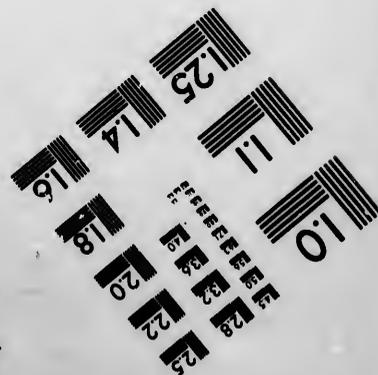
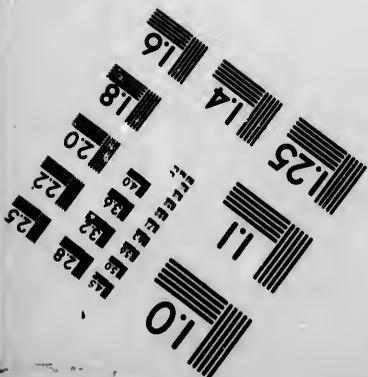
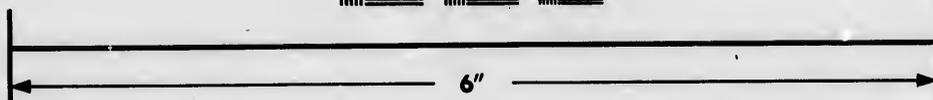
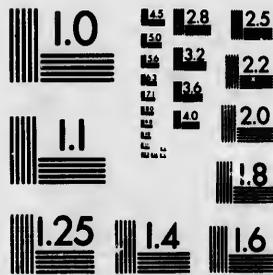


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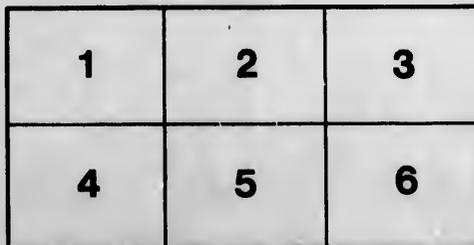
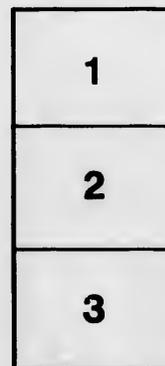
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METROPOLITAN

## PREFACE

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THE sketches herewith presented to the public first appeared in the columns of the "American Field," in twenty-five consecutive numbers, beginning April 26, 1890, and ending October 11 of the same year. They were written out from my note book, at Amherst, Mass., in the Spring of 1886. It is now intended to put them into permanent form, to supply the demands which have been made for them in such condition. The writer has *not* deemed it necessary to submit them to any other editorial hands than his own, and the reader will, therefore, have the opportunity of judging for himself somewhat of the writer's own style.

WINFRID A. STEARNS.

METROPOLITAN

## INTRODUCTION.

[THE ORIGINAL PREFACE.]

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IN a book, sketch, or series of sketches, one of the last things to be written — and often one of the last to be printed — is the introduction. Why, then, it should be so invariably placed first is a question for the causalist. I shall vary the usual proceedings in such cases, and, writing my introduction last, shall both print and place it last.

The subject of the present and last number of *BIRD LIFE IN LABRADOR* is very briefly stated.

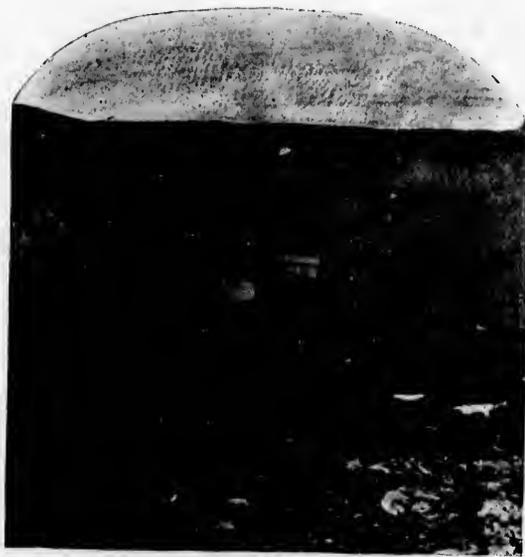
In 1875, the writer made a Summer excursion to Labrador, remaining there two months, traveling chiefly within a radius of sixty miles southwest and ten miles northeast of Bonne Esperance. In 1880, he visited the coast in September and remained until the following September, calling at nearly every harbor of importance from Mingan to Red Bay. In 1882, a third exploring party continued the work of the two previous trips, as far as Fox Harbor, St. Lewis Sound. Other trips to portions of these same grounds have been made, and much new material gained, but not beyond St. Lewis Sound, as above mentioned.

When the sketches that have just appeared in the *AMERICAN FIELD* were written, after returning from the trip in 1882, I had never seen any account whatever of the birds of this region, saving from occasional glimpses in odd volumes of the works of Audubon, and not all of these. I cannot, therefore, be charged with literary piracy, so often urged upon writers of any particular subject or region. To prove the above fact, I am prepared to take upon me the most solemn obligation that can be required of any author. I make this statement simply as a precautionary measure of self-protection. Some years after the sheets were written, I added several species to my list upon other authority than my own, in order to embrace all the then known birds

of the region. I now propose to briefly examine critically the claims of species from other known sources than my own, to a place in the avi-fauna of Labrador. Having studied diligently all the sources of information that could be obtained, I have come to the decision, carefully weighed, that Audubon is both father and son in the history of Labrador birds. That is, he gave us our first real knowledge of the birds of this region, and few facts new to science have been added, or old facts corrected, since his time. Even my own sketches are, in the main, mere reproductions of what he had so graphically previously given to the world; they could not well be otherwise. This does not necessarily lay me open to the charge of plagiarism, any more than it might some other man who wrote of the birds of a region of which somebody else had written before him: for nothing is farther from my thoughts than to try to steal another man's literary labors.

AMHERST, MASS., *May*, 1886.

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METROPOLITAN

## BIRD-LIFE IN LABRADOR.

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### THE ROBIN

*Turdus migratorius.* — LINN.

PERHAPS never in all my life have I started upon any task that was placed before me with so much of expectant pleasure as that with which I now begin to write out my notes upon the birds of a region I dreamed about in my childhood, and revelled in in my manhood. Among my first inspirations to seek out Nature in her own abodes, in my youth, were a parcel of robin's eggs, and an heirloom in the shape of an eider duck's, a puffin's, and an auk's skin, which had been presents from a friend to a brother, and which the enemies' bullets of a cruel war had handed to me. The skins were labeled from "Belle Isle." How I prized them! The robin's eggs were from home. Thus at the age of eight, a mere stripling, I formed the purpose, in my own mind, to study and explore "bird life" from the one place to the other. Although the whole of the intermediate space has not been gone over, and may never be fully searched personally, yet I have examined carefully these goals

of my youthful ambition, and, having shown the public one of them, in "New England Bird Life," will now try to give a very imperfect and inadequate conception of the other in this little sketch of Labrador bird life. In my boyhood, the robin was always, or nearly always, the first bird to greet me in the Spring and the last, saving a few chickadees, woodpeckers, nuthatches and the like, our regular Winter birds, to leave in the Fall. I have found him in nearly every corner wherein I have hunted; and often, when least expecting it, has his familiar form and note come to me like a message from home. The first bird then, of which I have to speak, is the robin; nearly of equal abundance throughout the extent of North America, from Labrador to Alaska.

