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THE
BOOK
OF
CAGE BIRDS.

BY HENRY B. HIRST.

THIRD EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA:

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IN TOKEN
OF
RESPECT FOR HIS VARIED TALENTS,
HIS SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE,
AND
HIS CHARACTER AS A MAN,
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED
TO
JOHN CASSIN,
BY HIS FRIEND
THE AUTHOR.

M368449

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following work the publisher presents to the public with feelings of considerable gratification. That the want of a good publication of this description has long been severely felt, he is well aware from the many enquiries at his establishment. Upon discovering this, he immediately took measures to ensure the production of a complete and practical treatise on the various birds which are to be found, singly and collectively, in an American Aviary. The book is written by a gentleman well known as one of the best practical Ornithologists of the day. This fact must give to the directions on its pages the fullest credit and reliance. The portion devoted to the

Canary-bird (*Fringilla serinus*) is the most perfect description of its character and habits ever published; while the remainder displays the most correct judgment and scientific knowledge. The expense of getting it up has been very heavy; but it is intended as an earnest that every thing which is produced at the publisher's establishment shall be of a sterling character.

In the close of the volume will be found a catalogue of the various articles adapted to the rearing and keeping of Canary and other Song-birds, all of which are of selected quality, or of the finest materials. The greatest pains will always be taken to preserve a full and complete assortment of every thing in this and every other line of the business, in order that the publisher may merit that confidence which has already been so liberally bestowed upon him.

BERNARD DUKE.

Philadelphia, 1842.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

GRANIVOROUS BIRDS.—*Order* GRANIVORES.

CHAPTER I.—General Characteristics of Granivorous

Birds. PAGE 13

DIVISION I.

FOREIGN BIRDS.

PART I.

FINCHES.—*Fringilla*.

CHAP. I.—General Characteristics of the Finch Tribe. 16

CHAP. II.—CANARY-BIRD.—*Fringilla serinus*.

SECTION I.—Of the Peculiar Characteristics of the Canary Finch. 19

SECT. II.—Of the most suitable season for pairing Canaries, and the best situations for breeding them. . . . 26

SECT. III.—Of the mode of pairing, and the proper means to procure handsome coloured Birds. 30

SECT. IV.—On the materials for building and the best nests to be procured. 33

SECT. V.—Of the most proper food for, and directions for feeding Canaries in the breeding season. 36

SECT. VI.—Directions for making the German Paste, and for rearing the young by hand. 45

SECT. VII.—On the distinguishing characteristics of the sexes in Canaries. 57

SECT. VIII.—On the teaching Canaries an artificial system of song.	61
SECT. IX.—On the necessary treatment for sullen and savage male-birds.	65
SECT. X.—General remarks upon breeding birds.	77
SECT. XI.—On the most prevalent diseases which attack Canaries, and the modes of prevention and cure.	85
SECT. XII.—On the various methods of the breeding “mule-birds,” and their general management.	98
CHAP. III.—DOMINICAN GROSEBEAK.— <i>Fringilla cardinalis</i>	108
CHAP. IV.—WHIDAH-BIRD.— <i>Fringilla whida</i>	110
CHAP. V.—JAVA SPARROW.— <i>Fringilla</i> —.	113
CHAP. VI.—WHITE-HEADED GROSEBEAK.— <i>Fringilla leucocephala</i>	115
CHAP. VII.—AVERDIVINE.— <i>Fringilla averdivina</i>	116
CHAP. VIII.—ENGLISH GREY OR BROWN LINNET.— <i>Fringilla linaria</i>	117
CHAP. IX.—ENGLISH GREEN-FINCH, OR GREEN LINNET.— <i>Fringilla chloris</i>	119
CHAP. X.—ENGLISH GOLD-FINCH.— <i>Fringilla carduelis</i>	121

PART II.

LARKS.—*Alaudæ*.

CHAP. I.—ENGLISH SKY-LARK.— <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	123
CHAP. II.—ENGLISH WOOD-LARK.— <i>Alauda arborea</i>	126

PART III.

BULL-FINCHES.—*Pyrrhulæ*.

CHAP. I.—BULL-FINCH.— <i>Pyrrhula vulgaris</i>	128
--	-----

CONTENTS.

9

DIVISION II.

NATIVE BIRDS.

PART I.

TANAGERS.—*Tanagræ*.

- CHAP. I.—SCARLET TANAGER, OR BLACK-WINGED SUMMER
RED-BIRD.—*Tanagra rubra*. 132

PART II.

FINCHES.—*Fringillæ*.

- CHAP. I.—INDIGO-BIRD, OR BLUE LINNET.—*Fringilla
cyanea*. 135
CHAP. II.—PAINTED BUNTING, OR NONPAREIL.—*Fringilla
ciris*. 139
CHAP. III.—SONG SPARROW.—*Fringilla fasciata*. . . 141
CHAP. IV.—YELLOW-BIRD, OR AMERICAN GOLD-FINCH.—
Fringilla tristis. 145

PART III.

CARDINAL-BIRDS.—*Cardinali*.

- CHAP. I.—CARDINAL GROSEBEAK, OR RED-BIRD.—*Cardi-
nalis Virginianus*. 149

PART IV.

GROSEBEAKS.—*Coccothraustes*.

- CHAP. I.—ROSE-BREASTED GROSEBEAK.—*Coccothraustes Lu-
dovicianus*. 155

PART V.

PURPLE FINCHES.—*Erythrospiza*.

- CHAP. I.—PURPLE FINCH, OR AMERICAN LINNET.—*Ery-
throspiza purpurea*. 158

BOOK II.

OMNIVOROUS BIRDS.—*Omnivores*.

- CHAP. I.—Of the general characteristics of Omnivorous
Birds. 160

DIVISION I.

FOREIGN BIRDS.

PART I.

STARLINGS.—*Sturni*.

- CHAP. I.—EUROPEAN STARLING.—*Sturnus vulgaris*. . 163

PART II.

ORIOLES.—*Icterii*.

- CHAP. I.—ICTERIC ORIOLE, OR TROUPIAL. GOLDEN-WING-
ED ORIOLE.—*Icterus* —. 166

PART III.

CROWS.—*Corvi*.

- CHAP. I.—EUROPEAN JACK-DAW.—*Corvus monedula*. . 168

PART IV.

JAYS.—*Garruli*.

- CHAP. I.—EUROPEAN JAY.—*Garrulus glandarius*. . 173

DIVISION II.

NATIVE BIRDS.

PART I.

AMERICAN STARLINGS.—*Sturnella*.

- CHAP. I.—AMERICAN STARLING, OR MEADOW-LARK.—
Sturnella Ludoviciana. 177

PART II.

TROUPIALS.—*Icterii*.

- CHAP. I.—BALTIMORE ORIOLE, OR GOLDEN ROBIN.—*Ic-
terus Baltimorus*. 180
- CHAP. II.—ORCHARD ORIOLE, OR HANGING-BIRD.—*Icterus
spurius*. 184
- CHAP. III.—RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD.—*Icterus prædato-
rius*. 186

CONTENTS.

11

PART III.

RICE BIRDS.—*Dolichonices*.

- CHAP. I.—REED-BIRD, OR RICE BUNTING.—*Dolichonyx oryzivora*. 191

PART IV.

CROWS.—*Corvi*.

- CHAP. I.—AMERICAN CROW.—*Corvus Americanus*. . . 197

PART V.

MAGPIES.—*Pica*.

- CHAP. I.—MAGPIE.—*Pica melanoleuca*. 199

PART VI.

JAYS.—*Garruli*.

- CHAP. I.—BLUE JAY.—*Garrulus cristatus*. 202

BOOK III.

INSECTIVOROUS BIRDS.—*Insectivores*.

- CHAP. I.—On the general characteristics of Insectivorous Birds. 205

DIVISION I.

FOREIGN BIRDS.

PART I.

THRUSHES.—*Turdi*.

- CHAP. I.—EUROPEAN BLACKBIRD.—*Turdus merula*. . . 208

- CHAP. II.—EUROPEAN, OR ENGLISH THRUSH.—*Turdus musicus*. 210

- CHAP. III.—MINOR-BIRD.—*Turdus minor*. 213

PART II.

WARBLERS.—*Sylvia*.

- CHAP. I.—ROBIN, OR RED-BREAST.—*Sylvia rubicola*. . . 215

PART III.

NIGHTINGALES.—*Curruca*.

- CHAP. I.—ENGLISH NIGHTINGALE.—*Curruca lusciana*. . . 218

DIVISION II.

NATIVE BIRDS.

PART I.

MOCKING-THRUSHES.—*Mimi*.

CHAP. I.—MOCKING-BIRD.—*Mimus polyglottis*. . . 229

CHAP. II.—BROWN, OR FERRUGINOUS THRUSH, OR THRASHER.—*Mimus ferrugineus*. . . 247

CHAP. III.—CAT-BIRD.—*Mimus felivox*. . . 249

PART II.

TRUE THRUSHES.—*Turdi*.

CHAP. I.—AMERICAN ROBIN.—*Turdus migratorius*. . 252

PART III.

BLUE-BIRDS.—*Sialia*.

CHAP. I.—BLUE-BIRD.—*Sialia Wilsonii*. . . 255

Mode of carrying Birds to a distance. . . 260

APPENDIX.

CHAP. I.—PARROT TRIBE.—*Psittaci*. . . 262

CHAP. II.—DOVES.—*Columbæ*. . . 269

CHAP. III.—PARTRIDGE.—*Ortyx Virginiana*. . . 273

CONCLUSION. . . 277

PREFACE.

No apology for the production of a work of this kind is necessary, and I give none, except it be the book itself. Those in whose bosoms the seeds of refinement, sown by Education or Nature, have sprang into stately and pleasant trees, will hail the work as having supplied a void too long existing. Those who despise, or affect to despise, the little warblers on whose habits and treatment it discourses, will have a prejudice not to be easily overcome; and one, moreover, which, despising them as I do, I care not to obliterate.

Shakspeare decries "the man who hath no music in his soul;" and any other vigorous writer might make a very fine, as well as just invective against him who loves not the music of birds. So far as my own observation has been extended, it has satisfied me that he who listens not

with delight to the melody of the feathered race, has either been rendered a misanthrope by the villany of others, or is at heart, himself, a villain. The best proof of this is the delighted expression visible upon the faces of children, as they linger near the cages of their favourites and drink in every note of their varied song. And what man lives, who, as he passes by the cottage of the humble labourer, and observes the wicker habitation of the well tended Canary suspended at the door, does not form a favourable idea of the taste of those who dwell within its walls. And oh! in the crowded cities, with the hum of business and the rattle of wheels sounding ever around, is it not pleasant to the ear of the sick-man to hear the voice of some lone bird, and fancy as the cool breeze from the open window steals across his feverish brow, that he is out again among the green fields and pleasant valleys, where the tall trees shake their heads in defiance of the winds, and the diamond-gleaming streams run onward with one continual murmur of joy. The dim light that streams into his room seems free and glorious, he imagines his humble apartment by the wild greenwood, and the

melancholy warbler is converted into the many voiced choir of the forest.

This life is made up of crosses and vexations; and he who can add one mite to the pleasures of existence is a benefactor to the whole human race. It was with the laudable ambition of being thus considered, that induced me to prepare the following little work for publication. If it answer the end for which it is designed, I shall feel myself amply repaid for any trouble I may have undergone in its compilation.

Independent of the pleasure arising from the rearing of birds, the profit to the poor man, and the ability which it gives him to purchase many little luxuries, otherwise far beyond his reach, is worthy of consideration. I know one family, a very worthy and honest one by the by, who, from a little expenditure of labour on the part of the females, and which only filled up otherwise unoccupied time, have been enabled to procure a small but very complete library for their amusement and instruction during the long winter evenings.

Grave and learned physicians may probably smile, when they learn that a chapter of the work has been devoted to the

treatment of the diseases incidental to birds; but the fancier who has hitherto seen his stock die off one by one, without being able to alleviate their sufferings or prevent their destruction, will be grateful for the information conveyed. It is true, we give no descriptions of *post mortem* anatomical examinations, nor have we records of the cases which we have observed, being content that our readers should take our *ipse dixit* for the facts we state; but we have aimed to give information fraught with common sense and to the purpose.

THE AUTHOR.

B O O K I.

GRANIVOROUS BIRDS.—*Order* GRANIVORES.

CHAPTER I.

General Characteristics of Granivorous Birds.

IT will be proper to premise with a few general remarks on the habits and characteristics of this, the most numerous, as well as one of the most beautiful orders of the feathered tribe; particularly as the descriptions of the different species will occupy by far the greater portion of the ensuing pages.

The granivorous birds live in pairs during the nuptial season, and after that period is terminated, assemble in flocks, or groups, ready for the time of their autumnal migration. Many species are very hardy; others again so tender as to leave the states on the approach of frost; while others only migrate from the intense cold

of the polar regions, and remain with us during the whole of the winter. Those of the tender kind reside in this state a short period; reaching us early in May, spending with us only the season of song and incubation, and then departing early in the Autumn for the more congenial temperature of Mexico and the West India isles.

The food of this order consists principally of seeds and small grain, that are always shelled before swallowing; but in the time of incubation, entirely of insects—a fare the easiest to be procured at that period, since but few of the earlier and rarer species of plants have then perfected their seed-vessels. It is, besides, more suitable for the sustenance and nourishment of their tender and delicate young. These would be unable at that immature season to receive and retain nourishment so harsh and difficult of digestion, though at a later portion of their lives such food is better suited to sustain existence. However, seeds of all kinds at all times will

answer for any of the tribe, when adult, in a state of captivity. In the cage they are readily kept to a great age, amply repaying by their melodious songs the attention that they require. They are likewise highly susceptible of education; and can readily be taught numbers of amusing and extremely interesting tricks.

The moult of this order of birds occurs in general twice a year; their plumage always being the most beautiful in the nuptial season, though it again changes in the fall to the unostentatious livery of the females. During the moulting season they are always most delicate.

It will be readily seen that in breeding birds in captivity, the nearest approach to a state of nature will be the most beneficial for their nurture, and the production of strong and vigorous young; but of this more hereafter in its proper place.

DIVISION I.

FOREIGN BIRDS.

PART I.

FINCHES.—*Fringillæ*.

CHAPTER I.

General Characteristics of the Finch Tribe.

OF all the tribes of birds, none, with the exception of the Gallinaceous and the Pigeon order, associate more familiarly and freely with man in a state of nature, and none that evince such docility and such rationality in a state of confinement, as those we now notice. The Finches generally, are either remarkable for their neatness or beauty of plumage, and delightful and varied powers of song. Their variation of feather as regards the sexes

is very slight, in many instances the male and female being the same in appearance, or only differing in the breeding season; while the young of most species immediately resemble the adult, or acquire the perfect plumage in the second year.

Of all the varieties of birds they are the most prolific, rearing several broods a year; and in fact increase so rapidly, that even accident, Hawks, or the shot-gun of the juvenile sportsmen in the neighbourhood of the large cities and towns can create no perceptible diminution. In the country, in the vicinity of farm-houses, they are always protected from pursuit by their social and semi-domestic habits; while the farmer's cottage is very often ornamented with cages, containing the species most celebrated for song. Their habits are solitary in the time of incubation; but after that period they associate together and migrate in bands of considerable numbers. They are generally very hardy, and many species, like the Snow-

bird (*F. hyemalis*), capable of enduring the utmost severity of cold.

Their song is loud and vigorous, and in many instances of a very superior character; consisting of the most beautiful passages, and frequently rising in such delightful trills as to excite the intensest admiration in the listener. They are also very capable of receiving tuition, and will readily perform various feats worthy of the greatest applause. In a state of confinement they are pleasant companions, and may be kept to a great age, frequently twenty years, without difficulty; owing to their peculiar food and their great habits of cleanliness.

CHAPTER II.

CANARY-BIRD.—*Fringilla serinus*.

SECTION I.—*Of the Peculiar Characteristics
of the Canary Finch.*

THE Canary, generally pronounced delicate, and often made so by improper treatment and want of attention, is in reality the hardiest of cage-birds. In the houses of our citizens it is always kept in the warmest rooms, where the artificial atmosphere gradually produces enervation of form and ultimate destruction of life. This results from the high esteem in which this favourite is held, and with considerable force recalls to my mind the old adage of "killing with kindness." A different treatment would be adopted, did the lady or gentleman fancier know how much stronger such a course would make their favourite, in body and song.

The system I should recommend would

be to suspend their cages in a constantly unheated room, where the temperature would approximate to that of the outer atmosphere, exposing them to the sun and air. This of course should only be done on moderate days; not when the air is but a few degrees above zero. Rainy seasons should likewise be avoided, though cloudy skies are not always to be deprecated as injurious.

The Canary-bird is esteemed by all ages, ranks and conditions; and it seems scarcely necessary for me to point out its excellent qualities. Yet, I will venture upon the task. I may leave the sweetness of its song unnoticed, that being well known and appreciated by my readers. The time of singing continues throughout the whole year, with the exception of the moulting seasons, which occur in spring and autumn, and even then, in strong and healthy birds, their melody is given without intermission. Their plumage, another characteristic, is varied and beautiful; con-

sisting of nearly a dozen distinct colours, all of which are of the richest and most gorgeous description, and upon which is founded the various and singular names in vogue among the different bird-fanciers. Their great and almost wonderful aptitude of acquiring knowledge is likewise displayed by the ease with which they perform numerous and astonishing tricks; their ability to articulate words clearly and correctly is nearly or quite equal to that of the Parrot (*Psittacus*), and their docility and attachment toward those who have them in charge is of the highest order, and worthy the greatest admiration.

Among the most striking exhibitions of their wonderful qualities, the most curious was one given in London, by a Frenchman, named Le Sieur Roman, who publicly exhibited eight well educated, and I think I may say without flattery, very talented Canaries. One of these pretended death, and was passed around to the company, by his ingenious owner, without displaying

the slightest sign of life. A second was an expert and excellent balancer, performing evolutions while standing upon his head with his claws elevated. A third imitated the peculiar action of a milk-maid, going and returning from market, bearing a small milk-pail upon his shoulder. A fourth mimicked a Venetian demoiselle, looking from the window and nodding to the bystanders, in a manner exceedingly *piquante* and amusing. A fifth appeared as a soldier, with a minute musket, and mounted guard, in the character of a sentinel. The sixth was likewise a soldier, and sustained the character of a cannonier, wearing a military cap on his head, bearing a fire-lock on his shoulder, and concluding his portion of the performance by taking a match and discharging a little cannon. The same bird, at another time, fell as if wounded by a shot from the enemy; suffered itself to be placed in a little wheel-barrow by its companions and taken to the hospital; and from thence took wing

and flew away before the spectators. A seventh gracefully turned a small wind-mill; and the eighth bird stood amidst a display of various kinds of fireworks without betraying the slightest signs of fear.

A second exhibition of this kind, more curious from the greater number of the performers, took place in London during the year 1820. The ingenious artist and owner was a Monsieur Dijon. The exhibited *troupe* consisted of twenty-four Canaries, who all performed numerous feats. One of these represented a company of soldiers. They had a small camp, tents and other martial equipage; stood and relieved guard; marched and counter-marched; and went through various evolutions. At last one of the company deserted, was pursued by a guard, brought back, and seemingly sentenced to be shot. The courageous little bird submitted, hero-like, to his fate, received the real fire of his companions from their little mechanical muskets, and fell apparently dead before

the company. He was then taken up by his companions, placed on a small tumbril and dragged away to be buried. This concluded the performance.

About two years since, I, myself, possessed an imported Canary-bird, who displayed equal semi-reasoning powers. His cage was constructed without the usual appendages of seed-box and water-fount; but had a small rail-road placed at each side, at the bottom of one of which was a small car on wheels filled with seed, and at the other a second with water. Whenever my little "*Mignonne*," as he was called, was hungry, he, with his bill and claws turned a small windlass which slowly and gradually brought the car of seed towards him. When it had arrived within his reach, he placed his foot upon the cord and retained it until satisfied; then letting go his hold he suffered it to sink to its former position. The same course of proceeding followed with the water. This bird was the admiration of a host of

friends and visitors, and probably would have continued so till this day, but being hung from my window, on one occasion, the nail by which it was suspended gave way, and the cage was precipitated into the street, instantly killing my talented and docile little companion.

There are many instances on record of the intelligence and rationality of the Canary, which are equally extraordinary with the above; but the limits to which I am confined prevent the possibility of a more lengthened notice.

To other qualities I may add their wonderful power of imitating various airs; for they have here the correctness and taste of an accomplished musician, keeping time with the most scrupulous exactness and adhering strictly to the melody. They are taught these airs by means of a flageolet, or a *serinette*, or bird-organ. The manner of tuition I shall consider in a future section.

SECT. II.—*Of the most suitable season for pairing Canaries, and the best situations for breeding them.*

The most suitable season for pairing the Canary, commences, in this section of country, in the latter end of February, and from then until the last of March; though they will succeed tolerably well if placed together as late as the middle of April. The former time should however be preferred; the first brood invariably producing the finest songsters, as well as the strongest and hardiest birds. The time may, however, depend upon the season's being favourable, or otherwise. If the latter, it would be advisable to delay their coupling until the weather becomes more genial, for when the frosts are gradually disappearing and the sun begins to shed its warm and enlivening rays, the birds may be placed together, without any fears as to a fatal result, which nearly

always occurs should they be paired at the time above mentioned.

When your judgment tells you that the proper season has arrived, select your cage, which should be of small size and in a state of perfect cleanliness. At the same time observe carefully that there are no small red-insects in its crevices; as these mites, as they are called, would be productive of much injury. Of these I shall speak more particularly hereafter. Then choose the birds, which you intend to pair, and place them together; for they invariably mate sooner in a small cage than in one of larger dimensions. When they are at first set in company, they generally disagree; but this need not be a matter of alarm to their owner, as the more bitter they are at the first, the sooner they become reconciled, and the more perfect in their connubial felicity. This happy period will soon be discovered by marks of affection in the male towards

the female, as by feeding and billing her, pluming her feathers, &c.

During this season they should be given the most enlivening as well as the most nourishing food. I would strongly recommend a composition, made after the following recipe, as the best addition to their daily allowance. Take one egg and two or three oysters, each boiled very hard, then chop, or grate them fine, adding some wheat-bread carefully and finely crumbled, and a little swelled Indian and oat-meal in equal quantities, and a small portion (two drachms) of maw-seed. Mix the whole well together. Give the birds a table-spoonful morning and afternoon, keeping the rest in a moist situation for future use. In a week your birds will be paired. This mixture I have found very successful in many instances, and the experience of a host of friends confirms my own.

