

The Rockwood Review.

former demonstrations to perch within touch of her. But after some minutes of attentive watching, I began to suspect that, in spite of all this parade, the green gloom of the alders concealed nothing more precious than a dozen or so of sapsuckers which hung on the branches in their cool globes of foam; and I accordingly rose and betook myself to a great clump of ilex, its wand-like branches closely strung with the inconspicuous clusters of little wheel-shaped, cream-white flowers. This was a move in the right direction; the anxious pair followed me up with redoubled dissuasions, and a moment later I caught sight of the object, or one object, of their solicitude, in the person of a very short-tailed, puffy and unresponsive youngster, seated on a twig and evidently exploring the world for a first time, and quite unsteady as to his wings. He paid no attention to his parents' cries, and it struck me that his expression was sulky, as if he wondered impatiently what all this hubbub was about; his beak looked unnaturally long and large—a common case among nestlings—in contrast to the curtailment at the other end, and his plumage was ill-set and somewhat crude and dingy in coloring, without those finishing touches of dark and bright noted in connection with the full-grown male bird. That he was not yet out of leading-strings I gleaned from the fact that the little mother soon approached with a worm in her bill; and the intruder was moved, in conscience name to withdraw.

On the day following I paid another visit to the ilex-bush. Not a feather was visible, but I had no sooner stepped foot in the region than from a brush-grown tuft in the midst of the swamp, a little resentful voice piped up "Tseep; chick!" Not one snatch of his proper melody had I been favored

with during these two encounters; but afterward I heard it many a time, ringing through the marsh-tangle before the sun neared the meridian—a sweet-toned, emphatic strain befitting the name of warbler, a name which has but scant justification in some members of the SYLVICOLINÆ family. In quality though not in vocalization it suggests the full "crescendo chant" of his near cousin the ovenbird.

The yellow-throat's nest is a bulky affair, placed near or upon the ground, as befits his terrestrial habits; the eggs, which I have yet to see, are described by Coues as white, rather sparingly sprinkled with several shades of brown, but in marking, size, and shape very variable. Two broods are reared during the season.

The edge of a marsh is a spot as favorable to birds as to flowers, and when it borders, as this one does, upon a stretch of secluded woodland broken by sunny openings, and counting frequent pines and hemlocks among its summer foliated trees, it is sure to be full of song in May and of fledglings in July. Up and down the dead or dying trees skirting the bog go the nuthatches and black-and-white creepers, with an occasional woodpecker and chickadees in plenty; the tiny tappings of the last audible at a considerable distance. In the still standing but far-decayed trunk of a yellow birch, not larger than a man's arm, one may discover a nuthatch's nest—empty, perhaps, but prettily eloquent, with its floor of spongy chips, well cushioned with grass and further softened by a few tell-tale feathers, and all so snugly enclosed in that papery cylinder. Grouse go booming up from among the mossed logs, or scatter into the underbrush while their wild, bright-eyed broods vanish magically under the fallen leaves: and many are the oppor-