

American Ornithology will be thoroughly arranged and settled forever by the majority of the members of this Union. Two current lists of N. A. Birds cannot be much longer extant, therefore, it is necessary that a uniform official system of classification and nomenclature should exist which would doubtless be recognized and adopted by every ornithological student in North America. We wish success to this Union; its promoters are hosts in themselves—a sufficient guarantee that their object will be attained.—C.

A VALUABLE DONATION.

Parties visiting the collections of the Natural History Society of Montreal will doubtless admire a large English made lighted case of British *Birds*, comprising pairs of each species. They are tastefully mounted on artificial rock by Mr. Reuben Webster, taxidermist, Sheffield. The birds are life-like, and form a very valuable and attractive feature to the Society's Ornithological collection. Those interested should examine this group of British partridge and grouse. Among the latter are a pair of the rare capercaillie in very natural positions. They were presented by A. A. Jowitt, Esq., senior partner in the firm of Messrs. T. Jowitt & Sons of Sheffield, England, through his friends Messrs. Frothingham and Workman of this city. This donation, we are sure, will be appreciated not only by the members of the Society but by all lovers of natural history.—C.

ORNITHOLOGICAL NOTES.

DEAR SIR—It is a repeated pleasure to me as each succeeding number of the *Canadian Sportsman and Naturalist* comes to hand, bringing information new and interesting, concerning the lovely creatures which form the subjects of our favourite study. I feel my inability to write anything that will ornament the pages of your magazine, while I read with delight the articles from pens of able authors, as I think do all those who are in search of a knowledge of the life histories of the quadrupeds, birds, &c., of our country. My sincere desire in sending a letter for publication is to help to increase the knowledge of natural history, and if anything I write is new information to my brother Ornithologists and Oologists, I shall be greatly gratified. Early on the morning of May 26th, 1879, I started into the fields and woods of our neighbourhood in quest of desirable specimens

of all kinds. When I started the sun had just risen brightly and all vegetation was yet moist with dew. Soon after entering a field about half a mile from our house, I came amongst some brier and red raspberry bushes scattered about. After walking a little way a female golden-winged warbler *Helminthophaga chrysopetra* started with sharp chipping notes from within a yard of my feet. Upon glancing down, I saw what at a short distance appeared to be a bunch of red leaves sunk in the grass at the roots of three little raspberry bushes. No other tree leaves were on the ground near the nest, which showed clearly that the birds had carried all the materials which formed their little house. The nest was very bulky, considering the small size of the builder. Fully two-thirds of the leaves fell from the outside of the nest before I reached home with it. The four eggs and also one of the cowbird which it contained were fresh. This is the nest and eggs which I sent to you to be described.* The two damaged eggs were broken by the box containing them accidentally falling from a shelf. Before taking the prize, I stood by and watched the actions of the parent birds. The female fluttered from one dewy bush to another for a few minutes, all the time uttering rapidly her note of alarm, when suddenly her mate appeared; but he, heartless little creature, instead of joining in the defence, darted at the female and fiercely pursued her hither and thither, regardless of her cries of anguish and grief, until both were lost to view. In a few moments the female again returned and behaved exactly as before. She would flutter along as if wounded, alighting on a bush within three or four yards of me and instantly leaving it again, moving away as she came, seemingly anxious to entice me in pursuit of her, instinctively endeavouring to lead me away from the spot where the objects of her affection were laid. So beseeching were the actions of this tiny bird that I had to harden my heart before I could take the nest away. I reasoned thus:—Perhaps if I leave this nest, some carnivorous animal or bird which the Creator has formed with egg devouring propensities, will find it out and destroy them. The bird would not forget her loss a bit sooner than if I took

*The eggs, four in number, do not differ in size and shape from others of this family. The average measurements are .65 .50-1.00, colour white, ground marked with reddish brown spots and blotches of different shades, the larger ends being most thickly marked. The markings are very irregular in size, shade and distribution only one of the eggs having the small end immaculate.