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THE AMERICAN
BIRD-KEEPER'S MANUAL;

OR DIRECTIONS FOR THE PROPER MANAGEMENT OF
AMERICAN AND FOREIGN SINGING BIRDS.

WITH PARTICULAR INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE

BREEDING OF CANARY BIRDS,
AND THE PROPER TREATMENT OF THEIR YOUNG.

TOGETHER WITH

SOME REMARKS UPON THE DISEASES
TO WHICH BIRDS ARE LIABLE—PREVENTION AND REMEDIES.

WITH A MINUTE DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS
OR MARKINGS OF THE DIFFERENT SEXES, SO AS TO BE ABLE
TO DISTINGUISH THE MALE FROM THE FEMALE.

By JAMES MANN,
TAXIDERMIST, DEALER IN BIRDS, NATURAL CURIOSITIES, ETC.

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P R E F A C E .

FROM my early days I have been an enthusiastic admirer of Birds, and have always considered these beautiful denizens of our woods and fields as the most interesting and delightful portion of animated nature. In a beautiful rural landscape it is the Birds that give life and vigor to the scene ; and when the passing breeze brings sweet sounds of harmony to the ear, it comes from those lovely feathered choristers who give animation and beauty to Nature.

It will be a pleasing reflection to me therefore, if I can aid and assist those that keep Birds in the proper management of them, and thereby increase the comfort and happiness of my feathered friends, from whom I have derived so much real pleasure.

In laying this little work before the public I redeem a pledge to many of my friends, (some of them years ago,) that I would at some time or other write something about the management of Birds ; they, no doubt, supposing as I do, that any person that has spent as

much time among Birds as I have, ought to know something about them.

I have endeavored to bring into notice some of our Birds, to which, as yet, little attention has been paid; which if found in Europe would be highly prized, and I have described some European Birds which have not as yet found their way here; nearly all the Birds described I have had in my possession, and I have laid down some plain rules for their proper treatment. For some time past I have been trying experiments on purpose to ascertain what is the most suitable food for them in a domestic state, and the result I now lay before you. If there are any of my readers who may think that my diet is too simple, and that there is not variety enough in it—that a bit of sweet cake is good for them, and a bit of sugar cannot hurt them, they are so fond of it,—to those I would say, that I know by experience that birds are like children, and that the simpler their food is, if natural, the better they will thrive.

J. M.

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BIRD-KEEPER'S MANUAL.

AMERICAN THRUSHES.

THE GRAY MOCKING BIRD.

THIS far-famed bird is unquestionably the prince and leader of the feathered choir. And for his power of imitation, compass of voice, and brilliancy of execution, has no compeer among all his tribe. Many years ago our transatlantic friends endeavored to set up their Nightingale in competition with the American Mocking Bird. Of the song of the Nightingale, from personal observation, we can give no opinion;* but it was then acknowledged that the song of the Mocking Bird was equal, if not superior to

* See Nightingale.

the notes of the Nightingale, in their utmost compass. Now, as it is known to all who ever heard both, that the imitations of this bird are true to life, and equal, if not superior, to the originals, the great superiority of the Mocking Bird, as a songster, must appear evident to all; and, indeed, it is no longer disputed, for the best European judges have long ago yielded the palm of victory to the American songster; and it is not only in his own native forests that he reigns triumphant as a vocalist, for we have seen him in a room, surrounded with the best American and foreign songsters, not only defy all competition, but by some sudden gush of melody actually awe them all into silence. And we have no hesitation in saying, that the American Mocking Bird stands alone in the world, unrivalled as a songster. This bird loses little if any of its musical powers, in the cage. Birds, when kept for some years, I think rather improve in strength and fulness of tone. Some birds will sing in the night, during summer and autumn.

We will now proceed to inform our readers, from our own experience and the best sources, how to keep in good health, and make happy, this delightful bird. It is by no means so difficult to keep this bird as is generally imagined. Feed

your bird regularly; keep your cage clean and dry; do not let his victuals get stale or sour. If these simple rules are attended to, the Mocking Bird will live, on an average, as long as any bird that is kept in a cage.

There are various diets adopted for this bird. At the South, the general food is egg and potatoe mixed; here at the North it is Indian meal and milk, and I knew a gentleman in Maine who kept a very fine bird for three years; he fed it upon eggs and beef alone. It died moulting, occasioned, as he supposed, by a fall from its perch when in that state, owing to a sudden jar given to the cage.

I have tried all those different modes of feeding, and I am inclined to believe, that the meal and milk is the best, at least for this section of the country. In summer I scald the milk, which prevents it from souring so soon; and even then it is well to give your bird a little fresh at noon in very warm weather. I give them likewise about half of the yolk of a hard boiled egg twice a week, and as often a bit of beef, (the lean); it should be laid on a table and scraped with a knife, which frees the beef from the muscles; it is then like a paste, and they can eat without the danger of suffocation, by swallowing too large a

piece; about the bulk of a hazel nut is enough for the day.

They are very fond of what is commonly called meal worms, which are found in pigeon-houses, and grain stores. When I have them, I give a bird two or three a day, but you cannot procure them at all times even if you breed them,* and the beef is a good substitute; and when you keep a bird, it is well to accustom him to eat what you can procure at all seasons of the year. Berries in summer, and small black currants in winter, and a sweet ripe apple, cut in two, and one half put into the cage so as they can eat out of the heart of it, is highly beneficial to them.

About the end of July or the beginning of Au-

* To breed meal worms, take a jar or small pail that will contain four or five quarts; put in it about two quarts of manure from a pigeon-house, a handful of meal worms, and about a pint of Indian meal. Put on the top of this some woollen rags, and tie a piece of cloth over the top; then put it in a dry and warm place. Then you must have some worms to begin with; (but by the following method, taken from an English work, which I have not yet tried, you can do without :) In case you cannot procure meal worms, and they are sometimes very scarce, buy, or beg, from a vessel returned from a long voyage, some stale ship biscuit, soak it in cold water, squeeze it dry, and put it in a covered vegetable dish in a closet, or other warm place. In a few weeks you will obtain an ample supply of meal worms.

gust, this bird begins to moult or shed his old and worn out feathers, to be replaced by new. (Of this general law of nature among the feathered tribe, I will speak more fully hereafter.) The sooner this takes place the better; for when it is retarded until the weather gets cool, it is apt to be protracted; and sometimes the new feathers come out twisted, and not smooth, which is very annoying, as it spoils the appearance of the bird, if not his song. If there is no appearance of the bird beginning to shed his feathers about this time, give him plenty of ripe berries. I have found by experience, that this food hastens the operation, and it is highly necessary, both for the health and beauty of the bird, that it should moult early.

Give your bird water in a shoal vessel, every morning, to wash. This bird is not so fond of bathing as some other birds. When I have had a bird that did not use the bath, I have put near him a bird that washed regularly, every morning, and it has had the desired effect of inducing him to do likewise. Keep plenty of gravel in the bottom of your cage.

As female birds generally have no song, and in procuring singing birds it is highly important to know how to distinguish the male from the

female, I shall in this work endeavor to give a minute description of the general characteristics or markings which distinguish the sexes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES.—The white on the wing of a full grown male spreads over the whole of the primaries, or longest wing feathers, as well as the coverts or feathers that cover the shoulders; it reaches also well down on the wing below the coverts. The two outside feathers of the tail are white, and the others, except the two middle ones, are tipped with white.

On the female the white is only on seven of the primaries, and is less pure, and does not descend so far down, and comes farther down on the broad than the narrow side of the feather.

LOCATION.—Found on the Mississippi and Ohio. In the Southern States — Resident.

BLACK-CAPPED MOCKING BIRD, OR CAT BIRD.

This bird is familiarly known to every boy in New England, from its very peculiar call while partly concealed in its favorite bramble, or blackberry bush, which exactly resembles the cry of a

young kitten in distress. He is not at all suspicious or afraid of you; and on your nearer approach will hasten to occupy a more conspicuous situation in the bush, and jerking up his tail, salute you with his favorite call. He is truly a mocking bird, endeavoring to imitate every bird he hears. Industrious and persevering, he will repeat his imitations over and over again. But unfortunately he is deficient in clearness and strength of voice, and therefore fails in many of his imitations. I have often listened to him with great pleasure, while probably perched over my head on some sapling, trying hard to imitate every bird he heard, and seeming at times to get quite excited when he failed in doing so to his satisfaction. He is, however, no contemptible songster, and has some natural notes, which he sings very sweetly in the cage.

Food. — I have kept them in good health on meal and milk, a little bruised hempseed, and a bit of beef, occasionally scraped, as for the Mocking bird.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male may be distinguished from the female, by the red under the tail being brighter on the male. Otherwise they are very much alike.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States. In the Southern — Resident.

FERRUGINOUS THRUSH, OR BROWN THRASHER.

This is a handsome, lively, and active bird, and in length of tail and shape bears a strong resemblance to the Gray Mocking Bird. In the Southern States he is called the French Mocking Bird; but his notes are not imitative, as this name would seem to imply, but are, I believe, solely his own. They are clear, and in some birds* loud, and full of variety. — They are the largest of our Thrushes, and their notes bear some resemblance to the English Thrush or Mavis. They are, upon the whole, rather distinguished songsters, and I am glad to see that their value is beginning to be appreciated, and there are a good many more of them kept in cages now than were formerly.

This bird shows a remarkable instance of what would certainly appear to be the possession of reasoning powers, or faculties. It is very fond

* There is a difference in the singing of birds of the same species; some are much better singers than others, even in their wild state. This difference may depend upon the age of the bird; the old birds may be the best singers.

of hard crumbs of bread; if very small it will swallow them as they are; if larger it will pick them up and carry them to the water dish, and drop them in the water, wait until they are moistened, then take them out, and, if they are very large, pick them to pieces; the others they will swallow, as there is now no danger of their hurting their gullet, or sticking in their passage down. This I have often been an eye-witness of, and so may any person who has one of those birds in his possession. Is this reason, or is it instinct? At all events it is exactly what we would do, if placed under the same circumstances.

Food. — Meal and milk, and a bit of scraped beef, two or three times a week; berries in the summer, and black currants in the winter. They should have plenty of gravel in the bottom of the cage, or in a box, as they are fond of dusting themselves in it, like the Sky Lark. This bird suffers severely in the moulting; they should then have more nourishing food, which all birds require when in that state. Give them a few meal worms, if you have them, if not a few ground worms. Change their meal to bread and milk twice a week, and give them berries and ripe apple.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the whole of the upper parts, and the tail, which is long and rounded at the end, of a brownish red. There are two bars of white on the wing, and the lower parts are of a yellowish white, with long pointed spots of black. The female has the white on its wing much narrower, and has fewer spots on the breast; otherwise they are very much alike.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States. In the Southern and Western — Resident.

THE RED-BREASTED THRUSH OR ROBIN.

This is a hardy, vigorous, and well known bird, handsome in shape, beautiful in his plumage, and graceful in his attitudes; and, although he is a heavy bird of his size, there is none possessed of more agility, and who will leap lighter on their perch than the Robin. It is delightful to hear him salute the opening morn with his fine mellow note; he will also imitate other birds, and a good singing Robin is a valuable cage bird, for it is not every bird that will sing in a cage, at least the first and second year. I have at present a beautiful male bird who was a year

old last spring; I have had him all summer, and never have heard him sing a note; I intend to keep him until next spring, to see what he will do then; I have had others who have sung very well the first year. The young are pretty hard to raise, being subject to the cramp in their legs and other parts of their bodies. I have found it very beneficial to them to put two or three inches of dry saw-dust in the bottom of the cage; they seem to enjoy it very much, and when put in the sun would lay down in it on their side, and stretch themselves out at full length. I was very successful in raising them last spring by this treatment. Put plenty of gravel in the bottom of the cage of the old bird, and, when it can be procured, a piece of turf, of which they are very fond. They are, when grown, a hardy bird.

FOOD. — Meal and milk, a bit of beef, and plenty of water to wash with is all they require.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is much redder on the breast than the female, the gray and white is also brighter, the bill is tinged with black, but ultimately it becomes pure yellow.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States, and in them all nearly Resident.

WOOD OR SONG THRUSH.

This is a shy and solitary bird, but a charming songster, frequenting the most lonely and secluded portions of our forests. They are never seen but in pairs or singly, and oftener heard than seen. The male is generally discovered on the top of some high tree in the morning, or towards the evening, where he pours forth his few but very sweet notes, making the woods echo with his melody. I have not yet had an opportunity of testing the singing properties of this bird in a cage, as I have not been able to procure one alive, or a nest, although I have offered a high premium for either. The first I ever saw, and which I wished to obtain, as a specimen for preservation, gave me a pursuit of more than two hours through the woods before I obtained it. It resembles the European Song Thrush more than any other of our Thrushes, but it is much smaller in size.

Food. — We have never had the pleasure of feeding this bird in a cage, but we hope soon to

have;* there is no doubt but it can be fed like other Thrushes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — In the whole genus of Thrushes, the male and female bear a strong resemblance one to another; in this species it is so close that we are unable to give any distinguishing marks either in size or plumage.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States. Many of them winter in the Southern States. Not abundant.

There are two or three more Thrushes found within the territory of the United States, but they have little or no song, with the exception of the Water Thrush (of Wilson), which is said to sing sweetly; some of them winter in the Southern States. Here they are very rare. They breed in the Fur countries, and are smaller in size than the Song Thrush.

* We hope that some of our young friends in the country, who see this, will endeavor to find a nest of this bird; directions for raising the young of which and other birds, they will find in this volume.

EUROPEAN THRUSHES.

THE ENGLISH BLACK THRUSH, OR BLACK BIRD.

WHEN clothed in his fine, jet black and glossy plumage, with his bright yellow bill, this is really a beautiful bird. He is familiar and docile; he can be taught to whistle a tune distinctly and clearly, and there is probably no bird possessed of such melodious and soft flute-like notes as the English Black Bird. I have heard one in a cage, early in the morning, in a large city, whistling "Over the water to Charlie," with great truth and harmony, and so loud as to be heard distinctly half a mile off. If you wish to teach your bird a tune, cover over the cage with a cloth about half an hour before sunset; then go near the cage, and whistle the tune you wish him to learn. Go over it slowly, from beginning to end, then repeat, say a dozen of times, or more. If he is a young bird you may hear him commence it in a few days. Be careful to whistle the tune, and nothing else, and if you whistle to him through the day, let it be the same tune.

Food.—My readers will perceive that I recommend meal and milk as a staple diet for all Thrushes, and what is called soft-billed birds; that is, all birds that require soft food. It is because experience has taught me, that it is preferable to any other food which can be given. Bread and milk, and crackers and milk, is the common food of those birds in England, but it is too purgative for birds, as a constant diet. Last summer I had a Black Bird brought to me, which had been four or five weeks imported, and had been fed on bread and milk. It really looked miserable; he was dirty, and his plumage was matted and wet; the cage also was wet, although the person who brought it had taken pretty good care of the bird, and regularly cleaned the cage. I immediately commenced feeding him upon meal and milk. The first day he ate very sparingly of it, and threw a considerable part of it out of the cage; the next day he ate a little more, and threw none of it out; the third day he ate heartily of it, and in three or four days he looked better, and was probably in better health than ever he had been. I had him about three months in my possession, and when he left it there never was a prettier Black Bird in a cage, and he was in full song. His meal

and milk, and about twice a week a little beef, prepared as for the Mocking Bird, was all he had. I use the yellow, or northern corn meal, in preference to the white, or southern. Meal and milk, a bit of beef, scraped, once or twice a week, berries in summer, and a bit of ripe apple and a few black currants, occasionally, in winter, are sufficient.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird is easily distinguished from the female. The male is all black, the bill a bright yellow. The female upper parts are amber brown, throat a dirty white, lower parts yellowish brown, bill brown, tinged with the fine yellow of the male.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Britain, and Resident.

ENGLISH THRUSH, OR MAVIS.

This is a most excellent songster, and comes nearer, in the clearness and melody of its notes, to the great American musician, the Mocking Bird, than perhaps any other bird known. — They will also imitate other birds. I have one, at present, which, there is no doubt, has profited in

that respect, by being near a Mocking Bird, a very superior singer. But their own natural notes are delightful, resembling the Ferruginous Thrush, but much finer, and fuller in tone. In shape and color it resembles the Wood Thrush, as has been observed, but it is larger in size; it has also the same attachment to an elevated position when singing; and in the North of Scotland, where high trees are rather scarce, he will get on the pinnacle of a high rock, to pour forth his song and cheer his mate, who is sitting far below, making the surrounding hills echo with his melody.

