

THE SECOND CHAPTER IN THE STORY OF THE MIGRATION OF BIRDS OF THE PAST SPRING.

By G. EIFRIG

In the May number of the "Naturalist" the present writer published an account of the remarkably early appearance of some of the bird migrants in this vicinity, when there was nothing here whatever to tempt them to come earlier, together with the probable reasons for this phenomenon. Appended was a list of 22 species, that were the firstcomers this spring. That was, if you please, the *first* chapter in the story of the past season's migration. It was an auspicious and promising looking one. However, the end in the migration did not bear out the promises of its beginning. The second chapter is an unsatisfactory, yes, even a melancholy and sad one.

When May, the principal migration month, came, it came not as usual, smiling, laden with fresh green leaves and blossoms; but darksome, gloomy, with lack of sunshine and warmth. The violent snowstorm on May 4th, leaving about six inches of snow on the ground, was but a foretaste of what was to come. Such extraordinarily cold weather had not been recorded in May for many years. There were heavy frosts at night, and occasional slight snow flurries as late as the 28th. Nor were we here the only sufferers from this winter weather in May. It is recorded as the coldest May for 35 years at Washington, and at Detroit, Fort Wayne, Ind.; yes, even at St. Louis, where the writer had occasion to go in May, conditions were the same. To see furs worn in May is certainly a novel sight for St. Louis, but it was a very common one this year.

The effect of this on plant and animal life was naturally a very marked one. Vegetation practically remained at a standstill throughout May. The buds that were on the trees in the beginning of May remained unopened until almost the end; the trees were nearly bare. Insect life was correspondingly kept back. Mosquitos, flies, etc., were few and far between, also the numerous small insects frequenting the newly opened blossoms and leaves. And the effect of all this on birds was simply disastrous. The arrival of most species was very considerably delayed, as the list given below shows. For instance, the chimney swift, 1906, April 30; 1907, May 10; house wren, May 2-9; spotted sandpiper, May 2-19; yellow warbler, May 4-13; bobolink, May 5-18; black-throated green warbler, May 7-16; parula warbler, May 7-15. The least flycatcher, whose note *chebec*, from which it also gets a name, can be heard in trees of our streets as soon as it arrives, came in 1906, May 11th—which already was