

ural enough as the songs of their *Larks* and *Thrushes* bring to mind childhood's happy hours, and other kindred associations. Still that is no reason why they should libel our birds as no singers. As songsters the birds of *Canada* compare very favourably with those of *Europe*, and in point of variety and beauty of plumage they far excel them. As yet they are placed at great disadvantage, being strangers to the many, and being known only to the few, while those of *Europe* have not only been voluminously written upon by *Zoologists*, but immortalized by poets as well. The people, too, of *Europe* have the good taste and judgment, to study *Natural History*, a branch of education that is much overlooked in this country. Another reason why the birds of *Europe* are by many considered the best singers, is because they frequent the hedges and open fields, which bring them under more general observation, while most of our song birds inhabit the deep shades of the forest, and are consequently, seldom seen or heard." It is therefore in some measure to fill up this existing vacancy that we give these *Sketches of Canadian birds* to the public, hoping that some more able and eloquent pen may soon be employed in giving this interesting subject the justice which its usefulness and importance demands. The feathered race have an important office assigned to them, for which they are admirably fitted by the hand of nature, and well do they fill their appointed tasks, and exercise the talents committed to their trust. Let us consider the facts, the *Eagle* and the *Hawk* prey much on small animals, which if left to increase would do vast injury to the crops and perhaps render vain the labour of the *Agriculturist*. The *Vulture* and the *Carrion Crow* delight to feed upon filthy and decayed matter, which, if not thus removed, would taint the atmosphere, and render that vital element a prolific source of disease and death. The numerous small birds, which frequent our fields and gardens, and the different species of *Swallows*, which on tireless wings, pursue their insect prey through the pathless air, from early morn until the dusk of the evening, destroy a vast multitude of insects which, if allowed to remain and increase their numbers, would not only be a great source of annoyance to mankind by rendering the air almost unbreathable, but would eventually destroy every green thing, and change the most beautiful and fertile regions into a barren and desolate waste. But besides this, by their varied plumage, they adorn and enliven the landscape, and the sweet melody of their voices makes the wilderness rejoice, and renders glad the solitary places. The various ways, in which many others of the feathered tribes contribute to the comfort and happiness of man, is obvious to all intelligent persons, and need not here be dilated upon, suffice to say, that the service rendered by our wild birds, to the farmers of *Canada* is wholly indispensable. It is true that some birds are mischievous and sometimes commit serious depredations, among the domestic fowls, upon the newly-sown fields and among the garden seeds and ripe fruit; but for all this, as we have endeavoured to show, they make ample compensation. About a hundred different species of wild birds, yearly visit, or permanently remain upon the shores or in the rural districts of *Western Canada*. These represent every