

equal to the song of the Nightingale) is uttered by the bird either when upon the wing, the ground, or a tree, and may be heard for a great distance. Towards the end of August, though the birds had not left, they had largely ceased whistling; but the arrival of a few warm days, about the 10th of September, set them off again for a time. When I left, about the middle of October, there were still a few small parties about, though the great majority had gone south. In the previous year (1882) Mr Seton says the main body left about the 17th of October. It is decidedly a shy bird, even in a country where most birds are notably less wary than in England; and, common as the bird is, it is no easy matter to obtain a specimen just when one wants. As Mr. Seton remarked to me, it bears truly heraldic markings on its breast—or, a *chevron sable*. Late in July I shot a young specimen with a large festering sore upon its breast, doubtless caused by its having accidentally flown against a spike on one of the numerous "barb-wire" fences on which this bird frequently perches. Not long after, I shot a Purple Grackle with an old wound on its head, which was probably occasioned by the same means. I often thought what a capital thing it would be to introduce the Western Meadow Lark into England. So far as plumage and song are concerned, it would take rank among our brightest-colored and most admired songsters; while its hardy nature would allow of its remaining with us the whole year round, as indeed it often does in Ontario and other districts farther south than Manitoba. Perfectly harmless and accustomed to grassy countries, it would find an abundance of insect-food, and would doubtless soon increase sufficiently in numbers to serve, if need be, as a game and food-bird, as it largely does in the United States. No other songster that I ever heard equals this bird in the sweetness and mellowness of its notes.

Three species of Grackle, the Purple, *Quiscalus purpureus* and the Rusty, *Scolecophagus ferrugineus*, and Brewer's, *S. cyanocephalus*, are excessively abundant, and often collect into enormous flocks after breeding-season. Under the name of "Blackbirds" they share in common the curses of the settlers, on account of the great damage they do in the harvest-field. They are both very noisy birds.

Before the beginning of September the Crow, *Corvus frugivorus*,