

nature and habits has been described above under the class and order to which he belongs. In summer he is an expert fly-catcher, capturing the smaller winged insects among the highest treetops of the forest; in autumn he frequents the orchards searching the bark of our fruit trees and ransacking every crack and crevice with microscopic scrutiny for the grubs and larvæ with which they are infested at this time. In winter of course he cannot ply these vocations of insect catcher and larvæ destroyer, and hence is most often found among the evergreens, pine, spruce or cedar, generally in company with the Nuthatch, the Brown Creeper, and Downy Wood-Pecker, the whole forming a gay, yet busy winter party as they roam about in search of their now scanty food. This food is still in the main grubs and dormant insects which lie concealed in the bark of the trees, and no man however expert or careful, could succeed half so well in ridding a tree of these enemies as this tiny bird.

Many writers speak of this King'et as having no song save a faint pipe or whistle or even a single chirp, but in late years this mistake has been rectified. Faint indeed, and by no means powerful his melody is yet a distinct and prolonged succession of pleasing notes, which he pours forth with utter abandon even in the midst of the most inclement weather. He is found most abundantly in the breeding season, and in the autumn and spring migration, April and October. The nest is pensile like that of his European congener, and in it are laid from 5 to 7 tiny eggs, scarcely larger than a humming bird's. These are of a pale white color, thickly sprinkled with buff dots. Two broods are sometimes raised the same season, and when we consider this fact together with his acknowledged industry which is exerted chiefly as the inveterate

enemy of everything insectile, we see that the bird, tho' such a diminutive mite being always under four inches in entire length, is nevertheless a most useful member of our feathered auxiliaries.

AN INTERESTING REPTILE.

RENA DULCIS. — BAIRD AND GERARD.

Read before the Natural History Society of Toronto, Jan. 7th, 1884.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:—

I have forwarded to your worthy Secretary, for your inspection, two photographs of this reptile, as well as the original, in a small bottle. It is the only one I possess, and, indeed, I may say that I do not think it likely any one else in Canada has a specimen, and I know that there are but few in the United States. I will now give you a statement as to how it came into my possession, and its general history as a species.

Last March, 1883, a man named Bell, who served in the capacity of a "pastor," or shepherd, on the Rio Grande, the great river that forms the boundary between Texas and Mexico, returned to visit his family and acquaintances in this neighborhood. He brought home a large pickle jar full of reptilian curiosities, thinking that they would astonish his friends here. I found on examination, among other interesting specimens, those before you. Of course it struck me at once, as I had never seen anything like it before. On first seeing it I was much puzzled, and very particular enquiries were made. "Where did you get this little snake? Was it alive or dead when you found it? Was it not under some log or a large stone? &c., &c." He was perfectly free in his answers, and quite frank. He