

with indignation, we are accustomed to accord to creatures of seeming insignificance, whose exploits demand much strength, great spirit, and insatiate love of carnage. We cannot be indifferent to the marauder who takes his own wherever he finds it—a feudal baron who holds his own with undisputed sway—an ogre whose victims are so many more than he can eat, that he actually keeps a private graveyard for the balance. Lest such a picture may seem exaggerated, let me make good my statements. The Shrike's food consists of such birds, quadrupeds, and reptiles as he can capture and overpower, together with insects, chiefly of the larger kinds, and especially grasshoppers. These he pursues, attacks, and destroys quite as a Hawk does; and he has the very curious habit of impaling their bodies upon thorns. Numberless illustrations of the spirit the Shrike displays might be given. Though smaller in stature than the least of our Hawks, he habitually destroys birds and other animals as large as those upon which some Hawks subsist, and quite as capable of resisting attack. Appropriating to himself sufficient territory, where no other bird may safely intrude, he becomes the terror of the neighborhood; and woe to the unlucky Finch or Warbler that ventures to trespass on these hunting-grounds! Like a veritable sentinel on guard, the Shrike stands in wait upon his chosen post, ready to pounce with unerring aim upon the first little bird that may dare to rustle in the nearest bush. His impetuosity and tenacity are well displayed in the onslaught he sometimes makes upon cage-birds hanging at our windows; and he has even been known to enter an apartment, bolting through the open sash with perfect recklessness. Dr. Brewer narrates the case of a Shrike who dashed at a Canary without perceiving that the window was closed. He struck the glass with all the momentum of his impetuous flight, and fell to the ground, stunned by the force of the blow.\* He revived, however, and was kept in confinement for some time, during which he continued sullen and fearless, and greedily devoured small birds which were offered him for food, though refusing to eat

raw meat of other kinds. Notwithstanding the protection that a cage affords, Canaries are not seldom killed by the Shrike unless speedily relieved from his attack. Sometimes they are so terror-stricken that they fall fainting to the bottom of the cage; but they oftener flutter and dash themselves against the wires, till seized by the bird of prey, who scalps them, breaks in their skull, or takes their heads off. The small birds that the Shrike destroys in a state of nature are either captured at a single dash, or caught in open chase, and killed with a blow of the beak. They are then devoured upon the spot, or carried to the "cemetery" and stuck upon a thorn, as I shall presently describe with more particularity. As if conscious of his prowess, the Shrike shows little fear in the presence of man. Under some circumstances, indeed, I have found a Shrike so wild that my endeavors to obtain a shot were unavailing, but the very opposite is oftener the case. You may enter the thicket the Shrike has chosen as his hunting-ground, and the bird will regard you with contempt, returning your regard with a gaze as steady and unflinching as if he were the better man of the two and knew it. At such a time, you will have a good opportunity to observe the easy nonchalant air with which he asserts himself. For all that the Shrike is such a gallant marauder, it must not be inferred that he is always on the war-path, intent on prodigies of valor. The doughtiest knights lay aside their armor at times, and the Shrike is fond of his ease in the intervals of his piratical enterprises. At such times, you may observe him lounging about with his hands in his pockets, so to speak, and nothing on his mind, when, as you approach, he will turn his head toward you with languid curiosity, just for a moment, and then dismiss you from further consideration. Sometimes you will see him ready for business, scanning the neighborhood closely from his watch-tower on the topmost twig of some bush or sapling, where he stands stilly, bolt upright, like a soldier on dress parade, ready to move at a moment's warning. He makes a rather imposing picture just then in his uniform of French gray with black and white facings, which fits him "like a dream": the next instant—whish! he is gone, and the piteous cry of the Sparrow in yonder bush tells the rest of the story. A good deal of the Shrike's business, however, is neither brilliant nor romantic. The green sward below his

\*A similar instance of birds' inability to see glass is within my own experience. Having on one occasion netted a large lot of Sparrows and other small birds alive, I turned them loose in a vacant room. In their terror and eagerness to escape, almost every one of them dashed against the window in the course of a few moments, and successively fell stunned and shivering to the floor—some to recover, others, more seriously hurt, to die shortly.