

NATURAL HISTORY.

"All are but parts of that stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

WRITTEN FOR THE GASKET.

THE REDBIRD.

Of all the birds of the Canadian forests, there are none more interesting in my opinion than the Redbird. Its size equals that of the Red wing Blackbird. The Redbird seldom appears till late in the spring, when its splendid colour among the deep green and rich and glossy foliage of the fresh-blowing grove is most conspicuous and beautiful. I have watched two of the mated of these birds, sitting on contiguous branches of the same tree, for long lengths of time, without any motion on the part of either; which circumstance had often led me to believe the male and female of the same colour, and that this was their manner of courtship: but from subsequent experience and observation, I found myself quite mistaken. I have since found the female to be of green colour mixed with dun; and that this inexplicable conduct of the males was the result of contention for some favourite mistress. Such is the chivalric love of birds. Although the song of this bird is not long, still its whistle and notes are not excelled by any of our sylvan songsters. I have never observed the female sing; but the male, among the thickly waving tops of the maple, ash or beech, has often delighted me at morn or sun-set with his mellow notes. During the time of incubation with the female, he can often be heard to utter a harsh and grating cry. He seldom visits the nest of his partner till the young are hatched; whereas, on the contrary, the female may always be seen about the nest, of which she is extremely careful, and shows her anxiety at the approach of large birds by elating her feathers and uttering harsh sounds.

CAROLUS.

Charles Darwin

SKELETONS OF LEAVES, FLOWERS, &c.
— We often see in museums and scientific collections, those beautiful and delicate preparations, which afford the reflective mind materials for contemplation, at the creative power of the Omnipotent Deity. The manner in which these specimens, or skeleton leaves, as they are denominated, are made has been kept a profound secret by those who are in the habit of making them; but the method is extremely simple, and performed as follows:—The leaves are to be placed in a small portion of water until it is perfectly putrid, and for this purpose hot water is to be preferred; it is then to be taken out and laid upon a marble slab, or flat surface; a delicate stream of clear water is then gently to be poured upon it, and thus the putrid particles are washed away, leaving nothing behind but a series of apparently woody fibres, or sap vessels, which constitute a beautiful net-work, particularly in the smaller leaves. This operation being performed, it is to be placed in its natural situation to dry, and when this is accomplished, it may be glued on a table of black velvet (as is usually done,) placed in a glazed frame, or glass case as fancy

may direct. This being done, it may be put in a museum, and be preserved for years. Until the student is *au-fait* in these preparations, he should commence his experiments with the largest leaves, as he will be less likely to fail, than with the more delicate.—*Scientific Gaz.*

THE SNOW-BIRD.

The Snow-Bird of America is remarked among ornithologists for the obscurity which hangs round its history. On the first approach of winter it suddenly makes its appearance at the farm house, apparently driven by the inclemency of the weather to court the society of man. Whence it comes, no one can tell; and whither it goes, (for his exit is as sudden as its entrance) no one has yet been able to discover. It is supposed to be in reality another bird; only that its plumes by some mysterious and irresistible power, has been suddenly changed. It delights to hover near hay ricks, feeding on the wheat they contain while in very bleak weather, when the ground is clad with universal snow, and the air is piercingly cold, it may be easily attracted to the parlor windows, by throwing fourth a few crumbs—the desolation of its lot causing it to forget its natural fear of man. There is a feeling of melancholy passes over the mind when the bleak and dreary landscape, deserted by all other tenants of the air, is only enlivened with the presence of the mournful Snow-Bird. Yet, even in the bitterest weather, he is always gay and lively; and the desolation of the scenery around him seems to have no saddening effect upon his cheerful heart.

POETRY.

The author of the following piece has sent us several articles of poetry, but does not say whether they were ever published. We admire his effusions, and shall publish all in their turn.

I'D LET HER ALONE TO BE SURE.

If the maid I adored, so faithful and true,
My presence would never endure,
The case would be trying and what should I do?
Oh, I'd let her alone, to be sure.
I'd say to her "go and do as you will;
Find some one whose love is more pure,"
For I never could bear to wish her an ill;
And I'd let her alone, to be sure.
There's another, I'd say, whose eyes glow as bright,
As sweetly as her's ever could;
Whose countenance beams with as noble a light—
And I'd let her alone so I would.
There are others, I'd tell her, whose faces are clad
With smiles as delightful and pure;
Who'd smile e'en thro' tears, when I am seen sad—
And I'd let her alone to be sure.
There are others, whose tears flow as softly & sweet,
Whose hearts with kind pity can bleed,
Whose presence can make the dull hours as fleet—
And I'd let her alone, sir, indeed.
Then what should I care for the maid proud and coy,
That cannot my presence endure;
There are others who'd give me a welcome with joy
And I'd let her alone to be sure.

W. E. H. E.

WRITTEN FOR THE GASKET.

A FRAGMENT.

O happy days for you I sigh—
The days when I was young;
When innocence play'd in mine eye,
And virtue taught my tongue.
When this gay world's delusive scene,
To me was little known,
And I liv'd happy and serene,
Beneath a peaceful home.
My hours were past with gay delight;
All then was bliss to me;
No dark foreboding seem'd to blight
Sweet homo's felicity.
But ah, those happy days are fled;
Short have my pleasures been;
Reflection fills my soul with dread,
My heart with sorrows keen.
My flattering lips forbid me tell
When all my woes began;
When innocence a victim fell
To vain deceitful man.
For man my early ruin sought,
Which caus'd me far to roam—
My heart feels broken at the thought
When first I left my home.
O happy days! for you I sigh—
The days when I was young,
When innocence play'd in mine eye,
And virtue taught my tongue.

G. H.

AGENTS FOR THE GASKET.

Messrs. G. W. Whitehead, *Burford*; J. Williamson, *Stoney Creek*; Henry Neiles, *Grimsby*; H. Mittleberger, *St. Catharines*; John Crooks, *Niagara*; W. J. Sumner, *Nelson*; J. H. VanEvery, *O. W. Everett, Paris*; J. Harris, *West Flamboro'*; A. Bates, *Wellington Square*; Robert Heron, *London*; David Gillet, *Norwich*; William Clay, *Streetsville*; J. B. Spraggo, *Credit*; J. S. Howard, *L. A. Phelps, York*; James Boyes, *Etobico*; J. Willson, *Hallowell*; Arthur McClean, *Brockville*; John M. Camp, *Smithville*; Oliver Blake, *Simcoe*; David H. Cornell, *Lower Settlement, Norwich*; A. S. St. John, *Dunnville*; Abel E. Barker, *Walsingham*; T. B. Husband, *Guelph*; John Gamble, *Dundas*; H. F. Fay, *Brantford*; Robert L. Mackenney, *Yarmouth*; D. Campbell, *Simcoe*; Jonathan Burbee, *St. Thomas*; Phineas Varnum, *Waterloo*; Seth Keith, *10 mile Creek*; T. G. Chapman, *Galt*;

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