

Perhaps the most interesting thing to me here, has been to note that our old friend, the English sparrow, has at length met his match—a foeman worthy of his steel. His aggression is not totally checked—I opine it never will be,—but his undisputed sovereignty of the city is no longer a matter of course. The sparrow vanguard reached this point about ten years ago, beating their way on some box cars. After the western fashion they soon tried to run the town, but found, no doubt to their surprise and mortification, that others were in that line of business. War was declared between the rival factions, which is still going on—guerilla fashion—the sparrows at any rate doing no more than to win the right to live in town to a limited extent. Numbers, in consternation at the unheard of prowess of their foes, have given it up as a bad job and have gone to live in the rural districts, until the whirligig of time shall enable them once more to be “monarchs of all they survey” amid the busy haunts of men.

The brave defenders of their native chimney tops and eave-troughs are known here as “House Finches.” (Probably *Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*.—Ed.) They are a trifle smaller than sparrows and of more slender build, the body generally dark brown, the males with dark brick red-breasts and crowns. Their flight is peculiarly soft and noiseless. Until recently, when mating began, they were to be seen in flocks of from twenty to fifty—feeding often upon Russian thistle and other seeds, sometimes finding food the nature of which I could not discover, under the trees. I have a suspicion, however, that they were perhaps taking out the seeds from the samaras of the ash and box elder, *Negundo aceroides*, as these lay about in profusion. It is very gratifying to find these little people able to defy the tyrannical sparrows, the more so that their song is very sweet,—seeming to resemble more than anything else short selections from the song of the house-wren,—sung fortissimo, but with wonderful expression and pathos. As I write, the air is quite musical with their love-songs, in very pleasing contrast with the querulous harsh chirp of our friends the sparrows. It will be interesting to watch the final issue of the struggle now going on. It will probably be an armed peace—after the manner of other bipeds similarly placed.