

owls that are not strictly nocturnal. Both of them are to be seen in pursuit of prey in broad daylight. The one is the Snowy owl, the other the Hawk owl; the former is a native of the far north, but occasionally appears in winter in considerable numbers in the Maritime Provinces and United States; the latter breeds over the whole of Eastern Canada, but is far from common, as owls go.

Both of them are probably later departures from the typical owls; whether they are or not, is worth thinking about. I could give good reasons in support of my view.

This group of birds is hated by all the feathered tribe; they are mobbed wherever discovered in the daylight.

"Not a bird of the forest e'er mates with him,
All mock him outright by day;
But at night, when the woods grow still and dim,
The boldest will shrink away."

They have not met with a favorable reception from mankind. Literature abounds with uncomplimentary references to them. The old Bible prophets pounced upon them as fit company for satyrs and dragons. "Their house shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there; and satyrs shall dance there, the owl and the raven shall dwell in it, and it shall be an habitation for dragons and a court for the owls."

Both their looks and their voices have been against them, to say nothing of their nightly frays on weaker creatures. Screeches, and dismal hoots uttered mostly in the darkness, were calculated to impress ignorant and superstitious people with a dread and fear. Into the hell-broth of the witches' cauldron on Forres Heath, went "Owlet's wing with lizard's leg and blind worm's sting" along with other bedeviled tid-bits calculated to make the "gruel thick and slab." Indeed, Shakespeare leaves us in no doubt about the general reputation of these birds:

"Out on ye owls, nothing but songs of death," exclaims Richard the Third. When King Duncan was about to be murdered in the Castle of Macbeth: "It was the owl that shrieked; a fatal bellman, which gives the sternest good night."

That Shakespeare did not share the popular dislike for owls, may be learned from these lines:

When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl:
Tu— Whoo,
Tu-whut To-whoo, a merry note,
While greasy Jack doth keep the pot.
The owl group is represented in the Maritime

Provinces by nine species. Of these the most common are the Great Horned owl (*Bubo Virginianus*), and the Barred owl (*Syrnium nebulosum*). The former is about two feet in length, has ear-tufts and yellow eyes; the latter is considerably smaller, lighter plumage barred with light and dark, has no ear-tufts, and the eyes are dark. The Great Snowy owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*) is as large as *Bubo*; plumage either white, or white barred with dark brown, no ear-tufts.

Great Gray owl (*Strix cinerea*) is very rare, large as *Bubo*, no ear-tufts, and yellow eyes. Screech owl (*Megascops Asio*), a small copy of *Bubo*, ten inches in length. Long-eared owl (*Asio Wilsonianus*), rare, fourteen inches in length, long ear-tufts, eyes yellow; above, blackish mottled with whitish; below, brown and gray. Short-eared owl (*Asio accipitrinus*) rare, color much like *Wilsonianus*, a little larger, smaller ear-tufts. In the long-eared owl the first primary is emarginate, that is to say, the feathered portion of web of the outside wing-quill is abruptly narrowed on the inner edge near the outer end. In the short-eared, the first and second primaries are emarginate.

American Hawk owl (*Surnia ulula*) rare, very much resembles a hawk; fifteen inches in length, tail very long, color grey and white. Acadian owl, or Saw-whet, (*Nyctala Acadica*) seven inches in length, strong, not very rare. This bird cannot be mistaken for any other species; closely resembling it, but some four inches longer is Richardson's owl, (*Nyctala Richardsons*), a rare bird.

Perhaps this list with brief descriptions may be useful to those who take an interest in birds, but are not provided with books.

A man or woman in public or private life, who ever works only for the sake of the reward that comes for the work will in the long run do poor work always. I do not care where the work is, the man or woman who does work worth doing is the man or woman who lives, breathes, and sleeps that work; with whom it is ever present in his or her soul; whose ambition is to do it well and feel rewarded by the thought of having done it well. That man, that woman, puts the whole country under an obligation.—*Sel.*

A correspondent writes: "You have published a good December number. The Nativity picture is particularly well done, and I congratulate your printers on the result as well as the editor on his selection."

Another adds: "I thought the Christmas number excellent."