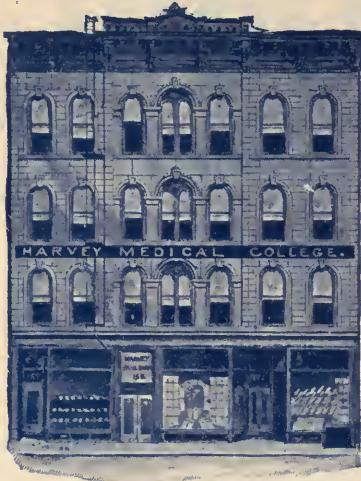
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ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK.
 $\frac{9}{10}$ Life-size.

THE ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK.

THIS is an American bird, and has been described under various names by various authors. It is found in the lower parts of Pennsylvania, in the state of New York, and in New England, particularly in autumn, when the berries of the sour gum are ripe, on the kernels of which it eagerly feeds. As a singer it has few superiors. It frequently sings at night, and even all night, the notes being extremely clear and mellow. It does not acquire its full colors until at least the second spring or summer. It is found as far east as Nova Scotia, as far west as Nebraska, and winters in great numbers in Guatemala. This Grosbeak is common in southern Indiana, northern Illinois, and western Iowa. It is usually seen in open woods, on the borders of streams, but frequently sings in the deep recesses of forests. In Mr. Nuttall's opinion this species has no superior in song, except the Mocking Bird.

The Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks arrive in May and nest early in June. They build in low trees on the edges of woods, frequently in small groves on the banks of streams. The nest is coarsely built of waste stubble, fragments of leaves, and stems of plants, intermingled with and strengthened by twigs and coarser stems. It is eight inches wide, and three and a half high, with a cavity three inches in diameter and one in depth, being quite shallow for so large a nest.

Dr. Hoy, of Racine, states that on the 15th of June, within six miles of that city, he found seven nests, all within a space of not over five acres, and he was assured that each year they resort to the same locality and nest in this social manner. Six of these nests were in thorn-trees, all were within six to ten feet of the ground, near the center of the top. Three of the four parent birds sitting on the nests were males. When a nest was disturbed, all the neighboring Grosbeaks gathered and appeared equally interested.

It is frequently observed early in the month of March, making its way eastward. At this period it passes at a considerable height in the air. On the banks of the Schuylkill, early in May, it has been seen feeding on the tender buds of trees. It eats various kinds of food, such as hemp-seed, insects, grasshoppers, and crickets with peculiar relish. It eats flies and wasps, and great numbers of these pests are destroyed by its strong bill. During bright moonshiny nights the Grosbeak sings sweetly, but not loudly. In the daytime, when singing, it has the habit of vibrating its wings, in the manner of the Mocking-bird.

The male takes turns with his mate in sitting on the eggs. He is so happy when on the nest that he sings loud and long. His music is sometimes the cause of great mourning in the lovely family because it tells the egg hunter where to find the precious nest.

THE CANADA JAY.

I don't believe I shall let this bird talk to you, boys and girls, for I'm afraid he will not tell you what a funny fellow he is. Isn't he a queer looking bird? See how ruffled up his feathers are. He looks as though he forgot to fix up, just as some little boys forget to comb their hair before going to school.

Well, to tell the truth, he is a very careless bird and does very funny things sometimes. He can't be trusted.

Just listen to some of the names that people give him—"Meat Bird," "Camp Robber." I think you can guess why he is called those names.

Hunters say that he is the boldest of birds, and I think they are right, for what bird would dare to go right into a tent and carry off things to eat.

A hunter thought he would play a joke on one of these birds. He had a small paper sack of crackers in the bottom

of his boat. The Jay flew down, helped himself to a cracker and flew away with it to his nest. While he was gone the hunter tied up the mouth of the bag.

In a few moments the Jay was back for more. When he saw he could not get into the bag, he just picked it up and carried it off. The joke was on the hunter after all. Look at him. Doesn't he look bold enough to do such a trick?

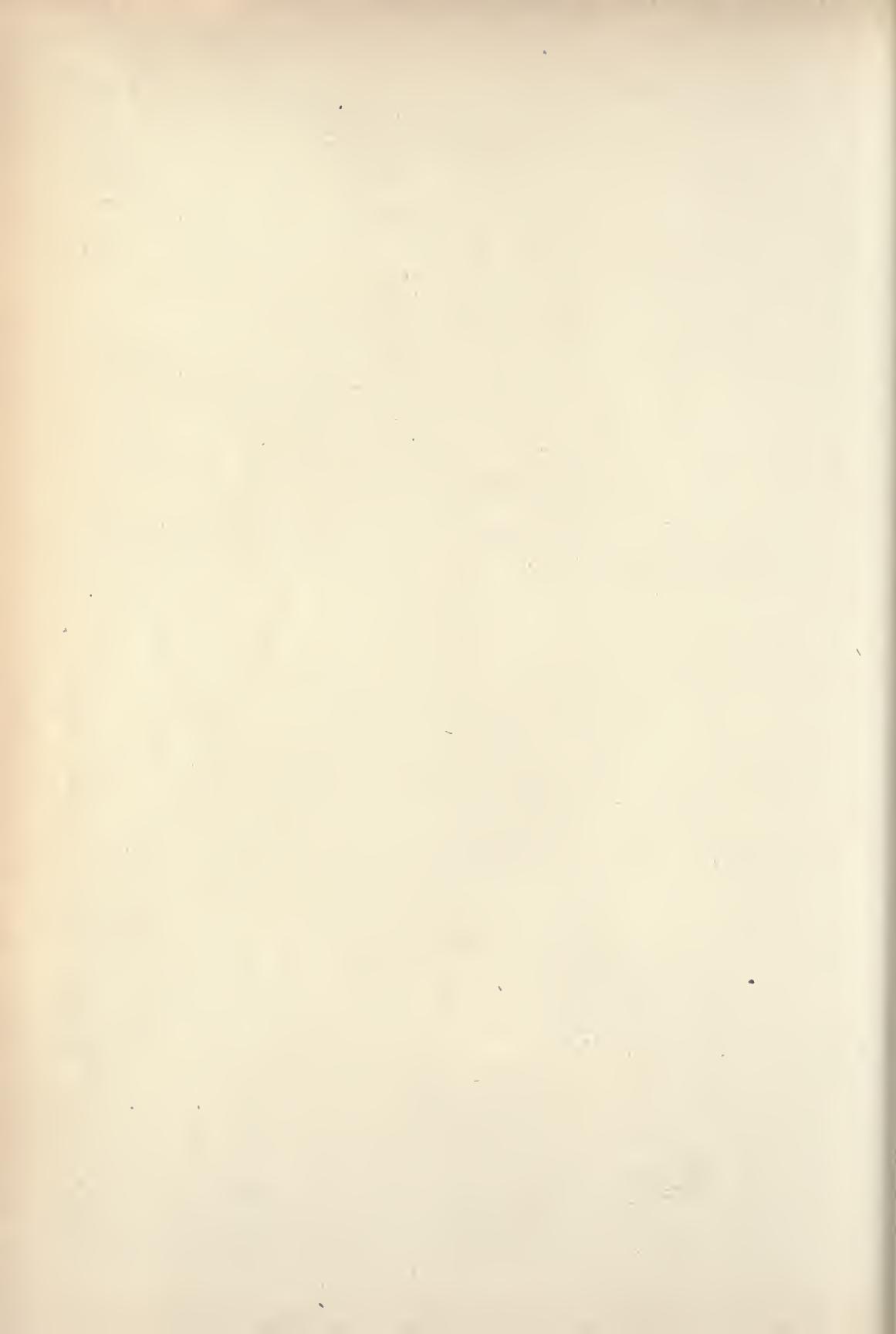
Look back at your February number of "BIRDS" and see if he is anything like the Blue Jay.

He is not afraid of the snow and often times he and his mate have built their nest, and the eggs are laid while there is still snow on the ground. Do you know of any other birds who build their nests so early?

There is one thing about this bird which we all admire—he is always busy, never idle; so we will forgive him for his funny tricks.



CANADA JAY.



THE CANADA JAY.

ANY will recognize the Canada Jay by his local names, of which he has a large assortment.

He is called by the guides and lumbermen of the Adirondack wilderness, "Whisky Jack" or "Whisky John," a corruption of the Indian name, "Wis-ka-tjon," "Moose Bird," "Camp Robber," "Hudson Bay Bird," "Caribou Bird," "Meat Bird," "Grease Bird," and "Venison Heron." To each of these names his characteristics have well entitled him.

The Canada Jay is found only in the more northern parts of the United States, where it is a resident and breeds. In northern Maine and northern Minnesota it is most common; and it ranges northward through the Dominion of Canada to the western shores of Hudson Bay, and to the limit of timber within the Arctic Circle east of the Rocky Mountains.

Mr. Manly Hardy, in a special bulletin of the Smithsonian Institution, says, "They are the boldest of our birds, except the Chickadee, and in cool impudence far surpass all others. They will enter the tents, and often alight on the bow of a canoe, where the paddle at every stroke comes within eighteen inches of them. I know nothing which can be eaten that they will not take, and I had one steal all my candles, pulling them out endwise, one by one, from a piece of birch bark in which they were rolled, and another pecked a large hole in a keg of castile soap. A duck which I had picked and laid down for a few minutes had the entire breast eaten out by one or more of these birds. I have seen one alight in the middle of my canoe and peck away at the car-

cess of a beaver I had skinned. They often spoil deer saddles by pecking into them near the kidneys. They do great damage to the trappers by stealing the bait from traps set for martens and minks, and by eating trapped game. They will sit quietly and see you build a log trap and bait it, and then, almost before your back is turned, you hear their hateful "Ca-ca-ca," as they glide down and peer into it. They will work steadily, carrying off meat and hiding it. I have thrown out pieces, and watched one to see how much he would carry off. He flew across a wide stream and in a short time looked as bloody as a butcher from carrying large pieces; but his patience held out longer than mine. I think one would work as long as Mark Twain's California Jay did trying to fill a miner's cabin with acorns through a knot hole in the roof. They are fond of the berries of the mountain ash, and, in fact, few things come amiss; I believe they do not possess a single good quality except industry."

Its flight is slow and laborious, while it moves on the ground and in trees with a quickness and freedom equal to that of our better known Bluejay.

The nesting season begins early, before the snow has disappeared, and therefore comparatively little is known about its breeding habits. It is then silent and retiring and is seldom seen or heard. The nest is quite large, made of twigs, fibres, willow bark, and the down of the cottonwood tree, and lined with finer material. The eggs, so far as is known, number three or four. They are of a pale gray color, flecked and spotted over the surface with brown, slate gray, and lavender.

THE PURPLE GALLINULE.

PURPLE Gallinules are found in the South Atlantic and Gulf States, and casually northward as far as Maine, New York, Wisconsin, and south throughout the West Indies, Mexico, Central America, and northern South America to Brazil. The bird pictured was caught in the streets of Galveston, Texas, and presented to Mr. F. M. Woodruff, of the Chicago Academy of Sciences. Gallinules live in marshy districts, and some of them might even be called water-fowls. They usually prefer sedgy lakes, large swampy morasses and brooks, or ponds and rivers well stocked with vegetation. They are not social in disposition, but show attachment to any locality of which they have taken possession, driving away other birds much larger and stronger than themselves. They are tenderly attached to their little ones and show great affection for each other. The nest is always built among, or near the water plants of which they are fond. It is about eight inches thick and fifteen to eighteen inches in diameter, and is placed from a foot to two feet out of water among the heavy rushes. The Purple Gallinule is known to build as many as five or six sham nests, a trait which is not confined to the Wren family. From four to twelve smooth shelled and spotted eggs are laid, and

the nestlings when first hatched are clad in dark colored down. On leaving the nest they, accompanied by their parents, seek a more favorable situation until after the moultling season. Half fluttering and half running, they are able to make their way over a floating surface of water-plants. They also swim with facility, as they are aquatic, having swimming membranes on their feet, and while vegetable feeders to some extent, they dive for food. It is noted that some Gallinules, when young, crawl on bushes by wing claws. The voice somewhat resembles the cackling or clucking of a hen. It eats the tender shoots of young corn, grass, and various kinds of grain. When the breeding season approaches, the mated pairs generally resort to rice fields, concealing themselves among the reeds and rushes. Mr. Woodruff noted that when the railway trains pass through the over-flowed districts about Galveston, the birds fly up along the track in large multitudes.

The Purple Gallinules are stoutly built birds, with a high and strong bill, and their remarkably long toes, which enable them to walk readily over the water plants, are frequently employed to hold the food, very much in the manner of a parrot, while eating.

O, purple-breasted Gallinule
Why should thy beauty cause thee fear?
Why should the huntsman seek to fool
Thy innocence, and bring thee near
His deadly tool of fire and lead?
Thou holdest high thy stately head!
Would that the hunter might consent
To leave thee in thy sweet content.—C. C. M.



From col. F. M. Woodruff.

PURPLE GALLINULE.

SMITH'S PAINTED LONGSPUR.

MITH'S Painted Longspur is usually considered a rare bird in the middle west, but a recent observer found it very common in the fields. He saw twenty-five on October 3rd of last year. They were associated with a large flock of Lapland Longspurs. On account of its general resemblance to the latter species it is often overlooked. It is found in the interior of North America from the Arctic coast to Illinois and Texas, breeding far north, where it has a thick, fur-lined, grass nest, set in moss on the ground. Like the Lapland Longspur, it is only a winter visitor. It is not so generally distributed as that species, the migrations being wholly confined to the open prairie districts. Painted Longspurs are generally found in large flocks, and when once on the ground begin to sport. They run very nimbly, and when they arise utter a sharp click, repeated several times in quick succession, and move with an easy undulating motion for a short distance, when they alight very suddenly, seeming to fall perpendicularly several feet to the ground. They prefer the roots where the grass is shortest. When in the air they fly in circles, to and fro, for a few minutes, and then alight, keeping up a constant chirping or call. They seem to prefer the wet portions of the prairie. In the breeding seasons the Longspur's song has much of charm, and is uttered like the

Skylark's while soaring. The Longspur is a ground feeder, and the mark of his long hind claw, or spur, can often be seen in the new snow. In 1888 the writer saw a considerable flock of Painted Longspurs feeding along the Niagara river near Fort Erie, Canada.

The usual number of eggs found in a nest is four or five, and the nests, for the most part, are built of fine dry grasses, carefully arranged and lined with down, feathers, or finer materials similar to those of the outer portions. They are sometimes sunk in an excavation made by the birds, or in a tuft of grass, and in one instance, placed in the midst of a bed of Labrador tea. When the nest is approached, the female quietly slips off, while the male bird may be seen hopping or flying from tree to tree in the neighborhood of the nest and doing all he can to induce intruders to withdraw from the neighborhood. The eggs have a light clay-colored ground, marked with obscure blotches of lavender and darker lines, dots, and blotches of purplish brown. The Longspur is a strong flier, and seems to delight in breasting the strongest gales, when all the other birds appear to move with difficulty, and to keep themselves concealed among the grass. While the colors of adult males are very different in the Longspur family, the females have a decided resemblance. The markings of the male are faintly indicated, but the black and buff are wanting.

THE AMERICAN CROSS BILL.

AMERICAN CROSSBILLS are notable for their small size, being considered and described as dwarfs of the family. Their food consists exclusively of pine, fir, and larch, which accounts for the fact that they are more numerous in Northern latitudes where these trees abound. When the cones are abundant they visit in great numbers many places where they have not been for years, appearing at irregular intervals, and not confining themselves to particular localities.

They are very social even during the nesting season. Their nests are built among the branches of the fir trees, and there they disport themselves gaily, climbing nimbly, and assisting their movements, as parrots do, with their beaks. They will hang downward for minutes clinging to a twig or cone, seeming to enjoy this apparently uncomfortable position. They fly rapidly, but never to a great distance. "The pleasure they experience in the society of their mates is often displayed by fluttering over the tops of the trees as they sing, after which they hover for a time, and then sink slowly to their perch. In the day time they are generally in motion, with the exception of a short time at noon. During the spring, summer and

autumn they pass their time in flying from one plantation to another."

The Crossbill troubles itself but little about the other inhabitants of the woods, and is said to be almost fearless of man. Should the male lose his mate, he will remain sorrowfully perched upon the branch from which his little companion has fallen; again and again visit the spot in the hope of finding her; indeed it is only after repeated proofs that she will never return that he begins to show any symptoms of shyness.

In feeding the Crossbill perches upon a cone with its head downwards, or lays the cone upon a branch and stands upon it, holding it fast with his sharp, strong pointed claws. Sometimes it will bite off a cone and carry it to a neighboring bough, or to another tree where it can be opened, for a suitable spot is not to be found on every branch.

The nest is formed of pine twigs, lined with feathers, soft grass, and the needle-like leaves of the fir tree. Three or four eggs of a grayish or bluish white color, streaked with faint blood red, reddish brown, or bluish brown spots, are generally laid.

The following poem is quite a favorite among bird lovers, and is one of those quaint legends that will never die.

THE LEGEND OF THE CROSSBILL.

From the German of Julius Mosen, by Longfellow.

On the cross the dying Saviour
Heavenward lifts his eyelids calm,
Feels, but scarcely feels, a trembling
In his pierced and bleeding palm.

And by all the world forsaken,
Sees he how with zealous care
At the ruthless nail of iron
A little bird is striving there.

And that bird is called the Crossbill,
Covered all with blood so clear,
In the groves of pine it singeth,
Songs, like legends, strange to hear.

Stained with blood and never tiring,
With its beak it doth not cease,
From the cross it would free the Saviour,
Its Creator's son release.

And the Saviour speaks in mildness:
"Blest be thou of all the good!
Bear, as token of this moment,
Marks of blood and holy rood!"



col. F. M. Woodruff.

AMERICAN RED CROSSBILL.

BIRD DAY IN THE SCHOOLS.

BIRD DAY! Have you heard of it? Whether you have or not, we wish to assure you that it is worthy the thoughtful consideration of all teachers, and of all others interested in protecting and preserving our sweet birds.

