

proof that maternal duties do not affect the vitality of sparrows in a very great degree is the fact that occasionally there will be found in their nests, at one and the same time, new-laid eggs, eggs half hatched, and young birds. I have not seen this myself, but my friend, Mr. W. A. D. Lees, on the 30th May, 1888, took from a nest in the top of a young hemlock tree, built on the remains of an old robin's nest, two young birds just out, one half-hatched egg, and another fresh and good, apparently new laid. Whether a continuous succession of eggs and young birds ever extend over a whole breeding season remains, so far as I know, yet to be found out.

During the past fall, after the breeding season was over, several members of the club observed sparrows carrying feathers and other light materials to the nests occupied in summer, with the evident purpose of making them warm and better adapted to resist the severity of winter weather. In fact, it did not seem to be nest-building at all, but rather house-building, much after the same manner as a man might build a house and occupy it. This habit, I believe, is common in other cool climates. I was not aware of the fact until a few days ago, when Mr. Lees called my attention to an article on "Winter Birds" in the December number of *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1889. I will give the quotation: "In times of severity he seeks the innermost caves and holes of thatches, gnarled ivy roots and interior of barns, being a lover of warmth to no inconsiderable degree. Certain it is that at times, when nesting cannot possibly occupy his mind, he may be seen dragging feathers about which evidently are to warm the nest last used in summer." It was gratifying to learn that observations in Canada were in such complete harmony with those made in England on this peculiar habit of the sparrow. It would be a reasonable conclusion to arrive at, that it was a case of adaptation to climatic conditions.

Sparrows begin nest-building very early in the year, and it is certain that occasionally they hatch young in February. I was informed by Mr. Fletcher a few days ago that he saw sparrows carrying hay and other materials to a nest on Metcalf street in the last week of last January, also that a warm new-laid egg was found in Mr. A. McIntyre's porch on the 18th day of the same month. Mr. Armstrong, M.P. for one of the ridings of Middlesex, tells me that he saw fall from