The breeding cage, which must be of good size, so as to allow the birds room for exercise, must now be obtained. The

situation is next to be considered; for though wherever the cage may be placed, the birds, prompted by instinct, will commence building their nest, yet success depends entirely upon its favourable position. Should a cage be placed in a room which is unexposed to sun and air, the young birds, if any are raised at all, will be sickly, weak, and less in size in three weeks than those reared in a more favourable situation would be in ten days, or even a less time. The reader will now see the propriety, in order to secure fine, healthy and vigorous songsters, of placing their cage in an apartment open to the sun-light. The morning sun is far more preferable than the afternoon, for the excessive heat of the latter frequently causes a dangerous disease in the hen-Canary, known to bird-breeders by the name of the "sweating sickness," or causes the hen to become indisposed and leave her nest, thereby blighting the rearer's hopes almost at the instant of gratification.

This "sweating sickness" is one of the most direful and disastrous that affects the Canary, for should the bird recover, a species of red-mite appears on the body of the hen, as the sequelus of the disease. These parasites destroy the mother and her interesting brood, clinging to them with the greatest tenacity, feeding on their blood and remaining until life is entirely extinct. Added to these incidents, they are also liable to lay clear and unproductive eggs. All of these things arise solely from their situation. Beside, Canaries are noted for their preferences and antipathies, and their behaviour in a room, or in a cage, is ample evidence of their satisfaction or dislike of the position which they occupy.

SECT. III.—*Of the mode of pairing, and the proper means to procure handsome coloured Birds.*

The Canary-bird, a native originally of

the Canary Isles, from which it derives its name, is, in its natural state, of a buff and olivaceous-green colour, and does not possess a title of the beauty for which the same family is remarkable in its present condition.

When you undertake to pair your birds, wishing to produce young ones of a regular and uniform colour, you must be careful not to place those of the same shade together. Should you neglect this precaution, your birds will be less finely marked, for while the colour of the young reared from those of a mealy hue, will be a dusky, dirty white, that of birds raised from a fine *jonque* or deep yellow male, with a *mealy* or pale female, will be of a deep straw colour, as the young in every instance follow more the tint of the father than of the mother-bird. This rule likewise occurs with all the other varieties, and great care should always be taken in the disposition of the old birds; provided

you wish to secure young of a peculiar and beautiful shade.

When you desire to breed “mottled, or marked” and “splashed birds,” the best couples are formed by a regular shaped green, or handsomely marked male, and a bright yellow or *jonque* hen. The young of these form a complete union between the different shades of the parents, and are frequently the most beautiful of varieties. Should the production of entirely green birds suit your taste, the parents should be entirely green; or if the male be of a very dark shade, it may be associated with a brilliant yellow, or a dark mealy hen, bred from a former admixture of the same varieties. This association produces the rare and extremely favourite sort known under the appellation of “Cinnamon or Filmuth-birds.” When your wish is for full coloured birds, without the slightest mark, a large and finely formed mealy hen should be placed with a deep coloured *jonque* cock. Should you prefer

a very deep yellow, your parent birds must be two close feathered yellow ones, of the largest size and strength, as if they be not, the young, though of the richest colour, will be small and weak. This association, however, produces the finest coloured birds of all the varieties.

In breeding "top-knot" birds, the male only should have the crest, for were it worn by both, the young raised would be of that odious character known to dealers by the quaint title of "bald-heads."

SECT. IV.—*On the materials for building and the best nests to be procured.*

In the selection of materials for nests, the greatest care should be observed in regard to their cleanliness; for on that requisite depends entirely the health and vigour of the young. Many articles are given to the Canary for the purpose of building, but nothing answers the purpose so well as Cow's or Deer's hair. This

should be well washed, to free it from dust or insects of any description, and then carefully dried in the sun. The material may be preserved after the first use, and on again being washed and dried, will answer equally as well for succeeding nests, during the season.

The boxes, in which the birds are to build, should be composed of basket or wicker-work, with wire-work bottoms. This allows any particles of dust which may collect to fall through; and it prevents the breeding of those small red-mites, who prey upon, and in a very short time generally destroy, the young birds.

In preparing the breeding-cage the bottom should be covered with fine red or silver sand, the former is the most preferable, or gravel, well dried, and laid to a considerable depth along the whole floor. This little precaution will often save the life of a most valuable bird, which the hen, in flying from the nest, might accidentally pull after her, and which, if it fell

on the hard board, would certainly be killed.

It is better, in placing your birds in the cage at first, to give them but one breeding-box, as they are frequently puzzled to make a choice, and carry the materials for building from one to the other; a circumstance which is always a loss of time, and a disappointment to the breeder. When the first nest is finished, and the hen commences sitting, the other box may be inserted; although I think it would be advisable to defer it until after the young are hatched, and indeed recommend the making of the nest by the raiser himself for the second brood, as it preserves the birds from unnecessary fatigue, and suffers them to commence operations much sooner. The shape should approach as nearly as possible to that of the one made by the Canaries themselves; though that is of little consequence, as if it be not agreeable, they will soon alter it to suit their taste.

SECT. V.—*Of the most proper food for, and directions for feeding Canaries in the breeding season.*

The next step for the bird fancier to observe, is to obtain proper food for the old birds, while engaged in the sustenance of their callow young. As I before remarked, the nearest approach to a state of nature will be productive of the most beneficial results. The following directions must be closely observed. Take an egg and boil it very hard, then grate it through a coarse grater, such a one as is used for the purpose of preparing horse-radish (and which must be washed very clean before using it) will best answer the object; then take a small piece of wheaten bread, baked the day before, about the same size as the egg, and grate it in the same manner; add to this a table-spoonful of fresh Indian meal and mix the whole very closely together, making it

finer with the hand; after which process pass it through the grater two or three times. It may then be given to the birds.

As bread and butter, or even Turkey, is an excellent food to the human species in its place, so is this to the Canary; but as were we confined to the most delicious articles in existence as a daily food, we should soon become cloyed or disgusted, and desire a change—so is it with the birds. Take every two or three days a nice piece of clean, stale, wheaten bread, without its crust, which has been soaked in water, squeeze out all the moisture, and pour over the whole a little fresh milk. Of this give a small portion, a table-spoonful at a time, to your feathered charge. They should also have given to them, whenever they can be obtained, fresh cabbage-leaves, which are the most useful and nutritious thing they can eat, at least two or three times a-day; and beside this, fresh chick-weed or salad, when in season.

It is a frequent circumstance with persons commencing the rearing of Canaries, without fully understanding the necessary rules to be observed in their management, to meet so many crosses and such frequent, and, as they imagine, causeless disappointments, to yield their attempts in utter hopelessness, attributing faults to the birds, and blaming dealers for the failure which results alone from their own negligence or inexperience.

The principal reason for the loss of young birds, are their either being fed too much, or too little, or at irregular times, and without paying the proper attention whether the food given is, or is not, in season. For an example, chick-weed or salad, when fully matured, are excellent articles; but, if given too early in the spring, they become of a poisonous nature, and frequently cause the destruction of a whole aviary. These should not be given before the last of May, when their cold

and acrid juices are rendered innocuous, by the then constant heat of the sun.

Whenever your young birds are fully able to feed and take care of themselves, which circumstance may readily be discovered by the want of attention on the part of the parents, or the refusal of the young to be so nourished any longer, they may be taken from the breeding-cage and placed off in another receptacle. Their proper food, which should be regularly given them, is a chopped or grated egg, with bread and Indian-meal, with the addition of about $\frac{1}{8}$ oz. of maw, and some ground or bruised rape-seed. When they arrive at the age of six or seven weeks, and their bill becomes hard, they will be able to crack hard seed, which may, however, be kept in their cage before that time arrives. They should then have all the varieties, viz. rape, canary, yellow and hemp-seeds, but well mixed together, given to them, taking at the same time the greatest care that fresh seed be placed in

their boxes at least every other day. The hemp-seed should always be bruised. It is frequently a practice with some persons, to feed their Canaries entirely on rape-seed, under the foolish delusion of its producing length of life. This ridiculous mode of sustenance invariably causes them to become so thin and weak that the first, and in many cases what would only be a slight illness, easily sweeps them off; and most particularly during the moulting season. Another evil, which it is difficult to guard against, is, when you place your old birds in the cage to breed and give them soft food, they sometimes gorge themselves to such a degree as to swell, and die off very rapidly. This soft food is not entirely necessary for them, nor should it be given to them without anything else. They should always have, when breeding, their seed-box well supplied with canary, hemp and rape, and now and then a little lettuce-seed, which acts upon them medicinally, and purges them from

all the foul humours which may have generated in their delicate systems during the long and arduous winter season.

The breeding, gentle reader, being by far the most critical and dangerous portion in the life of the Canary, and requiring the most careful and judicious and difficult management, deserves from me the most particular and lucid directions.

The hen sits about thirteen, but most generally fourteen and sometimes even fifteen days. The time, however, depends wholly upon the season, and the state of the out-door atmosphere at that interesting period; in clear, fine and warm weather, the young are much sooner produced than if the air be cold, raw and unpleasant. Two days before the young are hatched, it becomes highly necessary to clean the perches of the cage thoroughly, fill the box with fresh mixed seed and the fountain or cup with new water, in order that the old birds may not be approached or disturbed at that critical juncture. The

soft mixture, before recommended, must now be given to them regularly three times a day, and also the mixed bird-seed every morning, with the addition of a little chick-weed, or cabbage or lettuce leaves. The former must be thoroughly cleaned from any dirt which may adhere to it, and from the large rank leaves, which are always indigestible, coarse, and too often very injurious. In the months of July and August, the birds may be given ripe plantain or salad leaves, feeding them always about six o'clock in the morning, twelve at noon, and finally five in the afternoon. Should you make the hours of feeding an hour later or earlier it will make no material difference, provided the same course on each and every succeeding day is strictly observed. *The great requisite is regularity.*

During the hot and enervating summer months, they require more particular, and in fact, almost constant attention; the soft food which is put in the cage in the morn-

ing, frequently turning sour before they are fed the second time. The remains should, however, always be taken away and replaced with fresh food of the same kind at each succeeding feed. The chick-weed, lettuce or cabbage also becomes wilted or withered, and is thus rendered unfit for use. Should the old ones be suffered to feed their young on this decayed and nauseous substance, the growth of the chicks will be delayed, and they, instead of becoming regular, straight, taper and strong birds, will be weak, large bellied, and never worth half the price or esteem they would otherwise obtain. They should also have at this season, lettuce and wild plantain-seed, when it can be obtained, upon the medicinal qualities of which, I have before commented.

You must also carefully note the sort of food the old birds most prefer, and then allow them a greater portion of that peculiar kind; for the less the young are fed on the soft and green food the better, as

they advance in growth the faster, which is finer for their health and more suited to ensure their future worth. Because from this food solely arises the surfeit or swelling I have just described, and which may readily be prevented by adhering to the above simple rules. A piece of coarse stick-liquorice should occasionally be placed in their water founts; this at the same time giving a pleasant flavour to the water, and acting as an alterative on the systems of the birds.

During the continuance of warm weather a pan of water should be placed in their cages once every day, that the birds may bathe and wash; an amusement of which they are extremely fond, and which at the same time greatly refreshes them. Fresh water should also, during the hot months, be put in their fountains two or three times a day; as they drink oftener at that season than at any other. In cold weather once a day will suffice.

SECT. VI.—*Directions for making the German Paste, and for rearing the young by hand.*

Should you desire, either for the purpose of strengthening your old birds or to gain time in the short season of breeding, to bring up your young birds by hand, it will be first necessary to observe whether they are of sufficient age to be removed from the parental care; since they will, in case the attempt be made at too early a season, pine away and most probably die. The last, however, seldom happens. But on the reverse, they must not be left too long with the old ones, as they then become perverse, obstinate and sullen, and also extremely difficult to feed. The time of removal must be left entirely to the discretion of the fancier, though I would recommend it to be done when the birds are from twelve to fifteen days old. Should you succeed, as with common

attention you will, your young ones will be rendered remarkably docile and affectionate.

The birds that you intend to rear in this manner should be well fledged or feathered, and when taken from the tender protection of the mother, should be placed in a rather dark and secluded situation, (which treatment has the effect of rendering the subject of it forgetful of the old ones,) and kept in a warm box, lined with cotton, or some substance of a like nature.

There are some exceptions to this rule, which occasionally occur; as when from the heavy task of breeding, the hen is sometimes taken sick. Then it behoves the fancier immediately to remove the young, as she will be utterly unable to attend to them and they fall ill and die. Consequently, it becomes necessary to bring them up by hand, unless you may have another hen under whom they can be placed. It also frequently happens that a hen is so careless of her young, and

feeds them so seldom, that unless they be taken from her, they will soon perish from neglect and want of food.

When this happens, the young must be taken away immediately, or in a short time they will become past recovery. The hen also often forsakes the young when eight or ten days old, or frequently abuses them by plucking their downy young feathers from them to line another nest; even when she has every thing which is proper for that purpose around her. Whenever this fact is discovered, the young must be removed and reared at once by hand, or they will soon become victims to her savage conduct. But unless there is some such occasion, they should always be left with the parents until the time before mentioned.

When you have concluded to remove them, the following composition, entitled "German Paste," must be made for and given to them, as hereafter stated. When carefully made and the directions for its

keeping observed, it will continue fit for use at least two weeks.

Recipe for making "German Paste."

"In a large mortar, or on an even table, you must bruise, with a rolling-pin, a pint or quart of rape, in such a manner that you may blow the chaff away; to this bruised seed add a piece of bread, reducing them to powder; mix these together, and put them in an oak box, which should be kept from the sun. You may give them a tea-spoonful of this powder, with the addition of a little hard yolk of egg, and a few drops of water; and thus you will have prepared in a few minutes excellent food for your young birds. This powder must not be kept longer than twenty days, as it then becomes unfit for use, the rape-seed turning sour, so that when water is put to it, it smells like mustard."

At the expiration of two weeks, should any of the powder above mentioned be

left, it may be given to the old birds *dry*, as it is then equally nutritious, or more so than the unshelled seed, and cannot in any wise do them injury. I myself prefer **m**aking a small quantity of this paste, every day, since I find the young grow more rapidly under such treatment. During the first three or four days after they are taken from the care of the parent birds, they should be fed on stale sponge-cake, rubbed to powder, with the addition of the hard-boiled white of an egg. The yolk should not now be given to them, as it is too heating, and can only do injury. Add a little water, which will make this up into a thick paste; not too much, for the composition will then be too liquid and digest so rapidly as to be of very little use to the bird.

When your young birds get to be three or four days old, and are acquiring strength and vigour, a small quantity of rape-seed, over which boiling water has been poured,

may be added to the composition already described. The seed need not be bruised, as they are then capable of digesting them. A sweet almond or two, chopped fine, with a small proportion of chick-weed seed, may occasionally be given to them. The latter is very requisite for them, when the weather is hot and dry, at least twice a day. Should you observe strictly this prescribed mode of feeding, the certainty of your birds thriving is so great, that it will be impossible to lose one in fifty.

When your young birds first commence feeding themselves, should any of them fall ill, they must be treated according to the following directions. Take three table-spoonsful of hemp-seed, first carefully washed in cold water, bruise it in a mortar, immediately placing it in fresh cold water a second time, from which take it again and place it in a fragment of clean linen, then squeeze the entire juice of the contents into the last used water through the cloth. This forms a draught called by fanciers

“milk of hemp-seed;” which is extremely strengthening and nourishing to young birds. The water fount should always be removed before placing the medicine in the cage.

When you bring up birds by hand, they require frequent feeding, and should be attended to every two hours at farthest. To ensure complete and permanent success, there is no other thing so absolutely necessary as regularity, by which I mean the observing the utmost strictness in keeping to the same hours of feeding every day; these hours being as frequent as possible. They should be fed with a small piece of sharpened wood, and at the time of feeding, allowed as much as they will eat, which is generally four or five mouthfuls. It will be easy to perceive when they are fully satisfied, as they then refuse to open their mouths, at which time the operation should cease, as were the feeder to force them to swallow more, it would have the effect not only of dis-

tending their craws, which would make them unhandsome birds hereafter, but likewise give them a disease called the "surfeit," which arises in consequence of a weakness of their digestive powers at that early period of their lives. This may too often prove fatal. When they get to be three weeks or a month old, you may discontinue feeding in the above manner, for they will then be able to attend to themselves; but this must be done for at least the time stated. The young birds should at first be put in a cage without perches; for if not, they will be apt to strain, or otherwise injure themselves, from an ambitious peculiarity belonging to all the feathered tribe—the desire to reach an elevated position. At this time I would recommend the fancier to place a little rape and canary-seed in the cage; as the birds cannot too soon learn to feed on those articles, nor in fact commence to feed at all; but the seeds should be scalded

previous, or else the outer shells would be difficult for their tender bills to break.

When you see that they have gained sufficient strength, but not before, you may gradually remove the soft food entirely from them, and leave them nothing at last but rape, yellow, millet and canary-seed. They should likewise have placed in their boxes or founts, but only occasionally, a small portion of hemp-seed, bruised with a roller, which is nutritious at all times if given sparingly, but especially the best for them in the winter season.

It has long been, and still continues a matter of contention among professional bird-fanciers—whether birds brought up by hand, or those reared from the nest, are the strongest and best songsters? Some assert the former, predicated their position on the extraordinary attention they receive from the rearer; while others insist that those raised by the birds are the most preferable. My own opinion is

in favour of the hand-raised birds, which not only receive more care, and consequently should be the most vigorous, but they are likewise rendered far more docile and affectionate by the operation. Besides, it often occurs that young birds solely attended by the parents, should the old ones fall sick during the time of breeding, which is a frequent occurrence, become afflicted with a kind of consumption, analogous to that which is common to the human species. The parents, likewise, frequently have five or six young birds in one nest under their care, and being severely fatigued in providing and carrying food for so many, often neglect and sometimes even forsake them. Of course, even in the former instance, the young become feeble and very often die. It also becomes a matter of great relief to the adults when the birds are taken from them at ten or twelve days old, and they live much longer than when they have the whole task of rearing them themselves.

Besides, it is a matter of greater profit to the breeder, since the parents the sooner gather strength, and are capable of raising a greater number of birds in a season. The young, as I before said, likewise become more familiar, and are far less apt to die during the time of moulting.

The quantity of birds gained by this treatment is, on the average, at the least one more brood of young to every pair of adults; and these can, without fatiguing or doing themselves the slightest injury, raise four and sometimes even five nests in one summer; the next season being as fully able and in as good a position to breed, as they were at the commencement of the one previous.

Should a frosty day or two occur when the young are first hatched, the warmth of the apartment in which they are situated must be increased, to prevent any fatal results; and should there be any prospect of a long continuance of cold weather, the pairs that have not then laid should be

withdrawn from the breeding cages. This last should only be done when it promises to be very severe.

The first and second nests are always the best, solely for the reason of their being better attended to and fed by the parents than any subsequent broods, and perforce must be the strongest and most vigorous birds. These first broods have also the moult occurring during more congenial months, at the latest in June or July, while the later-produced birds do so during the generally cold and raw seasons of October and November. Young birds may be moulted singly, which some prefer, or in a fly, (large cage,) or an airy, warm room. If in a cage, not more than ten or at the outside twelve birds should be placed together, which number may be associated without the slightest injury, which answers nearly or equally as well as keeping them separately; for if there be more, disease and death in a heavy degree will certainly be the result.

To those who intend rearing birds, nothing will be found so beneficial as the keeping a book, in which should be carefully noted the number of the cage, when the first egg is laid, the commencement of the hen's sitting, and the time the young should be hatched. Those who observe these rules will never have cause to regret it; as they will be provided for all contingencies, and know when and how soon to commence providing for the coming young ones.

Breeding birds seldom if ever live for a longer period of time than twelve years; while others, who are kept for the sole enjoyment of their song, have been frequently known to attain the age of twenty years and upwards.

SECT. VII.—*On the distinguishing characteristics of the sexes in Canaries.*

The readiest, though till now almost unknown method of discovering whether

a bird is a male or a female, is by taking it in your hand, holding it gently, and then blowing apart the feathers on the abdomen. In the male, the lower portion of the body gradually tapers off toward the tail, and is slender, neat and close feathered; while the breast-bone is larger and more pointed than in the female, in whom that portion is rather the reverse, the distance from the breast-bone to the tail greater, and the whole appearance of the abdomen fuller and more rounded. With a little practice, and a comparison of the different sexes, the fancier will be enabled to judge of a bird's gender at all seasons, and will not fail, so certain is the system, once in a hundred instances. This is a new method, now for the first time published.

The older and more common plan of discovering the sexes, is by the colours of the birds. The male always being of a richer and brighter hue under the throat, and wearing a streak of brilliant yellow

over the eye. His head is likewise larger, wider and much longer than the female's, and he has always a greater brilliancy of plumage. His legs are thicker and stronger, and his feet and claws are of larger proportions.

Some fanciers only distinguish them when they commence to sing, or rather warble; this all the young males, or a majority of them, generally do when they first commence to peck hard seed, which happens at the age of a month; but when they have passed their first moult they strike their notes with considerable precision and clearness. They should then, to prevent mistakes, be separated, the males placed in one cage and the females in another, as the sexes become known. The males are also much sprightlier in action, quicker and more agile in their motions, and always more taper, graceful and slender in proportions than the female.

To test the difference of appearance between the male and female, place two

mealy birds, of whose sexes you are aware, in a cage together; you will then see the variation in colour, form and figure; and may readily perceive and understand the characteristics of each. Some fanciers pretend to tell the sexes by the brightness of the colour on the saddle of the bird and on the shoulders of the wings: now all of these rules may be observed in connection with each other, but the first rule that we have given, is, by far, the most certain.

The young fancier will now be easily able to select his birds, as the remarks before mentioned will apply in all cases; but if he depends wholly upon colour in making his selection, he may, in some few instances, be liable to mistake, as it sometimes occurs that the male and female so closely resemble each other in outer appearance and plumage, as to require an old and experienced judge to detect the difference.

SECT. VIII.—*On the teaching Canaries an artificial system of song.*

Among the various songsters of the feathered tribe, none is so much a favourite, nor so generally esteemed for the sweetness, regularity and power of his song as the Canary-bird. Among his many excellent qualities, one of the most striking perhaps, is his singular talent of imitation, and his facility in acquiring all the different changes and variations of an air of music; but this only occurs when young, and before his taste is formed for the notes given to him by nature. The system of tuition, which is either by a flageolet, or most commonly by a *serinette* or bird-organ, is very simple, and will require but little of the fancier's time and attention. By these instruments they will easily learn whole tunes. Among the different methods pursued for this purpose, I would recommend the following as the

most suitable and best calculated to effect the desired end.