FOOD. — Keep plenty of gravel in the bottom of your cage, and diet the same as for the Black Bird, with the addition of, about twice a week, half of a hard boiled egg, of which they are very fond, and which I think is beneficial to them.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — There is as much resemblance in the male and female of this bird, as in the Wood Thrush. The only difference is in the dulness of the orange color, and the spots on the breast.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Britain, and Resident.

THE MISSEL-THRUSH.

This is the largest of its tribe, but it is far inferior to the former in song. Its notes are few, but musical, and pretty loud. In Britain, some years ago, it was rather a rare bird, but it is now more abundant. It is distinguished from other Thrushes by its size, and by the pure white on the under part of the wing.

FOOD. — Diet the same as the former.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — There is little difference between the male and female, in size, or markings. The male is rather a brighter yellow on the lower part of the body.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe, Resident.

ROCK THRUSH.

This is a very rare bird, of whose good qualities I am incapable of judging by observation, having never seen one; nor do I believe it has ever been brought to this country; but, as it is a

very good songster, and it may find its way here, we will tell what we know about it. It is said to be a very musical Thrush, and can be taught to whistle tunes, and even to articulate words, like the English Starling. It is found in the North of Scotland, where it builds its nest on inaccessible rocks ; also, on the Alps and Pyrenees. It is highly prized, and an individual will bring in London as high as forty dollars.

FOOD. — In feeding, it would seem to require a good deal of care and attention, as it feeds more on insects, in its wild state, than any of our Thrushes, it is recommended to be kept the same as the Nightingale.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — It is smaller in size than the English Thrush. Upper parts grayish blue, lower parts orange, and spotted like other Thrushes. The female not so bright in color as the male.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe, but very rare, Resident.

AMERICAN FINCHES.

INDIGO FINCH.

THIS little Bird has two very good qualifications; it is beautiful and musical. It is a pretty little Bird, and a very sweet singer. It has also another characteristic peculiar to itself. It does not seem to be the least annoyed when exposed to the rays of a summer sun. During the heat of the day, in summer, most of our birds retire to the shade, and stop singing. But I have seen this little bird sit for an hour or two, in an exposed situation, in the meridian heat of a July sun, piping its sweet little notes without intermission. It is a very clean and docile bird in a cage, and has still another recommendation, that the longer you keep it the prettier it grows. I had one in my possession which had been kept for four years in a cage, and it was the most beautiful Indigo Bird I ever saw in my life; it was exactly like a piece of bright polished indigo, and was also a superior songster.

Food. — A mixture of hemp and Canary seed,

water to drink and wash, and gravel in the bottom of the cage, is all they require.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird is easily distinguished from the female ; the male being all blue, the female a grayish brown on the back, the lower parts clay color.

LOCATION. — Found, in summer, throughout the United States ; in the autumn, they migrate south.

NONPAREIL, OR PAINTED BUNTING.

This beautiful bird is a little larger in size, and somewhat inferior in song to the Indigo Finch, but what it lacks in song it makes up in the richness and variety of its plumage. The male is elegantly marked with vermilion, blue, yellow and green. They are very docile, and both male and female, when in full feather, are lovely cage birds. The male has a sweet note, it bears some resemblance to the Indigo, but is weaker and more concise. The planters on the Mississippi breed them in their aviaries, and I think they might be raised here ; but they require more care in winter than any of our Finches, as they are

very susceptible of cold. They have been crossed with the Canary here, and make a beautiful variety.

FOOD. — I have kept them in good health and fine plumage on a mixture of Canary and one third hemp seed, and a bit of ripe apple occasionally, of which they are very fond.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird is easily distinguished, dressed in his gaudy colors; the female is of an olive green above, lower parts of a dusky straw color, cheeks and neck tinged with green.

LOCATION. — Found, in the summer, in Louisiana, the Carolinas, and on the Mississippi; in the autumn, they migrate south.

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH, OR YELLOW BIRD.

This little bird bears a strong resemblance to his European prototype, not quite so richly dressed, and somewhat inferior in song; nevertheless, he is a sprightly and lively bird; he is docile and familiar, and a sweet little songster, and if kept

some time beside Canary birds will pick up their notes. His own natural notes bear a resemblance to the European Goldfinch, but they are inferior in tone, feebler, and more concise; in his habits he is the same, and is fond of the same food. They are fond of the seeds of the thistle. In districts where the thistle abounds in Europe, so does the Goldfinch, and where that plant is found in the United States, there you will find the American Goldfinch. If his transatlantic brother has a richer dress, he has the advantage of him, by having two — a summer dress and a winter one. On the approach of winter, the male puts off his beautiful lemon yellow color, and black wings and tail, and dons the sober olive-brown of the female, and in spring resumes it again. They are easily reconciled to confinement, and will sing a short time after being caught.

FOOD. — They are very fond of hemp seed. I feed them one part hemp and part Canary seed; a blade of lettuce or a bit of ripe apple is beneficial.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male in summer, is easily distinguished from the female;

the body of the male is bright yellow, wings and tail black; the female is all over olive brown.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States in summer; late in the autumn, they migrate south.

PURPLE FINCH, OR RED LINNET.

The birds of the United States may be divided into two general classes, summer birds and winter birds. The first class visit us in the spring, from the regions of the South, for the purpose of incubation; that duty being performed, the young fledged, and the old birds recruited, and their old feathers replaced by new, they leave us for more congenial climes to spend their winter, and return again in the spring. The second class having performed the same duty in the Northern regions, visit us to escape the rigors of the winter, again to return north in the spring. This bird's migrations do not extend so far north as some of our visitors, who have been found as far north as has yet been explored. The Purple Finch is a strong and vigorous bird, and a very good songster. They have a very fine warbling note, continued to a considerable length, not unlike a Ca-

nary bird, but not so loud ; they have also a kind of a call note, louder and very pleasant. They have been crossed with the Canary, the male Finch with the hen Canary, and the produce is a very fine vigorous and loud-singing mule bird.

FOOD. — They are a hardy bird, and will thrive well on hemp and Canary. half of each, and plenty of gravel in the bottom of the cage ; this should never be omitted, as it is very necessary for all birds, especially those who live upon seeds, for the proper digestion of their food.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — There is some difference of opinion as to the distinguishing markings of the male and female of this bird ; there are some gray and others red, and it is supposed by some, that there are two different species, and by others, that the gray ones are all females. The first is not correct ; they are the same species. And as to the second, I have proved by dissection, that some of the gray ones are males. The truth, I think is, that the gray ones, the males at least, are birds of the first year, as most of our birds are three, and some of them four years, before they arrive at their full plumage. The old females may be gray, but at all

events, the old males are a dark blood red on the head, breast, and neck, which turns after the first moulting in the cage to a dark golden yellow. They are much wilder than some others of our winter visitants, the cause may be their breeding in more populous districts, as they do not go so far north as others, (as has been observed,) but they can be tamed and thrive well, and are contented in a domestic state.

LOCATION. — Found in the Middle and Northern States in the winter and spring; in summer, to the Northward of this.

SONG FINCH, OR SPARROW.

If not the best musical performer that visits us from the South, there is none that meets a heartier welcome in New England than the Song Sparrow. While winter yet lingers, and seems loth to depart, and while yet our fields are mottled with patches of snow, and spots of bare earth, and Boreas, with his surly blast, still sweeps over our land, perched on an isolated shrub, or on the still almost snow-covered fence, the Song Sparrow pours forth his pleasing and

welcome notes, which proclaims that the reign of stern winter is about over, and that genial spring is about to return to gladden the earth. It is the first songster in the spring, and its notes are pleasing to the ear; and it is the earliest, and by far the sweetest songster of all our Sparrows.

FOOD.—It thrives well in a cage, fed on hemp and Canary seed, and soon becomes very tame.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES.—It is very difficult to distinguish the male from the female of this bird. The male is rather brighter in color.

LOCATION.—Found throughout the United States. Winters in the Southern States.

TOWHE BUNTING, OR SWAMP ROBIN.

This is a beautiful, and very familiar bird. He will allow you to walk close up to him, while engaged in his favorite occupation of scratching among the leaves for seeds, and the larvæ of insects. From which the male will mount to the top of some small tree, or high bush, where

he will pour out his simple but musical notes, for an hour at a time. While thus engaged, with his mottled black and white plumage, and his splendid long tail, he has a very elegant appearance.

Food. — He can be kept, and will thrive well in a cage: it should be a middling large one. Fed on one-third hemp and two-thirds Canary seed, with, twice or thrice a week, a small bit of beef, cut in very small pieces, or prepared, which is better, the same as for the Mocking Bird.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird is easily distinguished from the female; she being reddish brown where the male is black, and the white is not so pure.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States in summer. In the autumn migrates south.

LESSER RED POLL FINCH, OR LINNET.

This is another of our winter visitants, who extends his migrations from the north over both continents. Almost all of the birds who visit us

in the winter, are tame and unsuspicious, allowing a person to walk close up to them, when feeding, without appearing to be interrupted. The cause may be, their being reared in those remote northern regions, far from the abodes of man, they have not that distrust or fear of him, which they have in populous countries. This little bird is peculiarly tame and docile, and it will begin eating immediately after being caught, if put in a cage with food. Their note is very pleasing, and they may be taught to draw their seed and water, like the Goldfinch. After the first moulting the red on the head and breast become a golden-yellow like the Purple Finch.

FOOD. — This is a hardy little bird, and may be easily kept on a mixture of hemp and Canary seed.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is easily distinguished from the female. The female is destitute of red on the breast.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe and America, during the winter. In summer, in the Northern Regions.

FOX-COLORED FINCH, OR SPARROW.

This is a plump and pretty bird, and is another of our winter visitants from the North. It is tame like the others; is a large bird of its species, and being of a beautiful fox-color, it looks well in a cage. Its call is musical and loud, and it has some very fine low warbling notes.

Food. — It is a hardy and strong bird, and will thrive well on hemp and Canary seed. If it gets too heavy, and does not take exercise enough, withdraw the hemp, and feed on Canary alone. Give it plenty of gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male and female are very much alike, differing only in the male being brighter in color, especially about the shoulders.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the Northern and Middle, and, some seasons, the Southern States, during the fall and winter. Early in the spring leaves for the North.

SNOW BUNTING.

This is a bird who breeds in vast numbers in the solitary regions of the North; and on the approach of winter migrates southward, on both Continents. They are found in the North of Europe, and in the Northern and Middle States, and some seasons as far south as Maryland, in the winter. They generally come with our first snow, and may be seen then in the vicinity of Boston, and attract attention from their curious appearance, being mottled black, white, and brown. They have some very sweet and musical notes.

Food. — They will live in a cage, but must be kept cool in warm weather. They may be fed on hemp and Canary, with a portion of rapeseed. They soon become tame, and reconciled to confinement.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is larger than the female, and there is no other way to distinguish them, the colors are so various, and they are so much alike, that is, generally speaking, in the colors; but there are hardly two of them which are exactly alike in the markings.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the extreme northern regions in summer ; in winter, found in the North of Europe, and North America.

SNOW BIRD.

This little bird, like the former, visits us in great numbers from the north, on the approach of winter. They migrate extensively all over the country, from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico. Their summer migrations north are also very extensive. They arrive at Hudson's Bay about the first of June, in great numbers, and, after resting there a few days, they proceed farther north to breed. They have a very sweet, low note, and thrive very well in a cage.

FOOD. — They had better be fed on Canary seed alone. As they are inclined to get too fat in the cage, they may have also a portion of rape seed.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has the upper parts a deep slate color, lower parts pure white. The female differs in not having the colors so bright and pure.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States, in winter. Summer residence, in the Northern Regions.

WHITE CROWNED BUNTING.

This is a very beautifully marked species, and in Massachusetts rather rare, as it breeds to the northward of us. I have never seen but one in a cage; it was an elegant bird, and sang delightfully. The author of the Arctic Zoölogy says of it, in Hudson's Bay, where it is common, "it is silent in its flight, but when it perches it sings melodiously." It is found, also, in the State of Maine, where, I believe, it is more common.

FOOD. — Canary, and about one-third hemp seed; plenty of gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — This bird is longer than the Purple Finch. The male has the crown of the head pure white, with a line of black from each nostril; below that another line of white. Chin white, upper parts pale, ash streaked on the back, with brown and white; lower parts, below the breast, white. The female is smaller in size; the white on the head is less

pure; the black is brownish, and less of it, and the ash color on the breast is brownish.

LOCATION. — Found from Massachusetts, (where a few may breed,) northward. Migrates south in winter.

COWPEN FINCH, OR COWBIRD.*

This bird, in its habits, differs from all the birds which are known to naturalists on the continent of America; and it is rather a remarkable coincidence that there is one, on the continent of Europe, which has the same habits, and only one. The Cowpen Finch, or Cowbird of America and the common Cuckoo of Europe, build no nests of their own, but lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, and adopt other birds as foster parents for their young. There are several birds' nests which are appropriated by the Cowbird as receptacles for its young. the owners of which are generally smaller birds than the Cowbird, the egg of which (there is only one deposited in a nest) is hatched two or three days sooner; the young Cowbird then manages to exclude all the eggs of the legitimate owner, and takes sole possession of the

* It is so named from its habit of following the cows in pastures.

premises, which, when it is about a week old, it fills completely up.* I have seen the young Cowpen Finch in the nest of the American Goldfinch, the White-eyed Vireo, and Maryland Yellow Throat; and there are three or four more whose nests it selects for the purpose of incubation.

This cannot by any means be termed a songster; but if not famous for song he is, and will be, celebrated in the history of American birds, as being in his habits the only exception (as far as is known) to the common laws of nature which govern his tribe, on this continent.

Although the note of this bird is not at all attractive, being a kind of chattering, they are a very pretty bird, and they keep themselves neat and clean in a cage. Some years ago I saw one that an elderly lady had kept for three years in a cage, as she said, for the history that was attached to it. It was a male, jet black, with purple and violet reflections, and was in fine plumage; it was quite a favorite with the old lady.

* It is supposed by some that on the young Cowbird being hatched, the proprietors of the nest remove the eggs. It is said, that the Cuckoo (the eggs there being all hatched at the same time) hustles the other young out of the nest, or gets them on its back and jerks them out. In whatever way it is brought about, it is certain that the other young birds with the Cuckoo, and the eggs with the Cowbird disappear, and the foundlings become the sole occupants of the premises.

FOOD. — They are hardy and easily kept on the same food as a Canary bird.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is black with purple or violet, and sometimes green reflections; the head and neck are generally of a deep drab, but in the bird mentioned above, the head and neck were jet black also. The female is a fine deep brown, lighter below.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States; also to the northward. Migratory. Numbers winter in the Southern States.

EUROPEAN FINCHES.

GOLDFINCH.

THIS is one of the most beautiful of the European cage birds. Besides the beauties of its plumage, it is a neat and clean little cage bird, and a sweet songster. It also possesses other good qualities; it is docile, and apt to be taught, obedient to the call of its master or mistress, and

capable of forming strong attachments to them. There is a resemblance between it and the American Goldfinch in its manners and habits, and its partiality for the same food, as has been observed. It may be taught (the American also) to draw their seed and water, and they are easier taught this than any other birds I know of; they use their feet so nimbly, in holding on to the chain or cord to which their little buckets are suspended. The European is the aptest scholar; it is also superior in the beauty of the plumage, and likewise in its song, which, in some old birds, is very fine. They will imitate the Canary's notes, and also pair with them, the male Goldfinch with the yellow Canary hen; the produce is sometimes marked with the fine colors of the Goldfinch, and they make, I think, the most beautiful and best singing mules that can be bred from the Canary. The American will also pair with a Canary, but I do not think there is any improvement in the produce, either in the color of the plumage or the song.

