

Cat-fish in various ways, but the perfect mode of obtaining the flavour of the common Cat-fish is to pot them; they constitute the best fresh-water fish on this continent for potting, and their flavour is not far removed from Salmon. We rely therefore on the gist of our remarks being looked into; that we may see the Sarline of the Lower St. Lawrence put up in genuine olive oil; the pretty Caplin sold by our grocers, as sun-cooked fish, and the Cat-fishes of our fresh waters potted in such style that the strong prejudice formerly held against them may be forever removed.—C.

### THE QUEBEC GAME LAWS.

It is strange, after the many changes or alterations made in the Game Laws since they were first framed for this portion of the Dominion, that they are now imperfect. The Commissioner of Crown Lands has adopted an ornithological nomenclature peculiarly his own, as we cannot determine his "Sand-lark," and question if any one else can. Suffice to say that no bird of the name is known on this Continent. Section 5 of the Act is a perfect jumble, for we find the Grakles, Grosbeaks and Cow-hunting classed as insectivorous, while the (wax-wings) Cedar-bird is ordered to be destroyed. The Sparrow, which we suppose to mean the introduced European species is classed as an insect-eating bird, merely by chance because it has changed much of its old country habits in this climate. Only the other day, a motion was made by one of our Montreal City fathers devising means to destroy the House Sparrows, which are said to be a nuisance. But the mover and seconder of the idea forgot that an Act was passed by the Quebec Legislature protecting the Sparrow, and as soon as they gave the order to the Road Committee and they commenced to destroy them, Inspector Gailey could pounce upon these gentlemen, when according to law, they would be fined or go to jail. In connection with Section 5, a paragraph occurs which appears to us to have been placed there as a joke, as we cannot see what "poultry" or domestic fowl have to do with

the wild birds of the forest; however he who shoots a barn-yard fowl to bag it instead of a Whip-poor-will is a knave when he pleads ignorance of difference between the two birds. To show the confusion in this Game Law, it says that "it is forbidden to hunt or take (a) any Partridge between the first day of January and the fifteenth of September in each year;" and (b) any Grouse or Ptarmigan between the first of February and the first of September in each year." The poorest tyro sportsman in Canada possesses some knowledge of the birds classed as game, and when the Ruffed Grouse is called a Partridge, he knows that the name is vulgarly used. Suffice to say that we have no Partridge in Canada, (unless they have been lately introduced from Europe or some other country without our knowledge). The birds of this class called game—i.e., the Ruffed Grouse, Spruce Grouse and Ptarmigan are true American representatives of forms known to ornithologists as Grouse. Now, as stated above, a man may shoot Ruffed Grouse on the 16th of September and in accordance with the correct nomenclature of the bird, backed by scientific evidence, he can defy any Provincial Magistrate to fine him for doing so. We are displeased with this amended Game Law, and the hurried manner in which it was passed to the Statute-book. The matter should have been placed in the hands of a competent naturalist—one who professes to know something of the animals referred to;—A course of this kind would avoid criticism and the Statute would not then be paradoxical to legal men or magistrates. We wish some of our sportsmen would give us their opinions on these Game Laws; our object being to arrive at their correct framing.—C.

### THE SAW-WHET OWL.

The melanic form of this little owl is rare. A beautiful specimen was sent to us on the 21st inst. from Ontario. In days of yore, the variety was not properly known, its dark colouring would at that time lead an ornithologist to describe it as a new species. A want of knowledge of this bird led to the description of the White-fronted or Kirtland's owl, but now it is known that we have only two distinct species of small northern owls—i.e., Richardson's and the Saw-whet, both of which appear in distinct dresses during summer and winter.—C.