

the greatest difference in these birds is in the quality of their songs, and by their songs they can be most easily and certainly identified.

I may be permitted to give a personal instance of the value of a bird's song in its identification, for I remember well my first acquaintance with the Hermit Thrush. Though I heard one sing many times, I did not fully realize the difference between its song and a Robin's. I imagined that the Thrush, which, for several days, I had heard singing its enchanting song, was a Robin; but one that could sing more sweetly than the Robin usually does. In endeavoring to approach near enough to get an effective view, so that I might ascertain whether this bird was really a Robin, it would fly from the tree on which it was perching and disappear in the woods beyond. At length, by a circuitous approach and by taking advantage of the intervening trees, after a few failures, I succeeded in gaining a position within a few feet of the tree from a branch near the summit of which this Hermit Thrush poured forth the liquid and enchanting notes of its evening song. Then I appreciated how aptly Burroughs translated into language the song of the Hermit Thrush, as contained in the following quotation from this writer :—

"I often hear him a long way off, sometimes over a quarter of a mile away, when only the stronger and more perfect parts of the music reach me; and, through the general chorus of wrens and warblers, I detect his song, rising pure and serene, as if a spirit from some remote height were slowly chanting a divine accompaniment. This song appeals to the sentiment of the beautiful in me, and suggests a serene religious beatitude, such as no other sound in nature does. It is perhaps more of an evening than a morning hymn, though I hear it at all hours of the day. It is very simple, and I can hardly tell the secret of its charm. 'O spheral, spheral!' he seems to say, 'O holy, holy! O clear away, clear away! O clear up, clear up!' interspersed with the finest trills and the most delicate preludes."

Wilson's Thrush has not so fine a song as the Hermit, but it has one that is readily recognized and easily remembered. The same notes uttered four times in succession, with a distinct pause between, and followed by a firm trill, is the song commonly heard.

VIREOS.

The Vireos are smaller birds than the Thrushes, of the size and form of the Warblers. The bill of a Vireo is rather