Food. — I have kept these birds in good health and spirits, (drawing their seed and water, and singing alternately,) on about half Canary and half hemp seed, with lettuce, cabbage, or ripe

apple freely ; plenty of green stuff is beneficial to them.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male and female of this bird are easily distinguished — that is, year old birds ; a young bird has some resemblance to the female. The female has the crimson around the bill much smaller and fainter, the black stripe round the head (or bridal, as it is called,) is brown in the female, and her body is brown where the male is black.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe — Resident.

BULLFINCH.

This beautiful bird is universally admired both for its wonderful and musical powers, and its mild and inoffensive manners. It can be taught to whistle airs and melodies distinctly and accurately, with a soft and flute-like tone. It is also very tractable and obedient, and can be easily learned to come at the call of its master or mistress, and sit upon their finger and whistle a popular air or waltz. Its natural notes are also

soft, sweet, and musical; it is, therefore, a general favorite, especially with the ladies. Those that are taught are called Piping Bullfinches, and are imported from England and Germany; they are commonly taught with a bird organ; but the voice, and whistling or a flageolet, are recommended as superior. The Bullfinch will pair with a Canary, a tame hen Bullfinch with a spirited male Canary. The produce is a soft and very musical singing mule.

Food. — I have kept these birds in good health upon Canary and rape seed, and occasionally a little hemp seed; but the last must be given to them very sparingly, as these birds take but little exercise in a cage, and like some old gentlemen, they are naturally inclined to get corpulent. Some feed them on rape alone, but the Canary makes a little more variety for them, and even a very little hempseed at intervals I do not think is hurtful. It is said, that this bird's plumage may be altogether changed to black by being fed upon hempseed alone; this I rather doubt. I once saw a Sky Lark, which hung in its cage from the roof of a large apothecary's store; it was a favorite bird, and a fine singer; it had grown quite black. As the person that owned the bird

had kept it a good many years, I gave as a cause old age; but the old gentleman said it was his opinion, that the change of color was brought on by the bird's inhaling the effluvia of the drugs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The upper parts and tail of the male of this bird (with the exception of the shoulders, which are a bluish gray) are a rich glossy black; the cheeks, throat, and under parts a delicate red; the rump, vent, and under tail coverts, pure white. The female has the upper parts more of a brownish tint; the red on the breast is also brownish; it has not the beautiful clearness of the male in any of the colors.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe—Resident.

CHAFFINCH.

This is a beautiful, lively, and active bird, and has some very sprightly, warbling notes. It is very highly prized in Germany, so much so, that it would seem, from the way they speak of it, that there is a Chaffinch mania prevailing in that country, somewhat like the Tulip mania which

raged in Holland some years ago.* The following is an extract from a German work, on the history of this bird, and my readers may judge for themselves:—"Ruhl is a large manufacturing village in Thuringia, the inhabitants of which, mostly cutlers, have such a passion for the Chaffinches, that some have gone ninety miles from home, to take, with bird-lime, one of these birds, distinguished for its song, and have given one of their cows for a fine songster; from which has arisen the common expression, —such a Chaffinch is worth a cow. A common workman will give a louis d'or, (sixteen shillings sterling,) for a Chaffinch he admires, and willingly live on bread and water to gain the money. An amateur cannot hear one that sings in a superior style the double trill of the Hartz, without being in an ecstasy. I have heard them say that one which knew this melody perfectly, certainly can converse, from its pronouncing the syllables so distinctly." There must certainly be a good deal of imagination in all this, or the organs of hearing in Germans must be superior to other men, as the translator of this work, who is a lover and keeper of birds himself, says, in a note: "The notes of the wild Chaffinches in this country (England) are finer

* Bechstein's Cage Birds.

than any cage ones I ever heard in Germany." And again, the same gentleman says, "In England they are very little prized, and but seldom kept."

I have had several of these birds, and, although their note was very pleasant, they could by no means be ranked as superior songsters. Some time ago I had one; whether it came from Thuringia or Yorkshire, I cannot tell, as it was caught in the vicinity of Boston, having escaped from some cage, no doubt. The young man who caught it, brought it to me to find out what kind of a yankee bird he had got, as he had never seen one like it before. I put it in a cage with some Canary birds, and it agreed very well with them. It was in fine plumage, very lively and active, and a male bird. It eat the same as the Canaries, was in excellent health all the time I had it, nearly three months, and it would sometimes sit and warble its notes for an hour at a time.

The male of this bird will pair with a hen Canary.

FOOD. — Feed it the same as Canaries.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of

this bird has the forehead black, the crown, nape and sides of the neck grayish blue; the back deep brown, the breast reddish brown. The female is smaller, the head, neck and back, a grayish brown, the breast a grayish red.

LOCATION.—Found throughout Europe—Resident.

GREEN FINCH, OR LINNET.

This is a strong, hardy, and robust bird, and a pretty fair musical performer. He is remarkably docile, very easily tamed, and can be so completely domesticated, as to be bred like the Canary, in a cage or aviary. The male will also imitate the notes of other birds; and although rather difficult to teach, he is possessed of a very retentive memory, and will not forget what he once learns.

This bird will pair freely with the Canary. Either the male or female Finch, with the female or male Canary, and will produce a strong singing mule bird.

FOOD.—This bird is easily kept. Food the same as Canary birds.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — Upper parts of the male a yellowish green; lower parts shading almost to white. The female is smaller, the upper parts brownish, lower parts whitish. Breast ash color, with faint yellow spots.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe — Resident.

GRAY LINNET.

The song of this bird consists of several lively strains, which succeed each other with great harmony, in a sweet and soft tone. It can also be taught tunes by whistling them to it, like the Bullfinch, and will imitate the notes of other birds; and is much prized in its native country, as a cage bird. As is the case with a good many of our American birds, the Gray Linnet does not arrive at maturity, either in its song or plumage, until it is at least three years old, which has led some to suppose that the same birds in different stages of plumage were distinct species.

In my youth I kept a great many of these birds; and from observations made since on them, I am satisfied that the Gray Linnet, the

Rose Linnet, or Greater Redpole, the Mountain Linnet, or Twite, are the selfsame bird, and not distinct species. There are, first, the year old bird, or more, the Gray Linnet, (gray.) Second, the Rose Linnet, or greater Redpole, (top of the head and breast red,) two years old, or more. Third, the Mountain Linnet, or Twite, (the red changed to yellow,) three years old or more.

The following are some of the reasons which have led me to the above conclusion, although I am aware that it conflicts with some high authorities on this subject. The eggs of the three are alike; the nests, likewise, if the same material can be procured by the birds. The location is, in general, the same. The nest of the Gray Linnet, and the Mountain Linnet, have both been found in a furze bush. The song is the same, only the Mountain, or Yellow Linnet is superior. It is the oldest bird, therefore the best songster.

Food. — Feed them on a mixture of Canary and rape seed, half of each, with occasionally a little hemp. They take but little exercise in the cage, therefore must be fed sparingly. Plenty of gravel, and water to wash, and lettuce, or cabbage freely.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has the primaries, or longest feathers of the wings, white on the widest side of the feather, also white feathers in the tail. The female is smaller in size, and the wing-feathers are only slightly tipped with white; the same on the tail.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe — Resident.

CANARY FINCH.

This well-known bird is among Finches what the Gray Mocking Bird is among the Thrushes, the great musical leader of the tribe. We may go farther, and say that there is no bird of its size known to naturalists which can compare with the Canary Finch in the energy, fulness of tone, and harmony of its notes. And it is certainly complimentary to the discernment of our race in this instance, that the merits of this bird seem to have been duly appreciated, for there is hardly a spot on this wide earth, where civilization has entered, but you will find domesticated this sweet little vocalist. Originally, a native of the Canary Islands (as its name imports) it was

introduced into Europe about the beginning of the sixteenth century; it is now almost found everywhere. In the splendid mansion and in the humble cottage, its enlivening and delightful melody is heard alike in both, and its little wants are administered too by the hard, horny hands of the artisan in his cot, and the soft and delicate tapering fingers of the fair one, in her bower. It is loved and cherished in the palace and in the hovel; and in the Azores and some places on the Mediterranean, the breeding and rearing of this little bird constitute the principal support of many of the poor inhabitants.

Although the climate of New England is not the most favorable in the world for this bird, and it is affected by the changes of it in a domestic state, in common with other animals, there is a very erroneous opinion as to the degree of warmth necessary for it in the winter. Our rooms are kept in general too warm for the health of the inmates, and the Canary hangs above, where the temperature is several degrees higher. Indeed, I have been told by some, when too late to be remedied, that they actually covered over their cage with a thick cloth, and hung it over the stove as night approached. The consequence is, that the poor bird not only suffers, but is

weakened and debilitated, a premature moulting ensues, and at last it falls a victim.

I have kept Canary Birds in some parts of this country, where the winters are much colder than they are here. One winter I kept thirty or forty birds in a room, where there was no fire after dark. The thermometer there, would be sometimes below zero for a week, and the water would be frozen solid every morning, yet the whole winter I never lost a bird, and they sang sweetly every day. Last spring I had about thirty birds sent me to dispose of, that were kept in an attic all winter without having any fire near them; they were healthy and strong and sang well, and a person who had six of the females to breed, assured me that they all had eggs about a week after he got them. If you keep your birds in a room where there is a stove, place them in the coolest part of it, and give them fresh air every fine day; for humanity prompts me to say, (however much at variance with my own interests,) that of the Canary Birds which I preserve during the winter, full three-quarters of them die from being kept too warm and too near the stove.

The Canary bird seems to be peculiarly adapted for a cage bird. They will sing the whole of the

winter, during the most dreary part of the year, and when other birds are in general silent, they will solace and delight us with their animated and cheerful song. They are social and familiar, and capable of forming strong attachments to those who feed them; they will know the voice of their master or mistress; can be taught to sing sitting upon the finger, and come and go at command. The following account of some of those birds, which were exhibited in London some years ago, will show that they are capable of doing more wonderful things than has yet been mentioned, with which, (as I shall speak largely in a future part of this work, of the breeding, treatment of the young, diseases, &c. of this delightful bird,) I shall at present conclude.

In 1820, a Frenchman exhibited four-and-twenty Canary birds in London, many of which, he said, were from eighteen to twenty-five years of age. Some of these balanced themselves with their head downwards and tail in the air; one of them, taking a slender stick in his claws, passed its head between its legs, and suffered itself to be turned round as if in the act of being roasted; another balanced itself, and was slung backwards and forwards, as on a kind of slack rope; a third was dressed in military uniform, having a cap on

its head, and wearing a sword and cartridge pouch, and holding a fire-lock in one claw. After some time sitting upright, this bird, at the word of command, freed itself from its dress and flew away to the cage. A fourth suffered itself to be shot at, and falling down as if dead, to be put into a little wheelbarrow and wheeled by one of his comrades. Several of the birds were placed upon a little fire-work, and continued there quietly and without alarm, until it was discharged.

FOOD. — It is highly important to know the most proper food for this bird, as it is so completely domesticated, that it will eat almost everything that is given to it. Some pamper their bird and destroy the tone of its stomach by feeding it with sugar, sweet cake, &c., and others withhold from them their natural food. I once knew a confectioner who killed a fine pair of birds by feeding them upon cake. He had all kinds of cake that were ever baked, stuck in pieces all round the cage. I told him he would kill his birds. He answered, "O no, I love to see them eating it." They had a short life and a merry one; they were both dead in about a month. I also was once shown a pair of Canary Birds that were hanging out at a window; they were owned by an old maiden

lady. The person who pointed them out to me was a near neighbor of her's, and kept birds himself, and he assured me that she fed her poor birds upon bread and potatoes, and gave as a reason to him, that seed cost too much. Some give their birds no hemp seed, and others give them too much, because they are fond of it. Now, as all birds are fond of hemp seed, but some may have too much given them, and get too fat on it, is that a good and sufficiently sound reason that all birds should be kept poor and lean and get none? I have been led to these remarks, as there are some who think they have knowledge in this matter, and who condemn the use of hemp seed altogether. Now I am satisfied, from experience, that hemp seed, if fresh, (and attention should be paid to this, as it gets stale much sooner than Canary or rape seed,) is a nourishing seed, and is highly beneficial if given judiciously to Canary Birds, and also many other cage birds. I have at present in my possession a Red-breasted Thrush or Robin, who eats freely of bruised hemp seed every day, and there never was a prettier Robin in a cage, and he sings even at this season (the autumn) every day. It has been advanced, that giving hemp seed to Canary Birds will cause them to have the asthma; if it

be so, it cannot be a disease that birds are very liable to, for I kept birds when I was eleven years of age, and I have always given my Canaries a portion of hemp seed. I do not believe I ever had more than half a dozen of asthmatical birds in my life; and when I had one, I always found it to be a pretty old bird.

I feed my Canary Birds on a mixture of two thirds Canary and one third hemp seed, with occasionally a little rape seed in it. In moulting time I give them freely of rape seed, with occasionally a bit of baker's bread dipt in sweet milk. I give them freely of lettuce, in summer, and cabbage or Savoy blades in autumn and winter. I believe that these are the best vegetables that can be given to Canary Birds, and superior to chickweed, plantain, or any of those weeds which grow (as vegetation is so rapid with us) very rank and strong, especially such as grow in the shade, and do not have the vivifying heat of the sun to ripen them, and which, instead of being beneficial are very pernicious. A bit of apple is not hurtful, but sugar, figs, sweet cake, pound cake, and such things, only tend to hurt the stomach of the bird, and give it a distaste for its natural food. The fact is, that Canary Birds are like children, the simpler and

most natural their food is, the better they will thrive.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — There is such a diversity of color among these birds that it is sometimes not easy to distinguish the male from the female. There are, however, general characteristics given. The head of the male is rather larger and longer, the eye fuller, and the neck and legs a little longer. The carriage of the male is different, being more upright. This last I consider the best criterion, but the person must be a close observer that picks out a male in this way, and be accustomed to see a good many birds. The best and surest test is the singing; a bird, if good for anything, will sing in the spring, especially if there is a female in the room with him that he can see or hear. The young males may be picked out, when six or eight weeks old, by the swelling of their throats when warbling over their notes.

LOCATION. — Found domesticated throughout the world. In the Canary Islands, Africa — Resident.

GROSSBEAKS.

CARDINAL GROSSBEAK.

The Cardinal Grossbeak, with his bright black and red plumage, and fine pointed crest, is really a splendid bird. His fame for beauty and song hath reached across the Atlantic, and in Europe he is much prized, and named the Virginia Nightingale, from the resemblance his notes bear to the notes of that bird, and which is said by judges, to be but little inferior. He is a sprightly and active bird, has a fine figure, and a clear voice, and a good deal of variety in his note. They are clean in the cage, feeding principally upon seeds, which makes them, altogether, very desirable cage birds, and great favorites with those who possess them. The female of this bird sings also a low but sweet note.

They are a hardy and easily kept bird, and will live a long time in a cage. There was a preserved specimen in Peale's Museum some years ago, which, it was said, lived twenty-one years in the cage.

Food. — I have kept them in good health and song, upon Canary, two-thirds, and hempseed one-third, and a bit of beef, say twice a week, scraped as for the Mocking Bird. I have had them in full song in the middle of winter. They require plenty of gravel, and water to wash with, which should never be omitted for any bird.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is of a fine red, brighter towards the head; under the bill and sides of the head black, a fine large pointed crest, which it can lower or erect at pleasure. On the female the crest is smaller, and not so often raised; where the male is black she is of a chestnut brown. The body is of a drab color, except the wings and the tail, which are nearly as red as the male.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the Southern and Western States. To the south of Maryland — Resident.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSSBEAK.

This is another elegant bird, of the same species, and likewise a charming songster. I think

it is probable that this bird is originally from the far West, and is now gradually spreading over the country, as I believe the first that was seen in Massachusetts was caught in a net set for wild pigeons, in company with them, not many years ago. It is still a rare bird here, although sometimes seen. A gentleman, who resides in the vicinity of Boston, told me, last summer, he saw a pair near his house, and he hoped they would breed somewhere on his premises. It is said to choose the most secluded parts of the forest to breed, and where the foliage is densest and thickest. It sings in the night, and has a clear, mellow and harmonious note. The female has no song.

Food. — I have kept several of these birds, and as they naturally incline to take but little exercise in a cage they must not be over fed, as they are apt to get too corpulent and fat. I have found the best food for them is Canary and rape seed, with occasionally a bit of bread, dipped in milk, and a little scraped beef, gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the whole of upper parts black, with two stripes of pure white on the wings; the

lower parts a beautiful carmine, or rose color. The female's upper parts a light drab; the lower parts a light flaxen yellow; the white on the wing less than on the male.