Bird day has already proved a great success in two cities of the United States, both in the enthusiasm shown by the children in their friendly study of birds and in the result of such study.

In 1894, Oil City, Pa., observed the day, and in 1896 it was celebrated in the schools of Fort Madison, Iowa.

Of the results in his schools, Supt. Babcock, of Oil City, says, "There has been a complete change in the relations existing between the small boy and the birds."

Although we in Fort Madison have been engaged in bird study less than a year, and have observed but one BIRD DAY, results similar to those secured by Supt. Babcock are becoming manifest. Only a few days ago a boy said to his teacher, "I used to take pleasure in killing all kinds of birds. Now I don't wish to harm even an English Sparrow."

The object of BIRD DAY and the study that leads to it, is to diffuse a true knowledge of the aesthetic and practical value of birds and to arouse an interest in bird protection.

And it is high time that something be done. From all over the country

come reports of a decrease in native birds. In many places some of our sweetest songsters and most useful insect destroyers have become very scarce or have disappeared entirely. The causes are many, but the greatest is an inexcusable thoughtlessness on the part of young and old of both sexes. Johnny teases for a gun. His fond parents get it for him. Result—Johnny shows his marksmanship by shooting several birds in his vicinity. Or, perhaps, the ladies need new hats. Nothing except birds for trimming will do, though ten thousand sweet songs be hushed forever.

The study of bird life is one of especial interest to children and if properly pursued will develop in them sympathetic characters that should make them kinder towards their playmates now and towards their fellowmen in the coming years.

Impress upon a child that

"He liveth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small,"

and you have built into his life something that shall shine forth in good deeds through countless ages.

And how go about this work? The limit of space allotted this article forbids a full answer. Briefly,—study the birds themselves. Get a boy aroused to a friendly, protective interest in one bird and you have probably made that boy a friend of all birds. If you are a teacher, take your little flock out early some bright, Spring morning and let them listen to

[Continued on page 138.]

THE CALIFORNIA WOOD-PECKER.

I may not be as pretty a bird as my red-headed cousin but I'm just as busy. My home is in the west among the pines on the mountains. I do not visit the east at all.

Of course I like insects and fruits just as my relations do, but I like best to eat acorns. You know, if I left the acorns on the trees and just got enough to eat at one time, after a while I would have a hard time finding any. They would drop off and roll away and get lost among the leaves and grasses. What would you do if you were I?

I have a very sharp bill, you see. So I can peck and peck at the tree until I have made a hole which will hold an acorn. Sometimes I fill my store house quite full in this way. You can

see how they look in the picture. When I want to get at the meat in the acorn I drive the nut into a crack and split the shell. Then I have my breakfast easily enough.

Some of the other birds like acorns too—but I think they should find and store away their own and not try to take mine. I do not like to quarrel and so have many friends.

Then I have my nest to look after. I make it as my cousin does, by digging into a tree, first a passage way or hall—then a living-room. There are the four or five white eggs and there too soon are the little baby-birds to be taken care of. Now, have I not a great deal of work? Do you not think I am quite as busy as my cousin?



THE CALIFORNIA WOODPECKER.

THIS fine specimen of the Woodpecker is by far the most sociable representative of the family in the United States, and it is no unusual occurrence to see half a dozen or more in a single tree. It is also a well disposed bird, and seldom quarrels or fights with its own kind, or with smaller birds, but it attacks intruders on its winter stores with such vigor and persistence that they are compelled to vacate the premises in a hurry. Its manner of flight and call notes closely resemble those of the Red-Headed Woodpecker, and, like it, it loves to cling to some dead limb near the top of a tree and drum for hours at a time. It is one of the most restless of birds, and never appears to beat a loss for amusement, and no other bird belonging to this family could possibly be more industrious.

During the Spring and Summer its food consists, to some extent, of insects, including grass-hoppers, ants, beetles, and flies—varied with cherries, apples, figs, berries and green corn. Acorns form its principal food during the greater portion of the year. Of these it stores away large numbers in the thick bark of pines, in partly rotten limbs of oak trees, telegraph poles, and fence posts. A writer in the "Auk" says of its habits: "It is essentially a bird of the pines, only occasionally descending to the cotton woods of low valleys. The oaks, which are scattered through the lower pine zone, supply a large share of its food. Its habit of hoarding food is well known, and these stores are the source of unending quarrels with its numerous feathered enemies. I have laid its supplies under contribution myself, when short of provisions and lost from the command on which I had been traveling, by filling my saddlebags with half-dried acorns from under the loose bark of a dead pine."

The California Woodpecker is found in western Mexico, northern Lower California, and north through California into western Oregon. So far as is known the eastern limit of its range is the Santa Fe Mountains.

Its nest is usually from fifteen to twenty-five feet from the ground, excavated on the side of a branch of a good sized oak or sycamore. Breeding commences in April or May, according to locality. Both sexes assist in the excavation. The entrance hole is about one and three-fourths inches in diameter, perfectly circular, and is sometimes chisled through two or three inches of solid wood before the softer and decayed core is reached. The inner cavity is greatly enlarged as it descends, and varies from eight to twenty-four inches in depth. The eggs rarely exceed four or five, and are pure white in color.

The most remarkable fact concerning this species is the peculiar manner in which it stores acorns. The thick bark of large sugar and other pines has been seen completely riddled with small holes. A section of a partly decayed oak limb, three feet two inches long and five and one-half inches in diameter, contained 255 holes. Each hole is intended to hold a single acorn. The acorns fit quite accurately, are driven in point foremost, and are not readily extracted. Sweet acorns are selected. To get at their contents the acorns are carried to a convenient tree where a limb has been broken off, driven into a suitable crevice, split open, and the outer hull removed. Truly the California Woodpecker is no idler or bungler, nor is he a free-booter, like the noisy, royster ing Jay. He makes an honest living, and provides for the evil day which comes alike to man and beast.

THE PIEDBILL GREBE.

Boys and Girls:

This is the first time I've been on land for several weeks. I am sure you can't think of any other kind of bird who can say that.

Sometimes I don't go on land for months, but stay in the water all of the time—eat and sleep there, floating around.

My little chick wanted me to go on land so we could have our pictures taken.

If he were not sitting so close to me you could see better what paddles I have for feet.

I build my nest of weeds, grass, sticks, and anything I can find floating around. I most always fasten it to some reeds or tall grass that grow up out of the water.

In this I lay the eggs and just as soon as the chicks come out of the shell they can swim. Of course they can't swim as well as I and they soon get tired. Do you know how I rest them?

Well, its very funny, but I just help them up on my back and there they rest while I swim around and get them food. When they get rested they slide off into the water.

Are you wondering if I can fly? Well, I can fly a little but not very well. I can get along very fast swimming, and as I do not go on land often, why should I care to fly.

Should any one try to harm me I can dive, and swim under water out of reach.

Well, chick, let us go back to our home in the water.



From col. F. M. Woodruff

PIED-BILLED GREEBE.

THE PIEDBILL GREBE.

AMEMBERS of the family of Grebes are to be found in the temperate zones of both hemispheres, beyond which they do not extend very far either to the north or south. They are usually found on ponds or large sheets of stagnant water, sometimes on deep, slow-moving streams; but always where sedges and rushes are abundant. Probably there are no birds better entitled to the name of water fowl than the Grebes—at least, observers state that they know of no others that do not on some occasions appear on dry land. It is only under the most urgent circumstances, as, for instance, when wounded, that they approach the shore, and even then they keep so close to the brink that on the slightest alarm they can at once plunge into the water. Whatever they do must be done in the water; they cannot even rise upon the wing without a preliminary rush over the surface of the lake. From dry land they cannot begin their flight. Their whole life is spent in swimming and diving. They even repose floating upon the water, and when thus asleep float as buoyantly as if they were made of cork, the legs raised to the edges of the wings, and the head comfortably buried among the feathers between the back and shoulder. Should a storm arise, they at once turn to face the blast, and are usually able, with their paddle-like feet, to maintain themselves in the same place. They dive with great facility, and make their way more swiftly when under water than when swimming at the top. When flying the long neck is stretched out straight forwards and the feet backwards. In the absence of any

tail, they steer their course by means of their feet. When alarmed they instantly dive.

Their food consists of small fishes, insects, frogs, and tadpoles. Grebes are peculiar in their manner of breeding. They live in pairs, and are very affectionate, keeping in each other's company during their migrations, and always returning together to the same pond. The nest is a floating one, a mass of wet weeds, in which the eggs are not only kept damp, but in the water. The weeds used in building the nests are procured by diving, and put together so as to resemble a floating heap of rubbish, and fastened to some old upright reeds. The eggs are from three to six, at first greenish white in color, but soon become dirty, and are then of a yellowish red or olive-brown tint, sometimes marbled.

The male and female both sit upon the nest, and the young are hatched in three weeks. From the first moment they are able to swim, and in a few days to dive. Having once quitted the nest they seldom return to it, a comfortable resting and sleeping place being afforded them on the backs of their parents. "It is a treat to watch the little family as now one, now another of the young brood, tired with the exertion of swimming or of struggling against the rippling water, mount as to a resting place on their mother's back; to see how gently, when they have recovered their strength, she returns them to the water; to hear the anxious, plaintive notes of the little warblers when they have ventured too far from the nest; to see their food laid before them by the old birds; or to witness the tenderness with which they are taught to dive."

BIRD DAY IN THE SCHOOLS—Continued from page 129.

the singing of their feathered brothers of the air. Call attention to their beauty and grace of form, plumage and movement. Watch them care for their little ones. Notice their nests—their happy little homes—those “half-way houses on the road to heaven,” and as you and your flock wander, watch and listen and call to mind that,
“‘Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.”

Let us, fellow teachers and fellow citizens of America, take up this work of bird study and bird protection. Let the schools teach it, the press print it, and the pulpit preach it, till from thousands of happy throats shall be proclaimed the glad tidings of good will of man towards the birds.

C. H. MORRILL,
Supt. of Schools.
Fort Madison, Iowa.

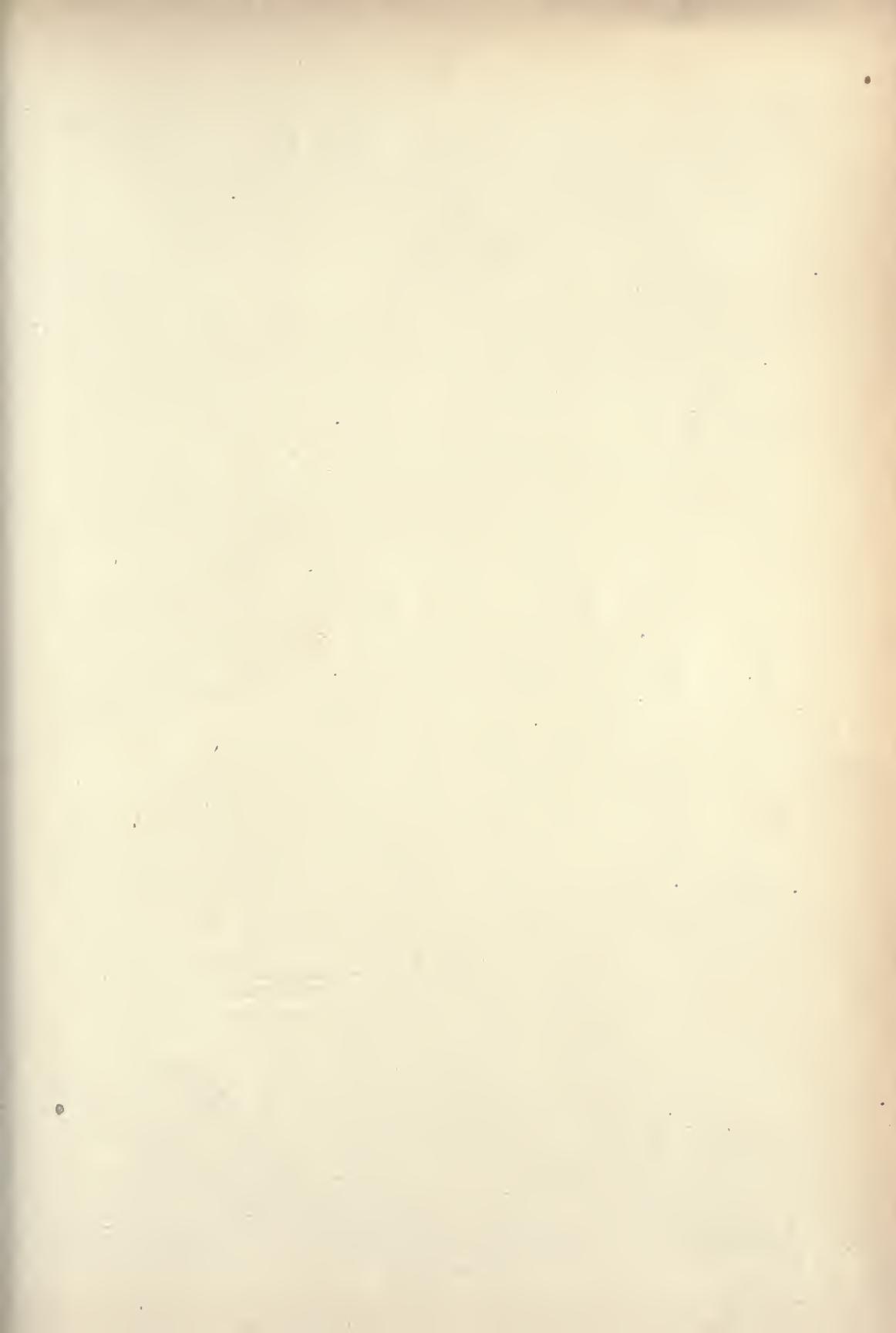
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It will be our purpose from time to time to suggest good works by the best authors.

We give below a list of publications that are especially fine, and shall be pleased to supply them at the list price, as indicated, or as premiums for subscribers to “BIRDS.”

- “Birds Through an Opera Glass,” 75 cents, or two subscriptions.
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In numbers 70, 63, 4, 28 and 54 of the Riverside Series, published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co, may be found selections appropriate for Bird Day Programs, and in the “Intelligence,” of April 1, published by E. O. Vaile, Oak Park, Illinois, may be found some interesting exercises for Bird Day Program. Copies of the paper may be obtained at eight cents.





From col. F. M. Woodruff.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING.

THE BOHEMIAN WAX-WING.

THE Bohemian Wax-wing is interesting for its gipsy-like wanderings, one winter visiting one country, next season another, often in enormous flocks, and usually with intervals of many years, so that in former times their appearance was regarded as sure forebodings of war and pestilence, their arrival being dreaded as much as that of a comet. Another interesting feature of its history is the fact that for a long time this familiar bird eluded the search of the zoologist. Its breeding habits, and even the place where it breeds, were unknown thirty years ago, until finally discovered by Mr. Wolley in Lapland, after a diligent search during four summers. It is also called the European or Common Silk-tail, and is an inhabitant both of northern Europe and of North America, though in America the Cedar Bird is more often met with. In the northern portions of Europe, birch and pine forests constitute its favorite retreats, and these it seldom quits, except when driven by unusual severity of weather, or by heavy falls of snow, to seek refuge in more southern provinces. It is said that even in Russia, Poland, and southern Scandinavia it is constantly to be seen throughout the entire winter; that indeed, so rarely does it wander to more southern latitudes, that in Germany it is popularly supposed to make its appearance once in seven years. On the occasion of these rare

migrations, the Silk-tails keep together in large flocks, and remain in any place that affords them suitable food until the supply is exhausted.

These birds are heavy and indolent, exerting themselves rarely except to satisfy hunger. They live in perfect harmony, and during their migrations indicate no fear of man, seeking their food in the streets of the villages and towns. They frequently settle in the trees, remaining almost motionless for hours together. Their flight is light and graceful, but on the ground they move with difficulty. Their call note is a hissing, twittering sound. In summer, insects are their chief food, while in winter they live principally on berries. The Wax-wing will devour in the course of twenty-four hours an amount of food equal to the weight of its own body. In Lapland is the favorite nesting ground of the Bohemian Wax-wing. The nests are deeply hidden among the boughs of pine trees, at no great height from the ground; their walls are formed of dry twigs and scraps from the surrounding branches, and the cavities are wide, deep, and lined with blades of grass and feathers. There are five eggs, laid about the middle of June; the shell is bluish or purplish white, sprinkled with brown, black, or violet spots and streaks, some of which take the form of a wreath at the broad end. The exquisite daintiness and softness of the Wax-wing's coat can be compared only to floss silk.

THE MARSH WREN.

With tail up, and head up,
The Wren begins to sing ;
He fills the air with melody,
And makes the alders ring ;
We listen to his cadences,
We watch his frisky motions,
We think—his mate attending him—
He's got some nesting notions.—C. C. M.

THese Wrens inhabit marshy and weedy bottom lands along river courses, and have all the brisk manners and habits of the family. This species, however, has a peculiar habit of building several nests every season, and it is suggested that these are built to procure protection for the female, in order that when search is made for the nest where she is sitting, the male may lure the hunter to an empty nest.

Its song is not unlike that of the House Wren, though less agreeable. It is a summer resident, arriving in May and departing in September. Its nest, which is found along borders of rivers, is made of sedge and grasses suspended near tall reeds. It has been found hanging over a small stream, suspended from the drooping bough of an alder tree, swayed to and fro by every breath of air. A careful observer states that a Wren will forsake her nest when building it, sooner than any other bird known to him. Disturb her repeatedly when building and she leaves it apparently without cause; insert your fingers in her teneiment and she will leave it forever. But when the eggs are laid, the Wren will seldom abandon her treasure, and when her tender brood are depending on her for food, she will never forsake them, even though the young be handled, or the female bird be caught on the nest while feeding them. The food of the Wren is insects, their larvae and eggs, and fruit in season.

