

THE FINCHES.

AMONG the class of birds called Finches are not only some of the most beautiful, but some of the most melodious of the feathered tribe. They are, too, very easily tamed, and have been the companions of man from the most ancient times, and in some places they are valued more than any other birds. We give an engraving of five of them—the Goldfinch (at the top,) the Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Siskin, and Mountain-Finch.

The Goldfinch is highly esteemed for the colors of its plumage, the elegance of its form, and the sweetness and fullness of its notes. It is at the same time a gentle and peaceful bird, easily tamed and raised as a cage-bird, and showing great attachment to those who take charge of it.

The Chaffinch is a cheerful little creature, and passes the greater part of the day in action, only reposing from its fatigue during the noon-tide heat; and it, like the goldfinch, builds an exceedingly artistic nest. While the female is sitting on the nest, her mate pours out an uninterrupted flow of song. Chaffinches are exceedingly attached to their young, and utter loud cries at the approach of an enemy.

The Bullfinch is a very docile bird, and though its natural song is harsh and disagreeable, yet it may be trained, as in England, Germany, and Holland, to whistle many airs and songs in a soft, pure and flute-like tone, which is highly prized. There are many schools for training them, especially in Germany, the teacher making use of a flute to aid him.

The plumage and song of the Siskin are both attractive, the greater part of the former being a beautiful green, called the "siskin green." Its song resembles that of the canary. It does not care about staying long in one place, but spends much of its time in wandering over the country, going south for the winter.

Mountains and large close forests are the favourite resorts of the Mountain Finch, but in the winter season, when deep snow is on the mountains, it descends into the lowlands and mingles with the other finches. It equals the chaffinch in its activity, but is inferior to it in the quality of its song.

All these little birds are industrious. They are persevering; they do their work in the right time; they do not interfere with each other; they do not get discouraged because they cannot build their nests in a day; they do not refuse to work because they have to find their own straws.

Will not the little readers of these lines learn a lesson from these birds? If these birds which God has made and cares for each day, but which can neither talk, nor read, nor reason, as we do, are so kind to