

THE INSTRUCTOR.

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NATURAL HISTORY.



THE GOLDFINCH.

(FOR THE INSTRUCTOR.)

The goldfinch is a bird of the sparrow class, having a sharp conical bill and open oval nostrils. The front of the head is of a bright and beautiful red, and the crown black, the greater portion of the body is brown, and the wings blackish, with yellow across the middle of each.

These birds are not only found throughout Asia and Africa, but are very common in Europe, particularly in Great Britain and Ireland. Their nests are constructed in orchards and gardens, and the eggs are four or five in number, of a whitish colour spotted with brown. Having performed the duties of parents, they congregate in flocks, and thus spend the winter until the ensuing spring. The goldfinch is not only admired for the beauty of its plumage, but for the vivacity and sprightliness of its song. Added to these, it is capable of being taught many curious

tricks; one of the most remarkable is that of drawing up small buckets, containing their food and water, into their cage, and having satiated their hunger, they lower them again by the cords to which they are suspended.

W.

THE SPARROW.

Sparrow, the gun is level'd; quit that wall.
—Without the will of Heaven I cannot fall.

The sparrow is mentioned in this place only under a hope, in some measure, of rescuing it from the extreme degree of odium with which it is loaded, in consequence of the supposed injury it does by feeding upon corn. This bird is by no means without its utility, even to the very persons who incessantly seek its destruction. On a calculation made by Professor Bradley, it was ascertained that a pair of sparrows, during the time they have young ones, destroy, on an average, 3850