This Wren has justly been called a perennial songster. "In Spring the

love-song of the Wren sounds through the forest glades and hedges, as the buds are expanding into foliage and his mate is seeking a site for a cave-like home. And what a series of jerks it is composed of, and how abruptly he finishes his song, as if suddenly alarmed; but this is his peculiar habit and common to him alone. In summer we hear his song morning, noon, and night, go forth for very joyfulness, as he wanders hither and thither in his leafy bower." It is only in the moulted season that he does not sing.

A lady who used to attract a great number of birds to her garden with crumbs, seeds, and other dainties, said that when the weather became cold the Wrens used to gather upon a large branch of a tree, about four inches beneath another branch. They assembled there in the evening and packed themselves very comfortably for the night, three or four deep, apparently for the sake of warmth, the topmost Wren always having his back pressed against the outer branch as if to keep all steady. Pitying their forlorn condition, she provided a bedroom for them—a square box lined with flannel, and with a very small round hole for a door. This was fastened to the branch, and the birds promptly took possession of it, their numbers increasing nightly, until at least forty Wrens crowded into the box which did not seem to afford room for half the number. When thus assembled they became so drowsy as to permit themselves to be gently handled.



From col. Chi. Acad. Sciences.

LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN.

THE MARSH WRENS.

A happier pair of birds than these little Wrens it would be hard to find.

They have just come up from taking their morning bath and are going to sing a while before going to work on their nests.

You see I say nests. That is a strange thing about the Wrens, they build several nests. I wonder if you can tell why they do this. If you can't, ask your teacher about it.

It is a little too early in the season or I would have one of the nests in the picture for you to look at.

I will try to describe it to you, so that you will know it when you see it. These little Wrens make their nests of coarse grasses, reed stalks, and such things, lined with fine grasses. It is round like a ball, or nearly so, and has the opening in the side. They fasten them to the reeds and bushes.

If you wish to get acquainted with these birds, you must visit

the tall grasses and cat-tails along rivers and creeks and in marshes.

You won't have to let them know that you are coming; they will see you long before you see them, and from their little nests they will begin to scold you, for fear that you mean to do them harm.

When they see that you mean them no harm, they will begin to entertain you with their songs. Oh, how they do sing! It just seems as though they would burst with song.

You can see how happy the one is in the picture. The other little fellow will soon take his turn. See how straight he holds his tail up. Find out all you can about these Wrens. You notice they have long bills. We call them Long-billed Marsh Wrens. There are several other kinds. You surely must have seen their cousins, the House Wrens. I will show you their pictures some day.

THE ARIZONA GREEN JAY.

THE geographical range of the Arizona Jay is in southern New Mexico and Arizona and south into Sonora and Chihuahua, Mexico. It is a common resident throughout the oak belt which generally fringes the foot-hills of the mountains and ranges well up among the pines. In suitable localities it is very abundant. It is rarely seen at any distance out of the arid plains; but after the breeding season is over, small flocks are sometimes met with among the shrubbery of the few water courses, several miles away from their regular habitat. They are seen in the early Spring, evidently on a raid for eggs and the young of smaller birds. On such occasions they are very silent, and their presence is only betrayed by the scoldings they receive from other birds. On their own heath they are as noisy as any of our Jays, and apparently far more sociable, a number of pairs frequently nesting close to each other in a small oak grove. They move about in small family parties of from half a dozen to twenty or thirty, being rarely seen alone. They are restless, constantly on the move, prying into this or that, spending a good portion of their time on the ground, now hopping on a low limb, and the next minute down again, twitching their tails almost constantly. Their call notes are harsh and far reaching, and are somewhat similar to those of the California Jay.

The voices of animals have a family character not easily mistaken, and this similarity is especially observable in birds. As Agassiz says, "Compare all the sweet warbles of the songster

family—the nightingales, the thrushes, the mocking birds, the robins; they differ in the greater or lesser perfection of their note, but the same kind of voice runs through the whole group. Does not every member of the Crow family caw, whether it be a Jackdaw, the Jay, or the Magpie, the Rook in some green rookery of the Old World, or the Crow of our woods, with its long melancholy caw that seems to make the silence and solitude deeper?"

The habits of the Arizona Jay are similar to those of its brethren. Its food consists of grasshoppers, insects, animal matter, wild fruits, seeds, and especially acorns. It flies by partly closing its wings, darting suddenly down, then up again, and repeating these movements for some time. It mates about the end of February. The nest, composed of dry rootlets laid very closely in rings, is usually found in an oak sapling about ten feet from the ground. The inside diameter is five inches, and depth one and three-fourths inches. It is like a deep saucer.

The Arizona Jay is considered a foothill bird, not going far into the pines and not appearing on the plains. But one brood appears to be raised in a season, and nesting lasts about sixteen days. The eggs vary from four to seven, and differ from all the known eggs of this family found within the United States, being unspotted. They are glaucous green in color, and the majority are much more glossy than Jays' eggs generally are. In one hundred and thirty-six specimens examined, all were perfectly immaculate.



ARIZONA JAY.

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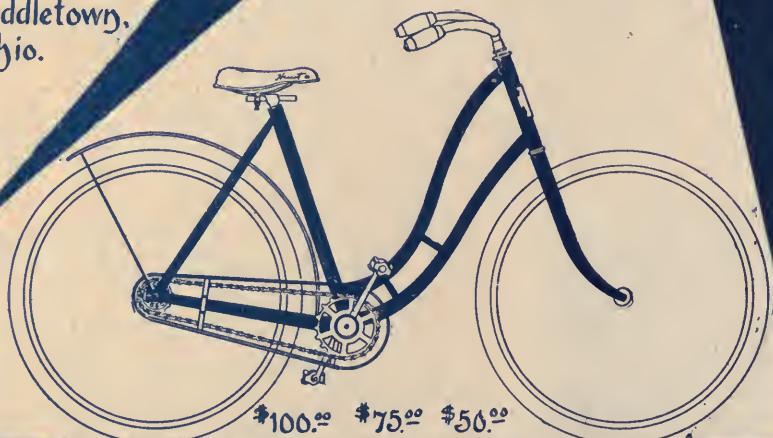
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Dear Mr. Watt: I thank you very much for the copy of "Birds," which has just been received, and I must congratulate you upon putting forth so attractive a publication. I shall be very glad to receive circulars stating the price of subscription.

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EDWARD R. SHAW,
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CAMDEN, N. Y., March 3, 1897.

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BIRDS.

ILLUSTRATED BY COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY.

VOL. I.

MAY, 1897.

No. 5.

NESTING TIME.

"There swims no goose so gray, but soon or late,
She takes some honest gander for a mate;"
There live no birds, however bright or plain,
But rear a brood to take their place again,

—C. C. M.

UITE the jolliest season of the year, with the birds, is when they begin to require a home, either as a shelter from the weather, a defence against their enemies, or a place to rear and protect their young. May is not the only month in which they build their nests, some of our favorites, indeed, waiting till June, and even July; but as it is the time of the year when a general awakening to life and activity is felt in all nature, and the early migrants have come back, not to re-visit, but to re-establish their temporarily deserted homes, we naturally fix upon the first real spring month as the one in which their little hearts are filled with titillations of joy and anticipation.

In May, when the trees have put on their fullest dress of green, and the little nests are hidden from all curious eyes, if we could look quite through the waving branches and rustling leaves, we should behold the little mothers sitting upon their tiny eggs in patient happiness, or feeding their young broods, not yet able to flutter away; while in the leafy month of June, when Nature is perfect in mature

beauty, the young may everywhere be seen gracefully imitating the parent birds, whose sole purpose in life seems to be the fulfillment of the admonition to care well for one's own.

There can hardly be a higher pleasure than to watch the nest-building of birds. See the Wren looking for a convenient cavity in ivy-covered walls, under eaves, or among the thickly growing branches of fir trees, the tiny creature singing with cheerful voice all day long. Observe the Woodpecker tunneling his nest in the limb of a lofty tree, his pickax-like beak finding no difficulty in making its way through the decayed wood, the sound of his pounding, however, accompanied by his shrill whistle, echoing through the grove.

But the nest of the Jay: Who can find it? Although a constant prowler about the nests of other birds, he is so wary and secretive that his little home is usually found only by accident. And the Swallow: "He is the bird of return," Michelet prettily says of him. If you will only treat him kindly, says Ruskin, year after year, he comes back to the same niche, and to the same hearth, for his nest. To the same

niche ! Think of this a little, as if you heard of it for the first time.

But nesting-time with the birds is one of sentiment as well as of industry. The amount of affection in love-making they are capable of is simply ludicrous. The British Sparrow which, like the poor, we have with us always, is a much more interesting bird in this and other respects than we commonly give him credit for. It is because we see him every day, at the back door, under the eaves, in the street, in the parks, that we are indif-

ferent to him. Were he of brighter plumage, brilliant as the Bobolink or the Oriole, he would be a welcome, though a perpetual, guest, and we would not, perhaps, seek legislative action for his extermination. If he did not drive away Bluebirds, whose nesting-time and nesting-place are quite the same as his own, we might not discourage his nesting proclivity, although we cannot help recognizing his cheerful chirp with generous crumbs when the snow has covered all the earth and left him desolate.

C. C. MARBLE.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DRESS, BY ITS CHAIRMAN,
MRS. FRANK JOHNSON.

BIRDS, WINGS AND FEATHERS EMPLOYED AS GARNITURE.

From the school-room there should certainly emanate a sentiment which would discourage forever the slaughter of birds for ornament.

The use of birds and their plumage is as inartistic as it is cruel and barbarous.

THE HALO.

"One London dealer in birds received, when the fashion was at its height, a single consignment of thirty-two thousand dead humming birds, and another received at one time, thirty thousand aquatic birds and three hundred thousand pairs of wings."

Think what a price to pay,
Faces so bright and gay,
Just for a hat!
Flowers unvisited, mornings unsung,
Sea-ranges bare of the wings that o'erwung—
Bared just for that!

Think of the others, too,
Others and mothers, too,
Bright-Eyes in hat!
Hear you no mother-groan floating in air,
Hear you no little moan—birdling's despair—
Somewhere for that?

Caught 'mid some mother-work,
Torn by a hunter Turk,
Just for your hat!
Plenty of mother-heart yet in the world :
All the more wings to tear, carefully twirled!
Women want that?

Oh, but the shame of it,
Oh, but the blame of it,
Price of a hat!
Just for a jauntiness brightening the street!
This is your halo—O faces so sweet—
Death, and for that!—W. C. GANNETT.



SCREECH OWL.



THE SCREECH OWL.

I wouldn't let them put my picture last in the book as they did my cousin's picture in March "BIRDS." I told them I would screech if they did.

You don't see me as often as you do the Blue-bird, Robin, Thrush and most other birds, but it is because you don't look for me. Like all other owls I keep quiet during the day, but when night comes on, then my day begins. I would just as soon do as the other birds—be busy during the day and sleep during the night—but really I can't. The sun is too bright for my eyes and at night I can see very well. You must have your folks tell you why this is.

I like to make my nest in a hollow orchard tree, or in a thick evergreen. Sometimes I make it in a hay loft. Boys and girls who live in the country know what a hay loft is.

People who know me like to have me around, for I catch a good many mice, and rats that kill small chickens. All night long I fly about so quietly that you could not hear me. I search woods, fields, meadows, orchards, and even around houses and barns to get food for my baby owls and their mamma. Baby owls are queer children. They never get enough to eat, it seems. They are quiet all day, but just as soon as the sun sets and twilight gathers, you should see what a wide awake family a nest full of hungry little screech owls can be.

Did you ever hear your mamma say when she couldn't get baby to sleep at night, that he is like a little owl? You know now what she means. I think I hear my little folks calling for me so I'll be off. Good night to you, and good morning for me.

THE ORCHARD ORIOLE.

The Orchard Oriole is here.
Why has he come? To cheer, to cheer —C. C. M.

THE Orchard Oriole has a general range throughout the United States, spending the winter in Central America. It breeds only in the eastern and central parts of the United States. In Florida it is a summer resident, and is found in greatest abundance in the states bordering the Mississippi Valley. This Oriole appears on our southern border about the first of April, moving leisurely northward to its breeding grounds for a month or six weeks, according to the season, the males preceding the females several days.

Though a fine bird, and attractive in his manners and attire, he is not so interesting or brilliant as his cousin, the Baltimore Oriole. He is restless and impulsive, but of a pleasant disposition, on good terms with his neighbors, and somewhat sly and difficult to observe closely, as he conceals himself in the densest foliage while at rest, or flies quickly about from twig to twig in search of insects, which, during the summer months, are his exclusive diet.

The favorite haunts of this very agreeable songster, as his name implies, are orchards, and when the apple and pear trees are in bloom, and the trees begin to put out their leaves, his notes have an ecstatic character quite the reverse of the mournful lament of the Baltimore species. Some writers speak of his song as confused, but others say this attribute does not apply to his tones, the musician detecting anything but confusion in the rapidity and distinctness of his gushing notes. These may be too

quick for the listener to follow, but there is harmony in them.

In the Central States hardly an orchard or a garden of any size can be found without these birds. They prefer to build their nests in apple trees. The nest is different, but quite as curiously made as that of the Baltimore. It is suspended from a small twig, often at the very extremity of the branches. The outer part of the nest is usually formed of long, tough grass, woven through with as much neatness and in as intricate a manner as if sewed with a needle. The nests are round, open at the top, about four inches broad and three deep.

It is admitted that few birds do more good and less harm than our Orchard Oriole, especially to the fruit grower. Most of his food consists of small beetles, plant lice, flies, hairless caterpillars, cabbage worms, grasshoppers, rose bugs, and larvae of all kinds, while the few berries it may help itself to during the short time they last are many times paid for by the great number of insect pests destroyed, making it worthy the fullest protection.

The Orchard Oriole is very social, especially with the king bird. Most of his time is spent in trees. His flight is easy, swift, and graceful. The female lays from four to six eggs, one each day. She alone sits on the eggs, the male feeding her at intervals. Both parents are devoted to their young.

The fall migration begins in the latter part of July or the beginning of August, comparatively few remaining till September.



ORCHARD ORIOLE.

THE MOTTLED OR "SCREECH" OWL.

FIGHT WANDERER," as this species of Owl has been appropriately called, appears to be peculiar to America.

They are quite scarce in the south, but above the Falls of the Ohio they increase in number, and are numerous in Virginia, Maryland, and all the eastern districts. Its flight, like that of all the owl family, is smooth and noiseless. He may be sometimes seen above the topmost branches of the highest trees in pursuit of large beetles, and at other times he sails low and swiftly over the fields or through the woods, in search of small birds, field mice, moles, or wood rats, on which he chiefly subsists.

The Screech Owl's nest is built in the bottom of a hollow trunk of a tree, from six to forty feet from the ground. A few grasses and feathers are put together and four or five eggs are laid, of nearly globular form and pure white color. This species is a native of the northern regions, arriving here about the beginning of cold weather and frequenting the uplands and mountain districts in preference to the lower parts of the country.

In the daytime the Screech Owl sits with his eyelids half closed, or slowly and alternately opening and shutting, as if suffering from the glare of day; but no sooner is the sun set than his whole appearance changes; he becomes lively and animated, his full and globular eyes shine like those of a cat, and he often lowers his head like a cock when preparing to fight, moving it from side to side, and also vertically, as if watching you sharply. In flying, it shifts from place to place

"with the silence of a spirit," the plumage of its wings being so extremely fine and soft as to occasion little or no vibration of the air.

The Owl swallows its food hastily, in large mouthfuls. When the retreat of a Screech Owl, generally a hollow tree or an evergreen in a retired situation, is discovered by the Blue Jay and some other birds, an alarm is instantly raised, and the feathered neighbors soon collect and by insults and noisy demonstration compel his owlship to seek a lodging elsewhere. It is surmised that this may account for the circumstance of sometimes finding them abroad during the day on fences and other exposed places.

Both red and gray young are often found in the same nest, while the parents may be both red or both gray, the male red and the female gray, or vice versa.

The vast numbers of mice, beetles, and vermin which they destroy render the owl a public benefactor, much as he has been spoken against for gratifying his appetite for small birds. It would be as reasonable to criticise men for indulging in the finer foods provided for us by the Creator. They have been everywhere hunted down without mercy or justice.

During the night the Screech Owl utters a very peculiar wailing cry, not unlike the whining of a puppy, intermingled with gutteral notes. The doleful sounds are in great contrast with the lively and excited air of the bird as he utters them. The hooting sound, so fruitful of "shudders" in childhood, haunts the memory of many an adult whose earlier years, like those of the writer, were passed amidst rural scenery.

THE MARSH HAWK.



NE of the most widely distributed birds of North America is the Marsh Hawk, according to Wilson, breeding from the fur regions around Hudson's Bay to Texas, and from Nova Scotia to Oregon and California. Excepting in the Southern portion of the United States, it is abundant everywhere. It makes its appearance in the fur countries about the opening of the rivers, and leaves about the beginning of November. Small birds, mice, fish, worms, and even snakes, constitute its food, without much discrimination. It is very expert in catching small green lizards, aniimals that can easily evade the quickest vision.

It is very slow on the wing, flies very low, and in a manner different from all others of the hawk family. Flying near the surface of the water, just above the weeds and canes, the Marsh Hawk rounds its untiring circles hour after hour, darting after small birds as they rise from cover. Their never ending flight, graceful as it is, becomes monotonous to the watcher. Pressed by hunger, they attack even wild ducks.

In New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, where it sweeps over the low lands, sailing near the earth, in search of a kind of mouse very common in such situations, it is chiefly

known as the Mouse Hawk. In the southern rice fields it is useful in preventing to some extent the ravages of the swarms of Bobolinks. It has been stated that one Marsh Hawk was considered by planters equal to several negroes for alarming the rice birds. This Hawk when feeding is readily approached.

The birds nest in low lands near the sea shore, in the barrens, and on the clear table-lands of the Alleghanies, and once a nest was found in a high covered pine barrens of Florida.

The Marsh Hawks always keep together after pairing, working jointly in building the nest, in sitting upon the eggs, and in feeding the young. The nest is clumsily made of hay, occasionally lined with feathers, pine needles, and small twigs. It is built on the ground, and contains from three to five eggs of a bluish white color, usually more or less marked with purplish brown blotches. Early May is their breeding time.

