

can make out the description : Crown forehead and region around the eye black ; curved gray mark back of the eye and back of this a black spot, throat black running well down to breast and fusing around the neck with the black region around the eye. This makes the head mostly black, and that the most striking color about the bird. The breast is light with black spots towards the sides. The back and wings are striped gray much as in the white-throat, but the upper tail coverts are a light uniform gray. It otherwise has the characteristics of the sparrow, but is larger than any other species I have seen. If some reader will identify this bird for me, I shall be greatly obliged. The only song I have heard from them is one note somewhat similar to the first note of the white-throat's song, but more prolonged.

Hartney, Man., May 14, 1902.

B J. HALES.

A WORD OF CHEER.

EDITOR EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL.

I am pleased to note in the communication of Mr. Jas. H. Kitley upon the birds of his district, a solitary evidence of individual effort and investigation of bird life. Since the cooling of the bird fever of some two years ago there has been little interest upon the part of teachers to encourage one to give any assistance in this important work.

The communication of Mr. Kitley however, shows considerable accuracy of observation and his questions are the result of difficulties encountered by the beginner rather than the off-hand questions of the superficial observer. The notes upon nesting habits are very interesting and rather too brief while the solution or rather the verdict in the swallow tragedy is no doubt correct as such is not an uncommon occurrence among birds.

The olive backed thrush is a regularly distributed breeding species in the province and being one of the earliest arrivals is no doubt the bird noted.

The marsh wren which is evidently the species next referred to is a most industrious little fellow and has the reputation of being the most particular in the occupation of a residence, being known to build as many as seven or eight nests before selecting one as a home.

I would suppose it was the common tern he refers to as our smallest gull is Franklin's, which is rose pink on the breast and much larger than the terns.

I cannot locate the species referred to with the orange throat patch, and about the size of the Baltimore oriole as he does not state actions of the bird nor the locality it was observed in. If these were given identification would be much easier.

I trust that this communication may be followed by others of a similar nature which will show that some practical work is being done in this department.

Bird stories by authors of varied abilities entertain for a time but they don't accomplish much when compared with the individual effort of an enthusiastic observer and student.

GEO. E. ATKINSON.

As a teacher I have found THE JOURNAL a very valuable friend, and wish it every success.—CATHERINE A. REEKIE.