The first time that I saw the robin in Labrador I was climbing the high hills in the rear of our log cabin, one day in the Fall of 1881. There was almost nothing astir that day. I had searched the lowlands without success; and the derisive titter of the chickadee, as he would suddenly appear a few feet from me and as suddenly disappear, after his merry laugh, in the spruces that spread their dense, matted masses everywhere around, and the mocking, fiendish croak of the ravens, perched here or there upon some inaccessible crag, had driven me to distraction. On, on I climbed. I left the spruces and entered the birches. As I did so, a short, quick cry of alarm, a glimpse of several plump bodies rushing through the tangled leaves, and, before I could head them off, a flock of robins gathered themselves just beyond the tree tops, and the next moment I saw their retreating forms way up the peak above me, clearing its northern side and disappearing behind the crest. Thus I first saw the robin in Labrador. I followed them that day for hours. They always eluded me, and were as wild as hawks. Over hill and vale the relentless pursuer followed until the shades of evening baffled all efforts, and warned me of the uselessness of any further attempts for that day. I have followed robins many times since that attempt, have found them on hills and home pastures, wild and tame,

Spring and Fall, though not in Winter, and breeding there as in the United States, and come to the conclusion that though not a very common yet by no means an uncommon native, it is doubtless here as everywhere else as a "resident" and "breeds." The specimens I shot were all in light plumage, often approaching almost to albinism, and apparently lean and long rather than plump and fat. Their nests were said to be not uncommon "up the river," and, from the stories of the small boys, which are not always to be relied upon, yet doubtless accurate in this case, built of mud and dried grasses.

### GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH

*Turdus Swainsoni Aliciae*. — (Bd.) COUES.

In my description of the robin I used the expression "up the river;" well, "up the river" we went one delightful day, in the Summer of 1882, boat, oars, guide, and our guns, the slight breeze proving our only sure protection against the everlasting black flies, to explore the country. My notes, under the heading of "wood thrush," read: "Certainly heard this bird repeatedly; other persons present verified the same; 10 miles up Esquimaux River, one day late in July." Of this note a good-natured editor remarked with a sort of humph, at least it so echoes in my ear: "More like *H. aliciae* (gray-cheeked thrush), since the wood thrush is not known to occur even so far north as the southern shores of the Gulf of St. Lawrence." He was right. The characteristic whistled "phengh" sounded right and left that day. I can hear it now, and seem to see the form of one of our number, as he then bent forward to catch the sound as it came to us through the dense spruce growth on the shore, when he said: "By Jove! that was a thrush; did you hear it?" Of course we all did, twenty times, and to-day we know that it is "everywhere abundant in the interior," at least as far as we have explored, and "breeds." This species is distinct from *swainsoni*, which it greatly resembles.

**STONE CHAT***Saxicola ananthe.* — (L.) BECHST.

Dr. Elliott Coues secured a single specimen of this extraordinarily rare bird at Henley Harbor, August 25, 1860. It has not been known to occur in Labrador since, to my knowledge. It was said to have been "in company with two others," and "in immature plumage, very different from that of the adult, and excessively fat." It a common European bird.

**RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET***Regulus calendula.* — (L.) LICHT.

In my "Labrador," (p. 85,) under date of Monday, October 11, my notes read: In the afternoon I shot perhaps the most cunning bird known about these regions, where it is never common, the ruby-crowned wren. It was flitting about in a small clump of bushes when I first saw it and it me. I was then obliged to wait around for over half an hour before I could again catch sight of and shoot it. It will cunningly crawl or flit from place to place, and it is a mere question of who will continue this game of hide-and-seek the longest. It has been taken several times in Labrador, and in various places along the coast, so that it is probably a more or less common visitor if not resident. My manuscript notes are much more explicit and read: October 11, at Old Fort Island. Much to my surprise, to-day, I shot one of these birds. He was flying about, appearing and disappearing, in the low evergreen firs and spruces of a little patch of undergrowth. I had thought that I had detected a slight noise, and listening intently I heard it again. After nearly fifteen minutes of careful watching and diligent searching I found the little fellow. So shy and careful was he that I pursued him fully fifteen minutes more before I was able to shoot and ascertain what it was. It uttered no note while I was watching it, but crept

about at all times in the shyest and most careful manner. It had a white patch in front of the eye, and another, smaller one, behind it, the two almost confluent in a ring; it had the ruby crown. If a small bird, naturally one of the smallest of the feathered tribe, would thus keep one upon the watch for over half an hour of a bunch of less than a dozen spruces, each less than three feet high, it is no wonder that the rascal so readily loses himself in the larger growths, where he is doubtless more or less abundant, as to be generally regarded as rare: but perhaps the little fellow knew that he had an "old hand" after him, and so, like Dave Crockett's 'coon, came out of his hiding place on purpose to be shot at.

### HUDSONIAN CHICKADEE

*Parus hudsonicus.* — FORST.

SOME of my notes upon this and succeeding species have been previously transcribed in my larger work, but as the following paper will doubtless reach many that the book will not I trust they will be none the worse for the repetition. I have found these little fellows everywhere on island and on mainland that I have been and their cheerful presence has dee-dee-dee'ed away approaching blues more than once. I first met them at Old Fort Island, where they would frequently come and perch upon the roof of the house, and occasionally fly in at the doorway and pick up crumbs from the floor; they were very tame and would even allow you to catch them without much opposition. Their flight was rapid, and, being so small in size, they could come and go with the suddenness of a shadow, and one could seldom follow their flight for any distance. They often fly off in a zigzag series of straight lines, as if uncertain in which direction to fly, and as often return to their former post, the roof of the house, as if fully aware that that was their safe place after all. I have stood in some open spot of ground, not a retreat near me, and scanned the air everywhere about for a sign of life in vain, when suddenly a whirr, a dee-dee of deri-

sion or of triumph, and the little fellow had appeared and disappeared without my even having caught a sight of him. Their favorite resting place was on the roofs of houses. The people of the coast are very fond of them and call them woodpeckers. They would frequently caution me with "now don't you go and shoot my little woodpeckers." I found them all about the islands among the low, stunted growths of fir and spruce. If I pretended to watch them they would hide in the evergreen, not even chirping, and remain there sometimes for nearly an hour, while I walked about softly and peered around to see them — they running or creeping out of sight or remaining perfectly still behind some bough until forced to fly. Sometimes they would give me the slip entirely, and often the most successfully when there was apparently the least chance of their escape without detection. They were on the mainland in low growths, and in the woods when no other apparent living creature was about; in midday; at early morn or late evening. They were everywhere, where you least expected to see them, and when you were looking for them not one could be found, search high or low. Veritable "Brownies," always around, when lo! in a second, the places that teemed with them were as silent and deserted as the grave. In my residence on the coast I grew very fond of these little fellows. If at times they were shy and retreating, they as often displayed the inquisitive side of their nature. In wandering listlessly about, with no apparent object but to kill time, we have passed most delightful hours together. If in the heat of midday or the cool of the evening I have sought me out a convenient and sheltered retreat, I had not long to wait before several would appear. We will remain still for a moment and see what they will do. At length one, bolder than the rest, jumps upon a sprig of spruce within five feet of my body. As the bough bends and tilts the little fellow to and fro, which operation he appears to love amazingly, he balances himself deftly, peers up and down and around cautiously, then launches into a most furious tirade of dec-dee-dee's that wake

