

that nestles upon the ground, unless the bobolink may be considered an exception. They are almost invariably colored like sparrows. The birds that inhabit the trees, on the other hand, need less of this protection, though the females are commonly of an olive or greenish yellow, which harmonizes with the general hue of the foliage, and screens them from observation, while sitting upon the nest. The male, on the contrary, who seldom sits upon the nest, requires a plumage that will render him conspicuous to the female and to the young, after they have left their nest. It is remarkable, that Nature, in all cases in which she has created a difference in the plumage of the male and female, has used the hues of their plumage only for the protection of the mother and the young, for whose advantage she has dressed the male parent in colors that must somewhat endanger his own safety.

The color of the plumage of birds seems to bear less relation to their powers of song than to their habitats; and as the birds that live in trees are commonly less tuncful, they are more brilliantly arrayed. The bird employs his song in wooing his mate, as well as in entertaining her after she is wedded; and it is not unlikely that Nature may have compensated those which are deficient in song by giving them a superior beauty of plumage. As the offices of courtship devolve entirely upon the males, it is the more necessary that they should be possessed of conspicuous attractions; but as the task of sitting upon the nest devolves upon the female, she requires more of that protection which arises from the conformity of her plumage with the general hue of the objects that surround her nest. While she is sitting, the plain hues of her dress protect her from observation; but when she leaves her nest to seek her companion, she is enabled by his brilliant colors the more easily to discover him. The male is diligent in providing for the wants of the offspring, and hence it is important that his dress should render him conspicuous. When the young birds have left the nest, upon seeing the flash of his plumage, they immediately utter their call, and by this note, which might not otherwise be sounded at the right moment, he detects them and supplies them with food.—Should a bird of prey suddenly come into their neighborhood, he overlooks the plainly-dressed mother and offspring, and gives chase to the male parent, who not only escapes, but at the same time diverts the attention of the foe from the defenceless progeny.

But the birds that build low, either upon the ground or among the shrubbery, are exposed to a greater number and variety of enemies. Hence it becomes necessary that the males as well as the females should have that protection which is afforded by sobriety of color. Not being made conspicuous by their plumage, they are endowed with the gift of song, that they may make known their presence to their mate and their young by their voice. I have often thought that the song of the bird was designed by Nature for the benefit of the young, no less than for the entertainment of his mate. The sounds uttered by birds on account of their young always precede the period of incubation.

The common hen begins to cluck several days before she begins to sit upon her eggs. In like manner the male singing-bird commences his song when the pair are making ready to build their nest.—While his mate is sitting, his song reminds her of his presence, and inspires her with a feeling of security and content, during the period of her confinement. As soon as the young are hatched, they begin to learn his voice and grow accustomed to it, and when they fly from the nest they are prevented by the sound of it from wandering and getting bewildered. If they happen to fly beyond certain bounds, the song of the male parent warns them of their distance, and causes them to turn and draw near the place from which it seems to issue. Thus the song of the male bird, always uttered within a certain circumference, of which the nest is the centre, becomes a kind of sentinel voice, to keep the young birds within prudent limits.

It is not easy to explain why a larger proportion of the birds that occupy trees should be destitute of song, except on the supposition that in such elevated situations the young are more easily guided by sight than hearing. Still there are many songsters which are dressed in brilliant plumage, and of these we have some examples among our native birds. These, however, are evident exceptions to the general fact, and we may trace a plain analogy in this respect between birds and insects. The musical insects are, we believe, invariably destitute of brilliant plumage. Butterflies and moths do not sing; the music of insects comes chiefly from the plainly-dressed locust and grasshopper tribes.

#### SLEEPLESSNESS.

It is the result of over bodily or mental effort. When a man works beyond his strength, or thinks or studies more than rest can restore, then, sooner or later, comes that inability to sleep soundly, that wakefulness which is more weary even than bodily labour, and which feeds the debility which first gave rise to it. The result is that a man is always tired; never feels rested even when he leaves his bed in the morning; hence he wastes away and finds repose only in the grave; if, indeed, insanity does not supervene. It is too often a malady remediless by medical means. Avoid it then as you would a viper or a murderer; all over effort of mind or body is suicidal. Whatever you do, take enough rest to restore the used energies of each preceding twenty-four hours; if you do not, you may escape for a few months, and if possessing a good constitution, years may pass away before any decided ill result forces itself on your attention; but rest assured, that the time will come when the too often baffled system, like a baffled horse, will refuse to work, it will not take prompt and sound sleep; it will not be rested by repose, and that irritating wakefulness will come upon you, which philosophy cannot conquer, which medicine cannot cure; and, wasting by slow degrees to skin and bone, rest is found only in the grave.—*Dr. Hall.*

#### PATIENT WORKERS.

Who does the most good? This question is not easily answered. Such men as Luther, and Wesley, and Edwards, and Wilberforce, and Howard, are prominent among the great workers in the world.—But who knows that they really excelled thousands of others whose names have never been mentioned in history? They were made prominent by the circumstances around them; and perhaps their success depended more upon the agency of unknown persons, than upon their own power. Very likely their position depended more upon others than upon the success of their own efforts. It is not always the man who applies the torch to the loaded cannon, who deserves the honor of the execution which it does. Most of workers must have toiled long, hard, skillfully and successfully before him, or his torch, and flash, and the smoke, and the noise would have amounted to nothing. To him who stands out the most prominently, who stirs up the greatest excitement, and makes the most noise, the least credit is often due for the result attained.

If we look at the surface of things men would seem to be pitched into life, as vast heaps of wood, coming down by mighty rivers, are brought together in rafts, pitched and tossed every whither,—no harmony, no apparent relation among them. Everything in life seems to be jumbled together, if we look at the fitness of things. Men of fine and tender feelings are placed in circumstances where there is nothing to satisfy their wants; men of aptitude for learning and thought are compelled to remain in ignorance; men of feeble minds are called to stations where strong wills are needed, and strong men are placed where their strength is of no avail. In the midst of all these difficulties and discordances, what a fierce and fiery time men would have of it, if it was necessary that they should worry over disagreeable duties; if there were no way of their avoiding to fret and fume over every ledge of difficulty which lay across their life.—*Beecher.*

#### REV. SIDNEY SMITH ON ENJOYMENT.

—Mankind are always happier for having been happy—so that if you make them happy now, you make them happy twenty years hence by the memory of it. A childhood passed with a due mixture of rational indulgence, under fond and wise parents, diffuses over the whole of life a feeling of calm pleasure, and in extreme old age is the very last remembrance which time can erase from the mind of man. No enjoyment, however inconsiderable, is confined to the present moment. A man is the happier for life from having once made an agreeable tour, or lived\* for any length of time with pleasant people, or enjoyed any considerable interval of innocent pleasure; which contributes to render old men so inattentive to the scenes before them, and carries them back to a world that is past and to scenes never to be renewed again.