LOCATION. — Found probably throughout the United States; not numerous. Migrates south in winter.

BLUE GROSSBEAK.

The Blue Grossbeak is another beautiful bird of this class. It inhabits Guiana, and perhaps further south, and is rather rare, even in the Southern States. It is but seldom that we see them in Massachusetts. About half a dozen, however, were brought to Boston last summer, with some Nonpareils, or Painted Buntings, from Louisiana. They are active and lively birds, and generally keep their plumage neat and smooth. Their song is very sweet and musical, but much feebler, than any of the forementioned birds.

FOOD. — Feed them the same as the Cardinal Grossbeak.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is wholly of a purple blue, skirted with black. The female of a dark drab color, tinged with blue.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the Southern States. Not numerous. Migrates south in winter.

PINE GROSSBEAK.

This is one of the bright and beautiful birds who visit us, not from the sunny lands of the South, but from the frozen regions of the North. And the modest and unassuming visitant is content with humble fare, as we would suppose, but which to him no doubt, is a feast. Take a walk some bright sunny, winter day, when the ground is covered with snow, glittering like diamonds under your feet, to some of the rocky and barren spots in the vicinity of Boston, where there are stunted pines growing, with great bunches of cones on the top of them, and there you will see the unsuspecting stranger at work. You may walk right up to the tree, for he is not at all afraid of you. He may, perchance, turn his

bright eye down towards you, which seems to say, "Let me alone, I am doing very well, don't interrupt me;" while he is tearing the cones to pieces, and dexterously nipping the seeds off the scales, making them fly, like a little cloud, all around him; while his beautiful red and yellow plumage, contrasted with the lovely evergreen on which he is perched, and the white underground, cannot but excite your admiration; and you will gaze on him with delight, as I have often done. This bird is easily caught, and very soon tamed. It may be kept in a cage, and sings a very sweet note. It visits the North of Europe, also. When kept some time in a cage, it is said to sing in the night.

Food. — It is a hardy bird, and will live upon almost any kind of seeds. It may be kept on Canary, and a little hemp seed, gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has the head, neck, breast, and rump, of a bright vermilion. The back and wings are of a blackish brown. The female is of a grayish green color. These birds, like all northern birds, are subject to changes of color; the red changing to yellow, and the yellow to brown.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the Northern and Middle States, in winter. Breeds farther north. Found, also, in Northern Europe.

COMMON CROSSBILL.

This remarkable bird being once seen, the most superficial observer can never afterwards be mistaken, as to the genus to which it belongs. The upper and lower mandibles of the bill cross one another about one-third from the tip. Showing a preserved specimen of this bird to an honest Hibernian one day, after examining it all over, and trying to straighten the bill, he exclaimed, "Sure that bird must have died of a lock-jaw." He is a visitant from the north, like the former, and, although a smaller bird, he probably does as much execution among the pine cones, with his powerful lever bill, as the other. He is equally unsuspicious, and you may walk close up, and look at him at work, clinging to the cones like a Parrot, or Woodpecker, sometimes head up, and sometimes down, but, like the other, giving evidence of his work by the husks which are flying around him. In a cage they are very amusing

birds, clinging round the wires like a parrot, and in a short time may be made so tame as to be carried anywhere on the finger. The male has a pleasant note, which is improved by his being kept in a cage. There is another of this genus, found in America, the White Winged Crossbill, but it is rarely found in the New England States, and is no songster.

FOOD. — Feed them on the same food as the Pine Grossbeaks.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male and female, in plumage, nearly the same as the Pine Grossbeak.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the Northern States, in winter. Also, in the North of Europe, there Resident.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

THIS bird is beautiful in plumage, displays a great deal of ingenuity and skill in building his nest, and is likewise a good musical performer. And although merit is not always rewarded, it would

appear that his has not altogether been overlooked. At least, it would seem that he has attracted a good deal of attention, from the number of appellations given him. He is named the Golden Robin, Goldfinch, Fire Bird, Fiery Hang Bird, &c. The last name intimating that he frames a pensile nest, which he suspends from the extreme branches of some high elm, weeping willow, or an apple tree, in the orchard. The name he now retains, it is said, is derived from the colors of his plumage, being orange and black; and that being the color of the arms and livery of Lord Baltimore, to whom Maryland, when a Colony, was granted, the bird being, perhaps, pretty often seen there at that time. Besides its beauty, there is no bird, perhaps, so docile, and which can be so completely domesticated as the Baltimore Oriole. A lady from the country called upon me one day, who had one of these birds she had brought fifty miles in the cars with her; it was a very beautiful one; it nestled in her dress, and when told would sit on her finger, and eat from her mouth. She said it never attempted to go away from her, it was so attached to her; of course the attachment was reciprocal. I kept one for some time, it hung in a room where we eat. On

coming in to my meals, I would open its cage door, and calling it, it would perch on my finger, and taking it to the table it would take breakfast or dinner with me. It would hop round the table, help itself to bread and butter, and sip tea out of the saucer; and after tasting of all that was on the table, it would sit quietly near me, until I put it into its cage again, when it would give me its thanks, in all the little notes it could muster.

There is another bird of this class, named the Orchard Oriole, which has caused much confusion among naturalists, being confounded with the above species; they are closely allied, but there is no doubt they are distinct. The male is not near so beautiful a bird as the male of the Baltimore, and, what is rather remarkable, although found from Connecticut to Texas, they are not found in Maine or Massachusetts.

Food. — I feed them on meal and milk, with, twice a week, a little beef, and hemp seed, bruised in a mortar, and put in a box in the cage, so as they can eat it when they please. When kept in the house they probably do as well by getting a little, as the saying is, of everything that is going; a little cooked or raw meat, potatoes

bread, &c. It is generally supposed that they cannot be kept in the winter. This is a mistake; a young lady had one from me more than three years ago; I saw it lately, and it was in good health, and in fine plumage.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the head, throat, back, and wings, black. The rump, pretty high up on the back, and lower parts, a bright orange; a band of the same across the back, and the orange brightens into vermilion on the breast. The female, where the male is black, is a yellowish brown, lower parts a dull brownish yellow.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States, in summer. Migrates south in the autumn.

SCARLET TANAGER.

THIS is one of the most gaudily dressed of our birds who visits us regularly from southern climes, for the purpose of incubation; and when seen flitting through some of our fine green trees, with his bright scarlet body, and jet black wings

and tail, his appearance is truly splendid. His sojourn with us is but short; he arrives here in May, and departs again about the latter end of August. His common call sounds like, *chip churr*, the last syllable dwelt upon; he has, besides, a fine mellow note. They begin to moult before they leave us. The male then has a very curious appearance; the young feathers come out green, consequently he is all spotted over scarlet and green. Probably like the American Goldfinch, and others, he has two suits, and on leaving us puts off his scarlet, and dons the green.

Food. — The food I have found most agreeable to these birds is grated stale bread, egg and bruised hempseed, the same as for the Sky Lark, with the addition of fruit, berries and cherries in the summer, and in the winter apple and black currants. They must be fed sparingly, as they take but little exercise in the cage, and are apt to get too corpulent. The only way I know to guard against this is to give them plenty of fruit, and less of solids.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male in full plumage, is of a bright scarlet, the wings and tail jet black. The female has the upper parts

of a dusky green, the lower parts of a dull yellow, and the wings brown.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States. Not numerous in New England — Migratory.

SUMMER RED BIRD.

THIS bird is about the size of the Scarlet Tanager, but the male is a bright vermilion, all over. The males are subject to the same changes of color as the former, having been found spotted all over with green, red and yellow, according to their age. Their stay here is very short. They hatch their young about the middle of June, and leave New Jersey about the middle of August. They are not found in Massachusetts. Their beauty is their most attractive quality; the song is a loud, sonorous trilling note.

FOOD. — Treatment and food the same as for the Scarlet Tanager.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male is a bright vermilion all over, except the inner webs

of the primary, or longest feathers of the wings, which are brown; this is not seen, of course, when the wings are closed. The female has the upper parts of a brownish yellow, the lower parts an orange yellow.

LOCATION. — Found from New York to Texas, in the Middle States rather rare; not found in any of the New England States — Migratory.

PURPLE GRAKLE, OR CROW BLACK BIRD.

THIS bird is rather longer than the European Black Bird, but not so robust. They are very social birds, building their nests in companies, on the highest of our trees, from the tops of which the males will pour forth some loud and musical notes, in concert, which, at a little distance, have a very pleasing effect. After breeding they assemble in flocks, and do some damage to the farmer, among the Indian corn, while in its seculent, or milky state; but for which they compensate him in the spring, by the multitude of worms, grubs, and caterpillars they destroy, which would soon, if it was not for the farmer's

best friends, the birds, devour the fruits of his orchards, as well as his fields. The Purple Grakle is very docile; even an old bird, after being caught, is easily tamed, and soon becomes very familiar. They sing well in a cage, will imitate the notes of other birds, and have been taught to articulate words.

· **FOOD.** — These birds are hardy, and easily kept; they will almost eat anything that is given to them; but will thrive well on meal and milk, and a bit of meat, either raw or cooked. Gravel in the cage, and plenty of water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird is black, with beautiful blue, green, and purple reflexions. The female has the upper parts dark brown, the lower parts duller and paler.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States, in summer. In the Southern States — Resident.

RUSTY GRAKLE.

THIS is another of our Black Birds, which is a winter visitant, breeding far to the northward of us. They visit us in the autumn, in small flocks, keeping company with the Red Winged Starling and Cowpen Finches, on our meadows, and on the approach of winter they move further south with those birds. I have had them in my possession, but have not as yet kept them long enough to test their singing properties in a cage. They are nearly silent while with us, having only a single note; but in the countries where they breed they are said to sing very sweetly. They are docile, and apt to learn, and soon become very tame and familiar, like the former. Rather smaller in size than the Purple Grakle, it is clean and handsome in shape, and I have no doubt may become an excellent cage bird.

FOOD. — It is a hardy bird, and may easily be kept on the same food as the Purple Grakle, or the Red Winged Starling.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird is black, with beautiful green reflex-

ions. The female has the upper parts brown, the lower parts of an ash color, and is smaller in size.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States, in autumn and winter. In the spring, migrates north.

EUROPEAN WARBLERS.

NIGHTINGALE.

THIS bird has been celebrated for its musical powers, almost from time immemorial. Poets have sung its praises, and historians have recorded its merits; and it is figured on the pages (not greatly to advantage however) of the immortal Shakspeare himself.

Of its merits or demerits as a songster, or whether the great bard was as good a judge of birds as he was of men, it behooveth us not to speak. We are sorry to say we never had the pleasure of listening to his delightful strains, either

by night or day, as it never honors that part of North Britain, which gave us birth, with its company. It is not found in Scotland, or Ireland, or Wales, and indeed it is only in some parts of England that it will condescend to reside. It is also found in Sweden and Russia.

As it will not visit us, we have tried very hard to bring it, but have not as yet succeeded; it is rather a delicate bird and requires care and attention to keep it. A friend, who has brought many birds across the Atlantic, left Liverpool the latter part of last summer with three of these birds, in one of the Boston steam packets, but they all died on the passage; the last, two days before he arrived in Boston.*

Food. — The following are the German and English methods of feeding this bird :

* Since writing the above, I am happy to say, that a gentleman in this city, who has in his possession a few of the best American and foreign songsters, and who devotes some of his leisure hours to the agreeable recreation and rational amusement of studying their habits and attending to their little wants, has succeeded in getting two Nightingales (which he sent for) from Germany safe and sound. They appear to be in good health, and I sincerely hope he will be repaid for the care and attention he bestows upon them, by listening to their delightful music in the spring.

German. — The best food is ants' eggs, to which are daily added two or three meal worms; when none of the former remain, they must be supplied by dried, or rather roasted, ox heart and raw carrot, both grated and then mixed with dried ants' eggs. A little lean beef or mutton may be used sometimes.*

English. — White bread soaked in boiled milk, mashed into a paste, with ground hemp seed scalded, and meal-worms once or twice a day, and a small quantity of the hard-boiled yolk of an egg, or bread and milk, meal-worms, or ants' eggs, or maggots, with boiled vegetables and pudding, of which they are very fond.†

American. — The Nightingales now in Boston are fed upon Indian meal and milk, meal-worms and ants' eggs, and are doing well.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The Nightingale is scarcely as large as a common sized Canary bird, and of plain and homely colored plumage. The male has the upper parts of a yellowish brown, reddish towards the head; the primaries or main feathers of the wings are darker, and towards the tail a chestnut color; the lower parts, on the throat

* Bechstein.

† Timbs's Manual of Cage Birds.

and breast, are grayish white, almost pure white towards the vent; at the tail yellowish white. The female is smaller in size, but similar in plumage, and is only known (it is said) by the general characteristics, not standing so upright as the male, having a smaller eye, &c.

LOCATION. — This bird takes a most extensive range, and is said to be found in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and in them all Resident.

BLACK CAP.

This bird is about the same size, and closely allied to the Nightingale, although placed by naturalists in a different genera. It does not require that care and attention, nor the variety of food which the Nightingale does; and by many the notes of the Black Cap are thought fully equal, and by some superior, to the Nightingale. We have never had the pleasure of keeping this bird. Until within a few years it was very rare in Scotland; it is now more common, and is more equally distributed through England. Formerly, it was only found in particular dis-

tricts. In Germany it is named the Monk, from its black cap.* The notes of this bird are similar to the Nightingale; it also sings in the night. The female sings in strains, it is said, resembling the song of the Robin Red Breast.

FOOD. — It is recommended to feed this bird the same as the Robin Red Breast; and I have no doubt it might be kept well on the same food as the American Mocking Bird. It eats of wild berries freely.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the upper parts of a bluish gray, the top and back of the head, down as far as the eyes, jet black; the lower parts are of grayish white. The female has head (where black on the male,) of a yellowish brown, the under parts are of a brownish white.

LOCATION. — The range of this species seems to be fully as extensive as the other preserved specimens, having been sent from Japan and Java.† It is found in Norway and Lapland, in the Azores, and in Madeira. In Europe it is migratory.

* Bechstein.

† Naturalist's Library.

ROBIN RED BREAST.

This pretty little bird has been rendered famous in story by figuring conspicuously in a pathetic nursery tale, well known in the land of our forefathers, to every child that is able to master its first reading lesson, *The Babes of the Wood*. Well do we remember how we sympathized with the poor babes, left all alone in the woods; and how the tears started into our eyes while we read that at last they laid them down to die, in each other's arms. And how we did love the little Robin Red Breast who covered them over with leaves, and then sweetly sang their funeral dirge. How susceptible the youthful mind is of early impressions, especially when the finer feelings of our nature are touched; neither time nor space can obliterate them, and they cling fondly to memory until the last. The Robin Red Breast is remarkable for his familiarity; he will not only fearlessly approach the cottage door to pick the crumbs, but in the winter he will take up his quarters inside, having his particular roost or place to sit, to which he will come regularly every night. These birds seem to have an innate attachment to the society of man; for although

they are solitary birds, breeding only in pairs, sometimes in the most secluded portions of the woods, yet a woodcutter, or other person, will not be at work long in the forest, even the most secluded parts of it, without having the company of one or a pair of these birds, carefully picking up the fragments of their meals, or the insects brought to light by their operations. And in the breeding season, when birds generally seclude themselves, their attachment to man is exemplified, for they will breed anywhere near him. Under the eaves of the barn, in a hole in the wall, in the cowhouse, or the greenhouse, they will build their nest, and unsuspectingly rear their brood. Sawpits used to be favorite spots with them; those sawpits built with stones, which I suppose are almost obsolete now: there they would raise their brood some few feet from where the sawyers were at work; but there they were secure, for the workmen would not molest them; and, whether it proceeded from their association with the above event, or from their extreme sociability with man, they were generally loved and cherished; and the nest of the Robin Red Breast was always spared by the boys. He is now kept in cages and aviaries, and is still a greater favorite than formerly, not only for his

pretty plumage and great sociability, but likewise for his song, which, when wild, is delightful; but when kept in a cage is very much improved, and is said, in the spring, to be really enchanting. They are very docile, and can easily be taught to sing on the finger, and eat out of the hand. We hope to have some of these pretty little warblers here before long, to answer for themselves.

