

over which a fire had recently passed, and left everything black, in its course,—saw a small flock of Titmice coming from the opposite side of the clearing. Being dressed in dark clothes and aware of their familiarity, he stood perfectly motionless, for the purpose of ascertaining how near they would approach. Stealing from branch to branch, and pecking for food among the crevices of the prostrate trunks as they passed along, onward they came, until the foremost settled upon a small twig, a few feet from the spot upon which he stood. After looking about for a short time, it flew and alighted just below the lock of a double-barrelled gun, which he held in a slanting direction below his arm, being unable, however, to obtain a hold, it slid down to the middle of the piece, and then flew away, jerking its tail, and apparently quite unconscious of having been so near the deadly weapon.

The next I shall notice, are the Sparrows and Buntings.

Of the Sparrows, the Tree Sparrow, (*Fringilla Canadensis*), is the only one that braves our winters. Large numbers of them do migrate to the middle and southern States, but small parties of ten or twelve, may often be seen among our shrubberies and gardens. It is such a well known bird that I need not stop to describe it.

As soon as the first hard frosts have stiffened the ground, that harbinger of winter, the Snow Bunting, (*Eruberiza Nivalis*), makes its appearance, flying high in large flocks, their white bodies shewing against the clear blue sky, they look almost like large feathery flakes of the substance from which they derive their name. They seldom or never enter the woods, preferring wide open clearings, or the shores of the lake. The peninsula on the opposite side of our harbour, is a very favorite resort of this bird. They feed on grains, grass seeds, and the larvae of insects.

Early in March, or even in February, if the season be a mild one, the Snow Bunting begins towing its way towards the desolate regions of the far north; as early as the middle of February, some straggling flocks have been seen in the neighbourhood of the Saskatchewan, on their way to the northward, and by the beginning of May, they have perhaps penetrated to the very shores of the Polar Sea. Only one nest of this bird, according to Audubon, has ever been found in the United States, that was seen by a gentleman of Boston, on the summit of one of the White Mountains, in New Hampshire. Richardson, gives Southampton Island, in the 62nd parallel of latitude, as the most southerly of their breeding stations. Captain Lyons found a nest there, strangely enough, placed in the bosom of an exposed corpse of an Esquimaux child.

Of the Wood-Pecker tribe, there is one industrious little hunter, the Hairy Wood Pecker, (*Picus Villosus*), who may be seen hard at work in the very coldest weather, tapping and chiselling away, flying from tree to tree, and dodging from one branch to another, uttering its peculiar sharp shrill cry, and seeming possessed with the very spirit of restlessness, the colour of the plumage is varicled black and white, with a small red band at the back of the head.

There is a still smaller species, the downy Wood-pecker, (*Picus pubescens*) which resembles the Hairy Wood-pecker so closely in plumage, that it can only be distinguished by the difference in size, this species not measuring more than six inches.

Nearly allied to the Wood-peckers are the Nuthatches. Of these the red-bellied Nuthatch (*Sitta Canadensis*) seldom deserts us. A few migrate to the middle American States, but through the greater part of the winter, their curious nasal "kank" may be heard in our woods. If you follow up the sound you will be sure to find the little fellow creeping round the trunk of some old

tree searching for spiders, or the eggs or larvae of insects, concealed in the crevices of the bark.

I was not aware, until this winter, that that pretty elegant bird, the Cedar or Cherry Bird, (*Bombycilla Carolinensis*) ever ventured to remain so far north beyond the autumn months. This winter, however, I have noticed a small flock feeding upon the berries of some mountain ash trees, close to my own house. Their congeners, the large European Wax-wing, (*Bombycilla garrula*) have been seen here occasionally. They are a larger bird than the common Chatterer, but the plumage is almost precisely the same, and they both have the curious vermilion appendages, re-sembling sealing wax, on the secondaries of the wings.

Of the game birds the Ruffed Grouse, (*Tetrao Umbellus*) the Spruce Grouse, (*Tetrao Canadensis*) and the Quail, (*Ortyx Virginiana*) are all constant sojourners with us, being generally seen in greater numbers in winter, as they then come nearer the haunts of man than at any other season of the year.

I am afraid, however, they will soon cease to be among the number of our feathered visitors, either in winter or summer.

The Ruffed Grouse used to be found among the pine and hemlock woods, lying between the cemetery and Castle Frank, and in many places along the banks both of the Don and Humber. But increasing population and extended cultivation, have driven them from all their old haunts, and the sportsman or the naturalist, must now seek in more remote and less settled districts, for this noble game bird.

I hardly know whether I am correct in enumerating the spotted grouse, or spruce partridge, as it is commonly called, as among the number of the birds found in the immediate neighbourhood of Toronto. I have never shot one myself, but I have had specimens brought to me, which were said to have been procured not very many miles from here.

Their favourite resorts, are the deepest pine and spruce woods and cedar swamps, where they feed upon the buds and seeds of the different evergreens, a diet which renders them at certain seasons of the year not very palatable eating.

They are very handsome birds. Their general colour is a black brown and grey mingled in transverse wavy bands and spots. The cock bird has a small red bare space over each eye like the European moor fowl.

The Quail is still occasionally heard uttering its plaintive cry in autumn and winter about our woods and fields. In former days large coveys used to remain in the stubble fields and about our barn yards, from October until March, but like other game birds, they have experienced no mercy at the hands of those gentry who shoot for the market, and I fear that in the course of a few years, they will have disappeared altogether from this neighbourhood.

I made great efforts about three or four years ago, to keep them about the woods at my own place, and so far succeeded that they bred there for one spring, and I had the pleasure of seeing a number of young birds flying about the following summer, apparently quite contented with their quarters, and but little inclined to stray beyond them.

During my subsequent absence from home, however, some of the before-mentioned gentry got into the wood, and shot half the birds, and the rest of the scattered and frightened covey betook themselves to a safer and more distant cover, and have never since returned to their old haunts.

I have now briefly adverted to most of the different species of land-birds to be met with in this neighbourhood, from November to March. Many of them, like the game-birds, are becoming more rare every year, seeking in less populous districts for the