

The Rockwood Review.

NOTES FROM BIRD-LAND.

THE MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT—
BIRD MANNERS IN FLEDGING-TIME
—AT THE EDGE OF THE GLADE—
TOWHEES, THRUSHES AND SPAR-
ROWS.

Amherst, Mass., July 6.

For some weeks I had lazily surmised (without investigating the subject) the existence in the neighborhood of a yellow-throat household; I so often saw the young heads of the family in the freshest hours of the day, flitting with their peculiarly noiseless, familiar, yet elusive movement from bough to bough of the great dome-shaped maple-tree, upon or rather into which (for it embraces the house), my upper windows open. They turned their bead-bright eyes on me fearlessly as I sat sewing or reading; and I on my part admired their light elegance of shape and rich but quite charm of coloring, neither, however, making any advance to a nearer acquaintance.

But on a morning in the last week of June, as I was wandering along a bit of swampy land at the foot of the orchard, with the double purpose of testing the earliest blueberries and finding a favorable spot to which to transplant some roots of *CALOPOGON PULCHELLUS*, that orchid whose purple rosy butterfly flowers I surprised this summer for the first time—as I was loitering there, I was arrested by a whisking and fluttering under the fringes of alders at my right, and in a moment detected the male yellow-throat, evidently greatly perturbed and intent to warn me off the premises. Instantly I dropped down into a bed of brakes and began to listen and look, unmercifully resolved upon further discoveries. The little fellow was exceedingly agitated, and, after the manner of mortals apparently thought fit to work himself to a more than natural

pitch of frenzy, whirling around and around, a foot or two from the ground and almost within reach of my hand, and uttering two sharp distracted notes which may be imitated by the syllables "chick" and "seep." His most curious antic was performed by running up a short branch and then coasting down it with his wings half extended and quivering like a humming bird's, and his whole body ruffled and tremulous.

I hardly knew my noiseless neighbor of the maple tree—his conduct now so irresistibly suggestive of Indian ghost-dancers and other of the quasi-inspired; but I remained motionless, hoping to be taken for a blue log, and in the course of a minute or two his mate appeared, and was immediately pitched upon, so to speak, with masculine vehemence, while the too patent danger that threatened was screamed into her ear. She was a slender matron, clad like her lord in yellowish olive, but only feebly reflecting his patch of deep sulphur yellow on throat and breast, and omitting entirely that dark band or mask over the eye and cheek which is the distinguishing mark of the species. Her note of distress, too, was quite distinct from his—a plaintive, unsibilant "teep" without show of violence; but as they circled about me, side by side in full cry, they so punctured the air with their protests that a catbird in the neighboring thicket burst into an angry tirade, interspersed with those flute and bell tones, those crystal roulades, that are never long wanting to our prince of vocalists.

I was amused to see that my quarry insisted on keeping his partner under his wing, as it were. When first she appeared they crossed bills, or exchanged a bird-kiss, and if she moved from his side he instantly followed and resigned his