Food.—Bread and milk is recommended; also crumbs of bread, and beef minced fine; and they are said to be very fond of cheese. It is also said they are subject to diarrhœa. Now I know by experience, as I have before stated, that any bird, kept constantly upon a diet of bread and milk, either raw or boiled, will be subject to that disease, more or less. And I have no doubt but our yankee fare, meal and milk would agree very well with them, as a staple dish. And it is probable that those pretty little warblers can be kept in good health on the same treatment as our Mocking Bird.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES.—The male has the forehead, sides of the head, and lower parts, a fine orange red; the upper parts of the

body are a brown olive. On the upper part of the shoulder there are some yellow spots, which are good marks to distinguish the male, as the females are destitute of them, except when very old, and then they are very faint. The female is smaller, and the color much duller.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe, in Britain — Resident. On the Continent — Migratory.

AMERICAN LARKS.

MEADOW LARK.

Although this bird has not, as yet, been often kept in a cage, I see no reason why it should not be; and when its merits are known there is no doubt it will. For although for song it will not bear a comparison with the European bird, the sky lark, that rises on the wing, and with delightful warblings hails the dawning morn, yet the male is a beautiful bird, and sings a sweet and plaintive note. They frequent our pastures and rich meadows, where they build

their nest, generally in a tussock of grass, and during this season, the males will mount to the tops of the trees, or bushes near, and serenade their mates below, with their fine, long, clear, and mellow notes.

FOOD. — They are hardy birds, and will live in a cage on almost any kinds of seeds. They may be kept well on one-third hemp, and two-thirds Canary seed; a bit of beef occasionally, plenty of gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — These birds are larger than our Robin. The male has the upper parts of a speckled reddish gray, all the lower parts a rich, bright yellow, a streak of black on each side of the head, and the breast ornamented with an oblong crescent of the same color. In the female the black is grayish, and the yellow is of a duller, dunnish hue.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States — Migratory. Numbers winter in the Southern States.

SHORE LARK.

This is another beautiful bird of this genus, that visits us in winter from the North, where it breeds. It is also found in Europe. They fly here in flocks, and their call has a resemblance to the Sky Lark of Europe; and in some parts of the Union they are named the Sky Lark, and in others the Shore Lark. In the countries where they breed they are said to mount in the air (like the European species) and sing sweetly. Last spring I had a female that was wing-tipped; I put it in a large cage, with some Canary Birds. At first, when any of them would approach it, it would open its mouth to the utmost extent to frighten them away, I supposed, but it never offered to attack any of them, nor they it. I have no doubt but the males would sing in a cage. I heard nothing from this but the call; but, being a female, of course I could not expect it to sing. It was very fond of dusting itself, like all the rest of the genus; and when I put a vessel, with gravel, in the cage, it would jump into it and make it fly all around, and seemed quite delighted.

Food. — It eat of all the seeds in the cage. I

bruised some hemp seed for it, and gave it occasionally a bit of bread.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the forehead, throat, sides of neck, and a line over the eye, of a fine straw yellow; back of the head and neck black, which bounds the yellow all round the back, a reddish drab color; lower parts reddish white. The female has little or no black on the head, and all the colors are paler and dingy. The male has a few long black feathers above the eyebrows, which it can erect at pleasure, which look like little horns, like those of some of the Owl tribe.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States, in winter. Migrates north in the spring. Found also in the North of Europe.

BROWN LARK.

This bird is rather smaller than the last mentioned, and is likewise a winter visitant. They visit us in the autumn, and fly in small flocks about our meadows and ploughed fields. Al-

though almost silent while here, having only a single note, there is no doubt but they sing in the countries where they breed, as those of our winter visitants, who have been seen there, in their breeding season, are said to sing sweetly. I have not yet been able to procure a live specimen, to try its singing qualities in the cage. In the Western States, where numbers of them winter, they are named the Prairie Tit Lark.

FOOD. — They may be fed the same as the Meadow Lark:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has the upper parts of a brown olive color; the breast and lower parts are a light yellowish brown, spotted with black; the spots most numerous on the breast. The female bears a strong resemblance to the male; the only difference, the colors are duller on the female.

LOCATION. — Found in winter in the New England States; many of them winter in the Western States. Breeds in the Fur Countries.

EUROPEAN LARKS.

SKY LARK.

It is a bright spot to look back upon, in the sunny days of our youth, when in the fields, on a fine summer morning, we listened to this delightful warbler, and gazed upon him in his upward flight, until lost to our view. We could still hear him, though faintly, and still gaze up, and wonder how high he would go, until again he would come into view descending, and carolling his joyful lay all the while; and on coming near he would stop singing, and shutting his wings would descend rapidly to the earth, in a slanting direction. The song of the Sky Lark is one continued strain of cheerful warbling notes, sometimes uttered high, and sometimes low. He enlivens the labors of the husbandman, is the theme of the poet, and in all illustrations of rural scenery he stands prominent.

These delightful warblers will sing well in a cage, which should be eighteen inches long, at least to give them room to run. At one end of

it keep a box, two inches deep, and six or seven inches square, filled with dry sand, or fine gravel, to dust themselves in ; of this, like the Shore Lark, they are very fond. At the end, a piece of green turf ; this is very necessary, and should be renewed once a week, if convenient. Those who keep this bird should have turf cut in the fall, and kept in the cellar for winter use. He is delighted with every new one he gets ; he will eat the grass off of it, and then stand on it and sing. The cage should not be put high up in the room ; they are a very timid bird, and apt to fly suddenly up when you open the cage door to feed them, which is disagreeable ; and the bird may get injured against the top of the cage. To get them tame, and keep them so, it is better to hang the cage about the height of your breast. I have known tame birds get quite wild when put up near the roof. If your bird flies about too much, and is afraid of you, hang a cloth over the cage ; they do not in general spring up, except when you open the cage door. If a bird continues doing so, it may be necessary to stretch a piece of cotton cloth, as a roof to the cage, and then if it does, it will not hurt itself.

Food. — I have kept these birds, without diffi-

culty, in good health and song, on stale bread, but not sour, grated up and mixed with a small portion of hard boiled egg, adding occasionally a bit of lettuce or cabbage, and a bit of beef minced fine. I always kept a box, with some hemp seed bruised in a mortar, to eat when he wished. Keep plenty of gravel in the bottom of the cage; they do not wash much. I have seen them dip their head in the water, and no more. The box of sand is their bathing tub.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The upper parts of the male are yellowish brown, the lower parts dusky yellow, with lengthened spots of black on the breast, a whitish ring round the eye. The female is smaller in size, destitute of the white ring round the eye, has more spots on the breast, and some on the back, and the breast is much whiter. The feathers on the crown of the male are partly elongated, and can be raised in a crest, at will.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe. Partially migratory.

THE WOOD LARK.

This bird bears some resemblance to the Sky Lark, but it is smaller in size. It is said to be superior in the melody and rich tone of its song to the other, but inferior in variety and compass of voice. Of this we cannot speak from experience, as we have never heard one, or seen a specimen. In Scotland it is scarcely ever seen; indeed, in England, it is only found at times in some particular counties, and lately some few have been seen in Ireland. In Britain it is a very rare bird, but it is found in greater numbers on the Continent; and as it may yet be brought here we will tell all we can learn about it. In its habits it differs; it is what is called arbo-real. It perches upon trees, on which it will sit and sing; also, it sings on the wing, like the other, but it does not rise perpendicular, but sails round in circles, and when it attains to a great height, it will remain stationary and sing, it is said, for hours together, in the same manner as when perched on a tree.

Food. — The same as the Sky Lark, and likewise the cage.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The upper parts of the male are rather darker than the Sky Lark, being a brownish black; the lower parts straw yellow; the streak round the eye brighter, the feathers on the crown, which it forms into a crest, are longer. The female is more spotted, and the yellow almost white, like the female of the Sky Lark.

LOCATION. — Found throughout Europe. Not numerous. Partially migratory.

RICE BIRD, OR BOBOLINK.

THIS is the Rice Bird of the Southern States, the Reed Bird of Pennsylvania, and the Bobolink of the New England States, and is about as well known in New England as the Robin Red-Breast is in Old England. His note is highly musical, and the rapidity with which it is uttered makes it lively and cheering. To me it is charming; I think there is something woodland-wild about it that no other bird's note possesses except the English Sky Lark; and in the spring of the year, when descending from the top of some tall tree to

the green grass below, warbling its delightful notes in the descent, it always reminds me of that bird. The note of this bird has been translated by the ingenious and much esteemed naturalist, Nuttall, as follows:

Bobolink, Bobolink, Tom Denny, Tom Denny, Pay me the five Pounds you borrowed of me more than a y-e-a-r-a-go.

I have before stated that a close observer of birds can discern a difference in their notes, even of the same species. During my residence in the country, some years ago, there was one of these birds which had its nest in a field of grass of about an acre, adjoining the house of my next neighbor. This bird had a very peculiar note, different, I think, from any I have ever heard; and, although surrounded with these birds, which had their nests in the adjacent meadows, besides having them in cages in the house, all of which were singing, I could always tell when this bird sang; and the inmates of my family also would say, when they heard it, — “There is Mr. —’s Bobolink singing.” This bird, being undisturbed, raised its brood before the grass was cut, and dispersed over the fields with its young, and the rest its species. And it is a remarkable fact, that the next season a bird, having the same note,

came back to the same little field again; there was no mistaking the note; if not the same bird, it must have been one of his descendants who inherited the father's voice exactly. That birds form attachment to their old locations, and will come back to them, there is no doubt; and I believe in this instance, that this was the same identical bird that had come thousands of miles, and passed over many lakes and rivers, and many a field of grass, to the old spot where it had been so happy the season before, again to raise another family.

In the month of July, the male of this bird (the plumage of which is white and black) begins gradually to change in color, and about the end of August the plumage is like the female and young, yellow, streaked with brown; but I have now in my possession four Rice Birds, or Bobolinks, who have not yet changed the color of a feather.* They are in beautiful plumage, the same as in the spring; not a shade lighter, and sing every fine day. Their not changing is very remarkable. I have kept these birds for many years, and I never knew an instance of the kind before.

* Dec. 25.

Food. — They are clean birds, and easily kept in a cage; but the cage, to keep the bird well, should be at least eighteen inches long, and the roosts, or perches, placed as far apart as possible, to enable the bird to exercise its wings in leaping from one roost to the other. I have found this beneficial to them, and it induces them to take more exercise in the cage. Feed them with Canary seed alone, as they are much inclined to obesity, and often die of something like apoplexy. I never could get them to eat of vegetables; sometimes they will eat a bit of apple, but in general they eat nothing but their seed. A bird that is kept for some time in a cage might be induced to eat of green stuffs; if it did, it would be highly beneficial to it in a domestic state.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of the second season is easily distinguished from the female; in the spring it is black, with a broad band of dark yellow across the hind neck, the feathers on the back tipped with gray, brightening into white at the wing. The female has the upper parts light yellowish brown, streaked with blackish brown; lower parts, a light grayish yellow.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States in summer; late in the autumn, they migrate south.

RED-WINGED STARLING.

THESE birds are very numerous in the United States, and congregate in large flocks in the spring and fall. And although they generally migrate farther south, large numbers of them winter in the Southern States, where, gleaning among the stubble of the old rice and corn fields, they find abundance of food for the winter. Very early in the spring they come to us in flocks, (the males first, as is generally the case with migratory birds,) and in the neighborhood of some pond, creek, or swampy meadow, they may be seen in large bodies, performing their aerial evolutions. At times they will all alight on one or more leafless trees, covering them from top to bottom. The contrast of their jet black plumage, and scarlet shoulders, makes the appearance of the trees, then, strikingly beautiful; while the combined notes of half a thousand or more of them, wafted on the breeze, at some dis-

tance off, is indeed one of nature's own sweet concerts, to which I have often listened with delight. They are very amusing birds in a cage, throwing themselves into all kinds of attitudes, and trying to imitate all they hear. There was one kept for some time in Quincy Market, near the poultry stalls, where, sometimes, the fowls are left alive, in cribs. This bird showed himself an apt scholar, and imitated perfectly the crowing of a cock, which attracted a good deal of attention. This bird is classed by the late lamented Alexander Wilson, as a Stare, or Starling, (the opinion of some high authorities to the contrary, notwithstanding.) That this close observer of nature, and self-taught genius, was right in this, (as he was in almost every thing he advanced,) I had sufficient proof, last summer, to convince the most skeptical. I had two young Red Winged Starlings, and an old English Starling, in two cages, beside each other. The Red Wings, in their gait and attitudes, in their manner of eating the same food, in the tone of their voice, their imitative powers, and even the color of their plumage, were fac-similes of their great type, the old English Starling; and some of their notes bearing a resemblance like his to the articulation of syllables, I have no doubt they

might be taught sentences like him. Their natural notes are few, but very musical, and their common call, *Conk-er-ree*, the last syllable dwelt upon, is very pleasing.

FOOD. — They are a hardy bird, and in a cage they will eat almost anything you give them. I feed them on meal and milk, bruised hemp seed, and occasionally a bit of beef, cut in small pieces, or scraped. Keep plenty of gravel in the bottom of the cage, and give them water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of the first and second year has the plumage streaked with brown, the red not being fully developed; the third year he is jet black; shoulders a bright and rich scarlet, bordered with reddish white. The female has the upper parts brownish, lower parts spotted, or streaked with black and white. Young male like the female. Young female browner.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States. Migratory. Numbers winter in the Southern States.

ciated with the strong-hooked bill of the Falcon. There is also a resemblance in the habits and manner of feeding of the Shrike. By stratagem or pursuit he seizes small birds by the throat, suffocating them, and then impaling them on thorns,* to be devoured at leisure; his claws being insufficient for either holding or tearing them; he also feeds on grasshoppers, and other large insects, like the Jay, and impales them in the same manner. On the approach of winter, this bird visits us (from the mountain forests to the north of us, where he breeds,) and is found in the vicinity of Boston; and in the midst of winter, when hard pressed with hunger, in many instances they have darted through panes of glass after Canaries and other birds, hung in cages inside, and have in general been taken in the very act, and some of them have been brought to me to see if they were Mocking Birds, as they bear some resemblance to that bird. In one instance, last winter, there was one who succeeded in killing the poor Canary Bird before any body came to the rescue; he effected his escape through the breach he had made, on the entry of an inmate of the house, and without his prey after all, which he was in the act of pulling through the

* From this practice is derived the name of *Butcher*.

wires of the cage when interrupted. It is a graceful and active bird, and the color of its plumage is chaste and finely contrasted ; it has also some very pleasant warbling notes, will imitate the notes of other birds ; the female also sings. They are very amusing birds in a cage, and if some sharp sticks, made like thorns, are fastened inside of the cage, and live mice or insects are put in, they will, after killing them, impale them all round on the sticks. They have, in Europe, one of the same genus very closely allied to this species, but not now identified with it. The only difference is a little more white on the wing, and its being one inch less in length. They are there kept in cages, and are great favorites. They are caught by placing a bird and cage in a box trap, which is so constructed that as soon as he touches the cage the trap closes and shuts him up in darkness, from which he is immediately taken and transferred to another cage.

Food. — This bird, when caught, even when old, can be easily used to the cage by giving it live mice or insects, and leaving him alone, as at first ; he will not eat, as long as you stand by. He will very soon get tame, and thrive well upon meal and milk, and a bit of fresh beef ; gravel in the

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cage, and plenty of water, as they are fond of bathing.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The adult male has the whole of the upper parts of a rich pearl gray, the lower almost pure white; in young birds, mixed with waving lines of grayish; space between the bill and the eye, and surrounding the eye, black; wings, black; extremities, tipped with white; a spot of white on the lower part of the wing. The female is easily distinguished by the upper parts being light reddish brown; the back brownish, and not coming to the bill; the lower parts are reddish brown, and the waving lines are brownish, and more developed.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States in winter; breeds to the Northward of Massachusetts.

CEDAR WAXWING.

WE have many birds of bright and gaudy colors, but none who have their plumage of a more delicate and silky texture than this bird.

