Canadian Aatural Kistory.

The Crow.

(Corvus.)

THESE birds are found in almost every quarter of the globe. Over twenty species are described, some friend is transformed, for the time being, into a " Poof which remain stationary, while others migrate from 'ato-digging-Machine." He also occasionally roots and Natural History."

place to place with the changes of the seasons. la the present article we have illustrated, and propose briefly to describe two of these numerous species.

THE AMERICAN CROW (C)rvus Americanus, Audabon) was first separated from the Eupope in species by the dist'n guished ornithologist whose name is associated with it; and there can be no question but that the two species are exti ely distinct.

The Crow is so well known to even that mythical person, "every schoolboy," that it requires no description. Generally and most un justly persecuted, al most every man, and certainly every boy feels that he has rendered an important service to agriculture by the slaughter of one of these wary, black birds. Thousands are mercilessly killed every year

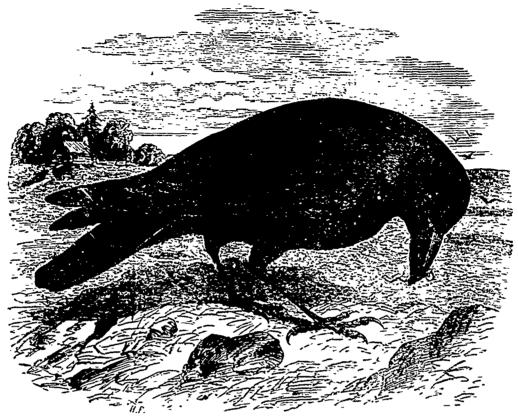
and Herod-like slaughter the innocents in their infancy.

It is impossible to deny that the bird is at times unavoidably somewhat of a brigand. When pressed by hunger, the instinct of self-preservation goads the hird to commit an occasional theft, and even sometimes to devour the young of other birds. We grant cribed

further that our black friend with the hoarse "Caw, Caw," at times, pulls up a considerable number of green corn blades that he digs up potato sets" and scat ters the fragments of the disintegrated bulb about the ground in a somewhat slovenly and provoking manner and fat firther be not no f equently bores a turnip so full of boles that pines away and de-Bit what then or feathered triend mus live somelow and t spite his occasional and necessitons villar of he is yet the most us ful and beneficial from 1 to agriculture that the farmer knows. Hear the Crow a counsel. If be roots up the corn. i. is not so much to do

vour the young blade as it is to extinguish that terrible pest of the farmer-the wire-wormand other destructive insect pests, which lurk at the roots of young plants and infallibly sap their vitality. In like manner, potato "sets" are attacked by numerous insect enemies, and it is to destroy these that the long, hard heak of our 'cute

Again, how industriously the Crow gathers up the the worms and grubs exposed by the plough. In this important and valuable service to the whole community, the keen eye and ready bill of this useful bird is employed from morning till night. Some faint perception of the extent and character of the bird's operations may be gathered from the following extract from Mr. Simeon's "Stray notes on Fishing "I was walking one



by the use of guns, traps, poisoned grain, and by the | up grass, but then it is for the purpose of destroying | that Groskill and Ransome could turn out. On ruthless hands of young urchins who rifle the nests, the grub of the cock-chaffer beetle-that most destruc'ive foe to grass lands. This rapacious creature lives for three years underground, is faraished with a huge's omach, a wonderful capacity of digestion, and a firmidable catting apparatus for obtaining its fool and, by assisting in its extermination, the services of the Crow may be better imagined than des-

tleman on his home farm, when we observed the grass on about an acre of meadow land to be so completely rooted un and scarified that he took it for granted it had been done under the bailiff's direction to clear it from moss, and on arriving at the farm. enquired whether such was not the case. The answer was, however. 'Oh no, sir, we have not been at work there at ali ; it's the Crows done all that. The mistake was a very natural one. for though I have often seen places where grass has been pulled up by Crows, yet I never saw such clean and wholesale work done by them as on this occasion. It could not apparently have been executed more systematically or perfectly by the most elaborate 'scarifier'

day," says that agree-

able writer " with a gen-

examining the spot afterwards, I found that the object of the rooks, researches had doubtless been a small white grub, numbers of which still remained in the ground a short distance below the surface. In the following spring I noticed that the part of the field where this had taken place was densely covered with cowslips, much more so that the rest of it. Possibly the roots of these plants may have been the

proper food for the grubs, and therefore selected by the parent insect as receptacles for her eggs."

The American Cyclo pædia further adds on the usefulness of this bird: "Though the Crow pulls up a few seeds of the germinating corn, his services to the agriculturist far outweigh his depredations; he daily devours insects, grubs, and worms. which but for him would devastate whole fields of young corn; he destroys innumerable mice moles, and other small quadrupeds, every one of which commits ton times the mischief he does he will eat snakes frogs, lizards and other small reptiles, and also fruits, and vegetables.