It will be observed that even the Hawk, rapacious as he undoubtedly is, is a useful bird. Sent for the purpose of keeping the small birds in bounds, he performs his task well, though it may seem to man harsh and tyrranical. The Marsh Hawk is an ornaiment to our rural scenery, and a pleasing sight as he darts silently past in the shadows of falling night.



In col. Chi. Acad. Sciences.

MARSH HAWK.



THE SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER.

FLYCATCHERS are all interesting, and many of them are beautiful, but the Scissor-tailed species of Texas is specially attractive. They are also known as the Swallow-tailed Flycatcher, and more frequently as the Texan Bird of Paradise." It is a common summer resident throughout the greater portion of that state and the Indian Territory, and its breeding range extends northward into Southern Kansas. Occasionally it is found in southwestern Missouri, western Arkansas, and Illinois. It is accidental in the New England states, the Northwest Territory, and Canada. It arrives about the middle of March and returns to its winter home in Central America in October. Some of the birds remain in the vicinity of Galveston throughout the year, moving about in small flocks.

There is no denying that the gracefulness of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher would well entitle him to the admiration of bird-lovers, and he is certain to be noticed wherever he goes. The long outer tail feathers he can open and close at will. His appearance is most pleasing to the eye when fluttering slowly from tree to tree on the other open prairie, uttering his wittering notes, "Spee-spee." When chasing each other in play or anger these birds have a harsh note like "Thish-thish," not altogether agreeable. Extensive timber land is shunned by this Flycatcher, as it prefers more open country, though it is often seen in the edges of woods. It is not often seen on the ground, where its movements are rather awkward. Its amiability and social disposition are observed in the fact that several pairs will breed close to each other in

perfect harmony. Birds smaller than itself are rarely molested by it, but it boldly attacks birds of prey. It is a restless bird, constantly on the lookout for passing insects, nearly all of which are caught on the wing and carried to a perch to be eaten. It eats moths, butterflies, beetles, grasshoppers, locusts, cotton worms, and, to some extent, berries. Its usefulness cannot be doubted. According to Major Bendire, these charming creatures seem to be steadily increasing in numbers, being far more common in many parts of Texas, where they are a matter of pride with the people, than they were twenty years ago.

The Scissor-tails begin housekeeping some time after their arrival from Central America, courting and love making occupying much time before the nest is built. They are not hard to please in the selection of a suitable nesting place, almost any tree standing alone being selected rather than a secluded situation. The nest is bulky, commonly resting on an exposed limb, and is made of any material that may be at hand. They nest in oaks, mesquite, honey locust, mulberry, pecan, and magnolia trees, as well as in small thorny shrubs, from five to forty feet from the ground. Rarely molested they become quite tame. Two broods are often raised. The eggs are usually five. They are hatched by the female in twelve days, while the male protects the nest from suspicious intruders. The young are fed entirely on insects and are able to leave the nest in two weeks. The eggs are clear white, with markings of brown, purple, and lavender spots and blotches.

CHICKADEE.

Bird of the Merry Heart.

Here is a picture of a bird that is always merry. He is a bold, saucy little fellow, too, but we all love him for it. Don't you think he looks some like the Canada Jay that you saw in April "BIRDS?"

I think most of you must have seen him, for he stays with us all the year, summer and winter. If you ever heard him, you surely noticed how plainly he tells you his name. Listen—"Chick-a-dee-dee; Chick-a-dee; Hear, hear me"—That's what he says as he hops about from twig to twig in search of insects' eggs and other bits for food. No matter how bitter the wind or how deep the snow, he is always around—the same jolly, careless little fellow, chirping and twittering his notes of good cheer.

Like the Yellow Warblers on page 169, Chickadees like best to make their home in an old stump or hole in a tree—not very high from the ground. Sometimes they dig for themselves a new hole, but this is only when they cannot find one that suits them.

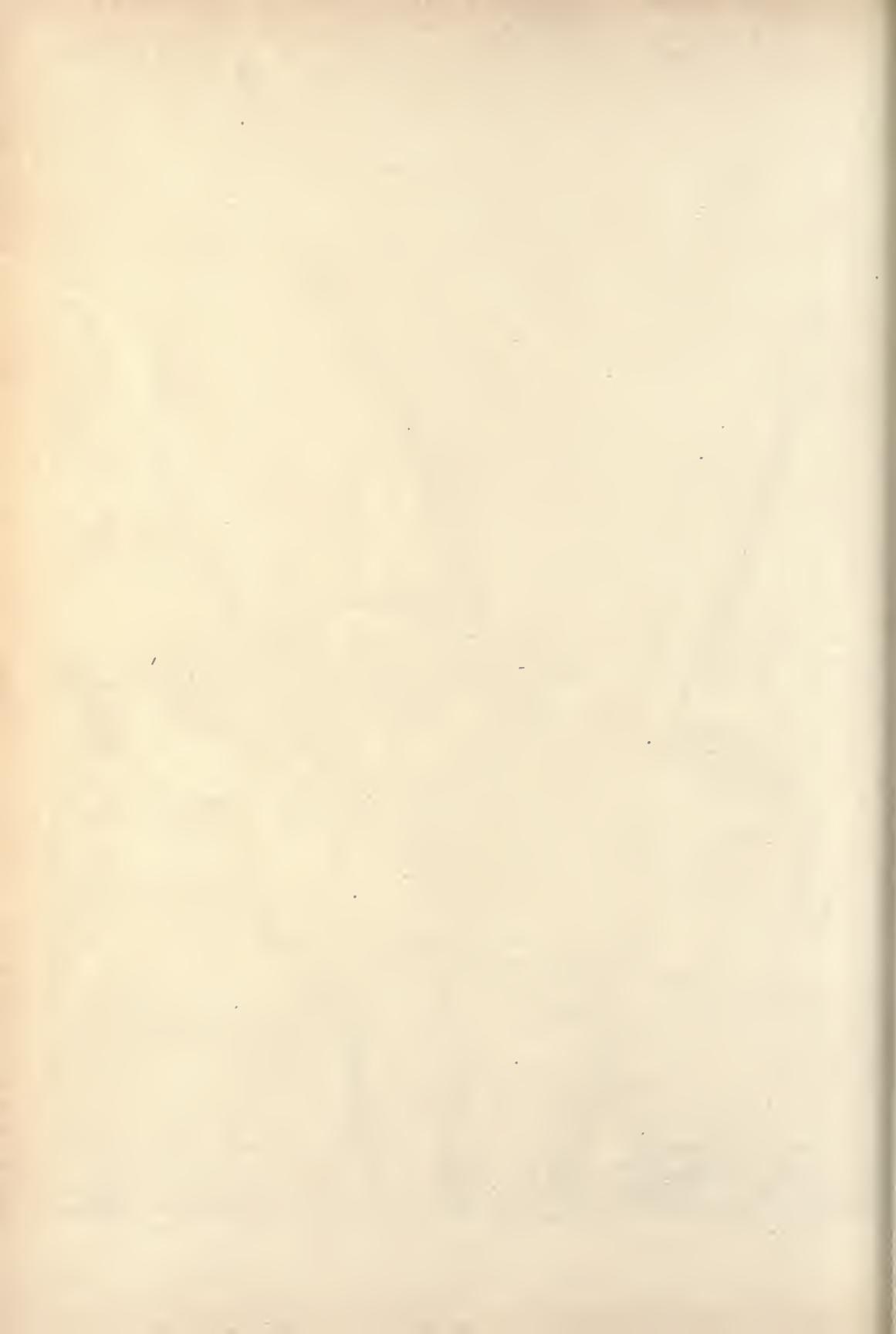
The Chickadee is also called Black-capped Titmouse. If you look at his picture you will see his black cap. You'll have to ask someone why he is called Titmouse. I think Chickadee is the prettier name, don't you?

If you want to get well acquainted with this saucy little bird, you want to watch for him next winter, when most of the birds have gone south. Throw him crumbs of bread and he will soon be so tame as to come right up to the door step.



Chi. Acad. Sciences.

CHICKADEE.



THE BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE.

"Chic-chickadee dee!" I saucily say;
My heart it is sound, my throat it is gay!
Every one that I meet I merrily greet
With a chickadee dee, chickadee dee!
To cheer and to cherish, on roadside and street,
My cap was made jaunty, my note was made sweet.

Chickadeedee, Chickadeedee!
No bird of the winter so merry and free;
Yet sad is my heart, though my song one of glee,
For my mate ne'er shall hear my chickadeedee.

I "chickadeedee" in forest and glade,
"Day, day, day!" to the sweet country maid;
From autumn to spring time I utter my song
Of chickadeedee all the day long!
The silence of winter my note breaks in twain,
And I "chickadeedee" in sunshine and rain.

Chickadeedee Chickadeedee!
No bird of the winter so merry and free;
Yet sad is my heart, though my song one of glee,
For my mate ne'er shall hear my chickadeedee.--C. C. M.

A SAUCY little bird, so active and familiar, the Black-Capped Chickadee, is also recognized as the Black-Capped Titmouse, Eastern Chickadee, and Northern Chickadee. He is found in the southern half of the eastern United States, north to or beyond forty degrees, west to eastern Texas and Indian Territory.

The favorite resorts of the Chickadee are timbered districts, especially in the bottom lands, and where there are red bud trees, in the soft wood of which it excavates with ease a hollow for its nest. It is often wise enough, however, to select a cavity already made, as the deserted hole of the Downy Woodpecker, a knot hole, or a hollow fence rail. In the winter season it is very familiar, and is seen about door yards and orchards, even in towns, gleaning its food from the kitchen remnants, where the table cloth is shaken, and wherever it may chance to find a kindly hospitality.

In an article on "Birds as Protectors of Orchards," Mr. E. H. Forbush says of the Chickadee: "There is no bird that compares with it in destroying the female canker-worm moths and their eggs." He calculated that one Chickadee in one day would destroy 5,550 eggs, and in the twenty-five days in which the canker-worm moths run or crawl up the trees 138,750 eggs. Mr. Forbush attracted Chickadees to

one orchard by feeding them in winter, and he says that in the following summer it was noticed that while trees in neighboring orchards were seriously damaged by canker-worms, and to a less degree by tent caterpillars, those in the orchard which had been frequented by the Chickadee during the winter and spring were not seriously infested, and that comparatively few of the worms and caterpillars were to be found there. His conclusion is that birds that eat eggs of insects are of the greatest value to the farmer, as they feed almost entirely on injurious insects and their eggs, and are present all winter, where other birds are absent.

The tiny nest of the Chickadee is made of all sorts of soft materials, such as wool, fur, feathers, and hair placed in holes in stumps of trees. Six to eight eggs are laid, which are white, thickly sprinkled with warm brown.

Mrs. Osgood Wright tells a pretty incident of the Chickadees, thus: "In the winter of 1891-2, when the cold was severe, the snow deep, and the tree trunks often covered with ice, the Chickadees repaired in flocks daily to the kennel of our old dog Colin and fed from his dish, hopping over his back and calling Chickadee, dee, dee, in his face, a proceeding that he never in the least resented, but seemed rather to enjoy it."

PROTHONOTARY YELLOW WARBLERS.

Quite a long name for such small birds—don't you think so? You will have to get your teacher to repeat it several times, I fear, before you learn it.

These little yellow warblers are just as happy as the pair of wrens I showed you in April "BIRDS." In fact, I suspect they are even happier, for their nest has been made and the eggs laid. What do you think of their house? Sometimes they find an old hole in a stump, one that a woodpecker has left, perhaps, and there build a nest. This year they have found a very pretty place to begin their house-keeping. What kind of tree is it? I thought I would show only the part of the tree that makes their home. I just believe some boy or girl who loves birds made those holes for them. Don't you think so? They have

an upstairs and a down stairs, it seems.

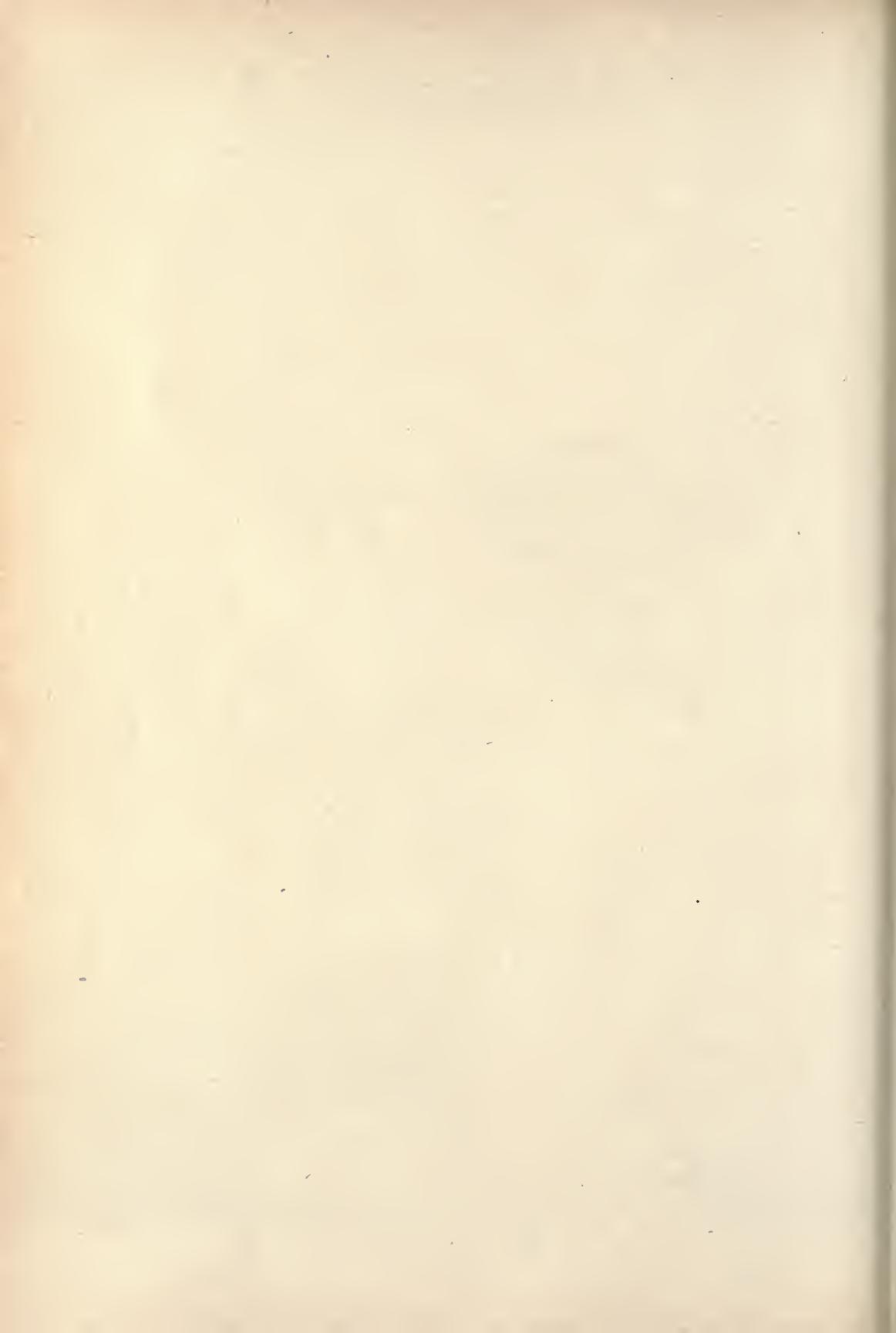
Like the Wrens I wrote about last month, they prefer to live in swampy land and along rivers. They nearly always find a hole in a decayed willow tree for their nest—low down. This isn't a willow tree, though.

Whenever I show you a pair of birds, always pick out the father and the mother bird. You will usually find that one has more color than the other. Which one is it? Maybe you know why this is. If you don't, I am sure your teacher can tell you. Don't you remember in the Bobolink family how differently Mr. and Mrs. Bobolink were dressed?

I think most of you will agree with me when I say this is one of the prettiest pictures you ever saw.



PROTHONOTARY WARBLER.



THE PROTHONTARY, OR GOLDEN SWAMP WARBLER.

THE Golden Swamp Warbler is one of the very handsomest of American birds, being noted for the pureness and mellowness of its plumage. Baird notes that the habits of this beautiful and interesting warbler were formerly little known, its geographical distribution being somewhat irregular and over a narrow range. It is found in the West Indies and Central America as a migrant, and in the southern region of the United States. Further west the range widens, and it appears as far north as Kansas, Central Illinois, and Missouri.

Its favorite resorts are creeks and lagoons overshadowed by large trees, as well as the borders of sheets of water and the interiors of forests. It returns early in March to the Southern states, but to Kentucky not before the last of April, leaving in October. A single brood only is raised in a season.

A very pretty nest is sometimes built within a Woodpecker's hole in a stump of a tree, not more than three feet high. Where this occurs the nest is not shaped round, but is made to conform to the irregular cavity of the stump. This cavity is deepest at one end, and the nest is closely packed with dried leaves, broken bits of grasses, stems, mosses, decayed wood, and other material, the upper part interwoven with fine roots, varying in size, but all strong, wiry, and slender, and lined with hair.

Other nests have been discovered which were circular in shape. In one

instance the nest was built in a brace hole in a mill, where the birds could be watched closely as they carried in the materials. They were not alarmed by the presence of the observer but seemed quite tame.

So far from being noisy and vociferous, Mr. Ridgway describes it as one of the most silent of all the warblers, while Mr. W. Brewster maintains that in restlessness few birds equal this species. Not a nook or corner of his domain but is repeatedly visited during the day. "Now he sings a few times from the top of some tall willow that leans out over the stream, sitting motionless among the marsh foliage, fully aware, perhaps, of the protection afforded by his harmonizing tints. The next moment he descends to the cool shadows beneath, where dark, coffee-colored waters, the overflow of a pond or river, stretch back among the trees. Here he loves to hop about the floating drift-wood, wet by the lapping of pulsating wavelets, now following up some long, inclining, half submerged log, peeping into every crevice and occasionally dragging forth from its concealment a spider or small beetle, turning alternately its bright yellow breast and olive back towards the light; now jetting his beautiful tail, or quivering his wings tremulously, he darts off into some thicket in response to a call from his mate; or, flying to a neighboring tree trunk, clings for a moment against the mossy hole to pipe his little strain, or look up the exact whereabouts of some suspected insect prize."