the echoes in the old wood, and seems a signal of safety and a call for gathering for every chickadee within twenty yards around. Then they begin to gather. Every bush swarms with them. I remain still, and the cautious little fellows hop nearer and nearer. If I move they are off; if I remain perfectly still they hop around and over me without the slightest hesitation. My large boots seem the object of greatest curiosity to them, and more than once several good-sized overflow meetings apparently took them for a text and preached with great success, each bird in his turn, then all together, upon this topic alone. At last, and somewhat unconsciously, one toe moves several inches, when whist! the panic that ensues is fearful and the meeting, overflows and all, breaks up in an instant. A whish of many wings, a vindictive ee-ee-ee, growing fainter and fainter, then ceasing altogether, and I am positively alone. Did I wait ten minutes they would all come back: but my attention is called in another direction, as will presently appear. The Hudsonian titmouse breeds in the interior, all up and down the coast, where it prefers the tangled undergrowth so difficult of access. Its note is wheezed and not a clear pronounced dee, repeated several times.

### SHORE LARK    HORNED LARK

*Eremophila alpestris*. — (L.) BOIE.

THE bird that has detracted our attention from the group of diminutive curiosity seekers, flies by with a wild flight far up in the sky above, uttering a wild, querulous whistle as he passes, and is immediately lost in the distance. It is the shore or horned lark; the people here call it the skylark. We will turn to the note-book again; here is the record: Monday, October 1. This morning I shot several specimens of the horned lark and noted the extent of the pinkish color on the wing coverts, rump, and neck, usual in the Spring specimens of high Eastern regions. My long stay upon the coast made me quite

familiar with this beautiful songster and characteristic bird of the region, which is abundant all along the north shores of the St. Lawrence from Quebec to Bell Isle. At Green Island, in the River St. Lawrence, I found the lark quite common. At that time it was rather tame, and could be seen on the low flats of the island hopping about and feeding in close company with the sandpipers. They were all single birds and not flocks. I saw them all the Fall at Old Fort Island, both alone and in large flocks, always more or less wild. I would often see them flying very high in the air, and uttering their peculiar querulous whistling notes; sometimes flying quite low and somewhat irregularly, but uttering their notes at all times while on the wing. Though common everywhere, they seemed to lead a sort of wild, solitary life that comported well with the wild, solitary region in which they dwelt; they preferred the plains, fields, and rocky knolls away from houses where they would hop about in twos or threes, or small flocks, picking up their food; occasionally they would perch on the tops of knolls as if to reconnoiter, then retire and go to feeding again as if satisfied that no enemy was near; they are very quick and active in their movements, and always wild rather than tame save in the late Summer, when the parents and young together will feed about the door-yards as familiarly as if never wild. This period usually lasts a month or six weeks and then all are off together, as wild as ever. They breed abundantly everywhere, often a few yards from the houses as well as in the large meadow lands miles from any habitation. Everywhere you go in Labrador you will meet with the lark. I saw them often on the shore, and feeding on the kelp in company with the white-rumped sandpiper, but never mingling with them as far as I could see. As their brown color corresponds so well with the color of the ground, it was often hard to detect them until a few shrill whistles and a hurried flight announced their flushing a short distance ahead. Several that I shot were really quite remarkable for the amount of pink upon them. At times large flocks fly over the island high up in the air, while one of these

flocks once alighted upon the island, where their extreme wildness was something remarkable. One can hardly say enough of this most beautiful songster and most charming little fellow, who chooses the bare ground for his nest of four ashy-peppered eggs, and enlivens the long days with a fresh and "clean-cut" song that, heard at early morn or in the evening, would almost induce one to believe the bird inspired. Often on a clear, crisp morning have I seen the lark ascend by a series of spirals to an immense height; then, remaining on almost stationary wing, carol forth such a thrilling warble that it seemed more like the chant of a spirit than the song of a bird.

### YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER

*Dendroica coronata*. — (L.) GRAY.

THIS little fellow scarcely deserves even a good-natured mention. As if afraid of the coast and the people on it, he sought the interior "up river" and there disported among low spruces and tangled evergreens. As we sailed down this really beautiful Esquimaux or St. Paul's River, from ten miles in the interior, the prospects were everywhere charming, and we enjoyed ourselves to the fullest extent. On the shore, a few feet from us, we could see and hear the yellow-rumps. It is a day in the latter part of July, yellow-rumps everywhere abundant; inference: common Summer resident, breeds; but this little fellow is fond of society, for all he seeks and remains in the interior, so we give him a neighborly companion whose rather shy, stay-at-home disposition ages well with the uncertain one of the present species.

### BLACK-POLL WARBLER

*Dendroica striata*. — (FORST.) BD.

So far as I ascertained the black-poll warbler was not so exclusively an interior bird as was the yellow-rump. I found it equally abundant in Summer in the thicket, a few rods from

the coast, and up the river ten miles and beyond. It appeared to breed in both places. I saw birds in every stage of plumage from the young to the adult. They appeared quite social in their habits, many, both old and young, disporting themselves and feeding among the alder and other thickets, not at all shy. Perhaps they were individual broods; at least they appeared to be such. They were charmingly social little fellows, at any rate, and ate and talked continually, while their choice of the smaller insects showed that they were as dainty as comely, and so clever that no amount of searching revealed the treasure of nest and eggs which must often have been close by us.

#### **MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT**

*Geothlypis trichas.* — (L.) CAB.

MY record for this bird reads: May 26, at Natashquan, I saw a single specimen which appeared several times, disappearing in the underbrush at the right. I have no doubt but that this bird is more or less common all along the north shore of the St. Lawrence. Though this is not Labrador, it is so near it that the species doubtless strays off occasionally beyond the boundary line. Its habits here appeared similar to those of its United States' neighbors.

#### **GOLDEN-CROWNED THRUSH OVEN BIRD**

*Siurus auricapillus.* — (L.) SW.

STRANGE as it may appear, both this bird and its neighbor appear in my list as not uncommon in the interior. Breeds. I have searched every available avenue for a note upon either of these species. I feel quite sure that they do not appear there without good and sufficient reason, and so let them remain, trusting to time to verify the statement.

#### **WATER THRUSH**

*Siurus naevius.* — (BODD.) COUES.

NOT uncommon in the interior. Breeds.

