

east, till near the end of January, when for a few days none were seen. About Feb. 10th the return migration began, and was very active while it lasted ; but they were only noticed for three or four days."

Mr. Ernest E. Thompson reports that a flock of about twenty were seen at Lorne Park, fourteen miles west of Toronto, on January 16th, and on January 18th Mr. Cross, and Master Charles Harvey, a son of our President, met with specimens in Rosedale, Toronto. A male bird, that Master Harvey procured then, he presented to our Museum. The white secondary quill feathers of the wing, in this specimen, are shaded with brown like those of the female.

The first time I saw any of these birds, was on January 22nd. I had gone out to Rosedale Heights with a gun, hoping to meet with some, as there had been a north-west wind on the previous day. After wandering about for some time, I heard what, at a distance, seemed like the creaking of a gate repeated over and over again. I walked in the direction of the sound, and, as I approached nearer, it increased to quite a number of quiet whistlings, and I saw, just in front of me, a flock of about fifteen Evening Grosbeaks. Their thick beaks gave them quite a parrot-like appearance as they ran about among the bushes, searching for seeds that had fallen on the ground. I followed them closely for some distance before they took any notice, and then the whole flock flew into a small tree by the roadside. I fired, and a pair of them fell. It was difficult to see the female bird as it lay on the greenish-brown herbage at the roadside, so closely did its plumage match the surrounding tints. The striking black, yellow, and white colours of the male bird were, of course, more conspicuous.

There are many birds that exhibit these striking differences in the colour of the sexes. The quiet tints of the female conceal the bird when sitting on its nest, and protecting its young, while the more striking colours of the male bird make him very conspicuous. Mr. Darwin attributes the bright tints of the male, very largely, to the preference of the females, and their continued selection of bright colored partners.

It often seems, however, to be the duty of the male bird to attract, not only the attention of the female, but also, that of any enemy that approaches too near her, and to lure away the enemy from the nest and eggs, by his attractive colours, or peculiar antics. The Scarlet Tanager, the Towhee, and Bob-o-link are, I think, examples of this.

The Grosbeaks were very numerous in the neighbourhood of the city until the end of January. There was very little snow about, and they fed largely on the ground.