THE INDIGO BUNTING.

THE Indigo Bunting's arrival at its summer home is usually in the early part of May, where it remains until about the middle of September. It is numerous in the eastern and middle states, inhabiting the continent and seacoast islands from Mexico, where they winter, to Nova Scotia. It is one of the very smallest of our birds, and also one of the most attractive. Its favorite haunts are gardens, fields of deep clover, the borders of woods, and roadsides, where, like the Woodpecker, it is frequently seen perched on the fences.

It is extremely active and neat in its manners and an untiring singer, morning, noon, and night his rapid chanting being heard, sometimes loud and sometimes hardly audible, as if he were becoming quite exhausted by his musical efforts. He mounts the highest tops of a large tree and sings for half an hour together. The song is not one uninterrupted strain, but a repetition of short notes, "commencing loud and, rapid, and full, and by almost imperceptible gradations for six or eight seconds until they seem hardly articulated, as if the little minstrel were unable to stop, and, after a short pause, beginning again as before." Baskett says that in cases of serenade and wooing he may mount the tip sprays of tall trees as he sings and abandon all else to melody till the engrossing business is over.

The Indigo Bird sings with equal animation whether it be May or August, the vertical sun of the dog days having no diminishing effect upon his enthusiasm. It is well

known that in certain lights his plumage appears of a rich sky blue, varying to a tint of vivid verdigris green, so that the bird, flitting from one place to another, appears to undergo an entire change of color.

The Indigo Bunting fixes his nest in a low bush, long rank grass, grain, or clover, suspended by two twigs, flax being the material used, lined with fine dry grass. It had been known, however, to build in the hollow of an apple tree. The eggs, generally five, are bluish or pure white. The same nest is often occupied season after season. One which had been used for five successive summers, was repaired each year with the same material, matting that the birds had evidently taken from the covering of grape vines. The nest was very neatly and thoroughly lined with hair.

The Indigo feeds upon the ground, his food consisting mainly of the seed of small grasses and herbs. The male while moulting assumes very nearly the color of the female, a dull brown, the rich plumage not returning for two or three months. Mrs. Osgood Wright says of this tiny creature: "Like all the bright-hued birds he is beset by enemies both of earth and sky, but his sparrow instinct, which has a love for mother earth, bids him build near the ground. The dangers of the nesting-time fall mostly to his share, for his dull brown mate is easily overlooked as an insignificant sparrow. Nature always gives a plain coat to the wives of these gayly dressed cavaliers, for her primal thought is the safety of the home and its young life."



From col. Chi. Acad. Sciences.

INDIGO BUNTING.

THE NIGHT HAWK.

THE range of the Night Hawk, also known as "Bull-bat," "Mosquito Hawk," "Will o' the Wisp," "Pisk," "Piramidig," and sometimes erroneously as "Whip-poor-will," being frequently mistaken for that bird, is an extensive one. It is only a summer visitor throughout the United States and Canada, generally arriving from its winter haunts in the Bahamas, or Central and South America in the latter part of April, reaching the more northern parts about a month later, and leaving the latter again in large straggling flocks about the end of August, moving leisurely southward and disappearing gradually along our southern border about the latter part of October. Major Bendire says its migrations are very extended and cover the greater part of the American continent.

The Night Hawk, in making its home, prefers a well timbered country. Its common name is somewhat of a misnomer, as it is not nocturnal in its habits. It is not an uncommon sight to see numbers of these birds on the wing on bright sunny days, but it does most of its hunting in cloudy weather, and in the early morning and evening, returning to rest soon after dark. On bright moonlight nights it flies later, and its calls are sometimes heard as late as eleven o'clock.

"This species is one of the most graceful birds on the wing, and its aerial evolutions are truly wonderful; one moment it may be seen soaring through space without any apparent movement of its pinions, and again its swift flight is accompanied by a good deal of rapid flapping of the wings, like that of Falcons, and this is more or less varied by numerous twistings and turnings. While constantly darting here and there in pursuit of its prey," says a traveler, "I have seen one of these birds shoot

almost perpendicularly upward after an insect, with the swiftness of an arrow. The Night Hawk's tail appears to assist it greatly in these sudden zigzag changes, being partly expanded during most of its complicated movements."

Night Hawks are sociable birds, especially on the wing, and seem to enjoy each other's company. Their squeaking call note, sounding like "Speek-speek," is repeated at intervals. These aerial evolutions are principally confined to the mating season. On the ground the movements of this Hawk are slow, unsteady, and more or less laborious. Its food consists mainly of insects, such as flies and mosquitos, small beetles, grass-hoppers, and the small night-flying moths, all of which are caught on the wing. A useful bird, it deserves the fullest protection.

The favorite haunts of the Night Hawk are the edges of forests and clearings, burnt tracts, meadow lands along river bottoms, and cultivated fields, as well as the flat mansard roofs in many of our larger cities, to which it is attracted by the large amount of food found there, especially about electric lights. During the heat of the day the Night Hawk may be seen resting on limbs of trees, fence rails, the flat surface of lichen-covered rock, on stone walls, old logs, chimney tops, and on railroad tracks. It is very rare to find it on the ground.

The nesting-time is June and July. No nest is made, but two eggs are deposited on the bare ground, frequently in very exposed situations, or in slight depressions on flat rocks, between rows of corn, and the like. Only one brood is raised. The birds sit alternately for about sixteen days. There is endless variation in the marking of the eggs, and it is considered one of the most difficult to describe satisfactorily.

THE NIGHT HAWK.

As you will see from my name, I am a bird of the night. Day-time is not at all pleasing to me because of its brightness and noise.

I like the cool, dark evenings when the insects fly around the house-tops. They are my food and it needs a quick bird to catch them. If you will notice my flight, you will see it is swift and graceful. When hunting insects we go in a crowd. It is seldom that people see us because of the darkness. Often we stay near a stream of water, for the fog which rises in the night hides us from the insects on which we feed.

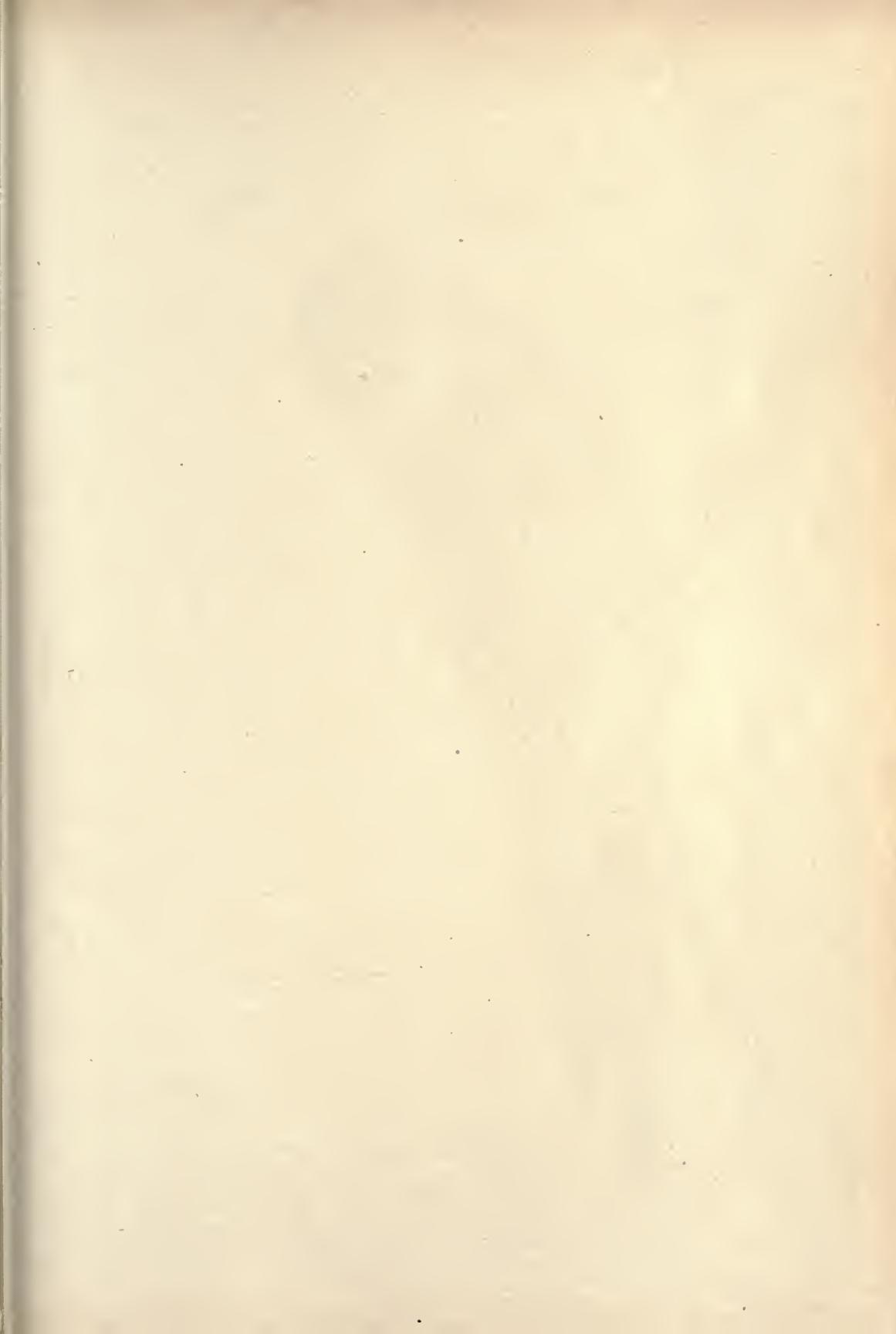
None of us sing well—we have only a few doleful notes which frighten people who do not understand our habits.

In the daytime we seek the darkest part of the woods, and

perch lengthwise on the branches of trees, just as our cousins the Whippoorwills do. We could perch crosswise just as well. Can you think why we do not? If there be no woods near, we just roost upon the ground.

Our plumage is a mottled brown—the same color of the bark on which we rest. Our eggs are laid on the ground, for we do not care to build nests. There are only two of them, dull white with grayish brown marks on them.

Sometimes we lay our eggs on flat roofs in cities, and stay there during the day, but we prefer the country where there is good pasture land. I think my cousin Whippoorwill is to talk to you next month. People think we are very much alike. You can judge for yourself when you see his picture.





From col. Chi. Acad. Sciences.

NIGHT HAWK.

THE WOOD THRUSH.

"With what a clear
And ravishing sweetness sang the plaintive Thrush;
I love to hear his delicate rich voice,
Chanting through all the gloomy day, when loud
Amid the trees is dropping the big rain,
And gray mists wrap the hill; foraye the sweeter
His song is when the day is sad and dark."


So many common names has the Wood Thrush that he would seem to be quite well known to everyone. Some call him the Bell Thrush, others Bell Bird, others again Wood Robin, and the French Canadians, who love his delicious song, Greve des Bois and Merle Taune. In spite of all this, however, and although a common species throughout the temperate portions of eastern North America, the Wood Thrush can hardly be said to be a well-known bird in the same sense as the Robin, the Cat-bird, or other more familiar species; "but to every inhabitant of rural districts his song, at least, is known, since it is of such a character that no one with the slightest appreciation of harmony can fail to be impressed by it."

Some writers maintain that the Wood Thrush has a song of a richer and more melodious tone than that of any other American bird; and that, did it possess continuity, would be incomparable.

Damp woodlands and shaded dells are favorite haunts of this Thrush, but on some occasions he will take up his residence in parks within large cities. He is not a shy bird, yet it is not often that he ventures far from the wild wood of his preference.

The nest is commonly built upon a horizontal branch of a low tree, from six to ten—rarely much more—feet from the ground. The eggs are from three to five in number, of a uniform greenish color; thus, like the nest, resembling those of the Robin, except that they are smaller.

In spite of the fact that his name indicates his preference for the woods, we have seen this Thrush, in parks and gardens, his brown back and spotted breast making him unmistakable as he hops over the grass for a few yards, and pauses to detect the movement of a worm, seizing it vigorously a moment after.

He eats ripening fruits, especially strawberries and gooseberries, but no bird can or does destroy so many snails, and he is much less an enemy than a friend of the gardener. It would be well if our park commissioners would plant an occasional fruit tree—cherry, apple, and the like—in the public parks, protecting them from the ravages of every one except the birds, for whose sole benefit they should be set aside. The trees would also serve a double purpose of ornament and use, and the youth who grow up in the city, and rarely ever see an orchard, would become familiar with the appearance of fruit trees. The birds would annually increase in numbers, as they would not only be attracted to the parks thereby, but they would build their nests and rear their young under far more favorable conditions than now exist. The criticism that birds are too largely destroyed by hunters should be supplemented by the complaint that they are also allowed to perish for want of food, especially in seasons of unusual scarcity or severity. Food should be scattered through the parks at proper times, nesting boxes provided—not a few, but many—and then

The happy mother of every brood
Will twitter notes of gratitude.

THE WOOD THRUSH.

The Bird of Solitude.

Of all the Thrushes this one is probably the most beautiful. I think the picture shows it. Look at his mottled neck and breast. Notice his large bright eye. Those who have studied birds think he is the most intelligent of them all.

He is the largest of the Thrushes and has more color in his plumage. All who have heard him agree that he is one of the sweetest singers among birds.

Unlike the Robin, Catbird, or Brown Thrush, he enjoys being heard and not seen.

His sweetest song may be heard in the cool of the morning or evening. It is then that his rich notes, sounding like a flute, are heard from the deep wood. The weather does not affect his song. Rain or shine, wet or dry, he sings, and sings, and sings.

During the light of day the Wood Thrush likes to stay in the cool shade of the woods.

Along toward evening, after sunset, when other birds are settling themselves for the night, out of the wood you will hear his evening song.

It begins with a strain that sounds like, "Come with me," and by the time he finishes you are in love with his song.

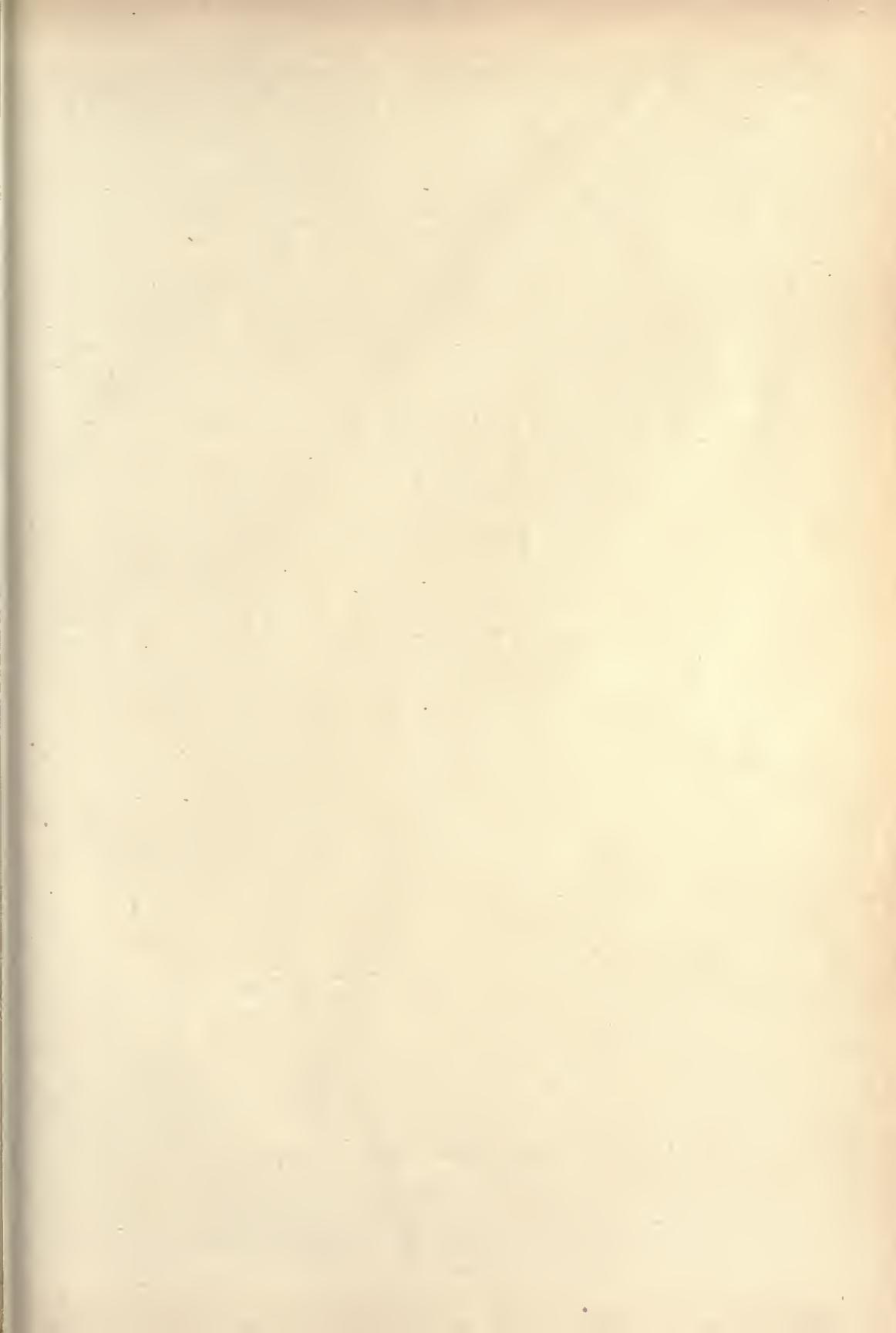
The Wood Thrush is very quiet in his habits. So different from the noisy, restless Catbird.

