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sparrows, a species that are unknown in the East and that are migrants in this latitude. They are extremely fond of brush-heaps. The flock of which I speak were concealed in a brush-pile in a little hollow, although at first I was not aware of their presence there.

A strong whirlwind formed on the top of the little hill, tossing the leaves and twigs and dead weeds in every direction. Then it swept down the hillside, and struck the brush-pile with a b-r-r-r-z-z-z. How surprised and frightened the sparrows in the brush-heap were! They must have thought a cataclysm was happening. With loud, panicky chirping they dashed from their hiding place, some of them getting caught in the gyrating currents and being tossed seven ways at once, their feathers ruffled and tossed as if they had been rushed backward through their brush-heap. When I laughed aloud at their discomfiture, they seemed to look at me reproachfully, as if they thought my hilarity untimely. Birds do look so comically serious, anyway, when something funny occurs!

In days gone by I have made some interesting discoveries relative to bird-roosts, and yet where all the birds sleep at night is a good deal of a mystery. Winter and summer there are many birds about my house, as

number of winters I have been spreading a table for the birds that have condescended to remain in the neighborhood of my house. Two winters in succession a nuthatch came to my festal board almost every day, disappearing in the spring and returning in the autumn. The third winter he did not return, and my table was without a nuthatch for guest. Had another tragedy occurred in birdland?

A pair of chickadees were my daily guests for three consecutive winters, remaining also through the summer to rear their broods. They ate freely from my windowsill, as well as from the table a rod or more from the house. Part of the time my writing-desk stood before the window. While they came regularly, and helped themselves to their repast with an at-home-like air, they were never for a moment off their guard. Not the slightest movement of mine escaped their notice. They would take a few nibbles from the morsel held beneath their feet then look up to spy for danger. So alert were they that it was out of the question to take them unawares. Birds are dowered with a gift of vigilance that is remarkable, their environments sharpening their wits.

One day I was witness of the following "moving picture," two downy woodpeckers being the actors. The bird-



Prairie Horned Lark.

familiar as birds can be during the day; but where do all of them spend the night? Again and again I have peered up into the trees, shaken the small pines, and beaten the bushes in my own yard and the thickets in a vacant lot near by, but all to no avail. In winter the chickadees, jays, nut-hatches, titmice, juncos, and others come to feed at the table I spread for them, and do not act at all as if they were mysterious beings; but where they sleep can scarcely be conjectured. Some of them are here in the morning at the dawn's peeping; others come straggling along at from eight to ten o'clock, as if their sleeping quarters were far away. One evening of the spring I tarried in the woods until it was quite late. Before night, and even in the gloaming, there were many birds flitting about and singing in bush and tree; but suddenly, as if by magic, all of them disappeared, and the woods became quiet. Not a bird was to be seen, not a rustle heard. For a long time I beat the bushes and shook the little trees, but found only one. Shook the little trees, but found only one. The feathered folk found sleeping-perches far up in the tall trees? Really the woods seemed almost apparitional.

Birds are interesting in winter as well as in spring and summer. For a

table was fastened to the hole of a large oak-tree in plain sight from my study window. First the male hobbled down the trunk to the level of the table, upon which he sprang and helped himself to the walnut kernels. He jabbed them with his bill, for they were still in the broken shells, breaking off bits which sped down his throat. Occasionally he squatted on his haunches, held a fragment of shell with his claws to keep it steady, and pounded with his stout bill.

Meanwhile the female was patiently practising Paul's injunction to wives to obey their husbands, clinging to the bark of the tree and watching her spouse breaking his fast. Presently he had enough; he wiped his bill, and ambled up the tree trunk. This was the signal for the wife to go to the table in her turn, which seemed to be after her chivalrous husband. She ate quite greedily, having less agreeable table manners than the benedict. It was raining; and, as she gobbled up the kernels greedily, she daubed her mouth from corner to apex with moistened food. Her hunger satisfied, she humped up the tree-trunk, converted the rough bark into a napkin, and ate the bits she brushed from her bill.

Afterwards she was hobbling about



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