**AMERICAN PIPIT TITLARK***Anthus ludovicianus*. — LICHT.

It was my good fortune, while on the Labrador coast, to become perhaps more intimately acquainted with this than with any other land bird with which I came in contact. Though my notes on this species have previously appeared in the *American Field*, under date of January 7, 1882, I repeat them here, although they are now the same as borrowed matter. The titlark is an abundant Summer resident, and breeds all along the coast of Labrador from Mingan to Red Bay, a distance of over five hundred miles, and is everywhere a familiar, well-known, and pleasing songster. I first became acquainted with it as an abundant, or at least more than common, resident at both Old Fort and Bonne Esperance Islands. These two places are not more than eight miles apart, and I then thought it probable that all of the islands about that part of the coast were equally abundant breeding places, as I have found since that they are. On May 7th I started on a trip up the coast, and arrived at Mingan on the 29th; the next day I saw the titlark for the first time, and afterward I found it on nearly all of the islands and places visited. Being absent during the egg season, I missed the eggs and nests, though I am informed that it breeds abundantly, and the boys and people along the coast everywhere recognized the bird and said the same. The name by which the pipit is known in Labrador is that of wagtail, the spotted sandpiper being the only other bird that I have seen that dips its tail and is to be found here; this latter has the name of the "crooked-winged bird." I could find no other bird that had a similar name of wagtail. The first specimen I shot was a young bird, and, after I became familiar with the species, I would often spend hours in watching the bird as it stood in some obscure corner of the yard pluming itself and resting, or slowly walking from place to place before finally taking wing. The young bird seems much larger than the adult, if not by actual measurement really so.

beyond. It appears every stage of plumage appeared quite so young, disporting in other thickets, not woods; at least they were social little fellows, while their parents were as dainty. Searching revealed ten have been close

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**OVEN BIRD**

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I have often mistaken it for the young of the horned lark, which at a little distance it resembles; but a close investigation would invariably detect the difference. Among others the shore lark hops while the pipit walks. It was impossible to mistake the full-grown bird, whose sleek, cunning appearance, as you come near it, strikes you at once. It is here called the wagtail, and possesses that peculiarity of so few of our birds of dipping and waving the tail, whence the name. On alighting, the bird immediately begins this movement, as if to secure a proper balance or equilibrium. The movement is generally a dipping of the whole hind part of the body, either straight up and down or diagonally, so it often thus gives the appearance of a waving of the tail from side to side; this latter motion I have never seen the bird execute. After firmly balancing himself the waving motion ceases, and the bird sits for a time with the tail pointing downward in a straight line with the rest of the body. I have carefully watched these movements, time and again, and am thoroughly convinced that this wagging motion is simply a means of acquiring a normal position of the body, and due, perhaps, to some peculiarity in the structure of the body itself. (I have never seen the bird hold the tail downward at a slight angle with the body, as do most flycatchers and kindred species.) The head is inclined upward and the neck drawn in. After a short rest the bird will become sprightly again and prepare to fly off. I have sometimes seen the bird dip its tail without moving the rest of the body, though rarely. It is at all times very tame, both young and old birds allowing me to often approach within a few feet of them, during the Summer season. Its walking motion is a rather short step, and while busy picking up food it looks about sharply, here and there, prepared to fly away at a second's notice, but rarely doing so. Its food is insects of the coleopterous order, judging from the legs, sheaths, and antennæ, of quite a number whose gizzards I examined. The old bird is very cunning, shy, and mouse-like. On approaching it it runs or walks to some sheltered tuft of grass or any concealment, and, crouching, draws

in and down its head, lowers its tail, then elevates somewhat the center of the back, and either remains perfectly still or creeps away as it seems to decide from the apparent danger of the situation. I have seen it remain still in this position the better part of half an hour, and until I was thoroughly tired waiting. If I moved the bird would then fly off with a wild, irregular, low but slowly-rising flight, tipping from side to side as do many of the sandpipers. When the flight is for a short distance only it seems to be rather undulating. I have often seen an old bird rise in a series of irregular spirals to quite a height, when it would seem to flutter or sustain itself by a series of trembling flutterings, only to soon dart off to the right or to the left and descend as if to alight, but, instead of so doing, to continue its flutterings and presently dart off in some new direction. Conceiving, at first, that this might be owing to some bewilderment, I arose from the crouching position that I had assumed upon first flushing the bird. All the time I was standing the bird continued these wild, irregular movements; almost the moment I again crouched the bird descended and alighted. I tried the same experiment repeatedly, with the same results. The longer I remain standing the more irregular were the bird's movements in the air directly after being flushed, while if I crouched at the instant of flushing, it immediately alighted at a short distance from its former position. While performing these gyrations the pipit seldom utters any note, excepting occasionally a sound which approaches more nearly to an attempt to whistle, in a medium but not too shrill key, the word *weep*, or *weep-weep*; this is repeated once, twice, or even three times in rather slow succession. The same note is uttered as the bird flies about from place to place, but generally, so far as my observation goes, it picks up its food in silence. The young men and boys generally, along the coast, recognized the bird when I showed it them, and said that "it builds its nest in some low tree, against the trunk or some large, stout limb; it is made of mud, plastered with grasses much like that of a robin's," and that the eggs are "smaller than any other egg we

ever saw." I give the above simply for what it is worth, without comment. I offered a small fortune, in the eyes of the Labradorian, for a nest and eggs, or simply a nest, but could not obtain them as the season was too far advanced. In some localities I have counted pipits by the dozen, walking about or feeding with apparent unconcern within as many yards of my very feet. The pipit breeds abundantly all along the Labrador coast, but seldom occurs in Summer far south of the Canada line.

### **GREEN BLACK-CAPPED FLYCATCHING WARBLER**

*Wilsonia pusilla*. — (WILS.) Bp.

I have described, rather briefly, the habits of two of the native warblers of Labrador, which eke out a miserable existence in this barren land, and, as "misery loves company," as the old adage tells us, we will now try to do justice to the company, in the shape of the third and last of the family. It is on that same trip "up the river" in which we discovered the yellow-rump and the black-poll that, most unexpectedly, a sleek little fellow, in a yellow dress, saving a black cap, appeared upon the top twig of a small tree, close by the river's side, and caroled forth a note of welcome, such as we had repeatedly heard while descending the stream in our boat, though we had not before seen the author thereof. Now he steps plainly out upon the branch and utters his carol and immediately, without doubt being pressed with hunger after his effusive eloquence, disappears behind the boughs and begins a most active search among the top twigs for some favorite morsel with which to satisfy his appetite. I am strongly of the opinion that this little fellow uttered several well-marked notes upon the occasion of this hunt, probably to express his disgust at not finding what he wanted; yet the notes might have proceeded from some other member of the bird tribe, whose patience had been sorely tried about something which he did not care to talk much of in such a public place. At any rate, our little black-capped

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gentleman or lady, whichever it might have been, did not seem to lay it especially to heart, for he or she soon appeared again, and, with a nod of recognition, treated us to some more music.