In from ten days to two weeks after your bird commences to feed himself, first putting him in a separate cage, remove him from all society of his kind, to some close apartment, where it will be impossible for him to hear the whistle of any other bird. You may do this at an earlier period, if you hear him make any attempts at his natural song. His cage should then be covered with a thin linen cloth, for a week to ten days, before you commence operations, in order to make him as solitary and as tame as possible. The flageolet or the bird-organ may now be used. Neither of these instruments must be too shrill or harsh; as the bird will invariably follow in the same tone, which will cause in him so great an exertion of the lungs, that death will in all probability be induced.

When fifteen days have elapsed, it will become necessary to substitute a piece of

thick red or green flannel, for the thin linen cloth, with the former of which he must remain covered until he is fully perfect in the air that you are labouring to teach him. The best time of feeding him during this period, is at night; since then he will not become alarmed, or have his mind diverted from the tune which you may wish to play to him, during the following day.

Some fanciers endeavour to learn their little favourites a number of airs; but it is by far the best system to teach them only one; for however talented the birds may be, they will be apt to confound the different tunes, which would be a great disappointment. The time of learning depends entirely upon the calibre of the bird; a sprightly, active one generally becoming perfect in his lesson in two or three months, while others are sometimes as long as six months. In a task of this kind, the fancier should never be discouraged; as if he observes the rules laid

down at first he is sure of ultimate success. Patience is the best requisite, the observance of which will produce for the owner, a valuable, interesting and curious bird.

I before remarked that the organ or flageolet should be soft and mellow in its tune, for were it harsh, independent of the danger to the lungs of the bird, it has in my opinion a greater evil, since the bird always closely imitates even the faults of the instrument. The time for giving the lessons should be thus divided: two lessons in the morning as soon as you rise, one or two at different hours of the day, and two at a late hour in the afternoon, which last, with the morning lessons, are always most profitable to the bird.

At each lesson it will be necessary to repeat the same tune several times, playing it slowly and always entirely through, so that the student may be enabled to catch every note. The birds best adapted for this purpose, as it requires some

strength to enable them to pass through its apparent severity, are the mealy, splashed or green Canaries, who are always more powerful than the dark yellows or *jonques*, these being the weakest, although the handsomest of their race. You must never attempt to teach more than one in the same apartment, as they will always, after your departure, practise upon the air they have heard, and are sure to lead each other into a wrong conception of the tune. This is an evil which it is almost impossible, or at least very difficult and troublesome, to rectify.

SECT. IX.—*On the necessary treatment for sullen and savage male-birds.*

It is a frequent occurrence to the bird-fancier who attends largely to the propagation of the Canary, to find in his aviary occasionally some sullen, unsociable and unmanageable cock-birds. These are readily distinguished by their different

behaviour, when in full health, from the rest of the tribe; being thoughtful and even very sad and melancholy in appearance, singing very rarely, and when attempting to sing, having their song short and without any of the natural sweetness of the tribe. When you observe this alteration in any of your young birds, immediately remedy it by placing them in a room, where they will have an opportunity of imitating the manners and melody of old, high spirited and courageous cock-birds of fine song, or else your obstinate bird will be worth nothing. The advantage, however, which he receives, under the tuition of fine birds, is extremely great; as by degrees he acquires the habits, manners and song of the other, until his character at last becomes entirely changed.

If, when you happen to pair a hen with a cock-bird of this hypochondriacal character, she should by any accident become sick and die, your male bird will, in nine

out of ten cases, pine away and follow her, inconsolable for the loss of his mate, whose death will bring back all his former character. It occasionally happens that you will have in your collection, a cock-bird of an extraordinary savage temper, who, upon the introduction of a hen into his cage, will fall upon and immediately kill her. When this happens, the best remedy will be to take a hen a year or two older than the cock, and one of the same age with him, or a year younger, which birds must have been kept together for some time previous, and have become perfectly sociable and familiar with each other. When the season for breeding arrives and you wish to pair your savage, place the hens in a very large breeding-cage, and when they have become perfectly used to it, and regard it as their property, turn him in with them. This will be scarcely done before he will attempt to conquer or kill the hens; but they having room to fly about, will together

soon conquer and reduce him to entire submission. He will then immediately mate with them, and ever after be a sociable and friendly bird. The union will also be productive of much profit to the fancier, as these forced matches always result in the production of a by far greater number of young birds, than those do whose coupling was attended with little or no difficulty.

It sometimes happens that you will have a cock-bird who, as soon as the hen lays, will very unnaturally break and eat the egg, and again another who will, immediately upon their hatching, throw the young from the nest, and then pull and drag them with his bill around the cage until they are dead. In the first instance, the following system will soon terminate his egg-eating propensities, which arise either from a want of such kind of food, or a desire to possess the constant society of the hen. You should take a clear egg, which must be carefully blown and then

filled with mustard; the newly laid egg must then be taken out of the box and the other inserted in its stead. The cock-bird will, on discovering it, immediately attempt to suck it, an attempt which I will warrant he will never dream of again. If you, out of tenderness for him, would prefer a milder course, take him from the hen and put him in a separate cage near her, until she has done laying, which always happens by eight o'clock in the morning; then take her egg from the nest, replacing it with an ivory one. After this the bird may be returned to its old locality.

This separation should be repeated every night, returning him each time when you have removed the egg, until the hen has completed her quantity; but then he must be kept from her until her brood is hatched, and the young able to fly about. This is of course effectual; but the first mode is the most simple and the most certain. Care should be taken of the eggs removed from the bird, and a box

kept expressly for the purpose of retaining them safe. This should have different apartments, if you have more than one pair, each of which should be numbered with the number of the cage to which the eggs belong, and be filled with bran, wool, hair or tow, to prevent them from becoming cracked or broken. It sometimes occurs that you will find a hen, who, upon your removing her eggs, will immediately forsake her nest. When this happens, you will have to run the risk of your cock-bird.

The male Canary, in the course of the breeding season, and when the hen has young ones, will sometimes fall sick. The most proper method is to remove him from the cage, and give him a little repose for a week or ten days; as his illness may probably arise from his being fed upon the rich, soft food intended for the young; such as chopped egg, green meat, &c. &c. After this period, during which he must be fed upon hard seed, you may

replace him in his former situation with the hen; but should he fall sick a second time, he must be again removed, and totally, from the female; as the married life is not congenial to his health, and he will answer better as a song-bird than a breeder. The hen should be treated in nearly the same manner when in the same circumstances, her eggs removed from her, and placed under some other sitting hen to be hatched, or the young ones put under one who has young and can attend to them.

One of the most dangerous accidents to which the hen Canary is liable, is to be what fanciers call "egg-bound." When this happens, she immediately falls off her perch upon her back, and often dies before the fact of her sickness is discovered. The proper treatment is to take her at once from the cage or room, and gently rub the lower part of her abdomen with a little sweet almond or olive oil, which will have the effect of enabling her to dis-

charge her egg by the relaxation caused by the application. The best thing, however, in this case, is prevention, which may easily be done by keeping a large piece of mortar in the cage, at which the hen may peck at all times, and which will always enable her to lay her eggs without any difficulty.

The hen Canary is likewise subject to another disease of the nature of a fever, which arises from her close confinement on her warm nest. The heat of her body is oftentimes so great as to stifle her young ones, especially if the illness attacks her before the young ones are a week old. The best method then is, to take and place them under another hen, if there happens to be one who at that time has nestlings; if not, you will have to run the risk. The hen will then be able to repose herself, which will at once remove the disease. It sometimes occurs that the hen will not sit when she has laid her full complement of eggs; this indisposition to

attend to her maternal duties, frequently arises from the eggs being clear and unproductive, which may easily be found out by holding them up to the light. If they be bad, they may be thrown away as useless; but if good, they may be placed under another, or divided between two hens, to be hatched.

When your Canary happens to break his leg in the cage, which sometimes occurs from the length of his nails or claws catching in some inequality in the perch, he should be put in a small cage without any perches, until it becomes well. The best plan, however, is to examine your birds occasionally, and when you find their claws too long, to cut the tips of them off with a sharp pair of scissors. The perches must also be perfectly smooth, round and strong, and when placed in the back of the cage, should be sharpened down to a fine point, which should be inserted in a hole made by a blunt awl. This will prevent the breeding

of insects around it, who always seek such situations, concealing themselves from observation between the perch and the back, whenever the bar, as it most usually is, is fastened with wire. The hole, however, must never go entirely through the wood. Whenever you have two nests of birds in one cage, or hatched at the same time in a room, some of which are stronger than the others, which generally happens from the first laid eggs producing the first young, place the strong of the one with the strong of the other, and the weak with the weak in a like manner of the other nest. This is a necessary proceeding, otherwise the strong would get all the food from the younger birds, who would consequently perish.

As every breeder is desirous of obtaining the greatest possible number of birds in the course of a season, it would be advisable when you happen to have a strong and vigorous male bird, who is readily told by his loud singing at frequent

intervals during the day, and his constant activity, to associate him with two females. To do this successfully, it will be necessary to have two apartments in your breeding-cage, which can be done by having a division in the middle, with a small door through which the cock-bird can pass, as the several wants of his parties require his assistance. The hens, whenever this system is intended, should always be placed in the same cage together, for sometime before, and gradually accustomed to each other's society, to prevent the possibility of disagreement.

But, by far the most pleasant and agreeable method of breeding birds, as it always occasions less trouble, and is productive of greater enjoyment than cage rearing, is that of taking a small room, which should either open on the south or east, and in which should be placed six handsome strong *jonque*, or dark yellow male birds, with double the number of females; a system of raising young which

is nearly always successful. The room should have a table in the centre, well supplied with deer's or cow's hair, moss and wool, or tow, for the making of nests, the seeds and food of different kinds most suitable at that season, and water in fountains and pans, the first for drinking, the last for bathing. The floor should be entirely covered with fine red gravel or coarse sand, and neat round perches be run from one side of the room to another, or the limbs of a dead tree placed in various positions for them to perch upon. They should also have fastened in some part of the room, where it will be easy of access, pieces of the bones of the "Osepia or Cuttle-fish;" a thing which Canaries should *never be without* at any season of the year, much less in the breeding season. This can be obtained constantly at the various seed-warehouses of the city, or in country towns at the various apothecary shops. The window of the room should be fitted with a neat

wire-work bow on the outside, with perches for the birds to sit, for the purpose of sunning and airing themselves, and the window-sash raised whenever the weather is warm, clear and fine. The nest boxes, in which baskets should be inserted, should be hung up in various parts of the room against the wall, in various situations, so that the birds may make choice for themselves, and should be one in number for every female bird in the apartment, to enable the birds to select those which they deem most preferable for occupation.

SECT. X.—*General remarks upon breeding birds.*

The number of nests made by the Canary-bird in a season, depends almost entirely upon the strength and character of the male and female, and on the modes pursued by the fancier. Some make and rear

but two, while others build three or four, and frequently, under judicious management, as many as six in a single spring and summer, producing from four to six eggs in each nest. When the fancier is possessed of a strong stock of birds, by careful feeding and close attention, he will readily render them almost beyond price, as each pair will, in such case, produce from twenty to thirty, and sometimes even thirty-five eggs, in the course of the breeding months.

The best mode of ascertaining the goodness of eggs, is, after the hen has set for a week, to take and place them betwixt your eye and the light. Those which are fit to be continued under the hen will appear thick, opaque and muddled, while the bad will be perfectly translucent. The latter may then be thrown away, and the good either given to another hen, or restored, with the addition from another nest of the wanting number, to their former situation. This will be found the

most certain method of testing the character of eggs.

When your hen has ceased laying every morning, examine the nest and take out the egg, replacing it with one made of ivory; but as soon as she has laid her full quantity, which is generally five or six, take away the ivory egg and return the whole of her eggs to their former situation. The hen will then commence sitting, and in due time hatch all the young together; which, were the eggs left in the nest, she would not do except at intervals of several days; and then the first hatched birds would probably be stifled to death by the mother's continuing on the nest to hatch the rest.

The hen always lays before eight o'clock in the morning. If she be not regular in this process, she is certain to fall sick and require the attention given to egg-bound birds, [see p. 71,] which she should immediately have, to prevent fatal consequences. Whenever you remove eggs from the

nest, be careful not to fracture them, which is frequently done by the very fear of doing so, in the persons attending to them, who let them fall and break from their not holding them in a careful manner. The best way of taking them from the nest, is to seize each with the thumb and fore-finger, holding it tightly and without any tremor, as in that case you are certain to fracture them, or with a thin silver-spoon, and then place them in the box before mentioned.

A strange contrariety of opinion is expressed by the different professional bird-fanciers upon the following points. Whether a hen Canary experiences a greater portion of fatigue in rearing and feeding her young until they are able to fly; or in being kept for the purpose of constant laying, and having her eggs hatched and attended to by different birds? Some hastily assert that the laying hen becomes the weakest, while others more sagely declare that the bird who has the

constant care of her eggs and young, for so long a period of time, becomes the most enfeebled. My own opinion, founded on long experience, is decidedly in favour of the latter conclusion, for which I give the following reasons. The bird in the first place has to lay her full complement of eggs, on which she must set from fourteen to fifteen days, during which time she is deprived of exercise and often very scantily fed by the male; and again, when the young are produced, she has the constant labour of providing for them and herself, for at least three, and sometimes four, weeks more. She is then consequently more injured than the other hen, who has none of this fatigue, and is enabled to fly about and retain her strength, for the sole and comparatively trifling labour of laying. When your hen is, as I before remarked, scantily fed by the male, or he refuses, or neglects to attend to her and the young, you will see her leave her nest and beat him for his unhusband-like behaviour, and

then proceed, compelling him to assist, to gather the best and most nourishing food for her neglected offspring.

It is always a matter of kindness when your bird has hatched her first nest, and wishes to go to laying again, to make her second nest for her yourself; she will then, if you allow her a little extra moss and hair, without fatiguing herself, finish it to her liking. After she has again done laying, allow her to set on her eggs for six or seven days, all that are then translucent may be thrown away as worthless, and replaced with others of the same age from another nest; while those of a dark, heavy colour should be retained, or put in the nest of another hen to be hatched and brought up. This last should always be done when your hen is a strong and favourite bird. After this examination and separation, the hen should be suffered to enjoy a few days repose in a separate cage. When you consider that she has fully rested herself, she may be returned

to her former situation and given another nest, which must likewise be made for her by yourself; and when she has again laid her proportion and has sat upon them for a week, you may take them away and replace them with the eggs of some other hen within a day or two of hatching. These young ones will then be immediately produced, and should be fed by her until they are fourteen days old, and then be taken from her and brought up by hand. The hen should then again be rested, and for a little longer time than before, as she will be the stronger for it in the end.

After this last operation, your hen may have a third nest given her, observing at the same time the former rule, which you may allow her to keep herself, hatching out her own eggs and rearing the young until they are able to fly; or you may follow the last mentioned system a second time, and still continue her on breeding; but if you are satisfied with the quantity

of young ones she has given you, you may remove her and her mate into a small cage, where they can repose themselves thoroughly and gain a sufficiency of strength to enable them to pass through the moulting season safely. Or you may again allow them to rear another nest of birds themselves, which they will readily do, and then they may be finally separated.

These methods are calculated in nowise to injure the birds, but rather the reverse; and it is a matter of well authenticated fact, that a pair of birds treated in this manner, will live longer and do more service to their owner, than a pair who have been allowed to go on regularly. These last will often, if over fatigued in the breeding, die as soon as the moulting season has commenced.

SECT. XI.—*On the most prevalent diseases which attack Canaries, and the modes of prevention and cure.*

In the observance of the various sorts of diseases to which the Canary-bird is subject, the fancier can only have recourse to outward signs, and thus judge of the affection within. These are never very difficult to discover, as the Canaries invariably display, in the coming on of sickness, strong and easily-noted symptoms. We shall go on, however, and describe the different kinds, with their appropriate treatment.

SURFEIT. This is a dangerous disease, nearly always occurring in young birds, when from the age of a month to six weeks, and is caused by their being fed almost entirely by the parents on the rich food partially recommended for the breeding season. The symptoms of the affection are easily discerned. The abdomen of the patient becomes frightfully enlarged,

and of a dark, sanguineous hue; the veins swell and appear distended with blood, presenting a varicose appearance; while the bowels of the affected bird partially protrude, forming complete *prolapsus ani*. When your bird is in this condition, which you will first notice by his sitting on his perch, or the ground, with his feathers swelled out, take him up for examination, which may easily be done, by blowing apart with your mouth the feathers from his stomach. If he be diseased, immediately place a small piece of alum in his water-fount, replacing his water every day on the same piece of alum for at least a whole week; if the alum be dissolved entirely in the meantime, replace it by another fragment. This will frequently be found thoroughly efficacious. Another apparently very simple though excellent remedy, is to place a piece of rusty iron in the fount of the bird. Another mode is to empty the water pan of the sick bird during the night, and refill it in the morn-

ing with water, in which some common salt has been placed. As soon as the bird has drank of the contents several times, you may again give him fresh water. If these prescriptions succeed, which they generally do, if given in time, your bird will soon be on the wing again; if not, he will die.

Other modes than these are, however, practised by different fanciers; all of which we append for their excellence.

Take a little wheaten bread and boil it in milk, with the same proportion of canary-seed. When boiled place it in the bottom of the bird-cage every day for a week, first removing his seed food the night before, at mid-day taking it away, and returning him his seed-box.

Another mode is frequently practised by good fanciers, which is generally attended with the most beneficial results. Whenever you perceive your bird to be attacked with the disease, and the swelling is apparent to the eye, heat a little milk

lukewarm and hold him in it until the pores absorb a portion, which occupies six or eight minutes. Then bathe him in spring or pump-water of the same temperature as the milk; after doing which, rub him gently with a piece of fine muslin before the fire, or warm him in the sun, if it be shining in your apartment, till he is perfectly dry. You may then put him back in his cage and give him a little lettuce-seed, and let him repose himself for twenty-four hours, the next day pursuing the same system; and so continue for two or three days, allowing him to rest after each operation a day, that the means pursued may have a good effect. This system, though apparently troublesome, if pursued for the given time, will have the effect in a few days of restoring your bird to all his former health and vigour.

MOULTING. This is, of all others, the most critical and dangerous period in the lives of Canaries, and produces a greater fatality among them than any known dis-

ease. It is a more fearful scourge to them than the plague or Asiatic cholera has ever been to mortals; and if they are the subjects of careless treatment, or possess injudicious tenders as their owners, may justly be accounted the bane of their tribe. Even when under the best of care, many of them die from the effects, who seem perfectly able, from strength of constitution, to resist its violence. This disease is more or less fatal according to the season. If the weather be damp and cold during and at the coming of autumn, your birds will die off rapidly; but if the weather be warm and mild you will lose but few. The time at which young birds, to whom it is most dangerous, moult, commences when they arrive at the age of six weeks, and continues for a couple of months. The symptoms of its approach may readily be seen. The young birds become sad and sleepy in appearance, and set upon their perches, or the bottoms of their cages, with their heads under their wings,

for the greater portion of the day, while the floors of their cages are covered over with small pin-feathers, which they shed during all the time, until the new ones appear. The young ones of the Canary never lose their wing or tail-feathers until the second year, which seems a wise ordination of Providence, for were they to do so, scarcely one in ten would survive. They likewise eat very sparingly, and only of that description of food which they most prefer, which should always be supplied to them.

Great care must be taken as cold weather advances, to give them the richest kinds of food in addition to their usual allowance, such as hemp-seed and sponge-cake, with a lump of loaf-sugar for them to peck at occasionally. One of the most deadly things that can happen to the Canary, is to be placed at this season in a cold place, or where a draught can reach him. This is too frequently done, although it will certainly cause his death.

He should be kept in the warmest room, where no air from without can reach him, and be put every day in the sun, which should shine on him through the glass. Should the moult prove uncommonly bad, take a piece of sponge-cake and soak it in white or sherry wine, the last is the best, and give it to him, as it will reinvigorate, and do him a great deal of service. After this, and every day or two, so long as he seems droopy, blow a little sherry wine over his feathers, and then place him as before in the sun, or set him nigh the fire. A lump of refined liquorice may also be thrown in his water, with occasionally a little saffron.

Be careful that your birds, during this time, are kept supplied with coarse gravel, which is now doubly beneficial to them, and a great assistance in casting their feathers.

PIP, OR SWELLING ON THE RUMP. This is another dangerous disease, that attacks the Canary not only when young but at

all stages of his life. It is a species of reddish pip or bile, which appears upon the rump of the bird. When the bile appears small, the birds had better be fed on cooling seeds, as lettuce and rape, and suffered to break the sore themselves; but if they appear very heavy and sleepy looking, they require immediate attention. Take the sick bird in your hand, and cut off very carefully and gently the upper half of the bile or swelling. Then press out, as lightly as possible, the white or yellowish matter it may contain, and touch the sore with a little salt, which must be previously moistened in your mouth. This will cause the bile to dry up. Should the salt appear to pain the Canary, on whom you operate, a little moistened brown-sugar should be immediately applied, and it will instantly alleviate the pain caused by the previous application. Should the bile, when you examine it, be not come to a head, a little olive oil should be gently rubbed upon and around it, with a small

feather. This will allay the irritation and inflammation.

SCABS ON THE HEAD. This is a mischievous sickness which occasionally attacks Canaries, for which the best remedy is light and cooling food; such as rape and lettuce-seed, &c. and repose. Time and nature are here the only, as they are everywhere the best, physicians.

RED MITES. Canaries are frequently infested with these dangerous and troublesome insects, the symptoms of whose presence, is the bird's pluming and feathering himself at all hours of the day. The cage, when this is discovered, should be scrubbed out thoroughly, and the shoulders of the perches, and every crack and crevice examined carefully, as the mites always breed in such situations.

DIARRHŒA, OR LOOSENESS. This is a very common sickness with the Canary, which may readily be cured by the gentle application of a little sweet almond or olive oil to their bellies, and being fed

upon cantelope-melon seed, which must be bruised for them, besides the yolk of hard boiled eggs, sponge-cake and a little lightly scalded lettuce.

ASTHMA. Singing birds are frequently asthmatic, or have a strange kind of croaking in the voice. The best remedy for this is sponge-cake, soaked in sherry wine, which removes the difficulty of breathing. A few wild plantain leaves should be inserted in their cage every day, while they are affected with this malady.

PERSPIRATION. This is a disease which only attacks the hen-bird during the commencement of the breeding season, and which may readily be removed by washing her in half a wine-glass of fresh cold water, in which half a tea-spoonful of common salt has been dissolved, and then bathing her in a little lukewarm water, and standing her in the sun, or should the sky be cloudy, before the fire, to dry; when she is thoroughly so, but not before, she may be returned to the breeding-cage.

