

did not seem to be particularly common; but after that it became more noticeable. Large flocks frequently flew over, their low hoarse croak being audible for long distances over the prairie. On September 7th a specimen was brought in having a curious malformation of the bill, which was evidently due to a gun-shot, as the right humerus had also been broken. The upper mandible was bent a good deal to the left, as well as having the tip strongly turned downwards. A notch had been worn in the side of the lower mandible where the upper one crossed it, but the former was normal in all other respects. As the bird was only wounded slightly in the wing, we kept him alive in order to learn how, with such an awkward instrument for a bill, he contrived to take his meals; for the fine condition he was in clearly showed that he had some means of so doing; and in a few hours he was tame enough to show us how. We placed some pieces of bread upon the floor which, being hard and flat, probably puzzled the bird more than if it had been soft or uneven; but, by standing directly over them and putting down his head till it was almost between his legs and the crown nearly on the floor, he contrived to get the piece of bread between his mandibles.

The Whiskey Jack, *Perisoreus canadensis*, probably breeds in the dense tamarac swamp south of Carberry, as a young specimen was shot there by Mr. Seton in August.

The Blue Jay, *Cyanocitta cristata*, is common, but appears to be migratory,—partially at least,—leaving in winter, though resident farther south.

(To be continued.)

ROBERT MILLER CHRISTY.

ASPHALT.

In about the centre of the island of Trinidad, a dot in the Caribbean Sea, just off the coast of Venezuela, there is an asphalt lake. It is said to cover about one hundred acres and is apparently inexhaustible. It is a black sandy substance, and is believed to be crude rotten petroleum. A singular feature of the substance is that, although about fifty thousand tons are taken out of this lake annually, it constantly fills up so that there is no lessening of the supply. This singular lake of paving material is owned by the Venezuelan government, but leased to a company in Washington. —*Philadelphia Times*.