There are, I believe, but three species of this genus known to naturalists: The Cedar Waxwing, the subject of this description; the Bohemian, or European Chatterer, which was first discovered in this country on the Rocky Mountains, and it is said, has been since seen a little beyond the Mississippi, and another species, found in Eastern Asia. They have all the fine silky plumage; and the first two, those remarkable oblong appendages at the end of the wing and tail feathers, resembling red sealing wax, hence their name of Waxwing. There are, I believe, none of them musical, at least this, the Cedar Waxwing, is not, for it is almost a mute, having nothing but a single chirp not much louder than a mouse; and how they got the name of Chatterers, is a mystery to naturalists. They are voracious birds and great eaters, and this the farmer and gardener sometimes know to their cost, for they are very fond of ripe cherries, and are good judges of them, and generally select the best. But they are entitled to a moiety of the fruit for their protection of the trees, for they devour an enormous number of insects. I have seen these birds on an apple tree continue for hours, eating canker worms without intermission. They are, therefore, of incalculable benefit to the agriculturist,

(as indeed all birds are, more or less,) and should be protected by him.

Food. — The Cedar Waxwing, as also the European Chatterer, are sometimes kept in a cage for their beauty; they may be fed with meal and milk, or any kind of berries, or cherries, and in the winter, dried berries or black currants; they must be soaked in water to make them soft, so that they can swallow them; they must also have beef, cut in very small bits, or scraped, as for the Mocking Bird.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — There is no distinguishing characteristics of the sexes in the plumage of these birds, and it is of no consequence here, as the song of both, such as it is, is alike.

The upper parts of this bird are of a reddish brown, or dark fawn color; the front of the neck lighter, the back browner; on the head a fine crest, which comes up to a sharp point, a line of black, as also a line of white, runs from the nostril to the back of the head; below, another line of white; lower parts, yellow; white at the tail; and at the extremities of the secondaries, or shortest feathers of the wings, there are sometimes, on

the whole of them, oblong appendages, resembling red sealing wax ; sometimes they are also seen on the tail.

LOCATION. — Found, in summer, throughout the United States ; in winter, in the southern States. Have seen them in the winter in Massachusetts.

BLUE JAY.

THIS elegant and well known bird, in the delicate coloring and beauty of his plumage, will bear a comparison with any of the gaudy colored birds of tropical climes, and it probably surpasses many of them in his sprightly and lively attitudes. He is also, altogether our own bird, and does not leave us, even in the inclement season of the year ; for I have found them in the very middle of winter, in our large woods, to which they resort in extreme cold weather. In the autumn they secrete and bury acorns, and such hard seeds that they feed on, in divers places, it is said, for their winter's hoard. But I think it is rather to indulge a propensity which is natural to all this class of birds, to hide any-

thing they can find, for they distribute these seeds in such a scattering manner that it is not possible that they could ever find nine-tenths of them again, when the snow is on the ground. I have seen one of these birds, with a large acorn in his mouth, alight on the top of a gate post, and put the acorn in the centre, where the pith was decayed, and hammer it down with his bill; so that if any of my readers should see a sapling growing out of a gate post, which is not uncommon, they may conclude that Mr. Jay was the planter. I have seen them put them at the root of a bush, and in a hollow in the open field, and strike them down with their bill in the same manner. It is said, and there is no doubt of it, that in this manner, and by dropping those seeds in transportation, those birds plant vast numbers of our forest trees. Their antics and attitudes in a cage are highly amusing; they are also by no means contemptible songsters; some of their high notes I will allow, are rather loud, but they have some low notes which are very musical. They will also imitate the notes of other birds. They are also very docile; they will answer to their name, and form a strong attachment to those who keep them; and, it is said, have been taught to articulate words. I kept a pair for sometime in a cage

which was built up against the wall of the room, which formed one side. Close up to the roof they picked a hole through the plastering, and it was amusing to see them indulge their favorite propensity. The surplus of their food, and everything else which they did not immediately want, they put into this hole. This would not profit *them* much for their winter's hoard, but it might be serviceable to the rats or mice, for it went down probably to the cellar.

Food. — They are hardy, and easily kept in a cage, and are not at all choice of their food, for they will eat almost anything. I kept them in fine plumage on meal and milk, and a bit of beef, either raw or cooked.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the upper parts of a light purplish blue, with a fine large crest on the crown of the head; the wings and tail are barred with black, and tipped with white, and are of a beautiful purplish blue. There is a band of black round the neck, and the lower parts are of a brownish white. The female has the crest much smaller; the black, grayish, and the blue is lighter and duller.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the United States — Resident.

THE MAGPIE.

WITH the name of this bird are associated stories of poor forlorn maidens, who have been unjustly accused of pilfering silver spoons, jewelry, &c.; while our hero, indulging in his natural propensity, and great partiality for all glittering things, has been the guilty culprit. The American bird has been compared and examined with the European, and no material difference can be discovered. When kept tame, in a family, he has the same qualities, and the same practices. He will answer to his name, will follow an inmate of the family all over the house, or out of doors; may be taught to articulate words, and will carry off everything that glitters that he can carry to his hoarding place, which has caused sometimes a great deal of trouble. Although his colors are but two, there is such a contrast, that with his fine long tail he has a very elegant appearance, and is so very tame and familiar, that he is always a great favorite, whe-

ther in a cage, or going at large in the house. If he is allowed to range the house, it will be well to keep the things he likes so well out of his reach, or he may put them where my Blue Jays put the surplus of their food, where it may be very difficult to find them.

Food. — Their food, like the Blue Jays, they are no wise choice about ; they will eat anything that is used in the house. In a cage they thrive well on meal and milk, and a bit of meat, cooked or raw. Gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the head, neck, and upper part of the breast, of a deep velvet black ; the inner vanes of the large wing feathers, the lower parts of the breast and belly, are pure white. The tail, of which the two middle feathers are much the longest, is most splendidly colored with green, blue, and purple reflections, on a glossy jet black. The only difference with the female is, that the colors are duller and fainter.

LOCATION. — Found throughout the interior of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and the Rocky Mountains — Resident.

EUROPEAN JAY.

THIS bird is inferior in the brightness and variety of its colors to the American Blue Jay. Yet the colors of its plumage are chaste and pleasing, and the variegated beauty spot on the wing, enlivening the whole, it is considered, and justly too, one of the most beautiful of European birds. It has the same lively and sprightly habits; as ours it will articulate words, is familiar, docile and obedient, will imitate the notes of other birds, and it is said, when young, it may be taught to whistle a tune.

Food. — In Europe it is fed on bread and milk, and it is said requires plenty of water to wash to keep it clean; so would our Blue Jays, if kept on the same food. But I have had them, as clean and beautiful in a cage, as ever they were in the woods, whether they wash or not, and so would this bird too, if fed on the same yankee fare, good yellow meal and milk, plenty of gravel, water to wash, and a bit of beef two or three times a week.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has

the upper parts, except the rump, of a pale brownish purple red; the under parts of the same color, but much paler; at the tail it becomes white. The feathers on the forehead are streaked with black, and can be erected into a crest at pleasure; a line of black on each side of the head, the rump white, and part of the wing is beautifully marked with small bands of light blue, dark blue, and bluish white, all blended together, which ornaments the bird greatly. The female only differs in having the back of the neck, and part of the back grayish, instead of reddish purple, and all the colors being a little fainter.

LOCATION.—Found throughout Europe—Resident.

CAROLINA PARROT.

OF nearly two hundred different kinds of Parrots, described by naturalists, this is the only species found within the territory of the United States. It is much prized in Europe, and in Paris it is said to cost more than any other; and while there are many brought here

from foreign countries, I have never seen a Carolina Parrot kept in a cage. This seems a verification of the truth of the old adage: A prophet has no honor in his own country. They are great favorites on the Continent of Europe for their beauty and docility; and that enthusiastic and indefatigable ornithologist, Wilson, had one, which he carried in his pocket, tied in a handkerchief, for more than a thousand miles, in his journey through the wilderness from Nashville to Natchez, his sole companion in many a lonely and weary day's travel. He intended to take his favorite to Pennsylvania to finish its education, as he says, but it unfortunately perished in the Gulf of Mexico, by making a breach in its cage, and flying overboard while he was asleep.

Food. — Wilson fed his, in the woods, on cockle burs, from which they extract the seeds, and beech nuts, but in a domestic state, of course they may be fed like others.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — As the females of this tribe of birds chatter and whistle as well as the males, the distinguishing marks are not of much consequence; however, we will give them, if there are any. This bird is about thirteen

inches in length. The male has the fore part and sides of the head of a bright orange red ; the back part of the head and neck are bright yellow, the rest of the plumage is of an orange green. The male and female are very much alike ; there is rather less yellow on the neck of the female.

LOCATION.—Found in the inland Southern States—Resident.

EUROPEAN SISKIN FINCH.

THIS little bird is very rare in Britain, and I had never seen a live specimen. But since this work went to press I have received one from Palermo. It is a neat and pretty shaped bird, and is closely allied to the Goldfinch, and has all its habits and manners. It is found in Germany, and is there said to be a great favorite with the stocking-weavers, from the resemblance its note bears to the noise of their looms.* The one I have in my possession is a male, and sings, and it has certainly a very peculiar note, but it is not

* Bechstein.

unpleasant. They will imitate the notes of other birds; and the male Siskin will pair freely with the female Canary, and the singing of the produce is very much admired by some. They are also very apt to learn to draw their seed and water, like the Goldfinch.

Food.—Treatment and food the same as the Goldfinch.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES.—The male has the top of the head, and under the beak, black; the hind part of the head, and all the upper parts of the body yellowish green; on the back streaked with brown, nearly yellow on the rump, the lower parts a greenish yellow, lighter on the belly, which is streaked with brown. There are two yellow bands across the wing, divided by one of black. The female has the crown and chin brown, and the other parts of the body are much duller in color.

LOCATION.—Sometimes seen in winter in Britain. Found in several parts of the Continent of Europe—Resident.

SOUTH AMERICAN, ASIATIC, AND AFRICAN BIRDS.

ORIOLES.

OF this very numerous genus of birds, of which the Baltimore is a species, by far the greater part of them belong to the American Continent. They are remarkable for their docility and sagacity, and the great ingenuity they display in constructing their nests. And there are many of them domesticated by the inhabitants of South America, for the purpose of destroying the large insects and reptiles, with which the houses in those countries are infested.

ICTERUS ORIOLE, OR TROOPIAL.

This beautiful species is of a very lively disposition, and possesses in an eminent degree the other qualifications of his tribe. There is one of these birds which has been kept in a family in this city for six years. He is as completely domesti-

cated as any member of it. He will visit every apartment in the house, will answer to his name, and come when he is called. He knows the voice, and even the footsteps of the inmates of the family. He will play or fight with them, (which he seems to enjoy very much,) and loves to be fondled, like a dog. He seems to think also, that he has a right to protect his premises, and drive off all intruders. On leaving his cage one day he went up stairs, and on finding an artisan engaged repairing the lock of a room door, he commenced an attack upon him with great energy, and actually succeeded in drawing blood, before the man recovered from his surprise. He will sit on the hand of his mistress, and accompany her anywhere. When I saw him last his appearance indicated that he was taken good care of, and all his little wants supplied, for he was in good health and beautiful plumage. In addition to his other attractions he whistles melodiously.

Food. — They may be fed on meal and milk, with a bit of meat occasionally, either cooked or raw. Berries in summer, and black currants in winter, and water to wash every day. They require a pretty large cage.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — This bird is larger than the Crow Black Bird, the head, throat, middle of the back, wings, and tail, black, remainder of the plumage a bright orange color. Across the wings there are two oblique bars of white; on the top of the head, and below the bill, there are elongated feathers, which the bird can raise at pleasure. The plumage of the female of these birds is duller and fainter in the colors.

LOCATION. — Found in different parts of South America, also, on the Island of Jamaica — Resident.

CACIQUE ORIOLE.

This species is about the size of a Crow Black-bird. The color of the plumage is glossy black, on the shoulders is a broad strip of yellow; also the rump and upper part of the tail, excepting the two middle feathers of the tail, which are black.

RED RUMPED ORIOLE.

This is an elegant species, although there is not

much variety in the colors. It is rather smaller in size than the former, and is entirely of a deep glossy black, excepting the rump which is of a vivid crimson. From the striking contrast of the colors, it has a fine appearance. This and the preceding species are sometimes brought here; they have the same manners and habits, and the same whistling note.

Food and treatment the same as the Icteric. They are natives of South America.

BLACK-HEADED ORIOLE.

This bird is about the size of the blue Jay. The head and neck is black; the wings are striped with black and yellow; the tail reddish, and the remainder of the plumage is of a bright golden yellow. This is an Asiatic species, and is sometimes brought to this country.

The food and treatment the same as the Icteric.

LOCATION. — Madras — Resident.

CRESTED DOMINICAN GROSSBEAK.

This is an elegant bird, and a very agreeable songster; and when in full plumage, with his fine arched crest, and the glowing crimson of his head and neck, contrasted with the chaste coloring of the remainder of his plumage, has a very fine appearance. They are docile, and easily domesticated, and sing well in the cage. They are often brought here, and are named the South American Cardinal, to distinguish them from the Cardinal Grossbeak.

FOOD. — A mixture of one-third hemp, and two-thirds Canary seed. They are very fond of ripe berries, which may be given them in summer, and a few black currants in winter; occasionally a bit of ripe apple. Gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — This bird is about the size of the Cardinal Grossbeak. The male has the head and fore part of the neck a bright crimson color, on the head a long and full pointed crest; the back and wings are of a dark, ash color, the lower parts white, the two middle feathers of the tail are a dusky red, the others the

color of the back. The female is duller and fainter in all the colors, and the back is speckled with white.

LOCATION. — Found in different parts of South America, especially in Brasil — Resident.

MINO BIRD.

This remarkable bird is about the size of our Crow Blackbird, and resembles it also in plumage. It articulates words and sentences with wonderful distinctness. There was one at the Exchange Coffee House, in Boston, last summer, who uttered the following sentences, which no doubt it had learned on its passage to this country :

“ Good morning. What are you going to do, Jerome? How 's the wind, Jerome? Jerome, what 's the clock? ”

This was articulated with surprising exactness, in a fine tenor voice ; and this is the more astonishing, as the tongue of this bird is long and slender, and not fleshy and rounded as in the parrot tribe, which is thought favorable to their articulation, from its resemblance to the tongue of the human species.

There was also one of these birds in New York recently, which was celebrated for uttering sentences distinctly. I kept one myself about a year ago, for a short time; while with me he would whistle and imitate other sounds, but did not pronounce words; since that time, I understand he has got the gift of speech also like the others.

FOOD. — These birds are great eaters; I fed mine on meal and milk, as a staple dish. If I approached the cage with anything in my hand that he could eat, (he was not particular) meat, cooked or raw, bread or potatoes, he would be down at the cage door putting his head through the wires, and uttering a whining cry; and would always get some of it out of my hand, before I could open his cage door, or put it into the cage. They require plenty of gravel, and water to wash often. It may be worthy of remark here, that I have always found those birds, which eat a good deal of food, all fond of bathing, and wash every day at least, if they have an opportunity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — This bird resembles the Crow Blackbird in size and plumage, and is remarkable for a broad band of yellow skin, which begins on the side of the head, and

extends to the nape of the neck on both sides, but does not meet; the plumage on the sides of the head is short, and resembles black velvet. There is little, if any, difference in plumage between the male and female.

LOCATION. — Found on the Island of Java and in other parts of Asia.

JAVA FINCH, OR SPARROW.

This pretty little bird, although it does not excel as a songster, cannot be surpassed in the beauty of its plumage, nor the chaste delicacy of its colors. The close compactness of its feathers make its covering appear as if it was a solid surface, and when it is sitting still you might almost imagine that it was cut out of a fine, close-grained piece of wood, and then highly polished and colored. They are also probably the neatest and cleanest bird that ever was in a cage. I have had thirty of these birds in a bamboo cage, which I kept for some time. During the time I had them I never saw them wash, (although I have seen them wash since, but they wash but sel-

dom,) and I never saw a spot on one of them; they were always neat and clean. They are very loving, one to another, and always sit close together, although sometimes they would have little quarrels, but they never hurt one another much. The males have a very sweet, low, warbling note.