We had a charming acquaintance with this little fellow, brief as it was, for suddenly a tall, lank individual, evidently a huge animal from some Western prairie, arose quite near to us, raised gently a most murderous-looking weapon until it reached quite to his shoulder, when, with a crash like thunder and a flash like lightning, the little black-cap whirled from his perch to the ground, a bleeding corpse. The community were in arms in an instant, and a volley of indignation resounded from the woods in several directions, while, from the opposite side of the river, several distinct *phenghs* seemed to hint at some direful revenge. We gathered up the corpse tenderly and laid it upon the bow of our boat and slowly continued our downward journey toward the mouth of the river. We saw relatives of this little black-cap several times on the coast, first and last, and they always had a great deal to say, when we saw them, about something, though we could not understand their tongue, though it seemed to be a sort of mongrel French, and something about residing and building, if people would only let them alone.

## PINE GROSBEAK

*Pinicola enucleator*. — (L.) CAB.

THE name I heard applied to this bird almost universally wherever I went was that of "spruce bird," probably from the fact of its frequenting so characteristically the spruce growths everywhere in the interior, upon the buds of which it doubtless feeds almost exclusively. I found it the last of November and in December in the wood about Old Fort Bay, singly and in flocks, but wild as larks. Several large flocks were seen a little way up the river, in the interior, where they appear to be much more common. One can usually see plenty of single birds, though very wild, in any ordinary day's hunt, "inside," as the natives call the mainland in distinction

from "outside," their Summer "fishing quarters," the former being their Winter quarters. It seemed very strange to me that, being in their evident home, I found rare, or missed entirely, so many of the usual Winter birds of the United States. I saw neither of the cross-bills; nor the siskin or pine linnet; nor the goldfinch. I did, one day, pursue for a long distance a bird which I took for a shrike but which might have been only a poor, good-for-nothing whisky jack. No bluebird, though different individuals described to me a bird "all blue"; no nuthatch; no waxwing; and but one blackbird. Thus, though most diligent search was made, few characteristic Winter birds were discovered in what ought to have been their paradise; yet many of them doubtless occur. I would not try another Winter in those regions for all the birds there twice over. Cold, dreary, uninviting abode of starving humanity, fit only for Indians and outcasts, and poor enough at that; yet even there may be found warm hearts and cozy homes, in spite of the nightly thirty degrees below. I could at least wish them better food and more comfortable quarters.

### RED-POLL LINNET

*Aegithus linaria.* — (L.) CAB.

POOR little "alder birds!" They look cold, all huddled up there, twenty or thirty of them, in every possible position, in that clump of alders. They look as if grown to the limbs on which they perch, a part and parcel of the very twigs on which they rest, a sort of alder bud as well as alder bird. Some of them are trying to eat, though they look as if their food made them feel half sick. Others have given up the idea of eating entirely, to all appearances, and are standing with ruffled-up feathers, their heads drawn far into the down of their breast, feeling much as I imagine the natives feel when, after a poor fishery, they look at a three-months' supply of provisions that they must make last six months of fierce Winter weather. Of a truth they look cold, and their toes

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look cold. Some disrespectful urchin, suddenly and unbidden, remarks, "Which, the natives or the birds?" and I, as suddenly, and somewhat fiercely, reply: "Both, unreservedly both?" But, while we have been talking, some of the birds have hopped down to a half-frozen and half-snow-in little brooklet, just beneath their perch, to drink; something has frightened them! A few mournful little peeps escape their throats, and whisk! a whirr, and off they go, piping their notes to the modulations of their flight until lost to sight, very likely to return, within half an hour, to the very same or some neighboring spot to feed again. As I have a few notes in my book upon this species, and they may be of interest to some one, I will transcribe them here: October 28, Old Fort Bay. I have seen several flocks of alder birds or red-polls to-day. One small one flying about the spruces near the lake, and several large ones about the alders; they all seemed rather tame except while flying at a great distance overhead, when they repeatedly uttered their faint, piping notes. It was often nearly or quite impossible to tell in what direction they were flying, as the notes seemed to re-echo, as some birds do, from false directions. In their flight the birds of each flock would keep close together, seldom spreading or straggling along as some species do. For two weeks I found them nearly everywhere I went, in low alder growths, on the tops of high hills, and in woody dells; along the coast, and inland. In feeding, they would hang on the limbs in all sorts of positions, head downward, and in every conceivable manner, often reaching upward or downward, stretching their necks and whole bodies to pick some inviting tidbit far above or far below them. Often several perch together on a single limb, bending it until it tips them all off, forcing them to take wing; but they quickly alight near by or in the same place and are soon at their work again. They are usually very busy little fellows, not easily frightened, but when one takes the alarm and flies they all follow. I shot a great many and saw a great many of the linnets very near to me, and as far as I could ascertain

they all were in a similar state of plumage at this time ; the rump being quite light-colored and streaked ; the red a small, restricted patch on the crown of the head ; the black a small patch at the base of the bill, deepening as it approached the bill. After the ground was fairly covered with snow I saw them no more. I took a specimen in full-grown Summer plumage, at the same place, July 20th. It breeds all along the coast.

### SNOW BUNTING

*Plectrophanes nivalis*. — (L.) MEY.

"AH! Now for a potpie!" exclaimed my companion smacking his lips, as a large flock of these birds swept by us, one noon just after dinner and just as we were preparing to stalk, Indian fashion, a huge white owl that sat like a dainty snowcap upon the peak of a hill about half a mile away. "Potpie be hanged!" cried the leader of the party and present writer, "while that old white owl sits blinking defiance into our very gun barrels." But my companion's mouth had tasted game and the old owl was laughing at us, for he suddenly spread his wings and flew off, leaving us nothing in view but this same wave of down and brown feeding not far away from us and just across the "tickle." This was in early Spring, and on one of the outside islands. The birds had been more or less common inland during the Winter months, but generally singly or in twos and threes, flying wild or alighting on the tall tree tops far out of gunshot. "They are as tame as larks now," said my companion, "and we catch them in traps and snares ; they make splendid potpies." So off we started on this potpie hunt, and were soon rowing across the narrow pass. In five minutes we were up with the buntings and had begun the slaughter. There had been a light fall of snow the night before, just enough to re-cover the ground, leaving only the tops of the seed-bearing grasses above its surface. There, in full sight, on the flats and open pasture grounds, this flock

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of a hundred or more hungry birds were hopping about in all directions, busily feeding and not a bit alarmed at the approach of two strange gentlemen of the hunter's persuasion, while they fairly poo-hooed among themselves at the very idea that those two long, inanimate-looking sticks they carried could do them any harm. But those same two gentlemen walked carefully up to the buntings, singled out their victims, and fired; result, five dead birds. The flock hustled off a few rods, as much as to say, "there, now, get away with you," and began feeding again. Once more the two gentlemen walked carefully within range and then fired; result, three more dead birds. This time the flock swept past the hunters and landed as far the other side of them, as if prompted by a sudden desire to entirely outflank the enemy. The third time the birds seemed more wary and of a consequence did exactly the wrong thing for them, huddling closer together to consult about the matter. A grand bang, and the field was covered with bodies, while the meeting broke up and its members were seen hurrying beyond the hill towards the left. Again, result, eight birds shot on the ground, three on the wing. Thus the hunters followed up the flock bagging a fair potpie. Oh! how fat the birds were. We saw the buntings many times after this grand massacre; sometimes they were few and wild, sometimes many and tame. Sometimes they alighted, and sometimes they hovered about and above on the wing thus presenting most beautiful targets for gun practice. But in a few weeks, as soon as the snow was off the ground for good, they were all gone, and none did we see until the returning fall. My companion told me that the boys often follow them about and kill them with stones, they are so tame.