The only time that he is noisy is when his young are in danger. Then he is as active as any of them.

A Wood Thrush's nest is very much like a Robin's. It is made of leaves, rootlets and fine twigs woven together with an inner wall of mud, and lined with fine rootlets.

The eggs, three to five, are much like the Robin's.

Compare the picture of the Wood Thrush with that of the Robin or Brown Thrush and see which you think is the prettiest.





THE AMERICAN CATBIRD.

THE CATBIRD derives his name from a fancied resemblance of some of his notes to the mew of the domestic cat. He is a native of America, and is one of the most familiarly known of our famous songsters. He is a true thrush, and is one of the most affectionate of our birds. Wilson has well described his nature, as follows :

"In passing through the woods in summer I have sometimes amused myself with imitating the violent chirping or clucking of young birds, in order to observe what different species were round me; for such sounds at such a season in the woods are no less alarming to the feathered tenants of the bushes than the cry of fire or murder in the street is to the inhabitants of a large city. On such occasion of alarm and consternation, the Catbird is first to make his appearance, not single but sometimes half a dozen at a time, flying from different quarters to the spot. At this time those who are disposed to play on his feelings may almost throw him into a fit, his emotion and agitation are so great at what he supposes to be the distressful cries of his young. He hurries backward and forward, with hanging wings, open mouth, calling out louder and faster, and actually screaming with distress, until he appears hoarse with his exertions. He attempts no offensive means, but he wails, he implores, in the most pathetic terms with which nature has supplied him, and with an agony of feeling which is truly affecting. At any other season the most perfect imitations have no effect whatever on him."

The Catbird is a courageous little creature, and in defense of its young it is so bold that it will contrive to drive away any snake that may approach its nest, snakes being its special aversion. His voice is mellow and rich, and is a compound of many of the gentle trills and sweet undulations of our various woodland choristers, delivered with apparent caution, and with all the attention and softness necessary to enable the performer to please the ear of his mate. Each cadence passes on without faltering and you are sure to recognize the song he so sweetly imitates. While they are all good singers, occasionally there is one which excels all his neighbors, as is frequently the case among canaries.

The Catbird builds in syringa bushes, and other shrubs. In New England he is best known as a garden bird. Mabel Osgood Wright, in "Birdcraft," says : "I have found it nesting in all sorts of places, from an alder bush, overhanging a lonely brook, to a scrub apple in an open field, never in deep woods, and it is only in its garden home, and in the hedging bushes of an adjoining field, that it develops its best qualities—'lets itself out,' so to speak. The Catbirds in the garden are so tame that they will frequently perch on the edge of the hammock in which I am sitting, and when I move they only hop away a few feet with a little flutter. The male is undoubtedly a mocker, when he so desires, but he has an individual and most delightful song, filled with unexpected turns and buoyant melody."

THE CATBIRD.

What do you think of this nest of eggs? What do you suppose Mrs. Catbird's thoughts are as she looks at them so tenderly? Don't you think she was very kind to let me take the nest out of the hedge where I found it, so you could see the pretty greenish blue eggs? I shall place it back where I got it. Catbirds usually build their nests in hedges, briars, or bushes, so they are never very high from the ground.

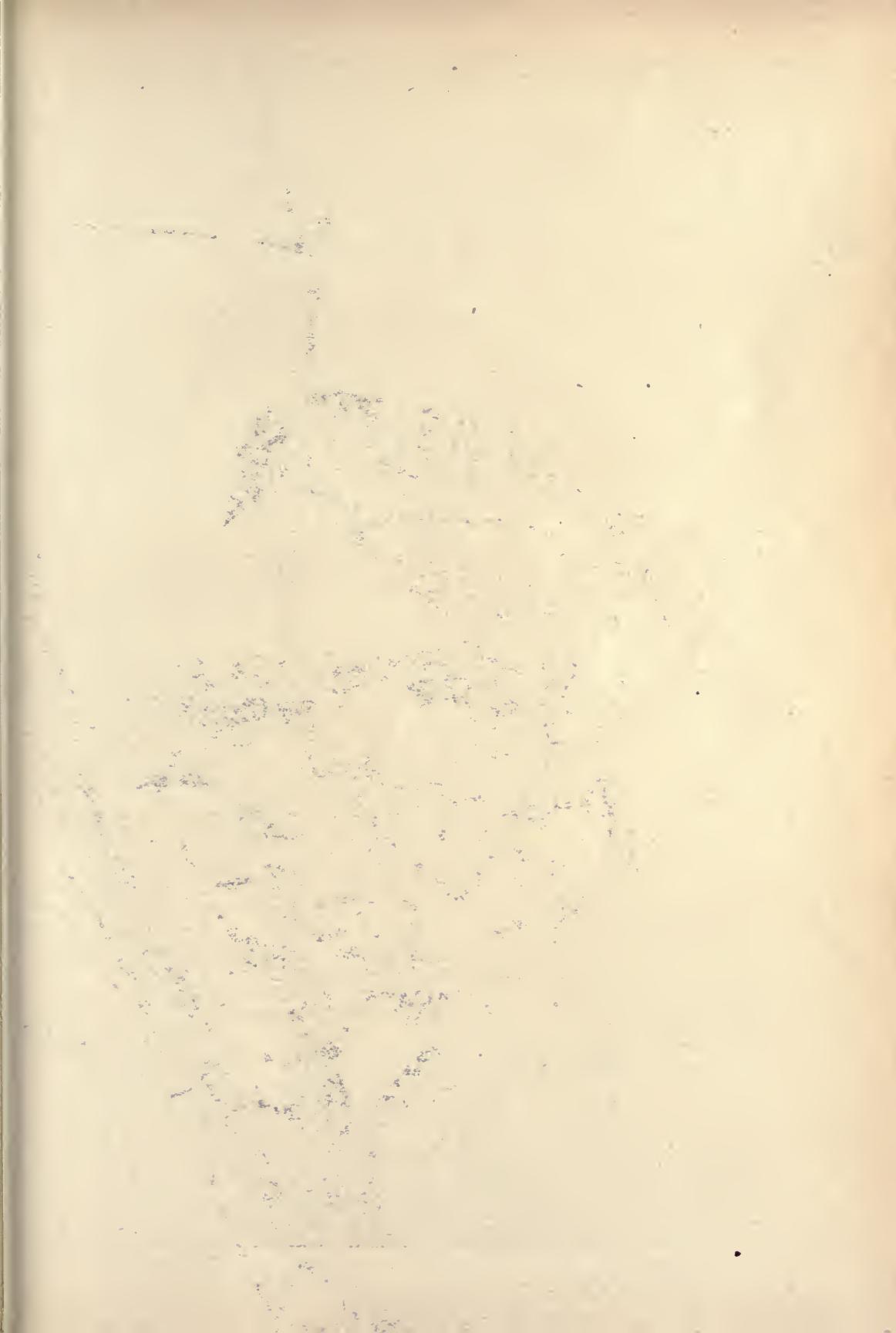
Did you ever hear the Catbird sing? He is one of the sweetest singers and his song is something like his cousin's, the Brown Thrush, only not so loud.

He can imitate the songs of other birds and the sounds of many animals. He can *mew* like a cat, and it is for this reason that he is called "Catbird." His sweetest song, though, is soft and mellow and is sung at just such times as this—when think-

ing of the nest, the eggs, or the young.

The Catbird is a good neighbor among birds. If any other bird is in trouble of any sort, he will do all he can to relieve it. He will even feed and care for little birds whose parents have left them. Don't you think he ought to have a prettier name? Now remember, the Catbird is a Thrush. I want you to keep track of all the Thrushes as they appear in "BIRDS." I shall try to show you a Thrush each month.

Next month you shall see the sweetest singer of American birds. He, too, is a Thrush. I wonder if you know what bird I mean. Ask your mamma to buy you a book called "Bird Ways." It was written by a lady who spent years watching and studying birds. She tells so many cute things about the Catbird.





From col. Chl. Acad. Sciences.

CATBIRD.

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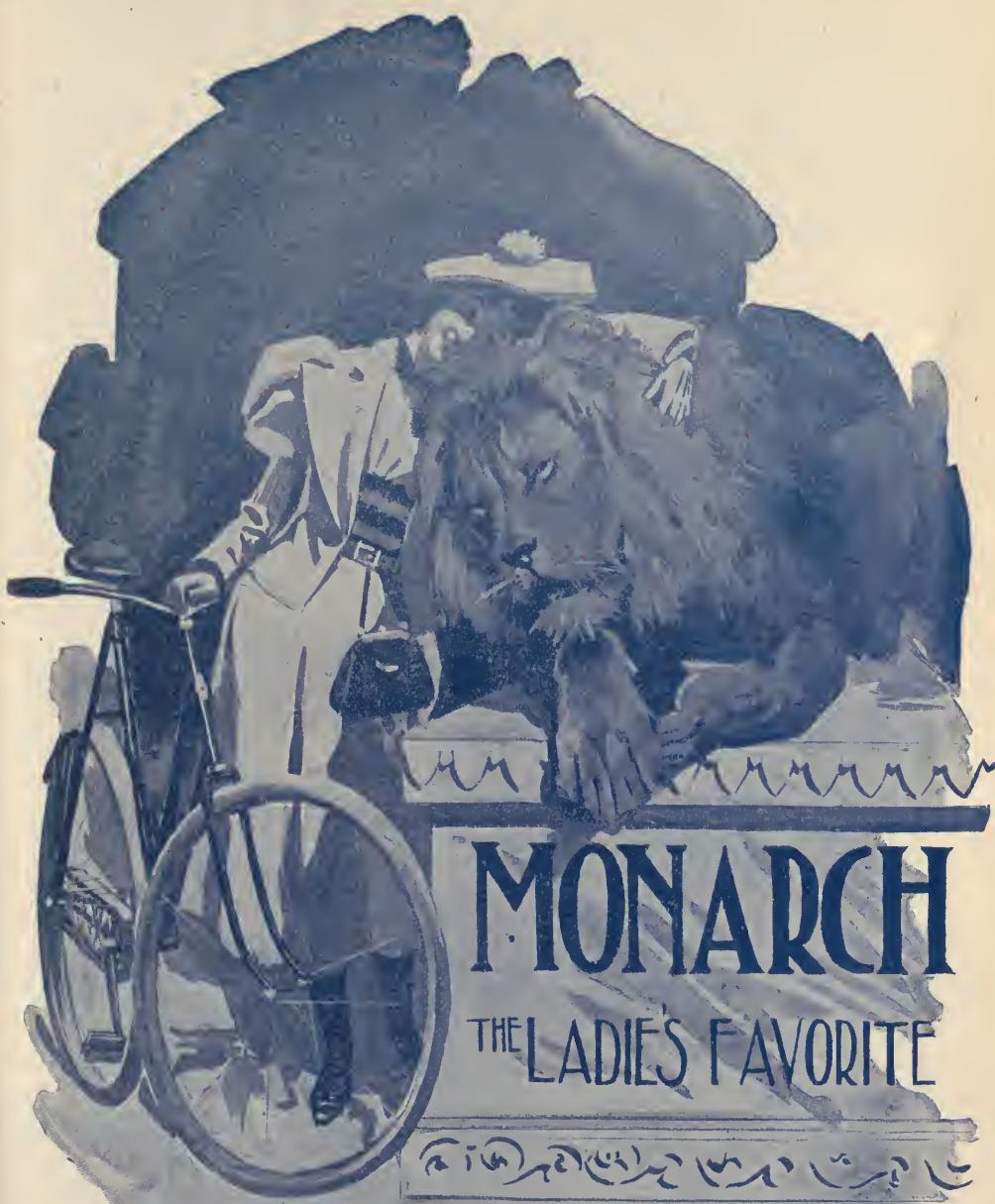
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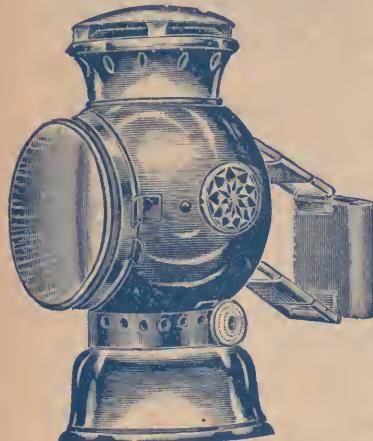
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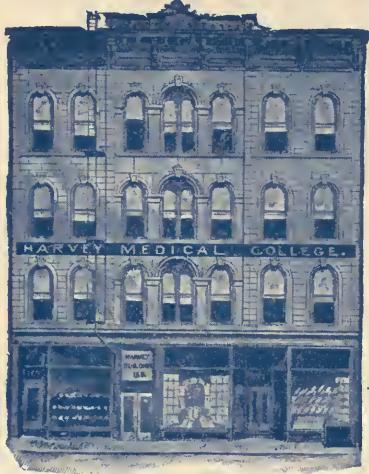
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BIRDS.

ILLUSTRATED BY COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY.

VOL. I.

JUNE, 1897.

No. 6.

BIRD SONG.

"I cannot love the man who doth not love,
As men love light, the song of happy birds."

TIT is indeed fitting that the great poets have ever been the best interpreters of the songs of birds. In many of the plays of Shakespeare, especially where the scene is laid in the primeval forest, his most delicious bits of fancy are inspired by the flitting throng. Wordsworth and Tennyson, and many of the minor English poets, are pervaded with bird notes, and Shelley's masterpiece, *The Skylark*, will long survive his greater and more ambitious poems. Our own poet, Cranch, has left one immortal stanza, and Bryant, and Longfellow, and Lowell, and Whittier, and Emerson have written enough of poetic melody, the direct inspiration of the feathered inhabitants of the woods, to fill a good-sized volume. In prose, no one has said finer things than Thoreau, who probed nature with a deeper ken than any of his contemporaries. He is to be read, and read, and read.

But just what meaning should be attached to a bird's notes—some of which are "the least disagreeable of noises"—will probably never be discovered. They do seem to express almost every feeling of which the human heart is capable. We wonder if the Mocking Bird understands what all these notes mean. He is so fine an

imitator that it is hard to believe he is not doing more than mimicking the notes of other birds, but rather that he really does mock them with a sort of defiant sarcasm. He banterers them less, perhaps, than the Cat Bird, but one would naturally expect all other birds to fly at him with vengeful purpose. But perhaps the birds are not so sensitive as their human brothers, who do not always look upon imitation as the highest flattery.

A gentleman who kept a note-book, describes one of the matinee performances of the Mockingbird, which he attended by creeping under a tent curtain. He sat at the foot of a tree on the top of which the bird was perched unconscious of his presence. The Mockingbird gave one of the notes of the Guinea-hen, a fine imitation of the Cardinal, or Red Bird, an exact reproduction of the note of the Phoebe, and some of the difficult notes of the Yellow-breasted Chat. "Now I hear a young chicken peeping. Now the Carolina Wren sings, '*cheerily, cheerily, cheerily.*' Now a small bird is shrilling with a fine insect tone. A Flicker, a Wood-peewee, and a Phoebe follow in quick succession. Then a Tufted Titmouse squeals. To display his versatility, he gives a dull performance which couples the '*go-back*' of the Guinea fowl with the

plaint of the Wood-peewee, two widely diverse vocal sounds. With all the performance there is such perfect self-reliance and consciousness of superior ability that one feels that the singer has but to choose what bird he will imitate next."

Nor does the plaintive, melancholy note of the Robin, that "pious" bird, altogether express his character. He has so many lovely traits, according to his biographers, that we accept him unhesitatingly as a truly good bird. Didn't he once upon a time tenderly cover with leaves certain poor little wanderers? Isn't he called "The Bird of the Morning?" And evening as well, for you can hear his sad voice long after the sun has himself retired.

The poet Coleridge claims the credit of first using the Owl's cry in poetry, and his musical note *Tu-whit, tu-who!* has made him a favorite with the poets. Tennyson has fancifully played upon it in his little "Songs to the Owl," the last stanza of which runs:

"I would mock thy chant anew;
But I cannot mimic it,
Not a whit of thy tuhoo,
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
T'ee to woo to thy tuwhit.

With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
Tuhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuhoo-o-o."

But Coleridge was not correct in his claim to precedence in the use of the Owl's cry, for Shakespeare preceded him, and Tennyson's "First Song to the Owl" is modeled after that at the end of "Love's Labor Lost."

"When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl.
Then nightly sings the staring Owl,
 Tu-who;
 Tu-whit, tu-who, a merry note."

In references to birds, Tennyson is the most felicitous of all poets and the exquisite swallow-song in "The Princess" is especially recommended to the reader's perusal.

Birds undoubtedly sing for the same reasons that inspire to utterance all the animated creatures in the universe.

Insects sing and bees, crickets, locusts, and mosquitos. Frogs sing, and mice, monkeys, and woodchucks. We have recently heard even an English Sparrow do something better than chipper; some very pretty notes escaped him, perchance, because his heart was overflowing with love-thoughts, and he was very merry, knowing that his affection was reciprocated. The elevated railway stations, about whose eaves the ugly, hastily built nests protrude everywhere, furnish ample explanation of his reasons for singing.

Birds are more musical at certain times of the day as well as at certain seasons of the year. During the hour between dawn and sunrise occurs the grand concert of the feathered folk. There are no concerts during the day—only individual songs. After sunset there seems to be an effort to renew the chorus, but it cannot be compared to the morning concert when they are practically undisturbed by man.

Birds sing because they are happy. Bradford Torrey has given with much felicity his opinion on the subject, as follows:

"I recall a Cardinal Grosbeak, whom I heard several years ago, on the bank of the Potomac river. An old soldier had taken me to visit the Great Falls, and as we were clambering over the rocks this Grosbeak began to sing; and soon, without any hint from me, and without knowing who the invisible musician was, my companion remarked upon the uncommon beauty of the song. The Cardinal is always a great singer, having a voice which, as European writers say, is almost equal to the Nightingale's; but in this case the more stirring, martial quality of the strain had given place to an exquisite mellowness, as if it were, what I have no doubt it was,

A Song of Love."