Food.—In their native country they feed upon rice; and when they are brought here they bring sometimes the unhulled rice with them, which is called paddy. But as we cannot procure it at all times, when I get them I always put them on Canary seed, (the Canary alone,) and I think it is much better for them, better even than the unhulled rice, when it gets hard and dry. I knew of one that was kept alone, for seven years, in a cage, upon Canary seed. They will seldom eat anything else. I have had them sometimes, that would pick a little green stuff, but not often.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES.—The bill of this bird is a deep carmine color; the head and throat are jet black, with the exception of the sides of the head, which are pure white; the primaries or main feathers of the wings are black, as is also the rump and tail; the rest of the upper

parts, and breast, are of a fine bluish gray, the belly a delicate grayish purple; close to the tail white. I never could discover any difference between the male and female, except in size; the female is rather smaller.

LOCATION. — Found on the Island of Java, and throughout China — Resident.

BROAD-SHAFTED WHIDAH FINCH.

This elegant bird is remarkable for the size and beauty of the tail, the middle feathers of which, (although the body of the bird is not much larger than a Canary,) is twelve inches long. It is a splendid bird in a cage, and carries its extremely long tail gracefully, and manages it dexterously, in hopping from perch to perch. It has a very sweet and soft note, and keeps itself neat and clean; nor is it by any means a delicate bird, although from the torrid zone, but stands our climate very well, and is easily kept in a cage. It moults twice in the year, when a change takes place in its plumage, and it loses the long feathers in the tail, which it does not regain for six months,

it having those feathers only, (in its own country,) in the breeding season. They should have a very large cage, and the perches pretty far apart.

Food. — They are fed the same as the Canary Finch.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The upper parts of the male of this bird are a brownish black; paler on the wings. On the upper part of the neck there is a broad collar of rich orange yellow; the under parts are of a light buff color, at the tail black. After losing the long feathers the plumage becomes streaked with black and white, about the head and neck, and below with black and red. The female is of a brownish black, all over, and has not the long feathers in the tail. The length of the long feathers in the tail of the male is twelve inches.

LOCATION. — Found in Southern and Western Africa.

CRIMSON-COLLARED WHIDAH.

This is another beautiful species, rather larger than the former, and the tail is differently shaped. In this bird the middle feather is the shortest, the tail being forked; round the upper part of the breast there is also a rich band of orange crimson. The plumage of this bird, both above and below, is of a jet glossy black, the side-feathers of the tail are six inches long.

RED-BILLED WHIDAH.

The tail of this species differs from the two preceding; it is square like another bird's, and of a moderate length, except the four middle feathers, which are long, and so formed, that when closed, they have the appearance of one single feather. It is rather smaller in size than the first mentioned; the upper part of the head and back are a deep glossy black; on the neck a white stripe, and towards the tail is white; there is also a large spot of the same color on the wings, the lower parts are pure white. This and the preceding species are also brought from Africa; they live upon seeds, and are fine songsters.

AMANDAVA, OR AVODAVINE FINCH.

This beautiful little bird, although a native of the warm counties of Asia, bears the vicissitudes of our climate remarkably well; although small, they are hardy, and there are many of them kept in Boston, and other parts of the country. They are generally brought in pairs, but will live alone in a cage. Like all the Asiatic birds, they are very loving, and will sit close nestled together on the perch, whether males or females, picking round one another's bills like the Java Finches. The male is a delightful little songster, and, on hearing it for the first time, you are astonished that such a diminutive bird could sing such a loud note. In cold weather they should be kept moderately warm, but I have kept them in winter where there was no fire after sundown.

Food. — They are generally fed on millet seed; I have had those that would eat Canary; they may have both; a blade of lettuce or cabbage occasionally; gravel, and water to wash.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has the head and lower parts of a deep fiery red; the upper parts brownish gray, tinged with red;

nearly all the plumage is spotted white, largest on the wings. The female is smaller in size; the head and upper parts are ashy gray; the rump tinged with red; the shoulders are spotted with white; the lower parts of the body are of a pale orange color.

LOCATION. — Found in the Tropical countries of Asia — Resident.

SENEGAL FINCH, OR SPICE BIRD.

This pretty little songster is still smaller than the Amandava, and its note, although not quite so loud, is much more harmonious. The female also sings, and if there are a pair in the cage, they will sit closely nestled together and sing alternately, the male first, and then the female.

Food. — Treatment and food the same as the Amandava Finch.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male has the bill red; sides and fore part of the head and chin, black; the top of the head reddish, with

black spots ; the rest of the plumage is of a light reddish brown, spotted with black and brown. The female has the upper parts of a light brown ; the lower parts, reddish gray.

LOCATION. — Found in various parts of Asia — Resident.

DOVES.

RING DOVE.

THIS is a neat and pretty bird, mild and gentle in its disposition. I kept a pair for some time, (a good many years ago) but never could succeed in raising more than one bird at a hatching, the other egg either proving bad, or if both hatched, one of them would die, it appeared to me, from their carelessness in feeding, and I have heard often since, from those who keep them, the same complaint. They are very loving birds, the male hardly ever leaving the female, and when she is

sitting on the nest, he passes the night close by her side. When the male coos, he does not turn round like others of his tribe, but walks up to the female, lowers his head, and swells out his crop, then raising his head, lowers it again, and so repeats a very plaintive note. When moving about, they have a more lively note, which resembles a person laughing. They require a pretty large cage, and two boxes, fastened one at each end about six or eight inches from the bottom, containing some fine soft straw for their nests. In Europe they are named the "Collared-Turtle Dove."

Food. — They will eat any kind of grain; barley, rice, or buckwheat is the best; they will also eat bread. They require plenty of gravel in bottom of the cage, and also to be kept in a moderate temperature in winter; not too warm, for there are many, even tropical birds, who suffer from heat in our warm rooms in winter.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the upper parts of a reddish white, the lower parts pure white; there is a black crescent round the neck, the points of which come forward. The female is much whiter, and the ring paler.

LOCATION. — They are natives of the East Indies and China, whence they are brought to America.

TURTLE DOVE.

This bird is also brought here and kept in cages. Although not so common as the Ring-Dove, it is more prolific in a domestic state; and it is said it will pair with the Collared Turtle, and the produce prove more fruitful than the last mentioned bird alone.* The cooing of the male of this bird has less variety than the Ring-Dove, being a prolonged note, but his gestures before the female are about the same. We have a species of this bird in the United States, allied to this, the Asiatic species, (the *Columba Carolinensis*,) but I am not aware of any of them having been kept in cages.

Food, and size of cage the same as the Ring-Dove.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The male of this bird has the forehead white, the upper parts

* Bechstein.

of a whitish blue, darker towards the tail; there is a black spot on each side of the neck, with a few whitish curved lines on it. This has a fine effect, and is named the beauty spot, the lower parts white. The female is grayish on the back, the beauty spot much fainter, lower parts grayish also.

LOCATION.—Found in Europe and Asia. In Northern Europe—Migratory.

PARROTS.

GRAY, OR AFRICAN PARROT.

This bird, although not so gaudily colored as some of his tribe, is one of the most beautiful and valuable. There are numbers of them, imported both to this country and Europe, from Africa, where they are only found. They can be taught to whistle a tune distinctly, and correctly; and they articulate words, and whole sentences, in a fine, full, and sonorous bass voice. And I believe they are the only species of those birds

which have propagated their kind in a domestic state. They are docile and intelligent, and form strong attachments to those who feed them. When young they are easily taught, and are possessed of good memories, never forgetting what they have once learned. A few years ago I had one in my possession for some time. I taught him to whistle, "Over the water to Charley." He whistled it clearly and correctly, and would speak some sentences very distinctly. I have had some of them since, which have showed the same facility in learning.

Food. — The common staple diet for Parrots is bread and milk, as for Thrushes; for this I have substituted for them, as well as the Thrushes, Indian meal and milk, and find it much better food for them. I had one of this species last summer, for two months, which I fed on meal and milk, and, two or three times a week, a piece of apple. He moulted during that time, and when he left me he was in beautiful plumage, and good health; and I have in my possession now, a Green Parrot, which has no other food but a little mug of meal and milk, every morning. He is also moulting freely, and is in as good health as ever I saw a bird in that state. This season is

the most hazardous time for those birds, and I do not recollect of ever preserving a favorite Parrot, which had not died moulting. The African Parrot is very fond of meat, both raw and cooked; but it brings on disease, and had better not be given.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEXES. — The general color of this bird is a bluish silvery gray, the feathers on the upper parts edged with brownish gray. The tail a deep vermilion. There is no distinguishable difference between the male and female.

LOCATION. — Found on the Coast, and Interior of Africa — Resident.

BRAZILIAN GREEN PARROT.

This is a very beautiful species; it is often brought here, and is about the size of the African. It is docile and tractable, and may be taught to articulate words and sentences very distinctly.

The front and round the bill of this bird is bright red, the sides of the head are a fine deep

blue, the crown a bright yellow, the shoulders, pretty far down on the wings, are red, the wing feathers are edged with yellow, the main, or longest, a deep blue. The tail feathers are finely marked with deep blue, yellow, and red.

FOOD. — Meal and milk, a bit of apple, a few cracked nuts, occasionally, of which they are very fond.

LOCATION. — Found in the different parts of South America, especially in Brazil — Resident.

WHITE-FRONTED PARROT.

This is another very elegant species, which is sometimes brought here. They are larger in size than the former, and are very gentle, and familiar in their manners, and easily taught to speak, and whistle snatches of tunes.

FOOD. — Treatment and food the same as the Brazilian.

LOCATION. — Found in different parts of South America — Resident.

Of this very numerous tribe, or genus, of birds, nearly all of which inhabit the warmer regions of the Old and New World, there are the Maccaws, the Cockatoos, the Lorys, and the Parrakeets. There are some of them which may be taught to speak and to whistle, and are docile and of gentle manners, and some of them are truly splendid in their plumage. Yet by far the greater part of them are so extremely vociferous and noisy, that they are much more at home in the menagerie than in the parlor.

INSTRUCTIONS
FOR THE
BREEDING OF CANARY BIRDS,
AND THE
PROPER TREATMENT OF THE YOUNG.

LOCATION FOR BREEDING.

If you intend to breed your birds flying at large in a room, and have a choice, choose one, the windows of which look to the south-east; if in cages, place them in the same situation, for the same purpose, to have the benefit of the morning sun, which is very beneficial, especially to the young birds. If you breed in a room, you must have one or two windows latticed with wire, so put on that you can raise the window to admit the air when it is mild, and shut it down when cold. It is better not to have the open windows opposite one to the other, as this makes a draft through the room, which I have found, by expe-

rience, to be injurious to the young birds, especially when moulting. If you use cages, hang them on the wall opposite the windows, where they will have the early sunshine longest; this is much better than hanging them on the roof or near the window.

PAIRING.

If the weather is mild you may put your birds together about the first of March. Those that are intended to be bred in a room had better be put in a cage for ten or twelve days to pair; they may pair before that time. Those who are not familiar with birds, may know that they are paired by seeing them feed each other. They may then be turned into the room, where there are nesting places provided for them. You need not be alarmed if they should fight a little, as those fighting birds generally breed the best. I have seen a female keep the male down in the bottom of the cage for a couple of days, and not allow him to get on a perch. She would sit on the top perch, stooping down, with her wings half stretched like a hawk, and if he should dare to come any nearer to her, by even getting on the lower perch, she would pounce on him like a Falcon on its prey, and knock him down to his

former position at the bottom of the cage. At last he will get desperate, pluck up courage, and succeed in placing her in the situation that he was formerly, but he will be more merciful than she was, for he will not keep her there long; they will then soon make up matters and raise a large family.

Birds, intended to be paired in the spring, should not be kept together in the winter, as the male will not sing so well, and they will not breed so readily when the breeding season comes. When your birds begin to moult, their breeding, for the season, is over; they should then be separated and well fed, and your attention directed to the young.

In pairing birds that are of different colors, there are some rules to be observed, that you may have those colors pure and bright in your young birds. In pairing the male primitive green Canary (dark green above and yellow below) with a pure white or bright yellow female, there may be some of the brood like the male, and some like the female, or part mottled like both; the young will be strong and healthy, and the males good singers, as the dark green birds are generally excellent songsters; the colors, also, will be pure and bright. Many years ago I bred a

pair of dark green Canaries; in the first brood there were two yellow birds; this rather surprised me until I thought of the cause: one of the old birds, or perhaps both, had been produced by yellow and green Canaries. If you wish to have pure yellow birds, pair a bright yellow male with the whitest hen you can procure; if mottled or splashed birds, pair a bright yellow male with a bright mottled female, or a mottled male with a pure white female.* The blending of the colors of these birds has arrived to such a height of late, and the bird-fanciers of Europe have got them by mixing, so striped, streaked, spotted, and speckled, that it must be very difficult for one poor little Canary bird to know another. But not only in color have they transmogrified them, (for as the Flat-head Indians are said to flatten the heads of their offspring,) so we might almost suppose that they stretched out the young of the Canary bird, for they have got some of them almost as long as two common birds. For some of those birds high prices are given, but it is mere fancy; the breed is not superior

* Do not pair two mottled or splashed birds, as the colors will be faint or mealy; or two Yellow Birds, except they be very large and pure, as they will degenerate in size and color; nor two crested birds, as the crests of some will be imperfect.

except, in the opinion of some, to the eye. The long birds are tender and delicate, and will not bear the vicissitudes of our climate like the others. And for song, I have had, and may have now, a stout, original green Canary, or a good, strong Yellow Bird that has been bred here, that you might hang in an attic all winter without fire, which will sing as sweet a note as any long bird I have ever heard in New York or Boston. Never pair birds of the same family together; if you wish to breed any of your young birds, exchange with some of your neighbors, or purchase mates for them. This close breeding degenerates the birds, and finally they become good for nothing.

BREEDING CAGES, NESTS, &c.

I HAVE bred Canaries in rooms and in cages, and I prefer the latter method, not only because I have been more successful in this way, but I think there is more pleasure and gratification in breeding in cages. You can go close up to the cage and look at them when feeding their young, without startling them, or take down the nests and see if all is right, and attend to their little wants,

without frightening other hens off their nests, and have them all flying around you; and there is no fear of confusion amongst them, or of their quarrelling together, in a room, as I have seen them; for birds will get irritated sometimes as well as men, and fight too. Two or three years ago I had about fifteen females, all sitting on eggs together in nests in a room. For a few days they all sat well, and I had every prospect of having a large family of young Canaries, when one lady bird began to get restless, and come off her nest oftener than was necessary to eat; then she began to visit her neighbors, and at last got, like some other lady birds, to be a complete gadder abroad, and we almost gave up all hopes of her ever raising her family, and thought some of removing her out of the community. One day, in my absence, (as there are degrees in crime,) she had commenced pilfering from some of her steady neighbors; they had resented, of course; then came the tug of war, and Greek met Greek. The males had interfered to make peace, as was their bounden duty; the other lady birds, seeing their lords in danger, had come to the rescue, and there was nothing but riot and confusion, in this hitherto peaceful community. And when I arrived I found the floor strewed with broken eggs

and fragments of nests; and where I had anticipated a fine harvest of young Canary birds, all was ruin and desolation. I immediately removed the delinquent, and two or three of the most furious of the combatants; but the mischief was done; this naughty female had imbued them all with her wicked spirit, and they fought and quarrelled, and quarrelled and fought, forsook their nests, or fought over them, until they broke the eggs in them; and from the whole I do not believe I had ten young birds.