### LAPLAND LONGSPUR

*Centrophanes lapponicus*. — (L.) KAUP.

THIS species is found singly or in twos and threes, either alone or in company with flocks of snow buntings, everywhere

along the coast, ever a characteristic but never a common bird, so far as I could discover. I saw several specimens in various houses where I visited, though I shot but one myself while on the coast. It was taken October 14, at Old Fort Island. It was feeding at dusk near the kelp on the shore and with several other birds, probably of the same species. They were very wild, and I watched a long while and pursued them several times before finally capturing one. It was quite wild. The flight and notes so deceived me at first that I thought them shore larks. The development of the hind claw of this bird, from which it receives its name, is something remarkable, it often reaching three-fourths of an inch and over in length. I doubt if it occurs in Summer.

### SAVANNA SPARROW

*Passerculus savanna.* — (WILS.) BR.

AND now we come to the characteristic "chip-bird" of Labrador as well as of the whole "North shore," everywhere common and a resident, excepting in Winter, and breeding in abundance with its nest in every dooryard and under every clump and bush of the field, or every bunch of sedges along the shore. At all times and in all weathers you can count them by the scores in sight of the dooryard, and about every field and hedge on island or mainland along the coast. It is, perhaps, the most abundant of all the small land birds that inhabit these regions. It is a tame and familiar little fellow, and feeds without fear about the doorsteps and in the dooryard, building its nest, laying its eggs, and rearing its young often in grassy clumps not two rods from the house. They are common all over the islands and on the mainland, and their song is a well-known attraction to a native of the place. So reads the note book, thus far confirming all that has been said in the previous paragraph, and which was written entirely from memory; and what further does it say? I shot a good many of them and found them displaying an unusually decid-

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ed shade of plumage, with the dark and white colors plainly marked. There was very little yellow about the head and eye and of some twenty specimens none at all on the wing shoulders. I shot, one day, four of these birds, none of which had a particle of yellow upon them anywhere that I could distinguish; a small tuft of white feathers at the base of the primary coverts of the shoulder gave the appearance of a white edging in the place of the usual yellow. The birds were all remarkably full in coloration, and decided in plumage; the white very clear, the dark inverted arrow points quite distinct, as were also the grayish and buff edgings everywhere. One specimen alone had the buffy suffusion covering the breast. I cannot say that the rule holds good constantly, but in some thirty specimens the male had the yellow on the wing shoulder, while the female and young-of-the-year of either sex had white in that place. The flight of this little fellow is short, quick, and irregular; he is wonderfully spry and will appear and disappear so quickly that you can scarcely follow him; then he is so cunning that when once he has made up his mind to play at hide-and-seek with you you might as well give up attempting to deceive him, for you will utterly fail in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred. He will greet you with a few chirps of surprise from the summit of some ridge of rocks, drop behind them, and appear so suddenly and unexpectedly in some place rods away that you will think it is another bird. Its ordinary notes are a few faint chirps, but at times, especially in early Spring or at night and morning, it will greet you with such a volume of song as to hold you entranced for many minutes at a time. It sometimes, at dusk, imitates somewhat the habits of the sandpipers, and feeds on and among the kelp along the shore in company with them, though I never saw more than two or three together at such a time in one place.

### SNOW BIRD

*Junco hyemalis*. — (L.) ScL.

WITH regard to this species I am in great doubt as to just

what to say. I found it in April and in October on both island and mainland; very rare on the former, occasional on the latter. Now, while it is thus found in its migrations I did not see it in Summer, though I had ample opportunities and searched carefully in localities where it would seem almost certain to reside. They must indeed have "kept entirely in the thick woods," and been "rather timid" to have thus eluded me, yet Dr. Elliott Coues, who visited the coast in the Summer of 1890, found them thus and added that "it is not so abundant as might be expected in Labrador, one of its breeding regions. From the fact that I was not in a suitable locality, I did not observe it until the latter part of July, at which time it was in small companies, the old and the young associating together."

### **TREE SPARROW**

*Spizella monticola.* — (Gm.) Bd.

HAD I been considering this and the foregoing species faunally speaking, I should have said of the former, not a resident but migrant; of this, resident, except during Winter, and breeds. I can find no record of this little fellow as a breeder here, though it must pass the Summer in this its usual limits. I saw numbers of them inland October 12, but a week or so later not one of them was to be seen anywhere: they must have migrated in a mass. They were very tame, and played in and about the alder shrubbery much as they do in the States. I did not see the two species in company, and do not know whether they associate together here as they do at home.

### **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW PEABODY BIRD**

*Zonotrichia albicollis.* — (Gm.) Bp.

EVERYWHERE I went in Labrador I was greeted with the shrill, sprightly, and cheering little *tee-dee-dee pea-body pea-*

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*body pea-body* of the white-throated sparrow. It is a charac-  
 teristic feature, especially of lower Labrador. The *tee* being  
 uttered several tones lower than the other notes, which are all  
 on the same key. Sometimes the *pea-body* is repeated only  
 twice, and rarely a single time. I was much struck by this  
 latter fact, as a curious circumstance impressed it upon my  
 memory. I was walking through the brush just back of the  
 station at Mingan, at dusk, one evening. The air was full of  
 the melody of this little songster, when suddenly I noticed, I  
 cannot tell why as there was certainly nothing in the note to  
 cause one to be suspicious, a rather shrill yet mellow *tee-dee-*  
*dee pea-body pea-body*, uttered just beyond the thicket at my  
 right. The *pea-body* was repeated but twice, whereas it is  
 usually though not always repeated three times. The call  
 was immediately responded to by the same notes with the  
 word sounded but once. This unusual call set me to think-  
 ing, so much so that, though not positive, I am very strongly  
 of the impression that the call was repeated in exactly the re-  
 verse order. The next instant an Indian stepped out in each  
 of the directions whence the calls had proceeded and, ap-  
 proaching each other, walked slowly towards the station. I  
 had unconsciously detected one of the Indian means of attract-  
 ing the attention of their fellows without discovery to them-  
 selves. It was a lesson in woodcraft to me that I have never  
 forgotten. I found this charming little fellow everywhere I  
 went all along the coast, though never quite so common as its  
 intimate friend the white-crown. They were always together  
 in sedge, field, thicket, and wood. In the Spring, at morning  
 and at evening, they trilled forth their lay in common, and  
 sometimes so closely together that one could barely distin-  
 guish from which bird each note came. The white-throat  
 is common everywhere and breeds. It seems to select situa-  
 tions in which to place its nest more remote from habitations  
 than does the white-crowned, which rears its young in cozy  
 nests often a few rods only from the dooryards of the houses.  
 I shot my first specimen at Old Fort Island, October 6. I

