

food, but sparingly. In the event of liver or other animal substances failing, cheese (ground or minced fine) will answer.

I have now spoken of the various kinds of animal and vegetable food best adapted for these birds. It is necessary to say a few words about the cages which I have found most suitable for containing the captives during the voyage. Each cage need not be more than eight inches square; the bottom part being formed like a tray, one inch and a half deep. In the front part of this tray is a division of one inch and a half wide; this division is again divided into two parts, the one on the right three inches and a half long, and the one on the left four inches and a half long—the former coated with pitch and made to hold water, the other division to contain the food. These trays or bottoms are made to hook on to the cage by two hooks and eyes, the bottom of the upper part of the cage being furnished with bars across, from side to side, close enough to prevent the bird getting through. The front part of the cage, over the feeding and water trough, is carried an inch more forward at the bottom than the back or sides of the cage, which enables the bird to obtain the food without difficulty, and the food and water are by this projection kept clear of the dirt of the bird. A perch also is required, nearly in the middle of the cage, from side to side.

Birds as Weather Indicators.

Probably no belief concerning the signs of the character of the coming winter has such a wide prevalence as the impression that the season may be foretold from the habits and appearance of birds and animals. I have studied this matter for years, and must confess that as far as being able to foretell what the character of the coming season will be, I am as far at sea as I was before I gave the matter a moment's consideration. I have always been, and am still, impressed with the belief that it is possible to tell what kind of weather will generally rule the coming season. It certainly would not appear more strange for one to be able to tell whether our next summer would be a wet one or a dry one, or the coming winter a severe or a mild one, than for astronomers to tell us to a second the next eclipse of the sun or moon, and foretell it with accuracy for hundreds of years. But astronomy has been reduced to a science, and foretelling the weather has not. In a hot, sultry summer day we know that a thunder shower is near. By-and-bye we see the black cloud coming up on the horizon, and soon the storm is upon us. It does not take us by surprise, we knew it was coming. If the wind in the winter shifts from the south to the north we know it will bring colder weather.

and our Meteorological Society, by getting the state of the weather from all quarters, is able to foretell what it will be in certain localities for the next twenty-four hours, or in some cases for a day or two ahead, with tolerable certainty, but further than this we have no signs, no science that tell us anything about the weather.

In the old country they have Moore and Zadkiel, who have been issuing almanacks, and prophecying the weather for years. Their prophecies are simply guesswork, and no reliance whatever is placed in them. Then we have our Vener and our Wiggins, whose foretelling of drouths, or floods, or storms, or calms, after a fair trial, is laughed at.

I have for some years tried to foretell the kind of winter that was coming on us by the birds, but have come to the conclusion that if the weather in the future can be judged by birds and animals, I do not know the secret. Fourteen winters ago, 1868-69, many pine grosbeaks, a bird that belongs to the far north, spent their winter here. That was a long, cold winter. They did not make their appearance here again till this winter, and I foretold from this that the present would be a severe winter, and it has been; but on looking over a record of temperature I find 1869-70 was colder than 1868-9, and yet no grosbeaks were here. The winter of 1883-81 was very long and severe, still they were not here. So from these conflicting evidences I can but come to the conclusion this is no sign. Old hunters and old Canadian settlers nearly all have their own signs of the coming winter. I was with one the early part of the present winter. We were in a large piece of bush; it was a cold day, and six inches of snow lay on the ground. He said, "We are going to have a mild winter," and when I asked him how he knew, he said, "The skunks, squirrels and chipmunks were out, which is a sure sign, as if the winter was going to be a hard one they would be housed up." Old Boreas made sad havoc with this prophesy. He turned the old hunter's skunk and chipmunk theory inside out, and gave one of the longest and severest we have had for years. I would almost be inclined to believe that if the squirrels and chipmunks knew anything at all about the coming weather, they were out foraging and laying up an extra stock of provisions for the then coming very cold weather.

I am quite satisfied that birds have not the power of foretelling what the weather will be in the future. I have long since come to this conclusion, by watching the arrival of our migratory birds in spring. While they never come unless on a mild day, we often have severe weather afterwards. The blue birds arrived here on the 2nd of this month, which was a mild day, and had all the signs of