CANCER. A very fatal disease, very prevalent among Canaries, and seeming to be contagious. The seat of this sickness is either the bill or foot, that becomes much swollen, and if not attended to in the early stage, always destroys the patient. The best method of cure is to keep the cage constantly clean, so that no particles of dust or dirt may adhere to the schirrous part, and to bathe it frequently with sweet almond or olive oil, and wash it with lukewarm milk.

COSTIVENESS. When Canaries are costive and require purging, it may easily be known by the want of appetite they display, and by their throwing their seed over the cage, without eating any. The best remedy is to give them a piece of lettuce-leaf, with chickweed and rape-seed for two or three days, and place a little sugar-candy in their water-founts.

WANT OF APPETITE. This is a very common thing with the Canary, after sickness, during breeding or after the

termination of the moulting season. The best cure is to take a handful of millet, canary, rape, yellow and a little hemp-seed, mixed with the same quantity of moistened garden loam, and knead them well together;—then drying it, and cutting it up into small pieces, which must be given to the bird. This medicine may be laid away after making; since it will be perfectly good for a great length of time.

BROKEN LIMBS. When a bird meets with an accident of this sort, the best mode of treatment is to place him or her in a cage without perches, with a little soft hay, and his seed-box and water-fount upon the floor of the cage, which should be covered round with a cloth, to prevent him from fluttering about. Nature will then do its work, and a few days will see your little favourite as strong as before the accident.

DECLINE. It sometimes happens that a hen Canary who is kept from breeding, will fall sick and die without any apparent

cause, or without exhibiting any symptoms of disease. This arises because they are denied the society of the male bird.

We have now gone through the various diseases to which Canaries are subject, and shall close the section by recommending the amateur or professional fancier, who breeds and keeps a number of birds, to keep a separate or hospital cage for those who happen to be taken sick. This should be made of wood, with dark sides,—with a wicker and not a wire front, and covered inside with thick flannel at the sides, top and bottom, to keep the sick as warm as possible. One reason for this is, that most diseases which attack the Canary, are contagious, and if the sick be kept in the same cage or apartment with healthy birds, they may cause the loss of an entire collection. Besides, they require different food and more gentle treatment than those in a state of health.

SECT. XII.—*On the various methods of breeding “mule-birds,” and their general management.*

I have now arrived at the closing section of that portion of my work devoted to the Canary-bird; which I shall conclude with a short dissertation on the breeding and management of “mule-birds.”

Mules are reared from hen Canaries, paired with birds of different kinds, as the Chaffinch, English Linnet, Green-finch; but most commonly with the English Gold-finch; which last association produces the finest coloured birds and the best singers. They may be raised *vice versa*, by pairing the females of any of these birds with the male Canary. In this country fine mules might be raised by coupling the males or females of some of our choicest native birds, with the same sexes of the Canary. The varieties most adapted to this purpose, are the “Song-

sparrow," *Fringilla melodia*; "American Gold-finch, or Thistle-bird," *F. tristis*; "Purple-finch, or American Linnet," *F. purpurea*; "Indigo-bird, Blue Tit, or Blue Linnet," *F. cyanea*; whose rich azure and indigo plumage, crossed with a bright yellow hen Canary, might produce birds of a magnificent and exquisite character, both as regards feather and song; and last, though not least, the splendidly marked "Painted Bunting, Nonpareil, or *Pape*" of the Southern States, *F. ciris*; which may frequently be obtained of our bird-fanciers, or at the warehouses of our best seed-men. Of each of these more will be said under their respective chapters.

The Gold-finch, however, is the most esteemed in Europe as a breeder of mules, and is the most common, and at the same time most successful cross. The cock-bird of this species should be placed with a richly coloured hen Canary. From these, on account of the rich colours of the mule's plumage, the young birds are

generally very beautiful. The following methods must be observed, to secure the attainment of your object.

When you undertake to pair your birds, take them when young, and bring them up either under a Canary hen or by hand, feeding them during this preparatory stage on a mixture of one-third rape and two-thirds Canary-seed. This food is the best adapted for them during the breeding season, and under its influence they most readily pair. Hemp-seed should never be given to them, as they become greedily fond of it, owing to its extreme oiliness, and it is the most injurious nutriment they could receive.

When the male-bird is a Gold-finch, before you pair him, carefully cut off the extreme tip of his beak with a pair of sharp scissors. Should it bleed, which it may not however, the application of a little moistened brown-sugar will immediately cure the wound. The reason of this proceeding is simple, as it hinders

him from flying at and attacking the female Canary, who is frequently killed upon her first introduction into his cage. It also prevents him from injuring the young birds, during the process of feeding, which he might do, easily, by the sharp point of his bill entering their throats and killing them.

A Gold-finch, before being placed with a Canary, should be two years old; and the same rule should be observed with any of our wild birds, who are always caught by means of the trap-cage. Otherwise, they would not lay the first year in the cage. This circumstance, but few even of our professional bird-fanciers seem acquainted with, which is one reason why many persons are disappointed the first season; and so give up the attempt in disgust; never essaying a second experiment.

When wild birds are intended to be crossed or bred together, they should be placed in a room or cage with Canaries,

that they may the more readily choose their hen from among the number; a thing which otherwise will be frequently of some difficulty. Newly caught birds may easily be tamed, by being hung very low in a frequented apartment, as, in that case, they soon become accustomed to society, and extremely familiar.

It is a general rule in breeding mules, for the dealer to couple the hen-bird of the Canary with the male-bird of the opposite species. This is in fact the most usual system, but some dealers prefer breeding the male Canary with the female Goldfinch or Linnet, asserting at the same time, that the young are handsomer and of finer song. This may be true; for the rule is always in favour of the young bird's resemblance to the father, in plumage and possession of musical abilities. The young, in this latter instance, differ very materially in their personal appearance, for while many are very plain, resembling the wild bird of the opposite

species, others are extremely beautiful and marked with the various colours of the male and female bird; and others are again of a snow-white, being complete albinos. The pied kind and the latter species are the most esteemed, and from their rarity, especially the last, are sold at exorbitant prices. The cross-birds raised from the Linnet, although the plainest in feather, are preferable for song; since they possess, by far, the strongest and most melodious voices. The attempt is frequently made to pair the hen Canary with the English Bull-finch; but this though occasionally succeeding, is always a matter of considerable difficulty; the Bull-finch during the time of coupling, distending his bill and opening his mouth so wide, as to excite the strongest terror in his gentler and weaker companion. To ensure success in the matter, they should be placed together a season in advance, and kept in the same cage until the following spring. Long association will then have

accustomed the Canary to his demeanour, and the desired object will be readily attained.

When it is your wish to breed Goldfinch mules, and you desire to rear those of the finest possible character, you must closely observe the following directions. The cock Canary must be at least two years old, close feathered, of the very deepest yellow, and should never yet have been paired; for if he has been previously coupled with one of his own species, it will be a matter of considerable difficulty to mate him with any other variety; still more with a bird of a different colour and habit. The female Goldfinch should, whenever she can be so obtained, be one raised by hand, or from the nest, or at least been captured a year previous and fully accustomed to feeding on rape and canary-seeds, with scarcely any or no hemp-seed; the last being a food which I before explained to be very injurious.

After they have coupled, and the young

are produced, thistle-seed should be procured and given to the old birds. This is the food they would receive in a state of nature, and is of course best adapted for their nutriment in that of confinement. This may readily be procured on the fields and commons in the neighbourhood of the city.

Your birds before coupling should be treated like Canaries, that is, placed in a small cage, as long before the breeding season as possible, so that they may become fully accustomed to each other's society, previous to the season of pairing. Should you select your birds properly, and closely observe the above directions, you will be certain to obtain males of the most beautiful and varied plumage; combining the different colours of the cock-bird with the softer, delicate tints of the hen, and mingling into an association of hues of the most gorgeous and magnificent description. This brilliancy of colour occurs less frequently in the case of a

male Gold-finch and female Canary, and the young raised are generally plainer and always less valuable.

When the young birds have left the nest, and are able to take care of themselves, it is advisable to place them in the society of older ones, that they may acquire the different changes of song. For this purpose old Canaries are the most preferable, and the trill which the young mules acquire from them, is an important addition to their wild wood-notes. Should your young ones prove to be cock Linnets, they should be removed from the nest-cage whenever they are able to feed themselves, and be placed immediately under old Canaries. This course of education will enable them to sing so loudly and well in six months, as to prevent them from being distinguished by voice from their preceptors^d; except when they, as they will do occasionally, run into their natural notes.

The most dangerous disease to which

the Gold-finch is subject, is called the "epilepsy, or falling sickness." The symptoms of this may easily be discovered. When the bird is seized with the disease, he flies around rapidly, beating his wings violently, and finally falls upon his back. The mode of cure is simple and effectual, if the bird be taken in time. Take a pair of very sharp scissors, and cut off the tips of his hinder claws. Should he bleed, as he probably will, wash his feet at once with a little white-wine, and give him two or three drops of the same liquor upon a piece of loaf-sugar. This treatment is always successful if timely resorted to; but unless it be done instantly the bird will be certainly lost.

Another most excellent mule variety is produced from the association of the cock Averdivine with the female Canary. The young reared by this couple are not very beautiful, but on the reverse rather humble in plumage; yet they are possessed of such exquisite melody of voice, as to fully com-

pensate for their unpretending appearance. They are likewise very familiar and easily tamed; indeed so much so, that they will come at a call, perch on your finger, and give forth their song at the word of command.

CHAPTER III.

DOMINICAN GROSBEAK.—*Fringilla cardinalis*.

The Cardinal Grosbeak of South America, as it is commonly called in this country, though in Brazil known by its proper title, is a native of the whole of Central America, and is as celebrated for its richness of plumage, as it is for the loudness and beauty of its song.

It derives its name from the similarity of its colours to the dress of the order of Dominican monks, who wear a scarlet cap, white frock and light grey cloak and

hood, which are the colours of this bird on the head, belly and back. It is likewise ornamented with a brilliant crest, which is raised and depressed at pleasure. In the cage this bird has all the gracefulness, ease and caprice of habit characterizing the Mocking-bird, with much of its imitative talent; while its voice is equally as loud and striking.

Its food must be the same as that given to our Cardinal Grosbeak; but it must be kept in a warmer situation in the autumn and winter, as it is unable to endure the slightest cold. It requires considerable room in the cage, without which it will thrive less than is desirable.

The price of this bird in this country is from ten to twenty dollars; though it can always be bought in the markets of Monte Video for one dollar. They generally live to about the age of twenty years, though some have been known to exist even to that of twenty-five.

CHAPTER IV.

WHIDAH-BIRD.—*Fringilla whida*.

This singularly plumaged and gracefully formed bird, is a native of the kingdom of Whidah, in Africa, from which it derives its name. Through the solemn colour of the songster and its rather melancholy notes, its appellation is frequently changed into "Widow," by the ignorant fancier, who believes it to be constantly mourning its lost mate. This idea gave birth in us to the slight poem which accompanies this description.

TO THE WHIDAH-BIRD.

Bird of the dark and glancing wing!
Whose home is Afric's burning strand,
With solemn accents sorrowing,
Why mourn'st thou for thy native land?
And why with cadence sad and low,
And look, the heraldry of woe,

Where others sit in merry mood,
Dost thou alone with drooping plume
And flutt'ring wing, in sorrow brood,
And wail so deep thy settled doom?
Poor widowed thing! I pity thee
Thus early mate to misery.

But now thy sylvan song rings out
Above the voice of every mate,
And floats its mellow tones about
In mock'ry of their meaner state;
As if within thy downy breast,
That fount of grief had sunk to rest.
But lower, sadder now it grows,
As though thy grief no smiles could cheer,
And solemnly thy cadence flows
With wailing tone upon mine ear.
And thou dost mourn as one would mourn,
Whom grief had made the most forlorn.

Yet 'tis but seeming, lovely one!
Thy mate is seated by thy side,
And what we deem is grief alone,
Is but the strain of hope and pride.
Like to the Dove's, thy strains of bliss
And love and joy and happiness
Seem ever sad and ever low,
When thou art happiest of heart,

And farthest from the pangs of woe,
That ne'er to life within thee start.
Still strike thy song! The spell is o'er;
What once seemed grief is grief no more.

The habits of the Whidah-finch in a wild state, are similar to those of the rest of its tribe; though, what may be the character of its song in its native woods, is as yet unknown, save from the imperfect descriptions of the African boors. Its rich plumage is its principal attraction, being of a deep black, with the exception of the belly, which is a reddish-cream, and its sides, which are a bright-chestnut. Its chief ornament, however, is its Bird of Paradise-like tail, which falls in a graceful curve. Its song in confinement is low, sweet and thrilling, at times scarcely heard, but at others clear and beautifully distinct from the notes of all other birds.

It may be kept upon canary and other seed, and treated when ill exactly like the

Canary-bird; and must be well supplied with water and gravel, and kept in a very warm room during winter. It requires a very large and high cage.

CHAPTER V.

JAVA SPARROW.—*Fringilla* —.

This prettily marked Grosbeak, so common as a cage-bird in this country, is a native of the East Indies and the Spice Isles, from whence it is brought, with many others of the same species, by vessels in the China trade.

In the cage it is one of the most quarrelsome of birds, and it frequently occurs, that when a half dozen or more of them are kept together, they will fight until the whole, or a greater portion of the combatants, are dead.

Its plumage, for the sake of which only it is kept, is silky and beautiful; but the bird is so well known that it need not be described. Its musical powers generally amount only to the repetition of a single "chuck," which is given whenever the bird is in motion; but we once possessed a specimen whose song had all the sweetness of tone, but none of the variety of the English Bull-finch.

Their food should be "paddy" or rough rice, which they shell before swallowing, or entirely canary-seed. They are very fond of bathing, consequently they should have plenty of water; and they likewise eat immoderate quantities of gravel.

They are susceptible of considerable affection toward their feeders. When sick, they should be treated like the Canary-finch; than whom they are less hardy, requiring to be kept in a warm stove-room during the winter season.

CHAPTER VI.

WHITE-HEADED GROSBEAK.—*Fringilla
leuco-cephala*.

Another imported East Indian variety, of plain, but neat plumage, living in its native land on the rice-fields and among the thickets which line the shores of the large rivers.

Its plumage is of a reddish-brown, excepting the back, which is darker, and the head, which is of a creamy-white. Its bill is white in colour, and as large in proportion to its size, or even larger than that of the Java Sparrow.

Its song is low and short, but harmonious.

It may be kept in the cage on canary-seed alone, or will thrive well on the same treatment as the Canary-bird. It is very familiar.

CHAPTER VII.

AVERDIVINE.—*Fringilla averdivina*.

This singularly beautiful and minute songster, who is the smallest of all our cage-birds, is occasionally brought to our shores in company with the two preceding species, and is highly celebrated for its richness of plumage; and when we consider his minuteness of size, for his astonishing sweetness of song.

His colour is a rich crimson, spotted and mottled with white, resembling closely the before-described markings of the British Starling. His form is graceful, and his actions replete with sprightliness and ease.

In confinement, where he is the most sociable of birds, and may be kept in companionship, the Averdivine may be fed upon canary and millet-seed, and, in the winter season, partially on bruised hemp.

He must also have plenty of water and an abundance of fine gravel to assist his digestion. He will readily breed with the Canary, like which he should be treated, and probably with some of our native birds. He should be kept very warm in the winter season, as he is extremely delicate and sensible to cold.

CHAPTER VIII.

ENGLISH GREY OR BROWN LINNET.—*Fringilla linaria*.

This small, neatly plumaged, and in the spring season, showy Finch, is one of the most favourite of cage-birds in his native country, and is equally esteemed in the same situation here.

His colours are not very striking, and the whole bird presents a rather dumpy

appearance. His back, head and breast are of a reddish-brown, with the lower portion of the belly and vent of a ruddy white. In the spring season the plumage of his breast softens into a rich, rosy-crimson, somewhat similar to, but brighter than the hue of our Purple-finch, to whom in appearance he is closely allied, and his wings and tail are of a dark and handsome brown.

In confinement he is rather impatient, and if kept along with other birds very pugnacious; his song is loud, sweet and harmonious, but apt, from his aptness of imitation, to be spoiled; since he will constantly, when in hearing of other songsters, take up and whistle their notes in preference to his own. The Linnet, therefore, had better be kept apart from society, as one of his sweet wild-wood strains is far more pleasing, from its distinctness and beauty, than the every-day song heard from the throats of a dozen Canaries.

He should be fed and treated like the

American Purple-finch; allowing him plenty of gravel and a sufficiency of water, both in a fount for drinking and a pan for bathing.

His price varies from three to eight dollars.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLISH GREEN-FINCH, OR GREEN LINNET.

—*Fringilla chloris*.

This large and handsome Finch, occasionally seen as a cage-bird in the commercial towns of the United States, is another of the natives of Europe and the British isles. It is here frequently called, in contradistinction to our own and the English Grey or Brown Linnet, [*F. linaria*,] the Green Linnet, though from what reason we are at a loss to discover.

The colour of this Finch, as may be gathered from its name, is green, but of that peculiar character called "Sap" by artists, which is brighter on the throat, breast and belly than it is on the back, where it runs into a dusky hue; while the primary and secondary feathers of the wings and the tail are of a dusky brown.

Its food, in a wild state, is composed principally of the different kinds of grass-seed and insects, which may be given to it in confinement; but it may readily be kept in the cage on the same food as the Canary, and is subject to a like treatment with that bird when diseased.

Of all the imported European birds, this is the least celebrated for powers of song. It is nevertheless a desirable variety, on account of its distinct plumage and its familiarity of character.

CHAPTER X.

ENGLISH GOLD-FINCH.—*Fringilla carduelis*.

This beautifully plumaged, sprightly and delicate song-bird, of whom so much has already been said in our former chapter, devoted to the instructions concerning the rearing mule songsters, is a native of Europe, and strongly analogous in manners and habits to the Thistle-bird, or true Gold-finch of this country.

Of his mode of treatment in the cage we have already spoken, and of the advantages arising from keeping him in a cultivated state; but as a single bird kept for the purpose of song only, he is not a whit inferior to the Canary.

His musical powers, however, are the most striking, and exhibited with the most effect, from the commencement of March to the middle of July, during which time they continue from sunrise to sunset.

The Gold-finch is nearly always to be obtained at the shops of our different fanciers, where it commands prices varying, on account of quality, from five to ten dollars each.

PART II.

LARKS.—*Alaudæ*.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLISH SKY-LARK.—*Alauda arvensis*.

The Sky-lark, though one of the plainest birds in plumage, is at once the theme of the poet and the delight of the villager and farmer. He is a native of the broad fields of "Old England;" and never was a bird more esteemed, or more deservedly, for the sweet character of his song. Yet, although thus delightful in the cage, a portion of the charm is lost for want of association. To enjoy his silver strain, one should stand at early dawn and see the Lark rising almost perpendicularly in the air from out the tufts of grass, beneath the shelter of which his mate and nest is

concealed, his downy bosom swelling with melody, which is poured forth in warble after warble, the songster gradually becoming less and less to the sight, until he is finally lost in the wide expanse of azure which bends dreamily o'er the horizon. Then, his soothing notes seem to float over the scene like an elfin song, and then, and then only can their sweetness be fully appreciated. A somewhat similar species, the Shore-lark, (*Alauda alpestris*,) inhabits this country, which bird strongly resembles in character and song the preceding songster, to whom we append an effusion from our own pen.

TO THE AMERICAN SKY-LARK.

Far, far away

With the blue heavens around thee, in the light
The red sun sheds upon thy plumage gray,
Thou tak'st thy flight.

And like a strain

Of music poured from lips of seraphim,
Thy song drops down upon the smiling plain,
A gentle hymn,

To where thy mate,

Amid the springing spears of em'rald grass,
Sits on her nest; whilst thou with heart elate
Doth upward pass,

And wait the hour

When, with her young and thee, she'll seek
again,
With swelling soul and wing of freshen'd power,
Yon azure plain.

Sweet bird, farewell!

Thine is the flight of genius, which awhile
Doth Lark-like mount beneath Fame's sunny
spell
And fortune's smile.

But soon the storm!

Then with the swiftness of thy downward
flight,
It passes from the vision, and its charm
Is lost in night.

To proceed. In confinement, a piece
of elevated green-sod should always be
kept in his cage, to afford him a stand-
ing place when singing, as he never
perches like other birds. The bottom

should always be well gravelled, and kept as clean as possible. His food consists entirely of seeds; but the leaves of salad, or other greens, may be occasionally given to him, and likewise a little hard-boiled egg.

The Sky-lark has never been known to breed in confinement.

Sky-larks are only occasionally to be obtained in this country, and then most frequently at the bird-fanciers, who purchase them from the mates of European trading vessels. Their prices vary from five to ten, and sometimes even as high as fifteen dollars each. They live to a considerable age.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLISH WOOD-LARK.—*Alauda arborea*.

This neatly and prettily plumaged bird, so closely related to the Sky-lark, and

somewhat resembling him in manners and song, is frequently found as a cage-bird in the towns of Europe, but only occasionally in America.

His song is not so fine as the preceding species', but is given more frequently, and is of a lower and more monotonous tone.

In a wild state he resides in the low wide-spread woods, or in the fields which lie adjacent, where he sits and sings, or soars like his before-mentioned relative, whistling as he rises to the top of some tall tree, from whence his lay is given the greater portion of the day. He is most frequently taken in nets by bird-catchers, or raised from the nest by them, and then brought to the bird-fanciers, who expose him for sale.

His treatment is exactly similar to that of the preceding species; but he may have perches upon which to sit when singing.

PART III.

BULL-FINCHES.—*Pyrrhulæ*.

CHAPTER I.

BULL-FINCH.—*Pyrrhula vulgaris*.

THE Bull-finch, so well known by name as a choice and delicious songster, and so greatly celebrated for its constant beauty of plumage, is another of the many varieties imported from Europe, to delight the eyes and ears of our countrymen.

In the countries he inhabits he is by far more commonly seen in the cage than in his native woods and fields, which probably arises from the great demand for him as a song-bird, and his rather wild and shy habits. There, he is towards his kind a social and friendly bird, and becomes so

much attached to his mate, that their connection endures for the life of the parties. In the cage, he, however, becomes wonderfully docile if reared from the nest; will breed in confinement; may easily be taught to articulate words; while his musical powers and imitative talents are turned to the highest account by the bird-fancier. He whistles tunes of considerable length and variation, with all the accuracy of an accomplished musician, and in so surprising and so sweet a manner, as to transcend the strength of the most high-flown description. In fact, in this branch of acquirement, he is entirely unrivalled; for no musical instrument possesses a thousandth part of the depth and entrancing harmony of his clear and delicious voice. He has likewise been taught to sing duets in company with other birds of his kind, taking up his part, finishing it, waiting for the response of his companion, and then again proceeding until the entertainment is finished.

