

generally to be found in greater or smaller numbers during the breeding season. Securing themselves by their claws and spreading out their tails, so as to support the body by pressing against the surface of the bank, they pick away the soil with their bills, until a space large enough to admit the body is formed, when feet and claws are also used in scratching out the sand. Their holes are bored sometimes to the depth of three feet, and at the furthest end, the nest is formed of short bits of dry grass, and lined with feathers. They lay from five to seven eggs. The plumage of the Bank Swallow is greyish brown on the upper part of the body with a dusky band across the forepart of the neck, the lower part of the body dusky white.

Towards the close of April, come many more new arrivals, not only of land but of water birds.

Our bays and creeks are already becoming peopled with wild ducks, and other water birds are making their appearance—but the space accorded to these ornithological notes has already been exceeded, and any further notices of our feathered friends must be deferred to another month.

G. W. A.

Moss Park, April 10th, 1869.

NOTE BY EDITOR O. F.—The above interesting article on “our feathered friends” is from the able and graceful pen of a gentleman, whom not a few of our readers will at once recognize, from his initials and place of residence, as the Hon. G. W. Allan of this city. We are happy to say it is the first of a series, to be continued from month to month, until the period of migration arrives, when an article on “The birds that winter with us” will complete the ornithology of the year. The whole will form a most valuable contribution toward the natural history of our country, and go far to disprove the libel upon it, that “in Canada the flowers have no fragrance, and the birds no song.”

RETURNED FROM KANSAS.

A. Buckler, of Pilkington, County of Wellington, has just returned from Kansas, whether he had gone to better his worldly circumstances. The *Elora Observer*, in noticing his return, says:

A very short stay served to convince him that Kansas as it is, and Kansas as it is represented to be, are entirely different things, and his experience in that territory are considerably at variance with many of the verbal and written accounts we get of that delectable region. The constant flow of immigration from all parts of the continent has overstocked the market with

artizans and labourers, and resulted in an injurious competition among those classes, and diminished the demand for labour to such an extent that efforts on the part of many to gain a livelihood by honest toil have proved so fruitless that begging has been resorted to. Scores are daily met with, craving a pittance from those more fortunate than themselves, in order to procure a bare subsistence. Mr. Buckler states that he daily saw indigent people wandering through the streets of cities and towns, with miserable rag wallets slung over their shoulders, as receptacles for any stray bits of fuel that might be swept from the shops, or otherwise deposited on the highways; also gathering orange and lemon peel, and other refuse of the more opulent, ejected into the streets, which they devour with an avidity that plainly indicated their utter destitution. While the Government land policy may be all that could be desired, hundreds of poor emigrants, having exhausted their funds in reaching their destination, find themselves unable to secure a homestead, or even sufficient employment; to warrant a hope that, within a reasonable length of time, they would be in a better position to purchase. Of the thousands of acres of land placed in the market, a very large percentage may be considered useless for agricultural purposes; and the best of the land being secured by those whose means proved adequate to the purpose, there is no alternative for the poor but to cast themselves on the charity of the community, or push on closer to the confines of civilization. Mr. Buckler says that a good supply of surplus funds are essential for making a start in Kansas. He, we think, wisely concludes that Canada furnishes equal if not superior advantages to a man of limited capital; while to the willing, frugal and industrious poor, Canada is preferable to the States.

Arts and Manufactures.

WIRE ROPE RAILWAYS.

Various experiments have been made in Britain, from time to time, to establish short lines of communication for the conveyance of freight, by means of wire ropes carried over suitable supports. Passing the loads over these points of support has heretofore been the chief difficulty their promoters had to contend with. This difficulty has at last been overcome, by overhanging the supporting rope, and curving in the pendant by which the load is hooked on to the rope, so that the centre of gravity of the load shall come vertically under the centre of the rope. The plan was tried on an experimental length of half a mile, two different modes of operation being adopted. The first employs a