saw others at the same time ; they were flying about much like and in company with the savanna sparrows, among the low evergreens on the island. They, like many others of the sparrow tribe, crept about so slyly in and out of the bushes, now appearing on the top twigs to chant a few feeble notes, then disappearing and rattling through the closely woven twigs and branches, or creeping between them, that one could scarcely get a moment's sight of them. When wounded their caution was doubled. They would wedge themselves into the smallest corners, under leaves, twigs, and roots, into holes of the ground, anywhere to escape observation, their brown backs, so near the color of the decaying foliage, and small size, greatly aiding them. If winged in open ground they would run so swiftly as almost to defy pursuit. Sometimes the little fellow had a way of appearing suddenly on the topmost twig of some bush and straightening himself out so that he looked as much a part of the twig as the top to a mullein stalk or the pod of a milkweed. On the North shore, where there were trees of any size, they frequently would alight on some high branch and so ruffle up their feathers as to look almost as large as a robin. They were very tame, but chase them through the brush and they would at once become so silent, active, and shy that the longer you followed them the more you became convinced of the uselessness of the attempt ; yet return to some convenient situation, sit down quietly and wait, and soon twenty would appear where you searched in vain for one only a moment before. On the shores of Belle Isle Straits this species is much less common than its next neighbor.

#### WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW

*Zonotrichia leucophrys*. — (FORST.) SW.

As the white-throat is one of the characteristic birds of the North shore of the St. Lawrence, so is the white-crowned one of the characteristic birds of Labrador, at least to Belle Isle.

It is a tamer and more domestic bird than the white-throat and breeds everywhere in meadow, field, and dooryard. In Summer it is very tame, and, with its young, feeds about the dooryards of the houses in a most familiar and charming manner. Even while you are standing quite near them and closely watching their habits, one of them, not in the least alarmed at your presence, mounts a sprig of Labrador tea and chants forth a very pleasing and homely little note that makes you feel happy in spite of yourself. He is perfectly self-possessed, is this little fellow, and seems to feel perfectly sure that you will not offer harm either to him or his little brood that are feeding close by. His song is the reverse of that of his neighbor, the white-throat, on that twig yonder toward the woods, and he repeats it loud and clear, then soft and mellow; this wakes two or three others who respond from various quarters near by and not half a dozen yards away. Meanwhile the female and young hop about, busily feeding, running in and out of the piles of old lumber and logs of wood on the lawn, even picking up crumbs and pieces that have been thrown out of the window to the dogs. The notes are *pee-dee pee-body*, the *pee* being two notes higher than the rest of the song. I have seen young birds with brown on the top of head, grayish in place of white, and speckled breast; in fact in all plumages from the nest to the adult bird, and watched them grow from one to the other. In the Fall and perhaps early Spring the birds are much less tame than at any other time of the year. They retire to the unfrequented parts of the coast somewhat back from the shore, and are shy and even almost wild. They sing comparatively little, and if they find that you are watching them will disappear in the shrubbery almost instantly and you are liable not to see them at all again. They apparently begin to be scarce and shy as soon as the breeding season is over.

### FOX-COLORED SPARROW

*Passerella iliaca*. — (MERR.) SW.

THIS charming little songster is the far-famed Canadian

"russingel," or red singer: red thrush as some like better. I found it all up and down the coast, though more common and even abundant at the extreme points. A most beautiful little scene comes to my recollection whenever I see or hear the "russingel"; it is pictured in a very short sentence in my note book, and the event occurred at Red Bay: We entered Red Bay of a Sunday. I shall never forget the clear, beautiful, varying shades of green on the slopes, and the dark outlines of the houses, as the sun sank behind the Western hills, overshadowing them for an instant, the first night of our entrance into this charming little harbor. We could see the people all along the shore, wending their way to church; while in place of the well-known music of the church bells, the robins, here equally abundant as at home, and the "russingels," or fox sparrows, sent forth a perfect melody of harmony that accorded well with the scene. The first of these birds that I succeeded in obtaining was from a small flock of four or five that had alighted upon the ridge-pole of the house on one of the islands where I was staying. That was on May 2d. It sings at morning and evening, and in places where it is abundant is found everywhere in the dells and low growths of the lowlands. It may breed, but of this I am unable to speak positively. On the lower North shore region, about Natashquan and Mingan, the fox-sparrow is very common and its habits are much the same as in the States. It prefers the scrubby, leafless bushes, and leaf-strewn ground of dry or moist places, in which to rush about and play at a sort of aviarian tag, to all appearances much to their own satisfaction.

### **RUSTY BLACKBIRD    RUSTY GRACKLE**

*Scolecophagus ferrugineus.* — (Gm.) Sw.

My first acquaintance with this species was on September 24th, while we were lying befogged just off St. Augustine, when a pigeon hawk, a small owl, probably the *scops asio* or screech owl, and one of these birds, each at different times,

came and lit upon the rigging of our vessel. The blackbird was very tame, and as we offered it no violence it remained some time with us. I afterward found that this bird had a Summer breeding range all along the coast here, at least as far as L'Anse au Loupe, at which place it was a resident. Mr. Fred Davis informed me that the bird occasionally built its nest in his woodpile — the people there are obliged to cut enough wood at one time to last the year around; thus there is always more or less of a pile about in the Summer season — and the boys call it quite common there. This, I believe, is the only species of blackbird that regularly remains so far North to breed. The rusty blackbird, as you remember, is generally regarded as an unsocial and retiring bird; here it is the reverse, and its nest is not unlike that of a small robin with many sticks outside, and its eggs about three or four, bluish-white with spots and dashes of light brown. It feeds upon the seeds of various plants and a few insects. Strange to say, they are, at various places along the coast, frequently kept as cage birds; and their cunning, and power of mimicry of song, is something quite remarkable.

## RAVEN

*Corvus corax.* — L.

THE raven is a common resident, both up and down the coast all the year around, and breeds. I met it first September 24th, off St. Augustine; September 27th, at Old Fort Island, I saw several of them and noticed their slow and heavy flight. Their cry is a hoarse croaking note. I have seen them flying high up in the air, nearly out of sight, and low and quite tame. Their instinct regarding a gun is only a trifle duller than is that of our common crow, which in many respects they closely resemble. They appear to be everywhere common and seem to replace the crow here as farther South the crow replaces them. They are very hard to hit, very acute, never about when you are looking for them, and abundant

me like better. I  
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most beautiful little  
I see or hear the  
sentence in my note  
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satisfaction.