—C. C. MARBLE.



YELLOW-THROATED VIREO.

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THE YELLOW-THROATED VIREO.

THE popular name of this species of an attractive family is Yellow Throated Greenlet, and our young readers will find much pleasure in watching its pretty movements and listening to its really delightful song whenever they visit the places where it loves to spend the happy hours of summer. In some respects it is the most remarkable of all the species of the family found in the United States. "The Birds of Illinois," a book that may be profitably studied by the young naturalist, states that it is decidedly the finest singer, has the loudest notes of admonition and reproof, and is the handsomest in plumage, and hence the more attractive to the student.

A recognized observer says he has found it only in the woods, and mostly in the luxuriant forests of the bottom lands. The writer's experience accords with that of Audubon and Wilson, the best authorities in their day, but the habits of birds vary greatly with locality, and in other parts of the country, notably in New England, it is very familiar, delighting in the companionship of man. It breeds in eastern North America, and winters in Florida, Cuba and Central America.

The Vireo makes a very deep nest,

suspended by its upper edge, between the forks of a horizontal branch. The eggs are white, generally with a few reddish brown blotches. All authorities agree as to the great beauty of the nest, though they differ as to its exact location. It is a woodland bird, loving tall trees and running water, "haunting the same places as the Solitary Vireo." During migration the Yellow-throat is seen in orchards and in the trees along side-walks and lawns, mingling his golden colors with the rich green of June leaves.

The Vireos, or Greenlets, are like the Warblers in appearance and habits. We have no birds, says Torrey, that are more unsparing of their music; they sing from morning till night, and—some of them, at least—continue theirs till the very end of the season. The song of the Yellow-throat is rather too monotonous and persistent. It is hard sometimes not to get out of patience with its ceaseless and noisy iteration of its simple tune; especially if you are doing your utmost to catch the notes of some rarer and more refined songster. This is true also of some other birds, whose occasional silence would add much to their attractiveness.

THE MOCKING BIRD.

Some bright morning this month, you may hear a Robin's song from a large tree near by. A Red Bird answers him and then the Oriole chimes in. I can see you looking around to find the birds that sing so sweetly. All this time a gay bird sits among the green leaves and laughs at you as you try to find three birds when only one is there.

It is the Mocking Bird or Mocker, and it is he who has been fooling you with his song. Nature has given him lots of music and gifted him with the power of imitating the songs of other birds and sounds of other animals.

He is certainly the sweetest of our song birds. The English Nightingale alone is his rival. I think, however, if our Mocker could hear the Nightingale's song, he could learn it.

The Mocking Bird is another of our Thrushes. By this time you have surely made up your minds that the Thrushes are sweet singers.

The Mocker seems to take delight in fooling people. One gentleman while sitting on his porch heard what he thought to be a young bird in distress. He went in the direction of the sound and soon heard the same cry behind him. He turned and went back toward the porch, when he heard it in another direction. Soon he found out that Mr. Mocking Bird had been fooling him, and was flying about from shrub to shrub making that sound.

His nest is carelessly made of almost anything he can find. The small, bluish-green eggs are much like the Catbird's eggs.

Little Mocking Birds look very much like the young of other Thrushes, and do not become Mockers like their parents, until they are full grown.

Which one of the other Thrushes that you have seen in BIRDS does the Mocking Bird resemble?

He is the only Thrush that sings while on the wing. All of the others sing only while perching.



From col. F. M. Woodruff.

AMERICAN MOCKING BIRD.

JUNE.

Frank-hearted hostess of the field and wood,
Gipsy, whose roof is every spreading tree,
June is the pearl of our New England year,
Still a surprisal, though expected long,
Her coming startles. Long she lies in wait,
Makes many a feint, peeps forth, draws coyly back,
Then, from some southern ambush in the sky,
With one great gush of blossoms storms the world.
A week ago the Sparrow was divine;
The Bluebird, shifting his light load of song
From post to post along the cheerless fence,
Was as a rhymer ere the poet came ;
But now, O rapture! sunshine winged and voiced,
Pipe blown through by the warm, wild breath of the West,
Shepherding his soft droves of fleecy cloud,
Gladness of woods, skies, waters, all in one,
The Bobolink has come, and, like the soul
Of the sweet season vocal in a bird,
Gurgles in ecstasy we know not what
Save June! Dear June! Now God be praised for June.

—LOWELL.



THE BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON.

WHAT a beautiful creature this is! A mounted specimen requires, like the Snowy Owl, the greatest care and a dust tight glass case to preserve its beauty. Dr. Coues' account of it should be read by those who are interested in the science of ornithology. It is a common bird in the United States and British Provinces, being migratory and resident in the south. Heronries, sometimes of vast extent, to which they return year after year, are their breeding places. Each nest contains three or four eggs of a pale, sea-green color. Observe the peculiar plumes, sometimes two, in this case three, which spring from the back of the head. These usually lie close together in one bundle, but are often blown apart by the wind in the form of streamers. This Heron derives its name from its habits, as it is usually seen flying at night, or in the early evening, when it utters a sonorous cry of *quaw* or *qua-wk*. It is often called Quawk or Qua-Bird.

On the return of the Black-Crowned Night Heron in April, he promptly takes possession of his former home, which is likely to be the most solitary and deeply shaded part of a cedar swamp. Groves of swamp oak in retired and water covered places, are also sometimes chosen, and the males often select tall trees on the bank of the river to roost upon during the day. About the beginning of twilight they direct their flight toward the marshes, uttering in a hoarse and hollow tone, the sound *qua*. At this hour all the nurseries in the swamps are emptied of their occupants, who disperse about the marshes along the ditches and river shore in search of food. Some of these nesting places have been occupied every spring and summer for

many years by nearly a hundred pair of Herons. In places where the cedars have been cut down and removed the Herons merely move to another part of the swamp, not seeming greatly disturbed thereby; but when attacked and plundered they have been known to remove from an ancient home in a body to some unknown place.

The Heron's nest is plain enough, being built of sticks. On entering the swamp in the neighborhood of one of the heronries the noise of the old and young birds equals that made by a band of Indians in conflict. The instant an intruder is discovered, the entire flock silently rises in the air and removes to the tops of the trees in another part of the woods, while sentries of eight or ten birds make occasional circuits of inspection.

The young Herons climb to the tops of the highest trees, but do not attempt to fly. While it is probable these birds do not see well by day, they possess an exquisite faculty of hearing, which renders it almost impossible to approach their nesting places without discovery. Hawks hover over the nests, making an occasional sweep among the young, and the Bald Eagle has been seen to cast a hungry eye upon them.

The male and female can hardly be distinguished. Both have the plumes, but there is a slight difference in size.

The food of the Night Heron, or Qua-Bird, is chiefly fish, and his two interesting traits are tireless watchfulness and great appetite. He digests his food with such rapidity that however much he may eat, he is always ready to eat again; hence he is little benefited by what he does eat, and is ever in appearance in the same half-starved state, whether food is abundant or scarce.

THE RING-BILLED GULL.

THE Ring-billed Gull is a common species throughout eastern North America, breeding throughout the northern tier of the United States, whose northern border is the limit of its summer home. As a rule in winter it is found in Illinois and south to the Gulf of Mexico. It is an exceedingly voracious bird, continually skimming over the surface of the water in search of its finny prey, and often following shoals of fish to great distances. The birds congregate in large numbers at their breeding places, which are rocky islands or headlands in the ocean. Most of the families of Gulls are somewhat migratory, visiting northern regions in summer to rear their young. The following lines give with remarkable fidelity the wing habits and movements of this tireless bird:

"On nimble wing the gull
Sweeps booming by, intent to cull
Voracious, from the billows' breast,
Marked far away, his destined feast.
Behold him now, deep plunging, dip
His sunny pinion's sable tip
In the green wave; now highly skim
With wheeling flight the water's brim;
Wave in blue sky his silver sail
Aloft, and frolic with the gale,
Or sink again his breast to lave,
And float upon the foaming wave.
Oft o'er his form your eyes may roam,
Nor know him from the feathery foam,
Nor 'mid the rolling waves, your ear
On yelling blast his clamor hear."

This Gull lives principally on fish, but also greedily devours insects. He also picks up small animals or animal substances with which he meets, and, like the vulture, devours them even in a putrid condition. He walks well and quickly, swims buoyantly, lying in the water like an air bubble, and dives with facility, but to no great depth.

As the breeding time approaches the Gulls begin to assemble in flocks, uniting to form a numerous host. Even upon our own shores their nesting places are often occupied by many hundred pairs, whilst further north they congregate in countless multitudes. They literally cover the rocks on which their nests are placed, the brooding parents pressing against each other.

Wilson says that the Gull, when riding buoyantly upon the waves and weaving a sportive dance, is employed by the poets as an emblem of purity, or as an accessory to the horrors of a storm, by his shrieks and wild piercing cries. In his habits he is the vulture of the ocean, while in grace of motion and beauty of plumage he is one of the most attractive of the splendid denizens of the ocean and lakes.

The Ring-billed Gull's nest varies with localities. Where there is grass and sea weed, these are carefully heaped together, but where these fail the nest is of scanty material. Two to four large oval eggs of brownish green or greenish brown, spotted with grey and brown, are hatched in three or four weeks, the young appearing in a thick covering of speckled down. If born on the ledge of a high rock, the chicks remain there until their wings enable them to leave it, but if they come from the shell on the sand of the beach they trot about like little chickens. During the first few days they are fed with half-digested food from the parents' crops, and then with freshly caught fish.

The Gull rarely flies alone, though occasionally one is seen far away from the water soaring in majestic solitude above the tall buildings of the city.



THE MOCKING BIRD.

THE Mocking Bird is regarded as the chief of songsters, for in addition to his remarkable powers of imitation, he is without a rival in variety of notes. The Brown Thrasher is thought by many to have a sweeter song, and one equally vigorous, but there is a bold brilliancy in the performance of the Mocker that is peculiarly his own, and which has made him *par excellence* the forest extemporizer of vocal melody. About this of course there will always be a difference of opinion, as in the case of the human melodists.

So well known are the habits and characteristics of the Mocking Bird that nearly all that could be written about him would be but a repetition of what has been previously said. In Illinois, as in many other states, its distribution is very irregular, its absence from some localities which seem in every way suited being very difficult to account for. Thus, according to "Birds of Illinois," while one or two pairs breed in the outskirts of Mount Carmel nearly every season, it is nowhere in that vicinity a common bird. A few miles further north, however, it has been found almost abundant. On one occasion, during a three mile drive from town, six males were seen and heard singing along the roadside. Mr. H. K. Coale says that he saw a mocking bird in Stark county, Indiana, sixty miles southeast of Chicago, January 1, 1884; that Mr. Green Smith had met with it at Kensington Station, Illinois, and that several have been observed in the parks and door-yards of Chicago. In the extreme southern portion of the state the species is abundant, and is resident through the year.

The Mocking Bird does not properly belong among the birds of the middle or eastern states, but as there are

many records of its nesting in these latitudes it is thought to be safe to include it. Mrs. Osgood Wright states that individuals have often been seen in the city parks of the east, one having lived in Central Park, New York city, late into the winter, throughout a cold and extreme season. They have reared their young as far north as Arlington, near Boston, where they are noted, however, as rare summer residents. Dr. J. A. Allen, editor of *The Auk*, notes that they occasionally nest in the Connecticut Valley.

The Mocking Bird has a habit of singing and fluttering in the middle of the night, and in different individuals the song varies, as is noted of many birds, particularly canaries. The song is a natural love song, a rich dreamy melody. The mocking song is imitative of the notes of all the birds of field, forest, and garden, broken into fragments.

The Mocker's nest is loosely made of leaves and grass, rags, feathers, etc., plain and comfortable. It is never far from the ground. The eggs are four to six, bluish green, spattered with shades of brown.

Wilson's description of the Mocking Bird's song will probably never be surpassed: "With expanded wings and tail glistening with white, and the buoyant gayety of his action arresting the eye, as his song does most irresistably the ear, he sweeps around with enthusiastic ecstasy, and mounts and descends as his song swells or dies away. And he often deceives the sportsman, and sends him in search of birds that are not perhaps within miles of him, but whose notes he exactly imitates."

Very useful is he, eating large spiders and grasshoppers, and the destructive cottonworm.

THE LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE.

ARAMBLER in the fields and woodlands during early spring or the latter part of autumn is often surprised at finding insects, grasshoppers, dragon flies, beetles of all kinds, and even larger game, mice, and small birds, impaled on twigs and thorns. This is apparently cruel sport, he observes, if he is unacquainted with the Butcher Bird and his habits, and he at once attributes it to the wanton sport of idle children who have not been led to say,

With hearts to love, with eyes to see,
With ears to hear their minstrelsy;
Through us no harm, by deed or word,
Shall ever come to any bird.

If he will look about him, however, the real author of this mischief will soon be detected as he appears with other unfortunate little creatures, which he requires to sustain his own life and that of his nestlings. The offender he finds to be the Shrike of the northern United States, most properly named the Butcher Bird. Like all tyrants he is fierce and brave only in the presence of creatures weaker than himself, and cowers and screams with terror if he sees a falcon. And yet, despite this cruel proceeding, which is an implanted instinct like that of the dog which buries bones he never seeks again, there are few more useful birds than the Shrike. In the summer he lives on insects, ninety-eight per cent. of his food for July and August consisting of insects, mainly grasshoppers; and in winter, when insects are scarce, mice form a very large proportion of his food.

The Butcher Bird has a very agreeable song, which is soft and musical, and he often shows cleverness as a mocker of other birds. He has been taught to whistle parts of tunes, and is as readily tamed as any of our domestic songsters.

The nest is usually found on the

outer limbs of trees, often from fifteen to thirty feet from the ground. It is made of long strips of the inner bark of bass-wood, strengthened on the sides with a few dry twigs, stems, and roots, and lined with fine grasses. The eggs are often six in number, of a yellowish or clayey-white, blotched and marbled with dashes of purple, light brown, and purplish gray. Pretty eggs to study.

Readers of BIRDS who are interested in eggs do not need to disturb the mothers on their nests in order to see and study them. In all the great museums specimens of the eggs of nearly all birds are displayed in cases, and accurately colored plates have been made and published by the Smithsonian Institution and others. The Chicago Academy of Sciences has a fine collection of eggs. Many persons imagine that these institutions engage in cruel slaughter of birds in order to collect eggs and nests. This, of course, is not true, only the fewest number being taken, and with the exclusive object of placing before the people, not for their amusement but rather for their instruction, specimens of birds and animals which shall serve for their identification in forest and field.

The Loggerhead Shrike and nest shown in this number were taken under the direction of Mr. F. M. Woodruff, at Worth, Ill., about fourteen miles from Chicago. The nest was in a corner of an old hedge of Osage Orange, and about eight feet from the ground. He says in the *Osprey* that it took considerable time and patience to build up a platform of fence boards and old boxes to enable the photographer to do his work. The half-eaten body of a young garter snake was found about midway between the upper surface of the nest and the limb above, where it had been hung up for future use.



THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

BALTIMORE Orioles are inhabitants of the whole of North America, from Canada to Mexico. They enter Louisiana as soon as spring commences there. The name of Baltimore Oriole has been given it, because its colors of black and orange are those of the family arms of Lord Baltimore, to whom Maryland formerly belonged. Tradition has it that George Calvert, the first Baron Baltimore, worn out and discouraged by the various trials and rigours of temperature experienced in his Newfoundland colony in 1628, visited the Virginia settlement. He explored the waters of the Chesapeake, and found the woods and shores teeming with birds, among them great flocks of Orioles, which so cheered him by their beauty of song and splendor of plumage, that he took them as good omens and adopted their colors for his own.

When the Orioles first arrive the males are in the majority; they sit in the spruces calling by the hour, with lonely querulous notes. In a few days however, the females appear, and then the martial music begins, the birds' golden trumpeting often turning to a desperate clashing of cymbals when two males engage in combat, for "the Oriole has a temper to match his flaming plumage and fights with a will."

This Oriole is remarkably familiar, and fearless of man, hanging its beautiful nest upon the garden trees, and even venturing into the street wherever a green tree flourishes. The materials of which its nest is made are flax, various kinds of vegetable fibers, wool, and hair, matted together so as to resemble felt in consistency. A number of long horse-hairs are passed completely through the fibers, sewing it firmly together with large and irregular, but strong and judiciously placed

stitching. In one of these nests an observer found that several of the hairs used for this purpose measured two feet in length. The nest is in the form of a long purse, six or seven inches in depth, three or four inches in diameter; at the bottom is arranged a heap of soft material in which the eggs find a warm resting place. The female seems to be the chief architect, receiving a constant supply of materials from her mate, occasionally rejecting the fibres or hairs which he may bring, and sending him off for another load more to her taste.

Like human builders, the bird improves in nest building by practice, the best specimens of architecture being the work of the oldest birds, though some observers deny this.

The eggs are five in number, and their general color is whitish-pink, dotted at the larger end with purplish spots, and covered at the smaller end with a great number of fine intersecting lines of the same hue.

In spring the Oriole's food seems to be almost entirely of an animal nature, consisting of caterpillars, beetles, and other insects, which it seldom pursues on the wing, but seeks with great activity among the leaves and branches. It also eats ripe fruit. The males of this elegant species of Oriole acquire the full beauty of their plumage the first winter after birth.

The Baltimore Oriole is one of the most interesting features of country landscape, his movements, as he runs among the branches of trees, differing from those of almost all other birds. Watch him clinging by the feet to reach an insect so far away as to require the full extension of the neck, body, and legs without letting go his hold. He glides, as it were, along a small twig, and at other times moves sidewise for a few steps. His motions are elegant and stately.

THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

About the middle of May, when the leaves are all coming out to see the bright sunshine, you may sometimes see, among the boughs, a bird of beautiful black and orange plumage.

He looks like the Orchard Oriole, whose picture you saw in May "Birds." It is the Baltimore Oriole. He has other names, such as "Golden Robin," "Fire Bird," "Hang-nest." I could tell you how he came to be called Baltimore Oriole, but would rather you'd ask your teacher about it. She can tell you all about it, and an interesting story it is, I assure you.