When singing one tune, he will come forth from his cage at the word of command, perch upon the finger of his owner, and on being bid will pour forth his enchanting strains without exhibiting the slightest fear, even should a stranger be present in the room. Birds thus educated bring with ease wonderful prices, and are rarely sold for less than eighty dollars; frequently commanding as high as one hundred and one hundred and fifty dollars each.

His colours are—back of a soft ash-grey, with the breast and belly of a soft crimson-red, and his wings and tail of a deep glossy black. His head is likewise ornamented on the crown with a patch of the same raven hue.

In confinement he should receive seeds of all the different kinds, except hemp, which should only be given sparingly, and when so, only in the winter, or during the moulting season, which occurs at the same time with him as with the Canary.

The same directions for this time of life, and for other sicknesses applicable to that bird will fully suffice for the Bull-finch. He will likewise, by observing the rules laid down in a previous section, breed with the Canary-bird.

DIVISION II.

NATIVE BIRDS.

PART I.

TANAGERS.—*Tanagræ*.

CHAPTER I.

SCARLET TANAGER, OR BLACK-WINGED SUMMER RED-BIRD.—*Tanagra rubra*.

The Scarlet Tanager, one of the most beautiful, if not entirely so, of our native birds, arrives in the Middle States during the time intervening between the first and the twentieth of May. While his residence continues, which is only during summer, he is principally found in the thick forests, but also on the edges of large

orchards, and frequently on the skirts of ploughed fields, which he visits in search of his insect food; at that season his only sustenance. Nothing could be imagined more lovely or exquisite than the glittering scarlet and ebony plumage of this bird, as he darts along either in frolic play, or in pursuit of winged insects of various kinds, like a winged meteor, through the green and interwoven branches of the budding trees.

Shortly after their arrival, the Tanagers commence pairing, and by the first of June, incubation has commenced. At this time the young birds can easily be obtained, and may readily be reared on scalded Indian-meal, soaked bread, raw beef (dipped in milk) and hard-boiled egg. The two latter articles chopped very fine.

When the young have attained their full size, they may be treated as regards food exactly like the Canary. They should also receive from time to time the ripe berries of the different seasons, with

cherries and such insects as can be obtained. In the winter, dried cherries, figs, raisins and currants would form an important addition to their diet.

The young are at first of a greenish-olive hue, which on the wings and tail approaches to a dusky-brown colour; but acquire their rich scarlet livery the ensuing spring, moulting into the olivaceous tint in the fall, and regaining the brighter plumage, which becomes deeper and deeper every succeeding spring, the following season.

Their song, which is delivered for hours together, is a sweet, mellow and harmonious ditty of considerable strength and power. It resembles very closely the clear fife-like notes of the Golden Robin, or Baltimore Oriole, passes into the soft delightful tones of the flute, and is at the same time remarkable for its rich variety of cadence.

They should be kept in a warm stove-room during winter, as they are extremely susceptible of cold.

PART II.

FINCHES.—*Fringillæ*.

CHAPTER I.

INDIGO-BIRD, OR BLUE LINNET.—*Fringilla cyanea*.

THE Linnet, as it is most commonly styled in this section of country, is another one of our beautiful summer residents, and is well known for its familiarity and excellent song. This is lively, unique and interesting; given not only at early dawn, but during the intense heat of the summer mid-day; and again is frequently heard during the greater part of the night, more especially if it be moon-light. Its notes resemble those of the Canary, and though less powerful than that bird's, possess more sweetness.

In the cage it may be kept on precisely the same food, and treated exactly like the adult birds of that species. During the spring they may, however, be given insects, though chopped hard-boiled egg will answer equally as well. They are especially fond of the leaves of the common garden beet, (*Beta vulgaris*), on which I have frequently seen them feeding, in company with the Yellow-bird, (*F. tristis*.)

The colour of the male Indigo-bird is a brilliant verditer azure, deepening on the head and neck into a rich dark blue. The plumage of the female is a dingy yellow and olive-brown colour.

On one occasion, on a moonlight night in June, while seated at the door of a friend's country residence, enjoying at the same time the cool breeze and the delight of a "Davenport Regalia" cigar, I was particularly struck with the song of one of these birds, who sat on the highest one of an adjacent clump of trees. At the moment I penned the following effusion,

which may give some idea of the sweetness of his strain in the lonely hours of night.

TO THE INDIGO FINCH.

'Tis the deep silence of a summer night,
A night in June. How solemn seems the scene.
The wood is hushed in slumber, while the trees
'Tween whose shut leaves the night wind playful
steals,

Kissing them into music, sadly breathe
A mournful requiem o'er the vanished day.
The brook, that through the meadow gleaming
creeps

And 'neath the wood, low ripples twixt the moss
Which interwoven lines its shelving sides,
Or pattering o'er the pebbles in its bed,
Hath changed its cadence to a lower tone,
More fitting to the hour.

The flowers have closed their petals and bowed
down

Their bells in slumber—And the wide-spread
fields

Lay like a burial place of by-gone dead.

Hark! some sweet strain,
In mellow cadence, on the ear of night

Falls like a lullaby. Whence comes the song,
And what doth give it life?

Again 'tis here!

Some elfin lover tunes his golden lute,
And, 'neath the beamings of the love-sick moon,
Soft woos his fav'rite fay.

More loud it swells,
While echo, wakened from her dreamless sleep,
Flings back in ecstasy the silvery lay;—
'Tis past and all is still.

Oh! once again
Delight with me thy strain, which, like the lutes
Swept by the fingers of the heedless wind,
Gives forth strange music. Vain I gaze around,
Yet naught I see! But now from yon tall beech,
Whose coronal of leaves is high in air,
Flitting betwixt me and the azure sky,
A form fast flies. Ah! sylvan one! 'twas thou
Who charmed me all unknowing.

He has gone
To his lone mate, and by her gentle side
Now rests in slumber.

Peace be with thee, bird!

The Indigo-bird should be kept in a
heated room during the winter; it being

so tender, that it is unable to endure the slightest cold.

CHAPTER II.

PAINTED BUNTING, OR NONPAREIL.—*Fringilla ciris*.

This brilliant and beautiful bird is a native of the southern portion of the United States, never visiting further north than the Carolinas. He is usually styled by the French residents of Louisiana, the "Pape;" and by the rest of our countrymen, the Nonpareil, no other word conveying a description of his exquisite beauty.

His song, though not so loud as the Indigo-bird's, and more concise, still runs into a delightful warble, which is continued all summer. He is extremely docile, will readily breed in confinement, and would

certainly produce, if mated with a dark-yellow hen Canary, mules of singular beauty.

The male is of a vermillion-red, with the head and back of the neck of a rich blue, the back of a golden-green, wings of a clouded-red, and the tail greenish, approaching to brown. The female slightly resembles the hen Indigo; but contains more yellow in her plumage.

The Nonpareil may be kept in confinement on precisely the same food as the Canary, with the exception of a little unhulled or rough rice, of which he is very fond, and which should be soaked twelve hours before he receives it.

He is extremely sensitive, not being able to endure the slightest cold. These birds may be occasionally obtained at the various fanciers.

CHAPTER III.

SONG SPARROW.—*Fringilla fasciata*.

This humble looking and sociable Finch, more familiarly known by the appellation of "Tom-tit," is an inhabitant of the whole continent of North America, and is one of the hardiest and most interesting of his tribe.

His colour, though plain and monotonous, being of a chestnut and greyish-brown, is neat and handsome; and his form, about the size of the Canary, taper and graceful.

His musical talents, however, are great, and amply recompense for his want of beauty by their sweetness of sound and long continuance, being given without any intermission through the whole of the year. His lay resembles, in cadence and delivery, the sweetest passages of that of the Canary; but is possessed of a depth of

warbling melody even surpassing that delightful songster; while his sprightliness in the cage is also of a more lively cast. His song early in the spring, is very vigorous and loud, continued from day-break until even after dark in the evening; but in the fall it becomes, as if the bird sympathizing with the solemnity of the scene around him, of a softer, more touching, and although of a lower, by far to me of a more delicious and entrancing character.

In confinement he may be treated in every respect like the Canary-finch, to whom he possesses a great affinity; occasionally giving him any or all of the different kinds of grass-seed to be had in the different seed-warehouses, on which, in a state of nature, he almost entirely depends for sustenance.

The Song Sparrow would likewise be an important bird for the fancier to rear with the Canary, to produce fine mules, which may readily be done by observing the

rules laid down in section twelfth of the division on the Canary-bird.

The following beautifully descriptive lines on this sweet songster, are from the pen of an excellent poet, who, though scarcely known in that capacity by the mass, still possesses much of the fire of a true son of Parnassus.

TO THE SONG SPARROW.

BY HENRY PICKERING.

Joy fills the vale,
With joy ecstatic quivers every wing,
As floats thy note upon the genial gale,
Sweet bird of spring!

The violet
Awakens at thy song, and peers from out
Its fragrant nook, as if the season yet
Remained in doubt.

While from the rock,
The columbine its crimson bell suspends,
That careless vibrates, as its slender stalk
The zephyr bends.

Say! when the blast
Of winter swept our whitened plains, what clime,
What summer clime thou charm'dst,—and how
was past

Thy joyous time?

O, well I know
Why thou art here thus soon, and why the bowers
So near the sun have lesser charms than now
Our land of flowers.

Thou art returned
On a glad errand,—to rebuild thy nest,
And fan anew the gentle fire that burned
Within thy breast.

And thy wild strain
Poured on the gale, is love's transporting voice—
That, calling on the plummy choir again
Bid them rejoice.

Nor calls alone
To enjoy, but bids improve the fleeting hour—
Bids all that ever heard love's witching tone
Or felt his power.

The poet, too,
It soft invokes to touch the trembling wire;
Yet, ah, how few its sounds shall list, how few
His songs admire!

But thy sweet lay,
Thou darling of the spring! no ear disdains;
Thy sage instructress, Nature, says, "Be gay!"
And prompts thy strains.

O, if I knew
Like thee to sing, like thee the heart to fire,—
Young should enchanted throng, and beauty sue
To hear my lyre.

Oft as the year
In gloom is wrapp'd, thy exile I shall mourn,—
Oft as the spring returns shall hail sincere
Thy glad return.

CHAPTER IV.

YELLOW-BIRD, OR AMERICAN GOLD-FINCH.—

Fringilla tristis.

The Thistle, or Lettuce-bird, as he is sometimes called, is one of our most cheerful and light-hearted songsters. Joy-

ous amidst the intense severity of the winter, and equally gay beneath the scorching suns of our almost tropical summer, he flits from field to field, and wood to wood, in company with his merry companions, a lovely emblem of intense happiness! When on the wing, like the far, faint and finely-drawn cadence of an *Æolian* harp, his notes of conversation are constantly heard, and while sitting on some lowly thistle or devoted lettuce stalk, he talks with a low, sweet, liquid voice to his more humble and less noticed mate.

In the cage, for which he is readily caught by means of trap-cages, he soon becomes as familiar as the Canary or English Goldfinch, and in that situation his musical notes certainly rival, and are scarcely surpassed by the sonorous whistle and trill of the former bird. His song is at times gradually elevated, and then softened in the most exquisite manner, bursting in one instant into overpowering melody, in the next dying away in a

fairy-like strain, which seems as if lost in the distance; then reviving, it again bursts forth with redoubled strength and energy, and strikes at once into the loudest fife of the before-mentioned songster.

In confinement, his cage should be hung outside of the window every sunny day, as sun-light and fresh air are necessary to the health and well being of this active little bird. He should likewise be well supplied with gravel, and a saucer of water kept constantly in his cage, as he is especially fond of bathing.

The Yellow-bird is much attached to rich and oily seeds, and should be reared upon yellow, canary, millet and hemp, with occasionally a little sun-flower and lettuce-seed, which are always an excellent addition to their fare. He is likewise very fond of the leaves of the garden-beet, lettuces and cabbages, together with chick-weed, which can be obtained at all

seasons, and also of ripe fruits, such as apples and pears.

He will readily, by observing the rules before laid down, breed in confinement, and would produce, if associated with the Canary-finch, mules of the most valuable character, both as regards plumage and song.

The male Gold-finch is of a brilliant lemon-yellow, with the crown of the head and the wings and tail of a glossy raven black; the two latter partially edged with white.

These birds may readily be obtained in the markets in the spring, where they are brought in trap-cages, and sell as low as twenty-five cents per pair.

PART III.

CARDINAL-BIRDS.—*Cardinalis*.

CHAPTER I.

CARDINAL GROSBEEK, OR RED-BIRD.—*Cardinalis Virginianus*.

THIS truly magnificent songster, whose loud and martial song and brilliant beauty of plumage alike attract our admiration, is a native of this continent, and is found in its favourite localities in all parts of the country, from New York to Florida. His chief haunts are in low watery thickets, or amid the swampy woods that margin the waters of our rivers and small inland streams, among which he builds his nest. They are never found in any situation in considerable numbers, but at most in

small families of five to seven, consisting of the young birds of the preceding spring and their parents. In the breeding season, like all others of the Finch tribe, they are perfectly solitary.

The Virginian Nightingale, as he is styled in England and in some parts of the Southern States, is nearly the size of the Robin, and of a brilliant scarlet, which is much brighter upon its breast and belly. His head is ornamented with a lofty crest, which is raised or depressed at pleasure, while his bill, which is large and powerful, is a soft and beautiful coral-red. The only colour on his person differing from the rest, and which is thrown into strong relief by the brilliancy of his other plumage, is a circle of deep black passing completely round his head at the base of the bill. His eye is very expressive and of a dark hazel, while his form is perfect and graceful to a degree.

The song of the Cardinal, which even in confinement is continued for six or eight

months in the year, is no less striking than his plumage, being composed of a clear, loud and mellow whistle, varying in cadence, and given without intermission for a considerable length of time, and closely resembling the tones of the human voice. This, though the delivery is original and striking, is composed partially of the notes of other birds, which are remodelled in so exquisite a manner, and so beautifully executed, that it seems almost impossible to determine to whom they originally belonged. The lay of the Red-bird is, however, possessed of a greater charm—a rare and delicate pathos, enlivened by the most brilliant and soothing touches known to the feathered tribe. This change seems the more astonishing, when we reflect that his voice may be heard on a clear morning, with the greatest ease, at the distance of a mile.

In confinement, for which he is taken by means of trap-cages, the Cardinal Grosbeak possesses all the sociability and

gentleness of his race, becoming in a short time as tame as a domesticated Canary. Here he is highly esteemed and ranks next to the Mocking-bird, than whom he is far more beautiful, for power of song, In retaining him in a cage, he should be kept apart from the society of Canaries, as they, struck with the character of his notes, entirely lose their own in the desire of imitation. The Red-bird is very hardy, and may be kept in a room without fire all winter, without the slightest danger. He should be hung out, and indulged with sun and air on all possible occasions during winter, and in the summer season, with the exception of stormy weather, remain permanently in the open air.

They will breed in confinement if treated like the Canary; but require a very large cage, or a small room, where they must be very seldom disturbed during the day, observing to supply them with food and water after their retiring to rest.

This is, however, unnecessary trouble, as they may be readily obtained in our principal markets during winter, where they are constantly exposed for sale, at the low price of one to two dollars each.

Their diseases, which are similar to the Canary, though they are seldom taken sick, may be treated in the same manner. They live to a great age; a specimen being preserved in the Philadelphia Museum collection which was kept by a member of the Peale family for twenty-one years, and which was probably three or four years old when first obtained.

They should be fed on Canary-seed, rough or unhulled rice, in which they delight, millet-seed, diversified at times with a little finely cracked corn, buckwheat and wheat; and occasionally, during the severity of winter, with a little hemp-seed. In the use of the latter, especially in the autumn months, great care should be taken; as the Red-bird has a tendency to become very gross, and will oftentimes

die from an accumulation of fat round the wind-pipe. When he is thus affected, it may be perceived by his uttering at intervals a wheezing sound. He should then have plenty of coarse brown gravel, which should indeed at all times be kept in his cage, and fed for a few days entirely upon rape-seed, and after a week or so, upon "rough rice" and corn. This will effect a cure. A large pan of water should be constantly kept in the cage, which last should be large and roomy, to allow him to bathe frequently; an amusement for which he has a great predilection.

PART IV.

GROSBEAKS.—*Coccothraustes*.

CHAPTER I.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK.—*Coccothraustes ludovicianus*.

THIS very rare and exquisitely plumaged bird, is another of the many beautiful inhabitants of the western continent, and is equally celebrated for the sweetness of his warbling, his rareness, and the singular variegation of his plumage. He is like the Tanager, (*Tanagra rubra*,) a summer visitant, and one that is little known except to enterprising and persevering naturalists.

His size is nearly that of the Robin, and his general character black, with the wings and outer tail feathers beautifully

margined with white. His breast is of a brilliant rose-carmine colour, which passes in the shape of a cone nearly down to the vent; and the entirety of the inner wing-coverts is of a beautiful bright rose. The bill is of a soft flesh-white. The female is of a dusky colour; but, as she is worthless for song, need not be fully described.

His song, which is continued in clear weather during the whole of the day, is melodious and brilliant beyond description, and is given in a warbling manner, now loud, clear and distinct, then falling into the most tender, low and pathetic sweetness, again changing into the most empasioned sprightliness, and abounding in all the tender, mild and touching tones of the English Nightingale. In fact, with the single exception of our Mocking-bird, he is the prince of songsters.

In the cage, where he is only occasionally met with, he is one of the most delicious of songsters, thriving as well and even better than the Cardinal Grosbeak,

and occasioning much less trouble. His food is all the usual kinds of bird-seed, which may be varied during their season, with the different sorts of berries to be obtained in our markets. He is particularly fond of those of the "sour gum," which abound in the woods in the neighbourhood of the city.

The Rose-breasted Grosbeak requires to be kept in a warm and airy stove-room during winter.

PART V.

PURPLE FINCHES.—*Erythrospizæ*.

CHAPTER I.

PURPLE FINCH, OR AMERICAN LINNET.—
Erythrospiza purpurea.

THIS beautiful, large and cheerful songster, is also a native resident, though but little known as a cage-bird in this section of country. The colour of the male is a rich dark crimson, which is deepest on the upper part of the body, and his tail and wings are of a dusky brown.

In the Eastern States the Linnet, as he is there called, is a great favourite as a song-bird, and brings very high prices. He is caught in the spring and fall in trap-cages.

His song, which strongly resembles in

sweetness and strength the delicious notes of our Red-eyed Vireo, or Greenlet, (*Vireo olivaceous*), is given in a wild state from the summits of the tallest tulip-poplar trees, (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), where the bird is most commonly seen. It is there poured forth for successive hours, without any faltering, and scarcely a moment's intermission for rest. When caged in the same room with a Canary, the Purple Finch's musical powers so far transcend that songster, that a comparison would be odious to our exquisite bird.

In the cage he may be given all the seeds adapted for the Canary, with the addition of sun-flower and hemp in the fall and winter season, and plenty of gravel and water. He is quite hardy.

B O O K I I .

OMNIVOROUS BIRDS.—*Omnivores.*

CHAPTER I.

Of the general characteristics of Omnivorous Birds.

THIS common and well known order comprises in its range those birds with whom we are every day familiar. Their habits and manners differ more, and their appearances as regards plumage and size are more varied than those of any other race of the feathered tribe. Some suspend their nests by threads from limbs, where they are subject to the sport of every wind, others secure them firmly between forks, and others again rest them on the ground amid the shelter of bushes, or in tussocks of long, rank grass. Some are

familiar as household words, seeking out the society of man, while others are shy and suspicious, living in the thickest woods, and avoiding our habitations with an apparent semi-reasoning power, as if conscious of the dangers that awaited them.

Omnivorous birds are gregarious in their habits, with the single exception of the breeding season, when some in single pairs seek solitary situations, while others build their nests in sociable connection, and form a common community for each other's protection.

Their plumage, with some exceptions, is noted for its beauty or singularity, and their song is generally more remarkable for its loudness and power, than for any softness or delicacy of execution. Many of this order possess the power of mimicry to a considerable degree, and can readily be taught to articulate words, and even lengthy sentences.

When in confinement, they soon be-

come thoroughly domesticated and familiar, and from their character, easily supplied with food, which in a wild state is composed of seeds of all kinds, insects, worms, and frequently grain and fruits.

DIVISION I.

FOREIGN BIRDS.

PART I.

STARLINGS.—*Sturni*.

CHAPTER I.

EUROPEAN STARLING.—*Sturnus vulgaris*.

THE Starling, one of the most common and numerous residents of England, and indeed all Europe, is frequently brought to this country, where he is highly esteemed as a cage-bird, for his excellent qualities, and sold for a high price.

The colour of the male bird is a deep black, with rich metallic reflections, varying from golden-green to deep violet and

dark purple, constantly changing in appearance as the bird moves its position. The whole body is likewise beautifully dropped, or mottled with triangular star-like spots, which are white on the breast of the bird and cream-coloured on the back. The bill is a bright yellow, the eyes hazel, and the legs either yellow or brown.

In a wild state the Starling is very lively, whistling and chattering constantly, and then somewhat resembles in habits and manners our Red-winged Blackbird, (*Icterus prædatorius*.) There he associates not only with his own kind, but with many other varieties of birds. Changing as it were his character in their society, he drops his own peculiar note and with a ready association to circumstances, whistles with the Plover, chatters with the Jack-daw, caws with the Crow and screams with the Sea-fowl.

In the cage, his character is the same, with an equally great fondness for imita-

tion. Here he may be easily taught to repeat with exactness short phrases, and even whole sentences; to warble tunes; and to do many other semi-reasoning feats. His song is likewise better in this situation than it is in his native fields or woods.

His treatment may be the same as that prescribed for our Red-wing in every particular. Giving to him grain, berries, seeds and cherries, when the last are in season, for he is remarkably fond of them.

PART II.

ORIOLES.—*Icterii*.

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CHAPTER I.

ICTERIC ORIOLE, OR TROUPIAL. GOLDEN- WINGED ORIOLE.—*Icterus* —.

THE Icteric, which so closely resembles the Golden-winged Oriole of South America, is a native of the East Indies, one half larger in size and rather more brilliant in plumage than his brother, the Baltimore-bird of this country. He possesses a greater power, though not the same sweetness of song as the last.

