

eave or house cornice, but for the most part it relies for its nesting places on man's direct bounty in the shape of boxes or houses specially provided for it, and it has, throughout the eastern United States and Canada, practically forsaken its primitive nesting habit.

For a good many years, I have had a martin house on the gable end of an outbuilding overlooking the square grassy yard at the back of our house. It has accommodation for eleven families, and is usually all taken up every summer. Sometimes in the early spring, before the martins have come, a pair of English sparrows decide that this is just the home they have been looking for, and begin to carry in great quantities of straws, sticks and feathers. Then when the rightful occupants of the house arrive, a fierce battle breaks out and rages for several days, but always ends by the sparrows being evicted, and their nesting material contemptuously cast forth. One year, however, the pertinacity of a particularly obstinate pair of sparrows finally wore out the martins, and the interlopers were permitted to occupy one of the lowest corner apartments. Considering that the whole vast countryside was open to them, the site seemed to be a poor choice for the sparrows, for their sufferance in the house was of the most intolerant description. They were continually harassed by the martins as they passed in and out of their nest, and were never permitted on any account to rest for a single second on the gallery in front of their door. It was comical to see how cautiously they had to approach the house, hopping with great circumspection from roof to roof of the adjoining buildings, and then while still some distance away, dashing straight into their compartment, too quickly for the martins to get a peck at them. But in spite of all their hardships, they managed to rear their young.

It may be worth while here to remark that while the pugnacious English sparrow is often and justly blamed for driving away many of our smaller native birds, it does not always succeed in its nefarious projects in this respect. A friend tells me that a pair of sparrows built this spring in a box in his garden usually occupied by a family of house wrens, and the young sparrows were hatched shortly before the wrens returned from the south. But the wrens were not to be dispossessed so easily. Immediately on their arrival, they opened an attack of such sustained ferocity, that the sparrows were driven off, their nest broken up, and their naked young ruthlessly tumbled out onto the ground.

The purple martins reach Arnprior on their spring migration about the middle of April. The average date for the last six years, as given me by Mr. Ligouri Gormley, is the 14th. But while they may be seen around the town as early as the 9th or 10th, it is a remarkable fact that for five years past, during which I have kept a record, the first of them have—with one exception—always taken up their