You see from the picture why he is called "Hang-nest." Maybe you can tell why he builds his nest that way.

The Orioles usually select for their nest the longest and slenderest twigs, way out on the highest branches of a large tree. They like the elm best. From this they hang their bag-like nest.

It must be interesting to watch them build the nest, and it requires lots of patience, too, for it usually takes a week or ten days to build it.

They fasten both ends of a string to the twigs between which the nest is to hang. After fastening many strings like this, so as to cross one another, they weave in other strings crosswise, and this makes a sort of bag or pouch. Then they put in the lining.

Of course, it swings and rocks when the wind blows, and what a nice cradle it must be for the baby Orioles?

Orioles like to visit orchards and eat the bugs, beetles and caterpillars that injure the trees and fruit.

There are few birds who do more good in this way than Orioles.

Sometimes they eat grapes from the vines and peck at fruit on the trees. It is usually because they want a drink that they do this.

One good man who had a large orchard and vineyard placed pans of water in different places. Not only the Orioles, but other birds, would go to the pan for a drink, instead of pecking at the fruit. Let us think of this, and when we have a chance, give the birds a drink of water. They will repay us with their sweetest songs.



From col. F. M. Woodruff.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

THE SNOWY OWL.

FEW of all the groups of birds have such decided markings, such characteristic distinctions, as the Owl. There is a singular resemblance between the face of an Owl and that of a cat, which is the more notable, as both of these creatures have much the same habits, live on the same prey, and are evidently representatives of the same idea in their different classes. The Owl, in fact, is a winged cat, just as the cat is a furred owl.

The Snowy Owl is one of the handsomest of this group, not so much on account of its size, which is considerable, as by reason of the beautiful white mantle which it wears, and the large orange eyeballs that shine with the lustre of a topaz set among the snowy plumage.

It is a native of the north of Europe and America, but is also found in the more northern parts of England, being seen, though rather a scarce bird, in the Shetland and Orkney Islands, where it builds its nest and rears its young. One will be more likely to find this owl near the shore, along the line of salt marshes and woody stubble, than further inland. The marshes do not freeze so easily or deep as the iron bound uplands, and field-mice are more plentiful in them. It is so fleet of wing that if its appetite is whetted, it can follow and capture a Snow Bunting or a Junco in its most rapid flight.

Like the Hawk Owl, it is a day-flying bird, and is a terrible foe to the smaller mammalia, and to various

birds. Mr. Yarrell in his "History of the British Birds," states that one wounded on the Isle of Balta disgorged a young rabbit whole, and that a young Sandpiper, with its plumage entire, was found in the stomach of another.

In proportion to its size the Snowy Owl is a mighty hunter, having been detected chasing the American hare, and carrying off wounded Grouse before the sportsman could secure his prey. It is also a good fisherman, posting itself on some convenient spot overhanging the water, and securing its finny prey with a lightning-like grasp of the claw as it passes beneath the white clad fisher. Sometimes it will sail over the surface of a stream, and snatch the fish as they rise for food. It is also a great lover of lemmings, and in the destruction of these quadruped pests does infinite service to the agriculturist.

The large round eyes of this owl are very beautiful. Even by daylight they are remarkable for their gem-like sheen, but in the evening they are even more attractive, glowing like balls of living fire.

From sheer fatigue these birds often seek a temporary resting place on passing ships. A solitary owl, after a long journey, settled on the rigging of a ship one night. A sailor who was ordered aloft, terrified by the two glowing eyes that suddenly opened upon his own, descended hurriedly to the deck, declaring to the crew that he had seen "Davy Jones a-sitting up there on the main yard."

THE SNOWY OWL.

What do you think of this bird with his round, puffy head? You of course know it is an Owl. I want you to know him as the Snowy Owl.

Don't you think his face is some like that of your cat? This fellow is not full grown, but only a child. If he were full grown he would be pure white. The dark color you see is only the tips of the feathers. You can't see his beak very well for the soft feathers almost cover it.

His large soft eyes look very pretty out of the white feathers. What color would you call them? Most owls are quiet during the day and very busy all night. The Snowy Owl is not so quiet day times. He flies about considerably and gets most of his food in daylight.

A hunter who was resting under a tree, on the bank of a river, tells this of him:

"A Snowy Owl was perched on the branch of a dead tree that had fallen into the river. He sat there looking into the water and blinking his large eyes.

Suddenly he reached out and before I could see how he did it, a fish was in his claws."

This certainly shows that he can see well in the day time. He can see best, however, in the twilight, in cloudy weather or moonlight. That is the way with your cat.

The wing feathers of the owl are different from those of most birds. They are as soft as down. This is why you cannot hear him when he flies. Owls while perching are almost always found in quiet places where they will not be disturbed.

Did you ever hear the voice of an owl in the night? If you never have, you cannot imagine how dreary it sounds. He surely is "The Bird of the Night."



om col. Chi. Acad. Sciences.

SNOWY OWL.



BIRDS AND FARMERS.

From the Forest and Stream.

THE advocates of protection for our small birds present two sets of reasons for preventing their killing; the one sentimental, and the other economic.

The sentimental reasons are the ones most often urged; they are also of a kind to appeal with especial force to those whose responsibility for the destruction of the birds is greatest. The women and girls, for whose adornment birds' plumage is chiefly used, think little and know less about the services which birds perform for agriculture, and indeed it may be doubted whether the sight of a bunch of feathers or a stuffed bird's skin suggests to them any thought of the life that those feathers once represented. But when the wearers are reminded that there was such a life; that it was cheery and beautiful, and that it was cut short merely that their apparel might be adorned, they are quick to recognize that bird destruction involves a wrong, and are ready to do their part toward ending it by refusing to wear plumage.

The small boy who pursues little birds from the standpoint of the hunter in quest of his game, feels only the ardor of pursuit. His whole mind is concentrated on that and the hunter's selfishness, the desire of possession, fills his heart. Ignorance and thoughtlessness destroy the birds.

Every one knows in a general way that birds render most valuable service to the farmer, but although these services have long been recognized in the laws standing on the statute books of the various states, it is only within a few years that any systematic investigations have been undertaken to determine just what such services are, to measure them with some approach to accuracy, to weigh in the case of each species the good and the evil done, and

so to strike a balance in favor of the bird or against it. The inquiries carried on by the Agricultural Department on a large scale and those made by various local experiment stations and by individual observers have given results which are very striking and which can no longer be ignored.

It is a difficult matter for any one to balance the good things that he reads and believes about any animal against the bad things that he actually sees. The man who witnesses the theft of his cherries by robin or catbird, or the killing of a quail by a marsh hawk, feels that here he has ocular proof of harm done by the birds, while as to the insects or the field mice destroyed, and the crops saved, he has only the testimony of some unknown and distant witness. It is only natural that the observer should trust the evidence of his senses, and yet his eyes tell him only a small part of the truth, and that small part a misleading one.

It is certain that without the services of these feathered laborers, whose work is unseen, though it lasts from daylight till dark through every day in the year, agriculture in this country would come to an immediate standstill, and if in the brief season of fruit each one of these workers levies on the farmer the tribute of a few berries, the price is surely a small one to pay for the great good done. Superficial persons imagine that the birds are here only during the summer, but this is a great mistake. It is true that in warm weather, when insect life is most abundant, birds are also most abundant. They wage an effective and unceasing war against the adult insects and their larvæ, and check their active depredations; but in winter the birds carry on a campaign which is hardly less important in its results.

THE SCARLET TANAGER.



NE of the most brilliant and striking of all American birds is the Scarlet Tanager. From its black wings resembling pockets, it is frequently called the "Pocket Bird." The French call it the "Cardinal." The female is plain olive-green, and when seen together the pair present a curious example of the prodigality with which mother nature pours out her favors of beauty in the adornment of some of her creatures and seems niggardly in her treatment of others. Still it is only by contrast that we are enabled to appreciate the quality of beauty, which in this case is of the rarest sort. In the January number of BIRDS we presented the Red Rumped Tanager, a Costa Rica bird, which, however, is inferior in brilliancy to the Scarlet, whose range extends from eastern United States, north to southern Canada, west to the great plains, and south in winter to northern South America. It inhabits woodlands and swampy places. The nesting season begins in the latter part of May, the nest being built in low thick woods or on the skirting of tangled thickets; very often also, in an orchard, on the horizontal limb of a low tree or sapling. It is very flat and loosely made of twigs and fine bark strips and lined with rootlets and fibres of inner bark.

The eggs are from three to five in number, and of a greenish blue, speckled and blotted with brown, chiefly at the larger end.

The disposition of the Scarlet Tanager is retiring, in which respect he differs greatly from the Sumner Tanager, which frequents open groves, and often visits towns and cities. A few may be seen in our parks, and now and then children have picked up the bright dead form from the green grass, and wondered what might be its name. Compare it with the Redbird, with which it is often confounded, and the contrast will be striking.

His call is a warble, broken by a pensive call note, sounding like the syllables *chip-churr*, and he is regarded as a superior musician.

"Passing through an orchard, and seeing one of these young birds that had but lately left the nest, I carried it with me for about half a mile to show it to a friend, and having procured a cage," says Wilson, "hung it upon one of the large pine trees in the Botanic Garden, within a few feet of the nest of an Orchard Oriole, which also contained young, hoping that the charity and kindness of the Orioles would induce them to supply the cravings of the stranger. But charity with them as with too many of the human race, began and ended at home. The poor orphan was altogether neglected, and as it refused to be fed by me, I was about to return it to the place where I had found it, when, toward the afternoon, a Scarlet Tanager, no doubt its own parent, was seen fluttering around the cage, endeavoring to get in. Finding he could not, he flew off, and soon returned with food in his bill, and continued to feed it until after sunset, taking up his lodgings on the higher branches of the same tree. In the morning, as soon as day broke, he was again seen most actively engaged in the same manner, and, notwithstanding the insolence of the Orioles, he continued his benevolent offices the whole day, roosting at night as before. On the third or fourth day he seemed extremely solicitous for the liberation of his charge, using every expression of distressful anxiety, and every call and invitation that nature had put in his power, for him to come out. This was too much for the feelings of my friend. He procured a ladder, and mounting to the spot where the bird was suspended, opened the cage, took out his prisoner, and restored him to liberty and to his parent, who, with notes of great exultation, accompanied his flight to the woods."



THE SCARLET TANAGER.

What could be more beautiful to see than this bird among the green leaves of a tree? It almost seems as though he would kindle the dry limb upon which he perches. This is his holiday dress. He wears it during the nesting season. After the young are reared and the summer months gone, he changes his coat. We then find him dressed in a dull yellowish green—the color of his mate the whole year.

Do you remember another bird family in which the father bird changes his dress each spring and autumn?

The Scarlet Tanager is a solitary bird. He likes the deep woods, and seeks the topmost branches. He likes, too, the thick evergreens. Here he sings through the summer days. We often pass him by for he is hidden by the green leaves above us.

He is sometimes called our “Bird of Paradise.”

Tanagers feed upon winged insects, caterpillars, seeds, and berries. To get these they do not need to be on the ground. For this reason it is seldom we see them there.

Both birds work in building the nest, and both share in caring for the little ones. The nest is not a very pretty one—not pretty enough for so beautiful a bird, I think. It is woven so loosely that if you were standing under it, you could see light through it.

Notice his strong, short beak. Now turn to the picture of the Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks in April BIRDS. Do you see how much alike they are? They are near relatives.

I hope that you may all have a chance to see a Scarlet Tanager dressed in his richest scarlet and most jetty black.

THE RUFFED GROUSE.

THE Ruffed Grouse, which is called Partridge in New England and Pheasant in the Middle and Southern States, is the true Grouse, while Bob White is the real Partridge. It is unfortunate that they continue to be confounded. The fine picture of his grouseship, however, which we here present should go far to make clear the difference between them:

The range of the Ruffed Grouse is eastern United States, south to North Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, and Arkansas. They hatch in April, the young immediately leaving the nest with the mother. When they hear the mother's warning note the little ones dive under leaves and bushes, while she leads the pursuer off in an opposite direction. Building the nest and sitting upon the eggs constitute the duties of the female, the males during this interesting season keeping separate, not rejoining their mates until the young are hatched, when they begin to roam as a family.

Like the Turkey, the Ruffed Grouse has a habit of pluming and strutting, and also makes the drumming noise which has caused so much discussion. This noise "is a hollow vibrating sound, beginning softly and increasing as if a small rubber ball were dropped slowly and then rapidly bounced on a drum." While drumming the bird contrives to make himself invisible, and if seen it is difficult to get the slightest clue to the manner in which the sound is produced. And observers say that it beats with its wings on a log, that it raises its wings and strikes

their edges above its back, that it claps them against its sides like a crowing rooster, and that it beats the air. The writer has seen a grouse drum, appearing to strike its wings together over its back. But there is much difference of opinion on the subject, and young observers may settle the question for themselves. When preparing to drum he seems fidgety and nervous and his sides are inflated. Letting his wings droop, he flaps them so fast that they make one continuous humming sound. In this peculiar way he calls his mate, and while he is still drumming, the hen bird may appear, coming slyly from the leaves.

The nest is on the ground, made by the female of dry leaves and a few feathers plucked from her own breast. In this slight structure she lays ten or twelve cream-colored eggs, specked with brown.

The eyes of the Grouse are of great depth and softness, with deep expanding pupils and golden brown iris.

Coming suddenly upon a young brood squatted with their mother near a roadside in the woods, an observer first knew of their presence by the old bird flying directly in his face, and then tumbling about at his feet with frantic signs of distress and lameness. In the meantime the little ones scattered in every direction and were not to be found. As soon as the parent was satisfied of their safety, she flew a short distance and he soon heard her clucking call to them to come to her again. It was surprising how quickly they reached her side, seeming to pop up as from holes in the ground.



From col. F. M. Woodruff.

RUFFED GROUSE.

THE RUFFED GROUSE.

At first sight most of you will think this is a turkey. Well, it does look very much like one. He spreads his tail feathers, puffs himself up, and struts about like a turkey. You know by this time what his name is and I think you can easily see why he is called Ruffed.

This proud bird and his mate live with us during the whole year. They are found usually in grassy lands and in woods.

Here they build their rude nest of dried grass, weeds and the like. You will generally find it at the foot of a tree, or along side of an old stump in or near swampy lands.

The Ruffed Grouse has a queer way of calling his mate. He stands on a log or stump, puffed up like a turkey—just as you see him in the picture. Then he struts about for a time just

as you have seen a turkey gobbler do. Soon he begins to work his wings—slowly at first, but faster and faster, until it sounds like the beating of a drum.

His mate usually answers his call by coming. They set up housekeeping and build their rude nest which holds from eight to fourteen eggs. As soon as the young are hatched they can run about and find their own food. So you see they are not much bother to their parents. When they are a week old they can fly. The young usually stay with their parents until next Spring. Then they start out and find mates for themselves.

I said at the first that the Ruffed Grouse stay with us all the year. In the winter, when it is very cold, they burrow into a snowdrift to pass the night. During the summer they always roost all night.

THE BLACK AND WHITE CREEPING WARBLER.

THIS sprightly little bird is met with in various sections of the country. It occurs in all parts of New England and New York, and has been found in the interior as far north as Fort Simpson. It is common in the Bahamas and most of the West India Islands, generally as a migrant; in Texas, in the Indian Territory, in Mexico, and throughout eastern America.

Dr. Coues states that this warbler is a very common summer resident near Washington, the greater number going farther north to breed. They arrive there during the first week in April and are exceedingly numerous until May.

In its habits this bird seems to be more of a creeper than a Warbler. It is an expert and nimble climber, and rarely, if ever, perches on the branch of a tree or shrub. In the manner of the smaller Woodpecker, the Creepers, Nuthatches, and Titmice, it moves rapidly around the trunks and larger limbs of the trees of the forest in search of small insects and their larvae. It is graceful and rapid in movement, and is often so intent upon its hunt as to be unmindful of the near presence of man.

It is found chiefly in thickets, where its food is most easily obtained, and has been known to breed in the immediate vicinity of a dwelling.

The song of this Warbler is sweet and pleasing. It begins to sing from its first appearance in May and continues to repeat its brief refrain at

intervals almost until its departure in August and September. At first it is a monotonous ditty, says Nuttall, uttered in a strong but shrill and filing tone. These notes, as the season advances, become more mellow and warbling.

The Warbler's movements in search of food are very interesting to the observer. Keeping the feet together they move in a succession of short, rapid hops up the trunks of trees and along the limbs, passing again to the bottom by longer flights than in the ascent. They make but short flight from tree to tree, but are capable of flying far when they choose.

They build on the ground. One nest containing young about a week old was found on the surface of shelving rock. It was made of coarse strips of bark, soft decayed leaves, and dry grasses, and lined with a thin layer of black hair. The parents fed their young in the presence of the observer with affectionate attention, and showed no uneasiness, creeping head downward about the trunks of the neighboring trees, and carrying large smooth caterpillars to their young.

They search the crevices in the bark of the tree trunks and branches, look among the undergrowth, and hunting along the fences for bunches of eggs, the buried larvae of the insects, which when undisturbed, hatch out millions of creeping, crawling, and flying things that devastate garden and orchard and every crop of the field.



From col. Chl. Acad. Sciences.

BLACK AND WHITE CREEPING WARBLER.

CHICAGO COLORTYPE CO.

VOLUME I. JANUARY TO JUNE, 1897.

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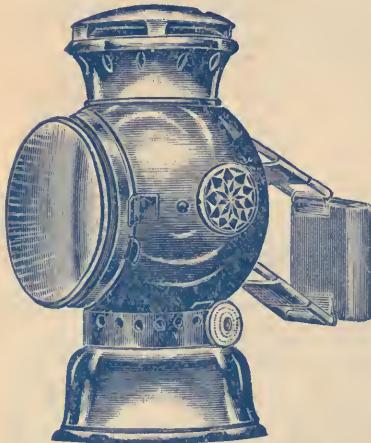
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