

The Banner and the Carpet.

The royal banner bent his head,
And to the royal carpet said;
"In the Palace at Bagdad
Different duties we have had;
Different, too, is our reward,
Though servants both of one great lord.

"While the storms beat on my head,
For a queen's feet you are spread.
I, on marches blown and torn,
Into the jaws of death am borne.
You are kept from dust and rains,
Battles, winds, and rents and stains.

"Yours a calm and happy life;
Mine is full of pain and strife."
Then the royal carpet said:
"You to heaven may lift your head.
I lie here beneath men's feet
A slave to tread on and to beat;
You in battle's stormy night,
May lead heroes to the fight."

—William R. Alger.

The Victoria Cross.

After the Crimean War, Queen Victoria ordered a new medal to be made. It was to be called the Victoria Cross, and given to any soldier or sailor who had done some very brave deed before the enemy.

The first Victoria Crosses were made from the metal of guns taken from the Russians in the war. In the centre is a crown with a crowned lion above it. From arm to arm of the Cross hangs a scroll bearing the words, "For Valour." The medal is greatly prized, and the soldier or sailor winning it may write the letters V. C. after his name.

The first Victoria Crosses were given by Queen Victoria herself to the men who had won them. She rode to Hyde Park on a white horse (an emblem of victory), wearing a scarlet coat and a plume of feathers. The men were drawn up in a line, and were brought one by one before the Queen. Then she stooped and pinned the medal upon each man's left breast.

Lord Roberts, one of the bravest British generals, won the Cross when he was a young officer serving with the troops at the time of the Indian mutiny. One day two Sepoys ran off with a British flag. Roberts followed, re-took the flag, killing one Sepoy and putting the other to flight. On the same day he rescued a British soldier from a Sepoy, who was on the point of stabbing him with a bayonet. For these two brave deeds Roberts was given the Victoria Cross.

In the late Boer War the son of Lord Roberts also won the much-prized medal. He went with a few other brave men to try to save some guns lying in an open place swept by the Boer fire. He was shot down and soon afterwards died, so that he never knew he had won the Victoria Cross.—*Adapted from the Britannia History Reader.*

Key for Identifying Sparrows.

Miss Annetta A. Bradley, of Carleton Co., New Brunswick, who recently took the nature-study course at the Macdonald Institute, Guelph, sends us the following key for identifying sparrows by their most conspicuous markings. It is very simple, and may help some student of birds to make a start:

A. Chestnut Crown.—

1. Spot on breast Tree Sparrow.
2. Bill red Field Sparrow.
3. Chestnut patch on wing Swamp Sparrow.
4. With none of these Chipping Sparrow.

A A. Crown not chestnut.—

1. Two white tail feathers Vesper Sparrow.
2. Yellow line over eye Savanna Sparrow.
3. Yellow spot between eye and bill . . . White Throated Sparrow.
4. Tail red Fox Sparrow.
5. Breast streaked with spot in centre . . . Song Sparrow.
6. None of these White Crowned

Canada, a Rich Country.

"I have travelled four thousand miles over Canadian soil. I have been in the bush and on the prairie, and I have come to the conclusion that Canada is the country of the future; I know of none greater. Her mineral resources alone make her the richest country in the world. This is not mere conjecture; I have arrived at this conclusion after a fair investigation in several parts of the country and a thorough study of the reports of the Dominion Government's Geological Survey Department, and an inspection of the ores to be seen in the collection at Ottawa.

"The resources of Canada are such as to make her a Britain, France, Spain and Russia, all in one. She possesses the iron of Britain, the fruit and salubrious climate of France, the rich minerals of Spain, and wheat fields that rival the best in Russia."—*Mr. Joseph Sutherland, of England, in Montreal Witness.*

I enjoy the REVIEW very much. The art notes, poetry, etc., in fact everything, is very helpful.—
E. R. B.