

## The Rockwood Review.

stump. The naturalist's surmise is correct, for seated on the poplar tree, gently tapping, apparently for amusement, is the male sapsucker. He takes flight on our approach, but does not fly far, and from the air of indifference assumed, it is fair to suppose there is a reason for the indifference, and that reason is not hard to guess. Not fifteen feet up on the poplar tree, is a nicely bored hole, an inch and a half in diameter, beneath the hole are many fresh chips, and in that hole as we presently discover, is a much annoyed female sapsucker, who believes that possession is nine points, or as many more as you like to assume of the law. I put my finger in the hole to announce my presence, she replies by a very energetic and decided peck, and intimates that it would be well to keep out. She hisses whenever I come near, and her little bead-like eyes flash an indignant protest to the intrusion. Has she the courage of her connections, or is she merely covering up her terror by showing a bold front. If the latter is the case, she will make a hasty escape when we pound the tree gently with a stick. Pshaw! she cares nothing for mysterious noises, even if she has a feminine nature, and the four or five little ones which are evidently in the nest are more to her even than life. Bravo little sapsucker, he would be hard-hearted indeed who would worry you further. Success to you, and may you long live to enjoy your poplar tree and your gaily colored partner, for be it known yellow-bellied sapsuckers belong to the very aristocrats of the red-headed family, and verily fine feathers do make fine birds once in a while. A steady row for half an hour, and we near a flat and reedy island. As we approach a loon is noticed swimming and diving some three or four hundred yards away, but a careful glance will show that we are closely watched. Once on the island, we find the shore matted with dried rushes, and along this

we will look for the loon's nest, for this shy bird places it just at the edge of the water, or possibly floating in it, where it is the simplest thing in the world for the ever alert bird to dive out of sight, to come up a hundred yards or more distant. Carefully we circle the island, and at one point find the appearance of a nest, but evidently the loon will not lay her two or three dark, olive or drab eggs for a day or two yet. These eggs are among the most beautiful objects in an oologist's cabinet, and are greatly prized by the enthusiastic collector. As we walk to the centre of the island, the Spotted Sandpipers rise by the half dozen, and on the gravelly ridges beneath masses of the jewel weeds, we find their nests. In each the same arrangement exists, four clay colored eggs, splashed and blotched with deep sepia and brown, these eggs are pyriform in shape, and invariably disposed with the small ends towards the centre. In this way a very small bird can cover four large eggs, 1.35 x .95 inches. Ordinarily the "Peep" betrays its nest with the greatest simplicity, but such is not always the case. A few days ago, while walking along the lake shore, I came across a pretty little sandpiper in the greatest distress. She was apparently badly injured, and as she ran was an object of pity, as she stumbled over the stones, and her wings were dragged along with great difficulty. Finally she stumbled into the water, gasping and making a lamentable to-do. I sat down to await the next piece on the programme, and she suddenly recovered and ran past me, not more than two or three feet away, anxiously looking for insects in the weeds; when she had gone twenty or thirty yards she exclaimed, 'peep, peep, peep,' and flew off. I looked for the nest in vain, but being interested determined to watch carefully half an hour later. In passing the spot a second time, Mrs. Peep again ran before me,