The treatment both of this and the Golden-winged Oriole, which although a distinct species, is often mistaken for, and bought as the Troupial, must be the same as that prescribed for our lovely species.

He will likewise eat any kind of ripe fruits and berries, which may be given to him in their respective seasons. He is wholly omnivorous.

The Orioles require to be kept very warm during the winter season, to have plenty of cage room, and to be constantly supplied with water.

PART III.

CROWS.—*Corvi*.

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CHAPTER I.

EUROPEAN JACK-DAW.—*Corvus monedula*.

Where the ruined turrets of the old castellated buildings of England stand, still mighty in decay, and beneath the parapets of the Gothic churches and monasteries, as it were the sole monarch of those homes of bygone chivalry and papal pride, the Jack-daw sits and builds his nest, while his hoarse chatter to his hundred companions takes the place of the trumpet-tone of the knight, the gay laugh and jest of chivalric noblemen and lovely demoiselles, the cry of the falconer as his winged charge mounted high in the air in

pursuit of the lordly Heron, or the holy hymn of the priest and the chaunt of the grey vested and shaven monk at the altar of the MOST HIGH. These have passed away. Knight and noble, lady and page, prior and priest, great and low, all, all have sank into the grave, and none wot now of their transient existence. Yet, hovering amid the same scenes, the Jack-daw still lives and moves the lord of all, while the prouder and nobler of mortality are forgotten.

The Jack-daw, though living in such localities, and somewhat unsocial in his habits, from the knowledge that man is not one to trust, a knowledge which only in the human breast is acquired after many years of manly experience in the world, is still a favourite with the farmers and peasantry of his native land. There, habited in his raven suit, with a plain ash-grey mark upon the hind part of his head, he strolls from field to field and wood to wood, as much like one of the wandering

Gitani in habit as any of the feathered race can be.

On the old tower of Dundee, in Scotland, full one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the earth, and beneath the decaying parapets, numbers of these birds even now build their nests, and even here they were once pursued by the adventurous hand and cupidity of man. The hero of this dauntless and dangerous feat, was one Murray, a barber of the old town, who, with a companion, undertook to rob the Daws' nests. These could not be reached from above, and the brave fellow creeping through one of the slits, lowered himself gradually down with one hand; he was still a few feet from his object, when he called to his companion to reach him his bonnet and hold tight to it, while he let himself by this means the further length of his and his companion's arm. He did so; and now, suspended between heaven and earth, with only his and his friend's hold on that frail article, he ba-

lanced himself with his feet against the perpendicular wall, and proceeded to fill the bonnet above him with the young birds. While in this perilous situation, his companion asked "how many young are in the nest?" "Five," was the answer. "I must have three of them." "You shall have no such thing," was Murray's determined response: "I have all the risk, and you shall have but two." "Well! then I will let go the bonnet." "If you do," said the other, "you shall have *none* of the spoil!" His companion at last consented to the arrangement, and the intrepid youth soon stood in safety with his prey upon the lofty summit of the old castle.

In a wild state the food of the Daw is insects, grain and fruit; but in confinement he will eat almost any thing, and may be treated like the Crow, or Magpie. He is easily tamed, may be taught to articulate words and sentences, and become the most docile of birds. For this purpose he must be raised from the nest.

He is only occasionally brought to this country, where his price varies from three to five dollars.

PART IV.

JAYS.—*Garruli*.

CHAPTER I.

EUROPEAN JAY.—*Garrulus glandarius*.

AMONG the whole imported tribe of birds who are annually brought to our shores, the European Jay stands conspicuous for his varied talents and the neatness and indeed beauty of his plumage, of which some idea may be formed, by those unacquainted with the bird, from the following concise description.

His bill is black, and his eyes white. His head is crested; but not so much so as our Jay, or our Cardinal-bird. The feathers which compose this ornament are white, striped with black; and the whole may be erected or depressed at the plea-

sure of the bird. The body of the Jay is a rich cinnamon colour, which is lighter upon the breast than it is on the back. The wings are beautifully marked with a patch of brilliant azure, barred with black.

In a wild state, where he has the entirety of the habits of our still lovelier-looking species, his food is acorns, seeds, nuts, fruits and the eggs and young of other birds, of which he is immoderately fond, and for which cannibal-like propensity he is shot down on every occasion by the game-keeper without mercy. In domestication he may be treated like the before-mentioned bird.

In the cage, like the rest of his order, he is very familiar and docile, and will learn sentences with the greatest ease. His song, however, abounds more in loudness and shrillness than it does in sweetness or delicacy of tone; but his talent for imitating the louder-voiced birds and animals, is striking and peculiar; consisting generally in close mimicry of the bleating

of cattle, the calls of the domestic fowls, the neighing of horses and the screaming of geese. One of these birds was known to imitate the sound of a saw so closely, that though it was on a Sunday, listeners could hardly be persuaded that his innocent owner had not a carpenter at work in his dwelling. Another bird had learned to hound a dog upon cattle by whistling to him and calling him by name; but he suffered severely for his mischievous propensity. On one occasion the dog, on a frosty-day, impelled by the calls of the Jay, pursued a cow that was big with young, and the poor animal fell upon the ice and was severely hurt. Her owner immediately prosecuted the owner of the bird for keeping a nuisance, and the poor songster was compelled to be killed. In the pronunciation of words, the Jay always succeeds best, as indeed do all birds with those in which the letter R is most frequent.

His prices vary in this country from ten

to twenty dollars. He is very hardy in habit, and will endure considerable cold without injury.

DIVISION II.

NATIVE BIRDS.

PART I.

AMERICAN STARLINGS.—*Sturnellæ*.

CHAPTER I.

AMERICAN STARLING, OR MEADOW-LARK.—
Sturnella ludoviciana.

THE first of this order, which we shall touch upon, is the Meadow-lark, a well known resident of old fields and marshy meadows, at all seasons of the year, in every section of the union. We give his description, because we have occasionally met with a specimen in the cage, where he is valuable for his beauty of plumage

and the low and sweet, though melancholy character of his song, which is given during a considerable portion of the day, and is, if any thing, rather monotonous.

The colours of this bird are plain, but varied so much in their disposition as to give him considerable beauty. The belly and throat of the Lark are a bright yellow, while across his breast runs a regular crescent of deep raven-black, with which his back and wings are also spotted, diversified with bright bay and ochreous-yellow colours.

His habits, when wild, are shy and retiring, except in the winter season, when the driving snows force him to seek out the neighbourhood of the habitations of man, and even the public roads, where he is hourly disturbed by the passage of vehicles, while in the search of his scanty meal. In the cage, he soon becomes familiar, and may even be taught like his prototype, the English Stare, or Starling, to articulate various words.

In this situation he may be fed upon the different kinds of bird and grass seeds, with a large quantity of coarse gravel and plenty of water, in which he is fond of bathing. The Lark may occasionally be obtained of our professional bird-fanciers.

PART II.

TROUPIALS.—*Icterii*.

CHAPTER I.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE, OR GOLDEN ROBIN.—
Icterus Baltimoreus.

THIS singularly beautiful and interesting bird, is a summer resident of the whole western continent. As early as the first of May, his loud piping song may be heard among the budding branches of the forest oaks and kingly sycamores, or distinctly above the noisy din in the streets and thoroughfares of our crowded city. In either situation the Hanging-bird may be seen darting about, full of life, activity and joyousness, in the company of his less richly marked mate, from twig to twig

and limb to limb, in active pursuit of the small beetles and different winged insects which then form his principal nourishment. All the while he converses with his mate, or utters loud and harmonious notes of gratulation, as he secures his agile and alert prey.

The song of the Golden Robin, as he is sometimes called, is loud, varied and interesting, and strikes the ear of the listener more like the shrill tone of the fife, mingled with the mellow breathings of the flute, than the notes of a woodland songster. It is likewise modulated in an exquisite manner, and frequently consists of an imitation of the sweetest and most powerful notes of other birds, which the Oriole follows with all the correctness of an echo, astonishing his hearers with his exactness and similarity. Indeed, so singular is this habit with the Hanging-bird, that I much doubt whether he has any original song of his own, and whether the various melodies with which he delights

our ears, are not the notes of tropical American and West Indian birds, which he has acquired during his winter sojourn in those sections of the world. Be that as it may, we have but few among our cage-birds who possess the same manifold attractions to our affections as the Baltimore Oriole.

The colours of this lovely creature are of a brilliant orange and glistening black, with a few strips of white upon the wing. From these he derives his name, since they are the colours of the family of lord Baltimore, the first proprietary of Maryland.

In confinement, for which he is readily obtained by means of a trap-cage, he becomes extremely familiar and even playful, coming at call, going in and out of the house like one of the family, and perching upon the neck or head of his fair owner, with an affectionate sociability. His food in the cage should consist principally of soaked wheaten bread, scalded

Indian-meal, and fruits of all kinds, as cherries, strawberries, currants, black and whortle, or as they are vulgarly called, huckleberries, and during the winter season, dried currants, raisins and figs. Insects of every kind may be added to his fare.

Perhaps the best method of obtaining the Oriole, would be to rear him from the nest. This can be done with the greatest facility. The food for this purpose should be raw meats of different kinds, excepting pork, which is indigestible, minced finely and soaked in fresh sweet milk. This is equally nutritious with the insect food which he receives in a state of nature; and it will cause the bird to grow as vigorously as if he were raised by his natural protectors.

When able to feed himself, the food before recommended may be placed in his cage, with the addition of sweet cakes, of which he is immoderately fond.

The Oriole lives to a considerable age,

when properly treated. He should be kept in the warmest room in the house during the winter season, as he is extremely susceptible of cold.

CHAPTER II.

ORCHARD ORIOLE, OR HANGING-BIRD.—*Icterus spurius*.

This handsome variety, so closely related to the preceding species in manner and habits, visits the United States about the same time, and continues with us about four months. At the expiration of this time, in company with small flocks of his companions, he gradually departs to winter in the more congenial temperature of tropical America.

In the woods or orchards he is a most sprightly, active and even restless bird,

now darting about on the highest branches of trees, singing in a wild, hurried manner, in pursuit of his prey; the next moment upon the ground searching among the waving spears of grass for a favourite insect.

His song is always so rapidly executed, that it would be difficult to trace out a resemblance to that of any other songster; although he, like the Baltimore Oriole, undoubtedly indulges in the talent of mimicry.

He may, like the same bird, be taken in trap-cages, and raised like him from the nest upon the same description of food, to which may be added boiled or swelled rice, of which he is, at times, immoderately fond. He will likewise greedily devour caterpillars, which, when he is in a wild state, forms a principal article of his food during the summer season. He must be kept in a very warm situation during the winter.

The colour of this singular and capri-

cious little songster is a rich, bright chestnut-red, with his tail and upper portion of his body of a glossy black. His form is slender and graceful, and his whole behaviour more sprightly and active, either in the forest or the cage than that of any other American bird.

CHAPTER III.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD.—*Icterus prædatorius*.

This very common and well known bird is closely allied to both the preceding species, and occupies nearly the same position among the birds of America, as does the Stare, or Starling, in the Ornithology of Europe. They move together, after the breeding season has terminated, in large and densely formed flocks, which

are frequently so numerous as to darken the horizon.

The colour of the male is a glistening jet black, with the wing-coverts, or shoulders of the wing, of a brilliant fiery-scarlet, which is edged round on the lower part by a series of feathers of a soft and delicate cream-colour.

His song, which is given with the greatest earnestness either in the cage or his native marshes, consists of a strange mixture of discordance and sweetness, something between a chatter and a warble, which constantly seem "agreeing to disagree." Yet his notes have at times a strange and if any thing, a sweet liquidity, and at others a harshness of sound most closely resembling the sawings of a file, the creaking of a tavern sign upon its rusty hinges, and the delicious melody which arises during the interesting operation of frying a pan of eggs. In fact his whole performance is a queer conglomerate-

tion of sweetness and discordance of tone, perfectly *sui generis* to this eccentric bird.

In confinement, for which he is easily obtained, and in which he is frequently found, he becomes in a short time very playful and familiar, singing with great volubility and performing a variety of amusing tricks. One specimen, which was in my own collection, used to, when the cage was opened, fly to me and perch upon my head, shoulder or hand, gently stroking me with his bill; and another, which belonged to a friend, was self-educated to an almost wonderful degree, displaying talents and power of acquiring knowledge, perfectly untaught, almost equal to man himself.

This bird would at the commencement of conversation by any of the family, or when his owner, who read frequently aloud, commenced that operation, though sitting perfectly quiet before, interrupt them, and entirely prevent any thing like speaking with his intense volubility and

loudness of song. When he was scolded, he would retire to the upper perch of his cage, bristle out his feathers and utter the words "poor Dick! poor Dick!" so piteously that he was immediately forgiven for his amusing fault. The talents of this singular bird did not rest here. He imitated everything which struck his ear. The crowing of a cock was equal, though in a minor key, to that of the tame "Bantam," who strutted about in the neighbouring yard; and the close imitation of the mournful "coo" of the Pigeons, who sat upon the adjacent roofs, was strikingly accurate and beautiful.

Another of these birds, which I afterwards possessed, owned an almost equal degree of power, but was poisoned, before he perfected his education, by a fellow lodger in the house where I resided, who complained that his early song prevented him from sleeping.

Birds of this kind are frequently kept by the fanciers, to whom they are brought

for sale by the "gunners," who wound them in the wing, during the months of September and October, in the large reed marshes which line the borders of our rivers.

Like the Oriole they are omnivorous, but may be easily kept upon the different kinds of seeds given to Canaries, and will readily feed upon swelled rice, or buckwheat and oats, of which they are very fond. During its season they may be given an ear of green corn, which they greedily devour. They should also be well supplied with water in a pan, to allow them to bathe, which they do several times a day, flinging the liquid contents over every part of the cage; and with a sufficiency of gravel, which they use in considerable quantities to promote digestion.

They should be kept in a good sized cage, and in a warm room in winter; though they are able to endure considerable cold.

PART III.

RICE BIRDS.—*Dolichonices*.

CHAPTER I.

REED-BIRD, OR RICE BUNTING.—*Dolichonyx oryzivora*.

THIS interesting and vivacious songster, so well and familiarly known to the epicure by its title of “Reed, or Butterbird,” but more so to the residents of our extensive tract of country from the singular nickname of “Bob-O-Link,” being given alike to itself and the favourite note he utters, is an inhabitant during the summer and fall months of the entirety of our continent.

When he first arrives in the spring, he takes up his quarters on the low and

marshy meadow lands, and among the thickets which line the margins of our large rivers, inland creeks and water courses, which seem alive with melody of the clearest, most liquid, interesting and delightful character. To describe the song of this bird would be doing him injustice, so varied and so striking are the cadences which at once delight and astonish the listener. Perched upon some low bush, or tussock of grass, near their mates, hundreds of male birds may be seen and heard at one time, as they rend the air with a wild incongruity of sweet sounds, which ascend mingling in harmony, a seeming hymn of innocent votaries to the beneficent God of Nature!

The plumage of this bird in his season of song, is no less singular and beautiful than his musical powers, being of a rich glossy black, with a perfect crescent on the back of the head, of a rich mellow cream-colour, while the lower portion of his back and his wing-coverts are a pure

white.

In the cage, in which, during later years, they have arrived to be great favourites, they become at once the liveliest, most agreeable and sociable of companions, constantly delighting the ears with their rich and ever varying profusion of song, which is given from daylight until sunset with scarcely any intermission. Here they have another excellent quality, in which they differ from most other song-birds, which is that they sing well in company, exciting each other to rivalry and emulation for hours and hours together.

Some of the various notes, though it is difficult to describe them from the rapidity with which they are delivered, strongly resemble the pronunciation of words and

meet, meet," in a most ludicrous manner. Nuttall, in his excellent "Manual of Ornithology," gives many other sentences which they repeat in the course of their song during their continuance in a wild state. These, although the fact may appear strange, approximate as closely to the character of this bird's strain of song, as words can imitate; and are usually uttered when flying on the wing near his mate, who is sitting on her nest in some overgrown tussock. "Tom Denny! Tom Denny! come-and-pay-me-the-two-and-six-pence-you've-owed-me-more-than-a-year-and-a-half-ago!"

They may readily be kept in the cage upon canary-seed alone, or on a mixture

of the various kinds, with the exception of hemp, which is always injurious to them; gravel and a profusion of water should be constantly supplied, as they are fonder of diving and washing than any other cage-bird.

I am fully satisfied that they will breed readily in confinement, in a room; and will even, as I have myself seen, actually pair with the hen Canary, though twice the size of that favourite little bird. This experiment was very successfully tried with one of these birds and a female of the before-mentioned species, in a collection kept by Mrs. Welden, the former matron of the Philadelphia Hospital at Blockley; who, as I regret to learn, lost all the mule-birds, by one of the diseases which attack the young in the moulting season. Those which I saw at different periods were a strange intermixture, between the two parents, partaking of the colours of both, but with the bill, form and claws closely resembling the Rice-bird. I have no

doubt, had they lived, they would have been wonderful for their powers of song, as well as strangeness of plumage. The disease of which they perished I believe was "surfeit," which was caused from their being fed entirely upon Indian-meal paste, owing to the difficulty of obtaining canary-seed during the summer of 1841.

They should be kept in a comfortable room during winter, carefully guarding them from draughts of air at the periods of their moult, which occur every spring and fall.

They may readily be obtained in any of our markets, at the low prices of from $37\frac{1}{2}$ to 50 cents each, during the summer and fall, or of some of our fanciers, who have accustomed them to the cage, at one or two dollars each.

PART IV.

CROWS.—*Corvi*.

CHAPTER I.

AMERICAN CROW.—*Corvus Americana*.

THIS well known bird is an inhabitant of the greater portion of, if not of the whole world, and is frequently met with in a state of domestication. For this purpose he is raised from the nest, and soon becomes as familiar as a chicken, regarding man as a friend, and approaching him without the slightest hesitation or fear.

We extract the following close description of his character from Nuttall's excellent Manual of Ornithology. This learned naturalist says; "the Crow is easily raised and domesticated, and soon learns

to distinguish the different members of the family with which he is associated. He screams at the approach of a stranger; learns to open the door by alighting on the latch; attends regularly at meal times; is very noisy and loquacious; imitates the sound of various words which he hears; is very thievish, given to hiding curiosities in holes and crevices, and is very fond of carrying off pieces of metal, corn, bread and food of all kinds; he is also particularly attached to the society of his master, and recollects him sometimes after a long absence."

He is perfectly omnivorous, eating greedily of any substance, whether animal or vegetable, which is offered to him by his owner. He lives to an extraordinary age.

PART V.

MAGPIES.—*Picæ*.

CHAPTER I.

MAGPIE.—*Pica melanoleuca*.

THIS bird, familiar as a household word to every inhabitant of England, is, though one of the commonest residents of the western section of this continent, only occasionally met with in the houses of our citizens, and then only when they have been brought from Europe.

His plumage is a deep velvety-black, with the belly and upper portion of the wings of a glossy snow-white, which gives to the bird a singularly striking appearance.

His musical powers are naturally very

slight; but he possesses a talent of imitation which renders him an immense favourite. This includes nearly every thing which the Pie hears, now following the "moo" of the Cow, then running into the different notes of various song-birds, or uttering the cluck of the chicken, and so on through an almost tedious catalogue of sounds.

In confinement he is very sociable, running in and out of the house, perching upon the backs of the cattle, and making himself feared and respected by the domestic animals, as dogs and cats, with whom he associates himself, playing upon them numerous tricks with a strange kind of familiarity. His power of acquiring language is very great, fully equalling if not surpassing that of the Parrot, for he will store together sentence after sentence which he hears, repeating them from time to time, with the same decision in which they were spoken and with great clearness and beauty.

He is, however, to counterbalance his good qualities as great a thief as the crow, of whom we have before spoken. Some of his thefts are historical. One of these is told in the almost fatal story of the "Magpie and the Maid," which has been the foundation of so many dramas and operas, frequently performed in the theatres of America and Europe.

The Magpie is kept with little difficulty, as he will live upon every thing given to him, no matter of what character. He lives to an extremely great age, some say two hundred years, on which belief a laughable anecdote occurred. A student of one of the English colleges, who was seen taking a young Pie which he had bought, to his apartment, was met and asked by one of his tutors, his reason for having made the purchase. He replied he had heard it stated "that Magpies lived two centuries, and so had bought one, in order to test the truth of the assertion!"

PART VI.

JAYS.—*Garruli*.

CHAPTER I.

BLUE JAY.—*Garrulus cristatus*.

THE Blue Jay, so poetically entitled by Audubon "The fop of the forest," is a well known inhabitant, in a wild state, of the extensive forests of the whole of North America; and is frequently seen as a cage-bird in our inland and larger cities.

His colour is by far his best recommendation; since his song, though in some particulars sweet, is more noisy than harmonious. In confinement, he becomes almost entirely changed; and he, like his close relatives in manners and habits, the Jack-daw, Magpie, Crow—and his proto-

type the British Jay, becomes noted for his imitative talent, which in some few cultivated instances is scarcely inferior to that of the Mocking-bird; and he becomes so sociable and familiar, that he may be allowed to travel over the house. He is equally as notorious for pilfering and hiding every thing in his reach as his above-mentioned kinsmen.

In the cage, the Jay may be fed upon seeds of different kinds, as canary and hemp, of which latter, from its oily character, he is extremely fond, and any other substance, animal or vegetable. The first had better be chopped fine, and the latter cooked. Eggs, when given to him, must be boiled hard. He is likewise partial to chestnuts, acorns and maize, or Indian-corn, either in a green or dry state, which in the last instance, he invariably breaks before swallowing.

The Blue Jay may occasionally be obtained of our bird-fanciers, or be reared from the nests, which may always be found

within a few miles of the city. When thus raised he must be fed upon raw beef, veal, mutton or lamb, chopped fine and soaked in milk. He should be allowed a profusion of water and an abundance of gravel.

BOOK III.

INSECTIVOROUS BIRDS.—*Insectivores.*

CHAPTER I.

On the general characteristics of Insectivorous Birds.

THE birds of this order are not so highly celebrated for docility as those of the granivorous or omnivorous tribes, perhaps because but few attempts have been made on their education. Yet we have no doubt they are equally as susceptible of that process as the others, though undoubtedly it would prove a more difficult task, owing to the natural wildness of the order, and the difficulty and in many instances impossibility of breeding them in confinement.

The song of the generality of birds belonging to this tribe, is in common harmonious and agreeable, and in some few instances, as in the Mocking and Minor-birds, the Nightingale and the various species of the Thrushes, surpasses any thing like rivalry. Their food in a state of nature, consists principally and almost wholly of insects, and entirely so during the period of incubation. To this is added berries of various kinds, but we ourselves are certain, and in that opinion are supported by the most distinguished naturalists, that these are only and occasionally used as an aliment, when insects are scarce and difficult to be procured.

