

what he is, the original type of the woodpecker, and the one pure species left to us in America. He is the only woodpecker which eats insects and larvæ (dug out of rotten wood) exclusively. Neither the sweetest fruits nor the oiliest grains can tempt him to depart one line from his hereditary habit. He accepts no gifts from man, and asks no favors. But the pileated woodpecker, just one remove lower in the scale of size, strength, and beauty, shows a little tendency towards a grain and fruit diet, and it also often descends to old logs and fallen boughs for its food—a thing never thought of by the ivory-bill. As for the rest of the red-headed family, they are degenerate species, though lively, clever, and exceedingly interesting. What a sad dwarf the little downy woodpecker is when compared with the ivory-bill! and yet to my mind it is clear that *Picus pubescens* is the degenerate off-shoot from the grand *campephilus* trunk.

Our red-headed woodpecker (*M. erythrocephalus*) is a genuine American in every sense, a plausible, querulous, aggressive, enterprising, crafty fellow, who tries every mode of getting a livelihood, and always with success. He is a woodpecker, a nut-eater, a cider-taster, a judge of good fruits, a connoisseur of corn, wheat, and melons, and an expert fly-catcher as well. As if to correspond with his versatility of habit, his plumage is divided into four regular masses of color. His head and neck are crimson, his back, down to secondaries, a brilliant black, tinged with green or blue in the gloss; then comes a broad girdle of pure white, followed by a mass of black at the tail and wing-tips. He readily adapts himself to the exigencies of civilized life. I prophesy that, within less than a hundred years to come, he will be making his nest on the ground, in hedges or in the crotches of orchard trees. Already he has begun to push his way out into our smaller Western prairies, where there is no dead timber for him to make his nest-holes in. I found a compromise-nest between two fence-rails in Illinois, which was probably a fair index of the future habit of the red-head. It was formed by pecking away the inner sides of two vertical parallel rails, just above a horizontal one, upon which, in a cup