

Some 10 or 15 days later, say when the snow has almost entirely disappeared from the open fields, we are generally able to record two of our commonest meadow-sparrows, the vesper and the savanna ; and about the same time the whitebellied, or tree, swallow. This latter is the second to arrive of the flycatching birds, and usually appears in compact flocks, even before the ice has entirely withdrawn from the ponds and rivers over which it loves to sport. The three last mentioned species spend the winter in a much more southerly clime than the robin, song sparrow and their companions. According to Chapman (Birds of Eastern N.A.) the tree swallow winters from South Carolina southward, the vesper and savanna from Virginia southward ; and all three usually put in their first appearance at New York city during the first 10 days of April. My own note book, running back to 1889 shows first appearances at Ottawa to range between the following dates :— Robin, 20 March to 7 April ; song sparrow, 24 March to 7 April ; tree swallow, 1 to 22 April ; vesper sparrow, 11 to 22 April ; savanna, 7 to 27 April. Now, the peculiarity of the present year is this : The migratory movement opened rather earlier than usual ; robin, song sparrow and grackle were recorded, as stated in your notes for March, before the middle of that month and by the 20th all were quite common. During the 3 or 4 following weeks the weather was almost continuously warm and springlike, so that by 8th April snow or ice could hardly be found, and winged insects were quite abundant. All conditions seemed to call for the second contingent of migrants ; but one looked in vain for either tree swallow, savanna sparrow or vesper.

The pioneers of the tree swallows only began to be seen on 13 April, those of the savannas on the 16th and the vespers not until the 19th, and even yet (30 April), they cannot be said to be common.

If we search for an explanation of the long delay in the arrival of these somewhat southerly species, I believe it will be found in the peculiar weather conditions of the country immediately north of their winter home. While we in Ontario and Quebec, in common with the state of New York, have been enjoying unusually mild weather through March and April, the people