A cage, to breed a pair of birds comfortably, should not be less than eighteen inches long. To each corner, opposite the door, pretty near the top, put a ring of common cage wire; take two of those little baskets which are imported from Germany every season, and after putting in a little tow or oakum, (the last is a good preventive against those little red mites) to fill them up, as they are made rather deep, line them inside with a piece of new woollen flannel, (which is better than the cotton,) sew it well through the basket with linen thread, and make it smooth inside; it will then be something like a teacup; then fit the rings in the cage to the nests, and make them fast by turning the ends over and driving them into the rail of the cage. Let the nests go pretty well down,

so as not to tilt when the bird hops on them; and it is well to put a little edge on the top of them, so as they will not go down through. Make them fit easy, so that you can take them out and look at the eggs, or young. If you live in the country you may make the baskets yourself, of twigs, or splints of wood, as I have often done; then take some cotton wicking, and cut it in short pieces, and a few feathers. When the bird layed, if those materials were not put in snugly, I always take them out, as they are apt to catch their feet and pull the eggs out of the nest; then the eggs lay on the flannel, which is quite sufficient. Put in both your nests when you put in your birds, and let the female make her choice. This is necessary, for, when the young are about ten days old, she will leave the care of them to the male, who will rear them, and lay again, in the other nest. When the young leave a nest, take it out and put in a new one, or take all the lining of it, bake it in the oven, or throw it into boiling water, and then line it anew. These precautions are necessary, to destroy any of those mites which may have got about the nest, or prevent their breeding. This simple method of preparing the nests, I have found the best for the comfort and convenience of the birds; and I have

been very successful in breeding them. It may be sufficient to say, that from a pair of birds I had twenty-one young ones, in one season, all alive and well. If you wish your birds to build their own nests, in place of the baskets, put up boxes four inches square, and three inches deep, made of thin wood;* then furnish your birds with some fine, dry grass; such as grows about the roots of bushes and fences is good, and some cotton wick cut in short pieces; also, some deer, or cow's hair; the hair should be washed clean, then put into a warm oven, or dried before the fire. Strew those materials over the bottom of the cage, or put them separately, in pieces of net, and hang them in the corners of the cage, and they will pull them out as they want them. It is better not to put but one box in at first, as they may amuse themselves by carrying the materials from one to another, and thereby lose time. Before you put in the box, take some of the grass, and fashion the frame of a nest, as neat as you can, (this will save time, and the labor of the birds,) and they will finish it to suit themselves,

* Camphor wood, or red cedar, is the best, if it can be procured, (as the mites will not breed in it,) if not, common cedar; nail them close together, in the joints, and give them a good coat of copal varnish, and hang them in the sun to dry.

or rather *she* will, for the female is the master-builder, the male only an assistant, or laborer, bringing her the materials. I have seen a female pounce upon the poor male, and give him an unmerciful thrashing, when he had merely hopped in, to try how it would suit him, while she was engaged building it, and had probably gone to eat. If you wish the birds to do the whole of the building of the nest, put in the box empty, and they will carry in all the grass, or hay, with the other material, themselves.

HATCHING, AND TREATMENT OF THE YOUNG.

On putting your birds in the cage, to pair, give one-third of a hard-boiled egg to a pair, every morning, yolk, white, and shell; add to their portion of hemp and Canary seed, some rape, and put in the cage, or stick in the wires, a piece of old lime plaster, from a ceiling, or wall.* When the female commences laying, she will lay an egg every morning until her complement is laid.

* Some use cuttle fish bone; it is the lime contained in the bone that is useful, therefore the old plaster is superior.

The number is generally five, sometimes six, or four, and some young hens will set upon three. Some females will not set until they have done laying; others will commence setting on laying the first egg, and it has been said by some, that, in this case, the egg should be taken out, and a false one put in its place, until the complement is laid, and then the whole put back into the nest again. This is taking a great deal of trouble, without any necessity for it, and the risk of breaking the eggs into the bargain; for if the young are hatched, one every morning, the one is nourished and fed before the next comes, and so on; and in the other case, where all are hatched together, the male assists in nourishing and feeding them, and all is well. There is very often one bad egg in the nest; when the youngest is two days old, take the box, or basket, which contains the nest,* in your left hand, introduce the little finger of the right gently under the young, and get out the bad egg, as it takes up room in the nest, and if it should get broke is very unpleasant. When I had six young at a hatching, which I have sometimes had, I prepared a large nest, and when

* Both boxes and baskets should be so fixed, that they can be taken down for this purpose; and occasionally to see how the young thrive.

they were five or six days old removed them gently into it, as the common sized nests, when they grow older, would prove too small for them. When the young are hatched increase the egg to one half, or more; the whole of it as before. Some give only the yolk, this is wrong; when very young the yolk is too heating and rich for them. Add to this a slice of good baker's bread, moistened with pure water; the parents will then feed with the three together.* Be careful that the bread is not sour. If there are four or five young, they may require fresh egg and bread in the afternoon, as they grow older. Give them fresh bread and egg every morning, as soon after sunrise as is convenient; and, if the weather is warm, about noon, remove what may be in the saucer; rinse it with water, and give them fresh egg and bread. The male takes an active part in the feeding of the young whenever they are hatched, but the female alone sits on them; and when they get large, and begin to feather, she will sit by them, or on the side of the nest at night. When they are about ten days old, (as before mentioned,) she will leave the care alto-

* I have seen a parent bird take a pick of the yolk, of the white, and of the bread, to feed a bird not many hours old.

gether to the male, and lay again in the other nest. The male will feed them regularly, and also his mate, whenever she calls him, which she will whenever she does not feel disposed to leave her nest. He will attend to his duty diligently, and the young are sometimes safer, under the charge of the male than the female, especially if she is a young mother. I have often gazed with pleasure on the male, after having a fine brood of young left under his charge. He would first hop gently on the nest, and survey them all over, with delight sparkling in his eyes; and when, on his uttering a low note, they would raise their heads and open their mouths, overjoyed he would quickly obey the call, fly down to the bottom of the cage, take two or three mouthfuls, then fly up and put it into one of two of their little throats, then down again, and when they were all satisfied, and he would take care that there were none unfed, he would hop on his roost, and pour forth strains of melody, which seemed to me to say: "Now I have done my duty I am happy; I will now sing my best song." When the young begin to eat alone, and pick about the bottom of the cage, take an equal part of hemp and rape seed, and bruise it in a mortar, or on a table with a rolling-pin; put it in a sau-

cer, or other shoal vessel, then into the cage. Whenever you think they can eat well enough to be alone, remove them out of the breeding-cage, as they annoy the mother when sitting, by crowding around the nest; and she does not scruple, sometimes, to rob them of a few of their feathers, to keep her eggs warm.

When you remove your young put them into a pretty large cage, where they can have plenty of room to fly; they will feather better, and be clean. Remove them in the morning; and if they should keep chirping all day, and not eat, in the afternoon take the male out of the breeding cage, and put him in beside them, and he will feed them all. Keep him there until near night; then put him back to his mate again, and they will eat the next day without any trouble. Put in the rape and hemp seed, bruised, as formerly; this I have found very beneficial for young birds. Put in, also, Canary seed, and egg and bread, as formerly; withdraw all the soft food gradually, but as soon as you can, as they will thrive better, and be much more healthy and vigorous, when you get them to live on their seed alone.

MOULTING OF THE YOUNG.

Although the moulting of young birds is only partial, as they do not in general shed their wing or tail feathers, they require more care and attention than at their future moultings. It generally takes place when they are about two months old, sometimes when younger, or older. At this time they sleep sometimes during the day, with their head under their wing. They now require nourishing food, and to be kept moderately warm. If the weather is warm open the window, and let them have air; but do not put the cage where there is a draft of air; the same if in a room, do not have opposite windows open, and be careful to shut them, when the cool of the evening approaches. Let them also have the benefit of the sunshine, morning and evening. If too warm in the middle of the day, drop the curtain of the window, or throw something over the cage. With the seed, as before, give, two or three times a week, a bit of baker's bread, moistened with milk, and, once or twice a week, a portion of hard-boiled egg, chopped fine; and, occasionally, some lettuce, or cabbage, and keep a piece of rusty iron in the water dish. By using those

precautions, and administering to their little wants, you will soon have your feathered friends in good health and beautiful plumage; and they will amply repay you for your care and attention, by their enlivening and cheerful songs during the ensuing winter.

MOULTING OF THE OLD BIRDS.

The old birds generally moult about the beginning of autumn. They require also nourishing food at this period. Give them freely of rape-seed, a bit of bread dipped in milk, and occasionally a bit of hard-boiled egg, and lettuce or cabbage. Sometimes it happens, that from some cause, this operation of nature is retarded or stopped, and the bird does not shed his old feathers, or does it very slowly, in this case I have found it efficacious to put a few cloves in the water, and give them plenty of green stuff. If the weather is cold when they moult, do not expose them to it; but if mild and warm, I have found it beneficial to an old bird, when moulting, to be kept outside of a window or door; at least, let them have plenty of free air, and keep a rusty nail in

water. In moulting, the proper treatment of the old birds is about the same as the young, only they do not require so much care and attention, as the most hazardous time with Canaries is their first moulting.

DISEASES,
TO WHICH
CANARIES, AND OTHER BIRDS ARE LIABLE,
IN A
DOMESTIC STATE.

INFLAMMATION OF THE BOWELS. — Young Canaries, when fed upon egg and bread, and such nutritious food, get sick, and their appearance indicates an attack of this disorder. The skin of the belly is distended, and the feathers come off, and leave the skin bare, and the veins under it are blue and surcharged with blood, and on dissection, the bowels are found inflamed, and black towards the vent. On the first appearance of this disorder withdraw the rich food, and give your birds a little lettuce seed and Canary alone, plenty of green stuff, and put a rusty nail in the water. But in prescribing for the diseases of birds, and

other animals too, the old adage holds good, that "An ounce of preventive is worth a pound of cure;" and to avoid this and other disorders, I endeavor to get my young Canaries from their soft and luscious food as soon as possible to their plain seed, on which they are much healthier.

CONSTIPATION, OR COSTIVENESS. — The good old singing Canaries, and other birds who live upon seeds, are often troubled with this ailment; it may be discovered by the bird jerking down his body when he voids, or tries to, and raising his tail. A bit of bread dipped in milk and a blade of cabbage will cure it. It is well to stick a bit of bread, moistened with milk, in the cages of your seed-birds occasionally, it will prove beneficial to them.

EPILEPSY. — This disease some birds are subject to; bleeding is prescribed by some, by cutting one or two of the nails of the claws until they bleed. I prefer cold baths. Many years ago I had a pair of Cardinal Grossbeaks both in one cage; one day the female had one of these fits; when I discovered her I found her lying on her back, at the bottom of the cage, pulling her feathers out, and she had succeeded in stripping her lower parts completely bare of feathers; I immediately took her out and plunged her into the water-pail, and after allowing her time to

breathe I put her in again. Being determined to test the virtue of this mode of proceeding, I put her into the water a third time, and then put her back into the cage. I kept her, I think, nearly three months after this, her feathers soon came on again, and she sung sweetly,* and never had another fit, at least when with me.

ASTHMA. — If you have a bird attacked with this disorder, which you will know by its making a croaking or wheezing noise when it breathes, take a piece of baker's bread; soak it in water, then squeeze the water out of it, and boil it well in milk. Give them freely of this every day, with plenty of cabbage or lettuce, and if your bird is not a very old one it will soon recover.

DIARRHŒA. — Put a piece of rusty iron in your water-dish, (and do not change the water oftener than twice a week,) and bread boiled in milk, as for the asthma; boil it well in this case, so as when it is cold it will cut like cheese; give them freely of it, and plenty of vegetables. For young Canaries and other seed birds, mix with the paste some scalded rape seed; this mode of treatment for this disease is generally successful.

DISEASES OF THE FEET. — Thrushes, and other

* The female of this species sings.

birds, are sometimes troubled with this ; it is often occasioned by the feet and legs getting dry and hard, and the scales contracted, and the shedding of them being protracted, causes much pain to the bird, and often lameness. Wash the feet and shanks of the bird, once or twice a day, with some warm milk and water, and rub them with a little lard ; when they get soft, remove the scales gently, this treatment will soon effect a cure.

By getting it caught in the wires, or from some other cause, a bird will sometimes unfortunately break its leg. In this case take the perches out of the cage, and spread a piece of flannel smoothly on the bottom. If you have glasses in your cage, take them out, and stop up the holes, then put the food into very shallow vessels so as the bird can eat and drink without getting up, or rising on its legs. Nature will now do the rest, the bone will soon knit, and the bird get well. By this mode of treatment I have in general been successful in effecting a complete cure.

The claws of a bird that has been kept in a cage for some time will grow long, so as to annoy the bird in leaping from perch to perch in catching round them, and might be the cause of the bird's injuring itself as before mentioned. In this case, take the bird in your left hand, and holding its

leg between your fingers, cut the nails off the claws with a pair of sharp scissors ; you need not cut too far up, to touch the quick, as it hurts the bird, (but it will not injure it) ; if you should the first, cut less off the others.

MOULTING. — Though not, properly speaking, a disease, yet during this operation of nature, all birds are more or less sick, and some suffer severely. And it is rather remarkable, that this is the case even among birds of the same species, some getting through the operation much easier than others. If we look at birds in a state of nature, we will find that at the time of moulting they have their food in the greatest abundance scattered around them in profusion, when they are least capable of making exertions to procure it. The mode of treatment of birds, in a domestic state, is here clearly pointed out. They require plenty of nourishing food, as near natural as we can possibly procure it. Worms, insects, and fruit, to those birds who eat them, and to those who live upon dry seeds, bread dipped in milk, fruit and vegetables ; to supply the waste of moisture and strength, occasioned by the growth of an entire new covering for their bodies.

LOSS OF VOICE. — Sometimes it will happen that a bird, after moulting, does not sing. This,

I think, proceeds rather from the notes escaping the memory, than any physical defect in the bird. By hanging a bird that has been brought to me in this state near a good singer, and feeding him well two or three days, he has soon found his voice again.

MITES.

These troublesome little insects first infest the cages, and then prey upon the poor birds. Under the ornaments on the heads of the posts, and under the perches, and about the head of the cage, are the places they are generally found. They are not so fond of the lower parts of the cage. I am happy to make public a destroyer of those tormentors of my feathered favorites, which I have used with complete success, and without the least injury to the birds. Take about half an ounce of corrosive sublimate, and dissolve it in a pint of spirits of wine, or high proof alcohol, and apply it with a hair-pencil; it kills the insects immediately, and then penetrates into the wood, leaving nothing that the bird can pick; and wherever you touch with it there will be no

insect, at least that season. This solution should be marked and carefully put away, as it is rank poison.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE REARING OF AMERICAN BIRDS FROM THE NEST.

A difference of opinion exists as to the proper time to take the nests of young birds. Some say, when they begin to feather; others, when the tail feathers begin to grow. When I reared them I always thought it best to let them have as much of the parents' care as possible; and I always let them get pretty well feathered, before I took them; and I let them stop until within two or three days of leaving the nest. If they are inclined to hop out when you get them home, this is easily prevented by throwing a light covering over them, until they get strong enough to stand on their legs. Young birds should be fed at least every two hours, some oftener; and small, delicate birds, should have, at first, a little every hour. They should be fed as soon after sunrise as possible, and not after sundown. If it is impossible, owing to the nature of your avocation,

to attend to them so often, keep them in a dark place, as they will not be so impatient for their food as when kept in the light.

Feed Thrushes and other large birds, that eat worms and insects, on meal and milk, mixed with a bit of lean beef, minced fine, or meal worms, or maggots, or small earth worms, if clean, (but, as they are in general full of earth,) I prefer the beef. For Finches, and other small birds, take a piece of stale, wheat bread, soak it in water, then squeeze the water out; put it in a pan, with some new milk, and boil it well until it is about the thickness of paste, and mix with it some hemp, or rape seed, or millet, bruised in a mortar, or on a table with a rolling-pin. And for other small birds, which eat insects, mix with it, some meal worms, or maggots, chopped fine, or ant's eggs, which my young friends in the country will know where to find. And if they will observe what the old birds are fond of, and especially what they feed their young with, and procure some for theirs, they will be the more successful in rearing their birds.

WHAT THOSE WHO KEEP BIRDS *OUGHT NOT* TO DO.

Do not keep a bird in a room that is painting, or has been newly painted, until the effluvia of the paint is completely gone.

Do not hang your bird over a stove, or above the mantel-piece, or over a grate which contains fire.

Do not put a bird and cage in a window, and then shut it down upon it; there is a draft then through the cage that may be injurious to the bird.

Do not wash your cage bottom, but scrape it clean with a knife, and then put on some fresh gravel; the moisture tends to breed those little red mites, and is injurious to the bird.

Do not keep birds together all winter, which you intend to breed in the spring. They will not do so well as if they were apart.

Do not keep single birds in a room where others are breeding. And do not keep males and females, in breeding season, in a room in separate cages; or you may lose your birds by what is called the pairing fever.

THE END.

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