

and jerks its tail up and down. Like the robin we noticed in our last number, the name given to this bird is incorrect. It is not a partridge but a true grouse, and belongs to the genus *Tetrao*, being known to Science as the Ruffed Grouse (*Tetrao umbellus*). The whirring noise we heard when it first started is said by the celebrated ornithologist Audubon to be made only when the bird is alarmed, for he had frequently seen it rise from the ground of its own accord as gently and softly as any other bird. During the winter months when the ground is more or less covered with snow, these birds feed upon the buds and shoots of the birch trees. When at feed late in the evening, stretching out their necks to pick off some choice bud, the slender outer branches bending down under their weight, a pair of these birds present a pretty sight. Their mode of procuring the buds can be easily perceived, for if you walk quietly they will allow you to come close underneath the tree and continue regaling themselves apparently without the slightest fear. We have observed a pair at feed on a birch while a man was cutting down a tree within 15 yards, and when the tree fell with a crash, they merely paused for a moment and then proceeded with their meal. The ruffed grouse has an extensive geographical range on this continent, being found as far north as Lat. 51°, on the shores of Hudson's Bay, while it is abundant in the upper part of Georgia, and was found by Captains Lewis and Clarke, in the mountains near the head waters of the Columbia and Missouri, where those rivers divide at a distance of 3000 miles from the mouth of the latter.

But let us return to our remarks upon trees, for the subject is an interesting one from which we may glean much useful information. Here in the midst of this dense spruce thicket hemmed in closely on every side, stands a white pine (*Pinus strobus*) known in England also as the Weymouth pine. Although the trunk is of large size, yet it ascends but a few feet before it branches out in limbs not much less in size than the parent stem, which extend out a considerable distance semi-vertically. We imagine, and not without reason, having carefully observed the growth of very young trees of this species in different positions in the forest, that this sudden check to the upward growth of the parent stem, has originated in obstructions presented by branches of other trees. For instance, the young pine grew perhaps to the height of its branches and met with the overhanging limbs of another tree. Its uppermost shoots became divided, some shooting out on one side, and some on the other. The stem now stayed in the vigour of its growth, becomes gnarled and stunted, while the branches pushed out towards the nearest break in the dense growth of trees around where most light existed. Hence we can account for the very curious contorted form which some branches exhibit, being twisted and turned in a singular manner. Another cause may also be advanced to account for the dwarf growth of pine trees near Halifax—their proximity to sea coast—for our readers must be well aware that the violent gales which sweep over the country at intervals through the year, are felt much more where the tempest first strikes the land charged with saline particles, than in the sheltered valleys of the interior. Indeed we have collected cones from the pine on the summit of the hills near York Redoubt which was so twisted and contorted in growth that it stood on that desolate spot as but a mere shrub certainly not more than two feet in height. At this time of year we observe after a heavy fall of snow that the extended lateral branches of the pine are bent down to the ground with the accumulated mass of snow, and they not unfrequently break off under the pressure and fall to the ground, as may be seen by any one rambling through the forest in summer. The geographical range of this tree in North America extends to South Carolina on the south, and it is found as far north as Lake Winipeg. In favourable situations it grows