

dwellers in towns and cities cannot enjoy his musical charms, he loves solitude, and is too proud to sing in captivity, which shows a higher degree of intelligence than is possessed by some birds, who do not refuse to gratify the morbid curiosity of persons who cruelly confine them in cages.

The Brown Thrasher is a magnificent bird ; although his plumage is not of bright colors, his form is handsome, his actions are graceful, and his habits are admirable. His great compass and power of voice, his musical composition, his artistic execution, as well as the vigorous manner in which he pours it forth, is beyond that of any bird I know of. I wonder why brown thrashers have not multiplied nearly so fast as the robins. They are probably as long-lived, and in their nests I have generally found about the same number of eggs ; they exercise great care over their nests. I have seen the female alight on a man's arm, outstretched towards the nest when full of young ones ; and they always make surprising demonstrations of displeasure when their nest is approached. Perhaps it is partly because the robins nest near human habitations, where they are partially protected from rapacious birds and other nest robbers, whereas the thrashers make their nests in solitary places, on or near the ground, where they are easily preyed upon by snakes, weasels, skunks, owls and crows. I believe many of them are killed when they go to their winter residence in the Southern States, where there is no law against killing migratory birds.

The food of the Brown Thrasher is chiefly insects and their larvæ ; I have seen him catching the codling moth, and on that account alone he should be protected. Insects injurious to the interests of the horticulturist are alarmingly on the increase. This year I have seen hickory, butternut and walnut trees stripped of every leaf by the forest tent caterpillar, and some orchards not far from here are sadly destroyed by the orchard tent caterpillar, so I fear that unless our friendly birds are protected and encouraged, we will, in a few years, have neither fruit nor forest trees. This bird, especially, should be guarded, even although he takes some cherries and raspberries in their season, by way of dessert. The good he does, and the pleasure he affords us, far over-balance what harm he does. It is a great mistake to condemn a bird which does so much good, merely because he does a little harm. I do not know of a more lovable bird than the Brown Thrasher. In color and markings, he very much resembles the "Hermit Thrush," but is of more slender build, and nearly as long as the Black-billed Cuckoo—about eleven inches.

D. NICHOL.

SOME LARGE TOMATOES are being produced at Orillia. Mr. H. Pellatt sent the *Packet* office one sample weighing a pound and two ounces ; and Mr. C. L. Stephens, one weighing a pound, three ounces and a half. Both were Peter Henderson's new variety, the Ponderosa, an excellent show tomato, and withal of good quality.