

## THE ROCKWOOD REVIEW

former seasons, and in seemingly increased numbers; for a flight of ten of these gregarious birds was seen wending their way, on the 2nd of April, to their time honored nesting place, on the tops of some tall hemlock trees in the midst of a cedar swamp, not far from this place. The birds must have hereditary instincts, or family tradition, as to these breeding localities, for some of the identical trees have been known to be thus utilized for many decades of years; and the promptness and directness of their flight to reconnoitre the condition of things, as soon as the shallow pools are released from winter's icy grasp, would tend to prove that birds have accurate powers of memory.

We hear this spring some complaints anent the trespasses, &c., of our old historical acquaintances, the Woodchuck tribe, and many farmers would not be sorry if those little quadrupeds were banished or exterminated, but notwithstanding the various changes and the vicissitudes and "contre temps" of our climate, the above named rodents hold their ground in undiminished numbers, and afford rare sport to the average farmer boy, and his collie or terrier dog, when the clover is growing vigorously, in which the marmots come to gambol and luxuriate, beside the Bobolink nest, in the merry May time.

Our sagacious and exploiting rat terrier "Nipper" seems to delight in a virulent belligerency to the ground hog species of zoology, and loses no opportunity of chasing members of that fraternity to their citadels, either in earth tunnels or in the hollows of trees, whenever the objects of his dislike put in an appearance.

One of these was hastily chased to the entrance of his burrow, at the margin of our sugar bush, by

the dog, and retreat having been cut off farther by the closing of the hole by the help of a spade—(in the big rodent's temporary absence)—at this point of the adventure. Arctomys put himself in a threatening attitude, shrieking and furiously gnashing his chisel-like incisors, and really looking like an ugly customer, to an antagonist of about his own size and equipment for tussle.

Just at this moment the dog turned his head to find out the meaning of a footstep of a third party that was approaching. The marmot made a rush into the nearby forest, and though hotly pursued, gained temporary safety by climbing the stem of a large beech tree, to the height of 15 or 16 feet, and thence repeated his gnashing and shrieking demonstrations for the edification of his barking and leaping, and fiend-like enemy at the foot (or base) of the tree. But the rodents of this species are not adept at tree climbing, and the specimen here described had got to nearly the limit of his physical resources,—for with no strength remaining for a higher ascent to the rest and security of the overhead tree branches, and the deficiency of adhesive power becoming every moment more evident; and in the event of a drop!—the battle—if fierce and sanguinary, could only end in the garroting and mutilation of poor arctomys. So in this instance he was given his modicum of "Law," and commiseration, by the dog being collared and jerked away by a humanitarian neutral onlooker, and after the lapse of a few minutes, the Woodchuck descended, rear first "backing down," cautiously to terra firma, and thence "bolted" to the buttressing roots of a big elm tree, and found sanctuary in cavities whence dislodgment was all but an impossibility. Doubtless the marmot's capability