In the wild state many of the species rear several broods, generally not more than two, during a season, dwelling indiscriminately in woods and thickets, the neighbourhood of the farm-house, or among reeds, where they are always found in solitary pairs. In the time of migration, in autumn, some kinds

depart in large flocks, while others leave singly and in an almost imperceptible manner. On this and indeed on almost every continent, with the single exception here of the Robin, they are extremely tender, leaving us before, or about the time of the commencement of frosts.

DIVISION I.

FOREIGN BIRDS.

PART I.

THRUSHES.—*Turdi*.

CHAPTER I.

EUROPEAN BLACKBIRD.—*Turdus merula*.

THIS beautiful and highly appreciated bird is at once the largest, and one of the sweetest songsters of his tribe, which are found in confinement. His song, which is clear and thrillingly sweet in its cadences, strongly resembles the mellow breathings of the flute; and is heard from the summit of a tall bush or tree, from among the low thickets which he frequents, and which

line the lane sides or farm-fences in his native country. This is given principally from day-dawn until near mid-day, and abounds in spirit and variety.

In the cage, where he is highly esteemed, he becomes very docile, and may be readily taught to whistle tunes, which he does with the greatest clearness and precision. Here, he is a greater favourite than the Thrush; but from his pugnacious character, he should never be associated with other birds, it being proper to keep him always alone, and in a large and roomy cage. In a collection of birds, from his peculiar character, the soft mellow song of the Blackbird is particularly distinct among the sharp trilling voices peculiar to the family of Finches.

The treatment of this songster must be the same as that prescribed hereinafter for the Mocking-bird, both as regards food and the cure of disease.

The Blackbird may frequently be obtained from our best fanciers, or from the

mates and sailors of European trading vessels. Their prices vary from ten to twenty dollars.

The colour of the male is wholly black, with the bill, mouth and eye-lids of a deep yellow. The female is a brown colour, which is rusty in appearance on her breast and belly. The bill is likewise dusky and the legs are brown.

CHAPTER II.

EUROPEAN, OR ENGLISH THRUSH.—*Turdus musicus.*

The Irish or English Thrush, as he is most commonly called in this country, and in his own indifferently the Mavis, the Throstle, or the Song Thrush, is one of the most delicious songsters in existence. He is easily distinguished among all other

birds,³ by the superior clearness and fullness of his note, which is charming, not only for its concentrated sweetness, but for its constantly changing variety. His song is given in a wild state from a very early portion of the spring to the latter part of the summer, and is continued throughout the greater part of the day; though, as with most other birds, his notes possess more power and depth in the early part of the morning.

In England, as a cage-bird, with the exception of the Nightingale, he is the most esteemed of all the British songsters; although possessing less romance of character than that bird, yet his song has more of that rustic vigour and matter of fact than the latter owns, who as it were possesses the refinement and beauty of cultivated, while the other abounds in that of uneducated genius. These two songsters, in comparison, may be called the Pope and Burns of the feathered race.

His treatment should be the same as

that of the Mocking-bird. His prices vary from six to fifteen dollars in this country, entirely on account of greater or less richness or vigour of voice. The native notes of this bird are so fine, that although he is capable of acquiring, he is never taught airs, which in this case would be really a sacrilegious perversion of nature.

His colours are very similar to, but deeper than those of our Wood Thrush, (*Turdus melodus*,) a songster of rich and sweet, but melancholy tone of voice. These are a reddish-brown on the upper part of the body, while the breast and sides of the bird are beautifully and regularly marked with spots of a dark brown, on a creamy-white ground. The throat is pure white, and the eye of the bird hazel, remarkable for its vivacity of expression.

CHAPTER III.

MINOR-BIRD.—*Turdus minor*.

This large and handsome East Indian bird, is frequently found in this country, to which he is brought by our “homeward-bound” vessels, and where he brings extravagant prices. He is a true Thrush in all his manners and habits, and is equally celebrated for the loudness and almost overpowering vivacity of his song, for the ease and beauty with which he imitates the songs of different birds and musical composition, and for his talent for acquiring language.

In the cage he is likewise easily kept, being fed upon the same food as our Thrushes and Mocking-birds, and is as docile and affectionate to his owner and the different members of the family, whom he soon learns to distinguish. Here he

requires plenty of water for bathing, and an abundant supply of gravel.

A fine song-bird of this species is worth from twenty to fifty dollars.

PART II.

WARBLERS.—*Sylvia*.

CHAPTER I.

ROBIN, OR RED-BREAST.—*Sylvia rubicola*.

THIS favourite and familiar little bird, known to almost every reader as the Robin Red-breast of the story of the “Babes in the Wood,” is another native of Europe, who we only occasionally see in confinement in this country. In England, he is everywhere held in respect and esteem, and is known by the most endearing appellations. There, where he is quite hardy, he becomes so sociable in winter as to tap at the window and claim the protection of man. Entering the house and perching upon the table, he seeks out

for crumbs to enable him to sustain life; or hops around the door, and finds his food in social community with the domestic fowls. We extract a passage from a well known author, illustrating the peculiarity of character in this bird.

“The Red-breast sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then brisk alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o’er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is;
'Till more familiar grown, the table crumbs
Attract his slender feet.”

His colours though not beautiful, are neat and striking, he being a rich brown on the upper part of the body, and on the head, which passes off into a greenish-olive shade; while the breast and throat are reddish-orange, varying into a pure white on the lower extremities.

He is easily kept on the same food as our Mocking-bird, and becomes very social, coming at call and perching himself upon his owner's hand and singing at the word of command.

PART III.

NIGHTINGALES.—*Curruca*.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLISH NIGHTINGALE.—*Curruca luscinia*.

OF all birds, this little favourite possesses the greatest reputation as a songster. Inhabiting the whole of the European and Asiatic continents, he is everywhere the theme of the poet's impassioned song, and the object of attachment. Shakspeare and Byron of the west, and Hafiz, Ferdousi and the thousand other poets of the east, have elevated the "Bulbul of a thousand songs" into a kind of god-like immortality. With the rose among flowers, the Nightingale is associated among birds, and if all the descrip-

tions which poets and historians have given to us of this wonderful songster be true, he well deserves his pre-eminence.

His song is said to commence at sunset, when all the rest of the world is slowly sinking into silence; and, as the last rays of the red-sun fall on the mountain tops, and the crested coronals of the lofty forest trees, crowning them as it were with a halo of flame, it rises in its fullest perfection. Then, the Nightingale from his perch, warbles on until the God of day rises in the east. His song is at once most melodious and expressive, now swelling into loudness and splendour of tone, it the next instant sinks into the most soothing softness and exquisiteness of expression; or, is low, faint and murmuring as the last dying tones of a far distant echo, and then bursting into violent and rapid articulation, he breathes at once anger, passion, love, delight and joy, in the constant and ever varying changes which he pours out, like water ever gush-

ing from a spring, on the ear of night. How beautiful is Byron's description of the song of this bird, in his never-to-be-forgotten "Bride of Abydos!"

"The live-long night there sings
A bird unseen—but not remote:
Invisible his airy wings,
But soft as harp that Houri strings
His long enchanting note!
It were the bulbul; but his throat
Though mournful, pours not such a strain:
For they who listen cannot leave
The spot, but linger there and grieve
As if they loved in vain!
And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
'Tis sorrow so unmixed with dread,
They scarce can bear the morn to break
That melancholy spell,
And longer yet would weep and wake,
He sings so wild and well!
But when the day-blush bursts from high
Expires that magic melody!

And again how powerful, and yet how sweet, is the tale of the Prince Menaphon to his cousin Amethus, in Ford's (one of

the old English poets,) "Lovers' Melancholy."

Men. I day by day frequented silent groves
And solitary walks. One morning early
This accident encountered me: I heard
The sweetest and most ravishing contention
That art and nature ever were at strife in.

Amet. I cannot yet conceive what you infer
By art and nature?

Men. I shall soon resolve you.
A sound of music touch'd mine ears, or rather,
Indeed, entranced my soul: as I stole nearer,
Invited by the melody, I saw
This youth, this fair faced youth, upon his lute,
With strains of strange variety and harmony,
Proclaiming, as it seemed, so bold a challenge
To the clear choristers of the woods, the birds,
That, as they flock'd about him, all stood silent,
Wond'ring at what they heard. I wonder'd too.

Amet. And so do I; good! on—

Men. A Nightingale,
Nature's best skill'd musician, undertakes
The challenge, and for every several strain

The well shaped youth could touch, she sung her
own;

He could not run division with more art
Upon his quaking instrument, than she,
The Nightingale, did with her various notes
Reply to; for a voice, and for a sound,
Amethus, 'tis much easier to believe
That such they were, than hope to hear again.

Amet. How did the rivals part?

Men. You term them rightly;
For they were rivals, and their mistress, har-
mony.

Some time thus spent, the young man grew at
last

Into a pretty anger, that a bird
Whom art had never taught cliffs, moods, or
notes,

Should vie with him for mastery, whose study
Had busied many hours to perfect practice:
To end the controversy, in a rapture
Upon the instrument he plays so swiftly,
So many voluntaries and so quick,
That there was curiosity and cunning,
Concord and discord, lines of differing method
Meeting in one centre of full delight.

Amet. Now for the bird.

Men. The bird ordained to be
Music's first martyr, strove to imitate
These several sounds; which, when her warbling
throat
Fail'd in, for grief, down dropped she on his lute,
And brake her heart!

We clip from the ably edited "Inquirer" of May 23, 1842, the following notice of the death, in a similar manner to Ford's graceful description, of one of these delightful birds in Richmond, Virginia. Who can now say that poetry is not the eloquence of truth.

"One of the admired Nightingales we spoke a few days ago of having been invited to hear, sang itself to death one or two mornings since. The two were in separate cages, suspended, one in the porch, the other in an adjacent room. They appeared to be engaged in a trial of their musical powers, and were exerting all their strength, rattling their wings, ruffling their feathers, jumping about their cages, varying and swelling their songs,

until the whole air seemed filled with the sweet volumes they uttered. This they continued for some time, when one of them fainted away and died. His little heart seemed to have swelled with the spirit of song until it bursted, and his soul passed away. It was truly touching to see the sweet warbler die thus, in the midst of his song—and it was not wholly unnatural to indulge a faint idea, that so sweet a vocal strain did not end with the little bird. It was strongly calculated to inspire credulity in the metempsychosis,—and may not the spiritual part of this extraordinary feathered vocalist yet inhabit the body of some Malibran? Who knows?”

“The above is from the Richmond Compiler. We regard it as touching and beautiful. The incident would form a fine theme for a poet. *The Death Song of the Nightingale!* The disembodied spirit of Mrs. Hemans, or of Miss Landon, should be invoked for such a strain! Daughters of genius, who may forget them! They

also expired amidst the sounds of their own melody. The gift of poetry was to them like the power of music to the ambitious bird. They soared away from earth and earthly things—on—on—through the blue depths of a world of their own creation. May we not hope that as the immortal parted from the mortal, the former, as angelic spirits, passed into a holier and heavenlier state, and became beings of a world where all is music, and poesy, and praise, and harmony.”

The accompanying elegant comments in the concluding paragraph, are from the pen of one of our most gifted and graceful poets, Robert Morris, of Philadelphia, who, though possessed of fire and genius sufficient for a far more arduous task, invokes the spirits of the hallowed dead to breathe forth such a strain. These and their golden lyres are now breathing a purer melody in a better world, but we, though possessing none of their talents, in all modesty accept the challenge, and pre-

sent our readers with the following trifling poem.

THE DEATH OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

Forth in that last glad strain!

Thy swelling soul burst forth and fled away,
While on the earth reposed
Thy silent clay.

'Twas sweet, full sweet to die

Amid the music of thine own glad heart;
To burst the chords of life
And so depart.

But where, sweet one! oh! where

Hath fled thy gentle soul? Unto that heaven,
Where rose thy hymn so sweet,
At close of even?

Or in some kindred form

Doth it repose, 'till twilight's quiet hour
Shall call it forth again,
With sweeter power?

Or 'mid the scenes so loved,

Dost thou now wander on ethereal wing,
And through the moon-lit groves,
Flit sorrowing?—

When in the deep midnight
My steps have wandered 'neath the arching
trees,

Oft have I heard sweet sounds
Float on the breeze.

And then, enwrapt, I thought
Them lays of disembodied souls of those
Whose sylvan songs to God
All pure uprose!

Perchance, whene'er again
I seek the woods, upon my wond'ring ear
May fall thy spirit song,
In accents clear.—

Thine was a hapless end;
For like to fire, thy love of song consumed
Thy own pure heart, and thou
Didst die self-doomed!

Thine was the death of those
Who seek for earthly fame, and wildly crave
Men's worship here, but find
A nameless grave.

Better to look on high,
With hopes and thoughts to One, Almighty
given,
And immortality
Is thine in heaven!

In the cage, the Nightingale may be treated like any of the Thrush tribe. For this purpose he is generally raised from the nest, or caught in nets, or trap-cages, or by means of limed twigs. The first are ever the best birds.

His price in America is from forty to sixty dollars, and even at that, though seemingly exorbitant, obtained with difficulty.

DIVISION II.

NATIVE BIRDS.

PART I.

MOCKING-THRUSHES.—*Mimi*.

CHAPTER I.

MOCKING-BIRD.—*Mimus polyglottis*.

THIS every where esteemed and beautiful Thrush, whose musical talents are so highly appreciated in this country and Europe, is a native bird, unrivalled for grandeur and power of song by any other in the known world. He is found in his natural condition from the state of Pennsylvania to the Rocky Mountains; in fact,

he is seen from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean as far south as the interior of Brazil. He is occasionally now, though rarely, seen in the vicinity of Philadelphia, whence he has been gradually driven by a constant pursuit, which arose from the great price constantly demanded and obtained for him, from the fancier. In fact, from this cause, scarcely a square in any one of our large cities has not at least one, and frequently as many as a dozen cages, suspended from the windows of gentlemen's mansions.

It would be unnecessary in our limited work to describe the appearance of this bird, which is more remarkable for plainness and intelligence than for any extraordinary beauty. In the cage as well as in the wood, his every motion is ease and gracefulness itself, combined with a lightness and rapidity of motion which is amusing to the spectator, from its resemblance to caprice and an apparent coquettishness of demeanour.

Now, with his head bent upon one side, and an arch and shrewd expression lighting up his eye, he is seated almost motionless upon his perch, quietly gathering the sounds which arise to his elevated position from the street beneath. In an instant he is changed, "and such a change!"—With outspread wings, and flirled tail, he flits from side to side and perch to perch, like an empassioned but earnest troubadour, pouring forth his whole soul in song.

In a wild state, his notes, from the ten thousand opportunities constantly offered, are much finer than in a state of domestication. There, where the wild hymns of the forest choir are constantly ringing in his ears, he has ample scope for his imitative powers. The song which these produce is unsurpassed except by his native notes, which are replete with vigour, boldness, sweetness, energy and constant and inimitable variation. In the forest, like the leader of an orchestra, or some

accomplished musician, he sits upon a lofty twig, with the whole feathered race around pouring out their varied performances, as an accompaniment to his song; forming on the whole, one of the grandest overtures which the human mind is capable of appreciating. These wild notes of his own are noted for their expression and beauty, and consist of short sentences of two, or three, or four syllables, which are mingled with imitations, and given with such ardour as to fill the breast of the listener with admiration.

But in the cage, to which he soon becomes accustomed, he is better known as a songster. Here, fully as happy as in his woodland home, his intelligence and genius have ample scope; and he spreads, by their exertion, a feeling of joy and happiness around. Day by day, and night by night, he is unceasing in his song; cloudy or clear weather is the same to him; he is the Shakspeare of nature, and his genius never sleeps. I have set in my chamber

many a morning, when the first tints of light were struggling into being, in the grey and misty looking east, while the stars were yet peering from their shadowy homes down on the quiet abodes of man, and raising my window suffered the cool breeze to steal through my heated apartment. Suddenly, while I sat in reverie, the distant scream of an eagle burst on my ear, and I started up, putting aside the branches of flowers which stood on the window-ledge, and gazed far away round the blue horizon to catch a glimpse of the royal bird. Then came the mellow song of the Robin, the "hear beauty, hear," of the Blue-bird, the piping "whittoo, wittu, vittu," of the Scarlet Cardinal, and the shrill cry of the Killdeer, "killdee, killdee," which is given as it flutters wildly around the head of the intruder in the vicinity of his nest. Then came the "weet-weet" of the Spotted Sandpiper, followed in the same breath by the hoarse guttural "caw, caw," of the Crow, and then the low,

sweet melody of the Wren, which in an instant changed to the parental "cluck, cluck" of the hen, gathering her young around her. Then "whirr, whirr," went a watchman's rattle, "bow, wow, wow," the yelp of a dog, "meow, meow, phits, phits," the fighting of a pair of cats, "uh! wee! uh! wee!" the grunt of some antiquated porker, and then the concert closed with the rich and mellow whistle of the Brown Thrush, dying away in the distance. Such was my morning's amusement for weeks and weeks together, listening to the lay of the Mock-bird, and tracing out song after song as they were uttered, to the original source, from which they were first derived.

But prose, plain prose is unequal to the task of giving an idea of the capabilities of this feathered Orpheus of our forest, and we turn to a lay of one of our gifted poets, which can better speak in the impassioned language of song, those powers

which our own pen would be feeble to describe.

TO THE MOCKING-BIRD.

BY FRANCIS COSBY, JR.

Bird of the wild and wondrous song!
I hear thy rich and varied voice,
Swelling the greenwood-depths among
Till gloom and silence, pleased, rejoice!
Spell-bound, entranced in rapture's chain,
We list to that inspiring strain!
We tread the forest's tangled maze,
The thousand choristers to see,
Who mingled thus their voices raise,
In that ecstatic minstrelsy.
We search in vain, each pause between,
The choral band is still unseen.

'Tis but the music of a dream,
Such as doth oft our slumbers cheer;
But hark again! the eagle's scream!
It rose and fell distinct and clear!
And list, in yonder hawthorn bush,
The red bird, robin, and the thrush!

Lost in amaze we look around,
Nor thrush nor eagle there behold!
But still that rich aerial sound,
Like some forgotten song of old,
That o'er the heart hath held control,
Falls sweetly on the ravished soul.

And yet the woods are vocal still,
The air is redolent with song—
Up the hill-side, above the rill
The wild'ring sounds are borne along!
But where, ye viewless minstrels! where
Dwell ye? on earth or upper air?
High on a solitary bough,
With glancing wings and restless feet,
Bird of untiring throat art thou,
Sole songster in this concert sweet!
So perfect, full and rich each part,
It mocks the highest reach of art!

Once more, once more, that thrilling strain!
Ill-omen'd owl, be mute, be mute!
Thy native notes I hear again!
More sweet than harp or lover's lute!
Compared with thy impassion'd tale,
How cold, how tame the nightingale!
Alas! capricious is thy power,
Thy 'wood note wild' again is fled;

The mimic rules the changeful hour,
And all the soul of song is dead!
But no! to every borrow'd tone,
He lends a sweetness all his own.

On glittering wing, erect and bright,
With arrowy speed he darts aloft,
As though his soul had ta'en its flight,
In that last strain so sad and soft—
And he would call it back to life,
To mingle in the mimic strife.
And aye in every fitful lay
His frame in restless motion wheels,
As though he would indeed essay
To act the ecstasy he feels;
As though his very feet kept time
To that inimitable chime.

And ever as the rising moon
Lifts her bright orb the trees above,
He chants his most melodious tune
While echo makes through all the grove;
Perched on the topmost bough he sings,
Till all the forest loudly rings!
The sleeper from his couch starts up
To listen to that lay forlorn,

And he, who quaffs the midnight cup,
Looks out to see the purpling morn.
Oh! ever in the merry spring,
Sweet mimic, let me hear thee sing!

For the cage, those birds raised from the nest are the best adapted; since they are accustomed to the sight of man from the first, and are never so wild as those which are trapped from the woods, though the latter are the best songsters. The young are generally sold in our streets at from two to five dollars each, the purchaser running the risk of the sex of the bird. This, however, can be obviated by observing the following rule.

The young male Mocking-bird, must always be chosen by the breadth and purity of the white marks on their wing-feathers. These, in the male, are spread over the whole nine primaries, or outer wing-feathers, down to and frequently a considerable distance below what is termed their coverts, which are generally of a dusky white, tipped with pale greyish-

brown. This white mark extends regularly on both sides of the feathers down to the place before-mentioned. In the female, this white is less distinct, spreads over a less number of the feathers, and extends a much greater distance on the broad than on the narrow sides of each. The wings besides are inclined to brown, which in the male are black.

The best food for the young, until able to take care of themselves, is raw meat, which shall be either beef, mutton, lamb or veal, *never pork*, without any fat, and be chopped or minced fine, and soaked in fresh sweet milk. This is the most nutritious nourishment they could receive, as it approximates most closely to that which they would obtain from the parent birds, insects of various descriptions. Besides this, Indian-meal, mixed to a thick paste with sweet milk or water, is an excellent addition, and must be fed to them daily. When the birds have arrived at a proper age, and can feed without assistance, the

same food may be continued for a month, or six weeks, supplying them also with all the different kinds of berries as they alternately arrive in season. They must have cherries, straw, black and whortle or huckleberries, &c. during the summer time; in the autumn those of the poke, alder, dogwood and sour-gum, all of which are readily to be found in the vicinity of the city; and, during the winter season, those of the pokeberry, which are dried for the purpose, and can always be had at the best seed warehouses, and of the Virginia juniper, or red cedar. At this latter time, they may receive soaked currants, raisins and slices of mellow fruits, such as apples, pears and peaches. They will likewise eat rice, boiled soft in milk and sweetened, which is very nutritious.

They should also have insects of various kinds, as grasshoppers and beetles, on every possible occasion. Spiders and meal-worms, which last can be obtained at

any granary, will immediately revive them, if given when they are either drooping or sick. Boiled egg is also excellent.

The Mocking-bird, when caught in an adult state, should be placed at once in a cage, which should be covered at the top with wood, and entirely round the sides with a linen cloth. This should remain for a few days; during this time allowing him space for air. Then it may be removed. The covered top prevents him from injuring himself in his vain attempts to escape; for birds will always make the most zealous exertions to get out from the loftiest part of their place of confinement.

This apparently wild bird may be readily taught to breed in confinement; and if the proper rules are observed, he will do so as safely and as certainly as he would in his native woods.

A room should be partitioned off ten or twelve feet square, with one window, which should be covered on the outside

with a wire bow; the whole being in a lofty, quiet and undisturbed position. In the centre of this, immediately opposite the window, should be placed in a box of earth a "straggly" growing, well limbed juniper or red cedar tree. The earth must be kept tolerably moist, so that the tree may continue in a healthy state. Building materials, such as short, very slender twigs, wool, deer's hair, &c. must be scattered loosely around the room on the floor, which should be well and deeply gravelled. After this is done, your birds, who may be kept together for some time before, may be placed in the apartment, which should also have two or three limbs of trees, so arranged that they can find plenty of perches. The partition should be disposed somewhat after the manner of Venetian blinds, to afford ventilation, and the slats should be painted of a green colour. If convenient, some shrubbery, that will stand a partial shade, should be placed around its sides, as the closest

approach to a state of nature will be the surest means of success.

The birds, if fed every other day with a little of the mixture prescribed for the Canary in a like situation, or on hard-boiled eggs, with a little chopped raw beef, and insects, when they can be obtained, will soon commence building.

When they are breeding they must be as little disturbed as possible; their food and water being placed in their room through a door in the side, without the tender being seen, and all persons kept away from their vicinity.

When the young are hatched, the old birds may have a paste composed of milk and Indian-meal, for the purpose of feeding their progeny; and as the latter advance in growth they should be supplied with a profusion of berries of different kinds.

The female always lays five eggs, which must never be touched during the opera-

tion of sitting; for if the eggs be thus disturbed, she will invariably leave them.

Should you wish to rear the young by hand, the directions for that purpose before laid down must be closely followed, and the young Mockers fed every half hour at the least. The old birds will then probably, but not certainly, rear another brood.

When diseased, as all the ailments which affect birds are similar, they may be treated like the Canary in a similar situation. But the Mocking-bird is subject to one disease which is incurable—it is blindness, which generally afflicts him after he has spent six or seven years in confinement. Thus shut out from light, he gradually pines away and dies. Alas! that the career of brilliant genius should be always one of shortness and sorrow! Man like the bird spends his life in a cage of worldliness, looked upon for one moment with admiration, the next sinking down beneath the darkness of

poverty to oblivion, as the other does beneath the blindness of nature to death. Bird and Man! are ye not alike in your glory, as ye are in your fate?

In the cage, the Mocking-bird should be regularly supplied with water once a day, and if the weather be very warm, twice. In the latter instance, he should be kept in a situation where he will have plenty of air; but not in one where the hot rays of the sun would fall for several hours together upon his cage, as this would at once kill him in the summer time, though in the winter it would tend to the advancement of his health. In the moulting season, however, this treatment must be changed; the bird must be taken in the house and kept warm, quiet and free from draughts of air, which at that critical period are always very injurious. This fatal time for birds occurs with this species about the commencement of August, and continues until the beginning of November.

During this season your birds should be richly fed, and have as frequently as possible spiders, which I before remarked, were an excellent revival to their systems, and also grasshoppers. These are their principal food, with other insects, at that season, in a state of nature. They should likewise have meal-worms, which are found in granaries, if they be severely affected. Another great requisite is gravel, which should be kept constantly in the cage.

But that which is most important, is *regularity* in the process of feeding. Your birds should be fed every morning at the same time, and not one day at one, and the next at a different hour. Such neglect will render him dispirited and drooping, and he will lose his song, and finally pine away and die, as if believing that the neglect arose because his powers were no longer appreciated.

CHAPTER II.

BROWN, OR FERRUGINOUS THRUSH, OR
THRASHER.—*Mimus ferrugineus*.

This large and beautiful Mocker, far surpassing in sweetness and variety of song the celebrated Thrastle or Mavis, of England, and scarcely inferior to the glorious Mocking-bird in voice and talent, is another of the choice, but too much neglected songsters of our native land, and a summer resident of the entire continent.

His colour, which is handsomer than that of the Mocking-bird, is a reddish-brown, with the throat, breast and belly of a yellowish-white, beautifully marked with lanceolate umbrous spots. Two bars of white, edged with black, ornament the wings of this bird, and give a neat effect to his appearance. His eyes are of a bright yellow.

His song is loud, bold, striking and full of originality, and given, like that of the preceding species, at all hours of the day and night; but most frequently in the morning.

He is readily raised from the nest on the same treatment as the before-mentioned bird; and becomes much more amusing and sociable in confinement, and shows the warmest attachment for the person who tends and feeds him; while his activity in the cage amounts almost to capriciousness and even seeming petulance.

He should be kept warm in the winter, and receive the same articles of nourishment, and the same treatment when diseased, as the Mocking-bird.

CHAPTER III.

CAT-BIRD.—*Mimus felivox*.

This quaint, but beautiful songster, of the same tribe as our Mocking-bird, and so similar in habit and manners, is another of our neglected native residents. In his song, he is scarcely inferior to that well known bird, and in every way equal to his delightful relation, the French Mocking-bird, or Brown Thrush. Possessing as he does, at once all the varied gifts of both these delightful songsters in an eminent degree, it has long been a wonder to me why his musical powers have not been more fully appreciated. But so it is. Humbleness of colour, united with the harsh, scolding, cat-like call, from which he derives his name, and for which he is often killed by the ignorant farm boy, have prevented him from being so gene-

rally known as his rich, sweet voice, so varied in compass, deserves.

His talents as a Mocker are also very great, and the description of the Mocking-bird's song will very little exceed a portraiture of his efforts, while the richness of his native notes is fully equal to that of the Brown Thrush. But, in addition to all these, there is a quaintness in his execution, which abounds in emphasis and melody, and is singularly striking in effect. He frequently sings at night, when every other bird save himself and the Mocking-bird, is in repose; or in the dim hour of twilight, when his musical talents perhaps possess their fullest power, and his song then "rises and falls with all the swell and studied cadence of finished harmony."

For confinement, he may readily be caught in a trap-cage, observing, should you so obtain him, the same treatment as prescribed for the Mocking-bird; covering his cage, or raising him from the nest in the same way.

His colour is a dark slate, with the crown of the head and his tail black. His motions in the cage are strange and fantastical.

He should be kept in a roomy cage, and abundantly supplied with water, for the purpose of bathing, of which exercise he is excessively fond, dashing about and submerging himself until every feather is wholly drenched.

His food may consist of every thing of a vegetable nature, with the exception of unbruised seeds. Bread, soaked in milk or water, fine pastry, mashed potatoes, boiled rice, fruits and berries, scalded corn-meal, cakes of different kinds, and at intervals minced flesh, and insects when they can be obtained. Gravel should also always be kept in his cage.

PART II.

TRUE THRUSHES.—*Turdi*.

CHAPTER I.

AMERICAN ROBIN.—*Turdus migratorius*.

This common and social resident, who is as familiarly known to our countrymen as his namesake, the Robin Red-breast of Europe, is highly esteemed throughout all sections of the country, as a cage-bird, and a most delightful songster.

His song, when in a wild state, is earnest, thrilling and powerful; but in the cage it seems to acquire much by education and association with civilized nature. In confinement, he readily imitates any sprightly tune; and Wilson describes one, who piped with affected solemnity the dull and serious psalm measure of "Old Hun-

dred." He is also possessed of considerable powers of mimicry, which is displayed in imitations of various birds of different tones and even characters of voice. Among these he is peculiar in selecting the mellow lay of the Blue-bird, the low whisper of the Pee-wee, and the plaintive call of the Whip-poor-will, although he finds a host of others as widely differing to imitate.

In the cage he seems jealous of approach, springing to the side of the cage, and with either real or affected anger, striking at the hand which is pointed through the wires. But when raised from the nest, as he usually is, for confinement, he becomes very tame, and will go in and out of the house, attend at table for his share of the dessert, and hop about with perfect freedom and unrestrained confidence. When thus domesticated, he feels uneasy, and shows considerable peevishness, if left alone or neglected. He will

likewise articulate plainly the name by which he is known.

His song is generally given in the early part of the day, and is most powerful about sunrise, bursting forth into full, loud and impassioned cadences.

His treatment is that of the Mockingbird and other Thrushes, and if well attended to he frequently survives to the age of twenty years.

PART II.

BLUE-BIRDS.—*Sialia*.

CHAPTER I.

BLUE-BIRD.—*Sialia Wilsonii*.

THIS beautiful and favourite, though rather mournful voiced songster, is another of the many interesting natives of our own sunny land. To great beauty of plumage and delightful tone of song, he adds a sociability and confidence of manner which at once endears him to the hearts of every one. He may be called a bird of passage, though he only departs from our homesteads when the severity of winter comes on, and even then in its midst, his sweet notes are heard from some lonely leafless tree, or high in air, a sweet harbinger of sunny days to come.

His colours are a bright azure blue on the back and wings, the primaries of which, with his tail, are black, and his breast is a rich ruddy chestnut hue. His abdomen and vent are a clear snowy-white. The female, who is valueless, is paler and greyer in hue, with the breast of a dusky olivaceous tint.

We cannot refrain from giving to our readers, the beautiful lines to this bird by our accomplished townsman, David Paul Brown, Esq. A gentleman, who, whether at the bar, of which he is one of the most distinguished ornaments, or in the higher walks of literature, is celebrated for the surpassing powers of eloquence, and the high tone of moral feeling which pervades his writings.

THE BLUE-BIRD.

O, do you hear the Blue-bird,
The herald of the spring—
How cheerily he tunes his pipe,
How blithely plumes his wing!

He breathes the native note of praise,
To the great Source of Good,
The trees are vocal with his lays,
Instinct with gratitude.

He mounts upon his downy wing,
He cleaves the ambient air,
Inhales the balmy breath of spring,
And wakes the world to prayer.

The fertile earth, at Nature's voice,
Unlock's her precious store,
And mount and vale and plain rejoice,
To greet the genial hour.

The purling stream, no longer bound
In winter's icy chain,
Sparkles beneath the sunny ray,
And freely flows again.

Flows—as life flows in infancy,
Pure, radiant and serene,
Through flow'rs and fields and fragrant groves
That animate the scene.

Flows on till winter checks its tide,
And robs it of its bloom,
Like death, that in our youthful pride,
Consigns us to the tomb.

Yet man, for whom these notes are sung,
For whom these waters flow,
For whom this vernal wealth abounds,
The *monarch* here below!

Man, only man! with lofty brow,
With stubborn heart and knee,
Looks o'er this smiling universe,
Ungrateful, Lord, to thee.

The perils of the winter past—
Spring, like a blooming bride,
The summer's and the autumn's hope,
All magnify his pride!

There—there he stands—a rebel still,
A recreant to that Power,
That murmurs in each limpid rill,
And breathes in every flower.

The Blue-bird may be readily obtained by means of trap-cages, though he thrives best in confinement when reared from the nest. As he is one of our most common songsters, his young may be found in almost any orchard in which a hollow or decayed apple tree can be seen. In the

holes of which, from six to ten feet from the ground, he always breeds. The young should be fed in the same manner as the young of the Mocking-bird, to whom he is nearly related; and when of a sufficient age, he may be kept upon the same food as it, or any other of the Thrush tribe. His diseases, as indeed those of all birds, may be treated like the Canary, or the last mentioned songster.

MODE OF CARRYING BIRDS TO A DISTANCE.

Should the fancier at any time desire to send a bird of any description to a distant part of the country, and wish it to go safely, he must procure a small wicker-fronted cage, about six or seven inches high inside, and seven or eight inches long, with a hard back, top and sides. This size is the most suitable, as it will prevent the bird from flying about and consequently injuring himself. When travelling from place to place, the front of the cage should be covered with a piece of gauze, which will allow the bird sufficient light to feed himself, and yet prevent him from being alarmed by the novelty of the surrounding objects. Instead of a water fount, a sponge should be put in one corner of the cage, on which a little fresh water should be poured every morning. The birds when requiring drink will

then press this with their bills, and so never suffer from thirst, which were a fountain placed in their cage, they would invariably do, as the water would be constantly spilling, and consequently many fine birds would be lost. The box containing the seed or other food may be permanently fastened at the side, or the seed may even be scattered over the bottom.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER I.

PARROT TRIBE.—*Psittaci*.

The Parrots, who are a widely esteemed and superb species of birds, are natives of the greater portion of the world. In North America we have but one kind, the Carolina Parakeet, (*Conurus Carolinensis*,) one of the most gorgeous of the whole magnificent tribe. This is a native of the Southern and Western States, and never found naturally in the North; although they are occasionally seen here when sent as a present by some southern friend, or brought for sale by sailors from the sea-coast towns.

This species readily becomes tame in confinement, although only then esteemed for his richness of plumage and acquired docility, as he possesses little or no talent in imitating the human voice. He will soon, however, learn to come when called, and answer to his name when addressed by his owner.

Various species of this splendidly plumaged race of birds, are found at all times for sale in the different bird-shops throughout the country, and at prices which depend entirely upon the education of the bird. This power, given by proper training, is at all times truly wonderful, and if not so well known would seem to be almost incredible. Among the many authenticated instances of acquirement of knowledge on the part of the Parrot, we give some of the most remarkable; though a volume might readily be filled upon this subject alone.

The first instance that we shall notice, is that of one of the common ash-grey co-

loured kinds, belonging to colonel O'Kelly, of Bristol, and for which he gave one hundred guineas, (nearly five hundred dollars.) This singularly talented bird, whistled not one, but a number of distinct and lengthy tunes, with the greatest precision and power, beating time with his right foot throughout his whole performance with all the exactitude of an accomplished musician. His ear during the air was remarkably correct, but if he occasionally produced a false note, he would immediately recommence the same bar, and then continue on to the end of the piece in a regular and exquisite manner, keeping time until its termination.

Besides this extraordinary musical talent, he would give his orders for the different articles of food of which he was most fond, in a manner which had the strongest appearance of perfect reason. This strangely accomplished bird lived to the age of thirty years, and when he died, a long obituary notice appeared in the

General Evening Post of October 9, 1802, from an old copy of which we extract the principal items. Colonel O'Kelly was extravagantly fond of his bird, and is said to have possessed as much affection for his favourite as a parent could have for a child. He had been frequently offered any price for the bird, but refused to part with him, and also declined many offers of 500 pounds a year from those who were desirous of making a public exhibition of his astonishing powers.

Goldsmith gives another instance of a talented Parrot, who belonged to Henry VII. of England, which is extremely amusing, and no doubt true. The bird was a resident of Westminster palace, and being constantly hung from a casement looking out upon the river Thames, learnt from the passing boatmen a strange variety of incongruous phrases. On one occasion, poor Poll tumbled into the river, and with a singular approach to reason, shouted out at the top of her voice "A

boat! a boat! twenty pounds for a boat!" A greedy waterman hearing this, hastily took up the bird and bearing it to the king, demanded the exorbitant sum the frightened bird had promised for its deliverance; a sum which was then much more valuable than now. The astonished monarch refused compliance, but agreed to leave the matter to the bird, who, upon being asked what the ferryman should have, instantly replied, "Give the knave a groat!"

Locke, in his excellent and unequalled "Essay upon Human Understanding," gives another instance of an educated and almost rational Parrot, whose powers were certainly of an astonishing character. This bird's reputation had become so great, that the then Regent of Brazil, Prince Maurice, with his suite, visited the bird in his apartment to witness the powers so widely circulated with praise by the neighbours of the owner. The Parrot sat for a short time, silently sur-

veying the group; but at last exclaimed in Portuguese, "What a company of white men are here!" His owner, pointing to the Prince, inquired who he was? "Oh!" said the bird, "some General or other!" The Prince then casually asked him, "From what place do you come?" He answered instantly, "From Marignan!" "And to whom do you belong?" "To a Portuguese!" was the reply. "What do you do there?" again asked the Regent, astonished, to which the bird responded with great *naïveté*, "I look after chickens!" "You look after chickens," said the Prince, jeeringly. "Yes! I, I!" reiterated the Parrot, "and I know well enough how to do it!" and then immediately imitated the clucking call of a brood-hen to her chicks.

Another instance of a talented bird, who is now in Philadelphia, in a central portion of the city, who calls for his meals regularly, scolding harshly, if not instantly served, and laughingly calling, in imitation of the mother's voice, the names of the

different members of the family, who are daily deceived by its consummate talent of mimicry. This bird also has a very pleasant but noisy song, yet is unacquainted with anything like musical abilities.

The food of this variety of birds is of a mixed description. They may be given almost anything, except seasoned animal food, of which the family partake. However, bread and milk, potatoes boiled, cakes, raw or cooked meat without seasoning, scalded Indian-meal, and fruit of every kind may be allowed them, with plenty of water, which they drink immoderately. Hemp-seed may also be given to them occasionally.

Their diseases are of the same nature as the Canary and other birds, and the same modes of cure, but stronger in proportion, will suffice to restore them to health.

CHAPTER II.

DOVES.—*Columbæ*.

The most common, and the most prized variety of the Pigeon race, is the Ring, or as it is most frequently styled, the Turtle-dove. Of all the feathered tribe, none are regarded like them with such holy reverence, from the circumstance of one of the species having been the messenger who returned to the Ark, bearing in his bill the token of a subsidence of the waters; and of his being symbolical of the presence of the Most High. This feeling is carried to such an extent among the farmers of the interior of Pennsylvania, that the slaughter of the common American wild species, the Carolina Pigeon, (*Columba Carolinensis*,) whose flesh, by the by, is scarcely inferior to that of the Partridge, is esteemed a sacrilegious thing,

and forbidden by the patriarchs of the family, strongly, as a most awful crime. But, in the neighbourhood of our large cities, where civilization reigns supreme, the poor *Tourterelle* is shot down without compunction.

To the poet, the Dove has long been an object of devotion, calling into operation those fine springs of feeling which gush to overflowing, in his warmer and more benevolent heart. Perhaps one of the most beautiful and finished articles which ever fell from a poet's inspired pen, is that by our fellow countryman, Charles Sprague of Massachusetts, which we give for the gratification of our fair readers, deeming it a gem not more than equalled by the master minds of older ages.

THE WINGED WORSHIPPERS.

Gay, guiltless pair,
What seek ye from the fields of heaven?
Ye have no need of prayer,
Ye have no sins to be forgiven.

Why perch ye here?
Where mortals to their Maker bend!
Can your pure spirits fear
The God ye never could offend?

Ye never knew
The crimes for which we come to weep:
Penance is not for you,
Blessed wanderers of the upper deep.

To you 'tis given
To wake sweet Nature's untaught lays;
Beneath the arch of heaven
To chirp away a life of praise.

Then spread each wing,
Far, far above, o'er lakes and lands,
And join the choirs that sing
In yon blue dome not reared with hands.

Or, if ye stay
To note the consecrated hour,
Teach me the airy way,
And let me try your envied power.

Above the crowd,
On upward wings could I but fly,
I'd bathe in yon bright cloud,
And seek the stars that gem the sky.

'Twere heaven indeed,
Through fields of trackless light to soar,
On Nature's charm to feed,
And Nature's own great God adore.

Their food, in a wild state, consists wholly of grain and seeds, which undergoes, as with all the Pigeon tribe, a kind of softening in their crops before it enters into the vessels of the stomach, and these in the cage must form their sustenance. Broken corn, buckwheat, oats, wheat, rye, and canary and hemp-seeds may be given to them, observing at the same time to allow them plenty of coarse gravel, which they cannot live without, and a sufficiency of water, in a flat pan, daily in winter, and during the warm months twice or thrice a day.

They breed with the greatest ease in confinement, and the hen becomes so tame when sitting, that you may place your hand upon her, and plume her feathers without her evincing the slightest fear; this sociality, however, is common to all

the Pigeon tribe. They breed throughout the greater portion of the year, and though laying only two eggs, which are snow-white, at a time, increase with extreme rapidity. They should have a small box placed near the top of the cage, and be supplied with small twigs and hay, and a little wool, with which to form their nests.

Their song, if it may be so called, is a long and rather monotonous "coo," continued for a length of time, and of an extremely mournful character, yet when given the bird is always exulting in happiness, beside the cherished partner of his bosom.

CHAPTER III.

PARTRIDGE.—*Ortyx Virginiana*.

Of this favourite and sociable bird but little need be said, as all ages and condi-

tions are fully acquainted with his character and habits.

He is sometimes found in the cage, although his song consists only of the single call of "Bob-White," which is only given during the latter part of spring and the commencement of summer; but he is principally kept by benevolent sportsmen, for the purpose of being turned loose in the spring, in order to prevent the extreme possibility of the species, already too thin, becoming entirely exterminated in the vicinities of our large cities.

When kept in confinement, in numbers, they should be placed in a well-aired room, the floor of which should be strewed with coarse gravel, of which they are very fond, and large branches of the Virginia juniper layed along its sides, or placed in clumps, that they may shelter themselves on the approach of the feeder. If the last direction be not attended to, they will be apt to injure themselves in flying about, which they do very rapidly.

When first taken they are very wild, but in the course of a few weeks, become accustomed to the presence of the person having them in charge.

They should be plentifully supplied with water, in large flat pans, as they are fond of drinking and bathing frequently; and they should be fed on buckwheat, wheat, rye, broken corn, and occasionally a little hemp-seed.

The proper season of setting them free for breeding, is in the last of March, or early in April, if the season be open; and this must be done by placing a single pair in a cage at a time, and setting it with the door open on the edge of a thicket, or wood, near wide spread fields, the person having them concealing himself from view. They will then run out together and hide themselves, without being separated.

CONCLUSION.

And now, gentle and courteous reader, we come to bid you a farewell. May your progress through life be as pleasant, as our journey together through this little book has been to us. Go forth, and may a thousand pleasures await you in the forest, in the meadow, on the green hill side, or by the rill which dances and sings with delight as it passes through the flowery valley. And oh! look well to the feathered songsters, those missionaries of good feeling from the divinity of surrounding Nature, and a perception of all that is lovely and beautiful will spring up in your bosom.

Men may deceive you, Nature never will. As says the gifted poet, so truly and so well:—

"Oft have we learned by bitter deeds to deem
 Not always men are candid when they seem.
 Cowards oft courage, as a mantle, don;
 Liars talk loud their matchless truth upon;
 Those born ignobly own of birth no taint;
 And sinners hide them in the name of saint.
 Not so with Holy Nature; who is still,
 As she hath ever been and ever will,
 Governed by laws, by fixed unchanging rules,
 That mock the wise man's fathoming, and fool's;
 She still the same external visage wears,
 Or filled with sunny smiles, or dewy tears.
 Her every beauty to thy touch is free,—
 Mistress as well as mother she to thee."

THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH.

And with these reflections we close the
 subject, bidding our readers a kind fare-
 well.

THE END.

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