## GRACKLE

(L.) Sw.

was on September  
off St. Augustine,  
y the *scops asio* or  
at different times,

when you have no gun or means of securing them. Their favorite haunts are the stage-heads and other places where refuse matter is kept. In Summer they are always seen near the summits of inaccessible crags and on the hilltops in the interior where they breed. In the Winter, while driving in the dog teams over the frozen ponds, rivers, or across the bays, they often appear, like sentinels, perched on the top of some dead tree overhanging the ice or hovering near as if waiting to pick up any chance refuse that you might leave for them or accidentally drop. In fact, wherever you go in Labrador, and at any season of the year, you will be sure to fall in with one or more of these birds. It always amused me to see them while flying, as I often did, suddenly double up their wings, take an oblique and very peculiar sort of dive, then righting themselves again at the same time uttering their hoarse croak. No one at all familiar with their movements could ever mistake a raven for a crow, or *vice versa*, while it was flying. My notes on this bird will perhaps add a few items of interest concerning the habits of the species, though, in the main, they but repeat, with a better choice of words perhaps, what has been said above: We have had several ravens hovering about the fish stage all day to-day (October 14); the people here seem to regard them as birds of ill omen, and say that they are in league with the devil. You can rarely get any of the natives to shoot at one of these birds, no matter how near they come, and they seem positively afraid of the results of so doing, fearing that it will bring them misfortune for the remainder of the year. The bird is really a very difficult one to shoot. I have often lain in wait for it with my gun, firing at it both when at rest and on the wing, even at a short distance off, and had it raise its huge black wings and fly slowly away with a harsh and hollow croak that seemed to defy me to try my worst. I have wasted more extra large ducking charges at the raven than at almost any other bird, and obtained the least results. The bird itself is very common everywhere, Summer and Winter, breeding on the high cliffs and hilltops

and remaining about wherever there is any putrid flesh. It apparently loves to walk or fly about on or near the tops of the hilly crests on the mainland, and rest on the trees near the frozen bays in winter. It frequents the seacoast, and is common about the inland ponds and lakes. It replaces here the crow, which is occasionally though very rarely seen so far East. One man told me that a few years previous an adult pure white raven was shot on the coast.

### COMMON CROW

*Corvus frugivorus.* — BARTH.

SOME of the inhabitants told me that they had seen crows up Esquimaux River. It seems highly probable that stragglers might occur so far East; as the two birds are so different, both in size and cry, they would not be easily confounded.

### CANADA JAY      Whiskey Jack

*Perisoreus canadensis.* — (L.) BP.

A more meddlesome, noisy, independent young fellow than this same good-for-nothing whiskey jack probably never existed; and yet you would grow even fond of him for his very impudence, if nothing else, were you to spend six long Winter months snowed up ten miles in the interior of Labrador, with birds and animals your almost sole companions. This jay is at times very wild and at others very tame. Its appearance while flying is much like that of the white-rumped shrike, at least so it struck me when first I saw it flying. I have usually found it wild, and very difficult to approach. I have pursued it over field and thicket, in high woods and from one tall treetop to another for hours together before succeeding in shooting it. In its cunning and sagacity it much resembles its neighbor, the blue jay, but its notes are very different. It is generally very noisy, a single pair making disturbance

enough for a dozen ordinary birds. Though this jay appears to be of tolerably large size yet the body is very small; the feathers, being long, downy, and fluffy, enable the bird to ruffle them up so as to present the appearance of being fully twice its real size. A double protection is thus presented against the extreme cold weather of this coast. They are more or less common everywhere in the interior, and the farther inland we went the more abundant and tamer they appeared to be. The people from these interior cabins told great stories of Sir Jack, who was evidently a great favorite with them in spite of the harsh words that they occasionally employed regarding him, though I failed to learn in what respect he so greatly annoyed them. They said that they were everywhere common about their huts, in the thickets around, and would often come into the very dooryard and pick up crumbs that might be thrown to them there. At these "Winter quarters" the dwellers always have a number of dogs, which require to be fed once a day from pieces of old seal or whale meat that has been frozen and carefully preserved for them. In order to keep and protect this dogs' meat a simple raised platform, six or eight feet from the ground, is erected on four poles, and the meat simply thrown upon it and fed to the dogs, cut up upon some billet of wood with a hatchet, in frozen chunks just as it is. Over and on these stages the ravens and jays alight in perfect crowds. Now, why it should particularly exasperate the indwellers of the cabins to see this small jay slyly thieving a few pieces of meat I can not see. They can not make very great inroads upon it; yet, in answer to the question as to why the jay exasperated them so, the cry always was: "They steal the dogs' meat." I strongly suspect that the sentiment had more words than meaning to it, and the true relation between the people and these birds was rather as when one quarrels good-naturedly with an intimate friend. I saw stragglers all through the Winter, and have no doubt but that it breeds abundantly inland during the Summer.

**NIGHT HAWK**

*Chordeiles popetue.* — (V.) Bd.

As I have already included in my list several so-called extra-limital species, a species not to be sought probably within the true bounds of Labrador proper, so I quote the night hawk as being common at Natashquan, and probably more or less so all along the southern portion of the North shore. I include this and other like species because I noted them so near Labrador proper, though I do not care thereby to become involved in a critical examination of the birds of the whole of Canada, which, at the present time, I wish particularly to avoid. I may, at the end of the present paper, add a few words upon hypothetical occurrences in Labrador and its immediate vicinity, and my reasons for considering each species; but upon this I am by no means decided. The date of this occurrence was June 20th.

**BELTED KINGFISHER**

*Ceryle alcyon.* — (L.) BOIE.

THE kingfisher appears to be more common even than the night hawk, having been seen by our party several times, and reported from Natashquan to Esquimaux River, at the former place, and for some distance east of it, being regarded as a regular Summer resident and breeding, though by no means common. It is safe to infer, that where the kingfisher is found breeding it is not at all unlikely for one to find one or more species of the swallow tribe breeding also near by, though none were reported to me.

**HAIRY WOODPECKER**

*Picus villosus.* — L.

IN writing up my biographies of birds I often think of the terrible monotony there would be in going over and over the same old names, and racking one's brain time and again, to

think what to say concerning each, were it not that birds do differ in their habits somewhat according to their location, and the varied scenes, trials, and triumphs through which one goes in the pursuit of the bird life of any new region are always fresh and interesting. I read my title, hairy woodpecker. In writing lists, papers, books even how many times have I penned that name, and each time to add something, be it never so small, that was new, I hope at least, to our knowledge of the species. So in life, we go over and over the same scenes, in memory and in reality, but so varied from their connection with friendships and external objects that, in their new dress, we scarcely recognize them. Imagine my surprise then, in distant Labrador, one day, October 28, at the sudden apparition of a small calico-colored bird, vigorously pecking away at the dead limb of a tall old white birch tree, not a dozen rods away from where I stood viewing the remains of an old beaver's dam, which blocked the channel of a wide gully through which a diminutive rill trickled into the wide pond a few feet below. Be still, my heart, be still! Am I in the woods just back of my Massachusetts' home? And is not that a responsive hammer at the distant left? I wake to the realities of the situation immediately, and a moment later a fine specimen of the present species tumbles, wing over wing, to the ground. I bag it and rush for the mate, which proves to be a downy. Thus I secure two strong reminders of that same well-known woods just back of my Massachusetts' home — even among the deep snows and cold weather of far-off Labrador. My notes of these two species are short and to the point relative to its occurrence here. I shot one of these birds the same day with a specimen of *pubescens*, in a lonely dell by a pond, on an old dead tree. It was not a bit wild, and allowed me to come quite close to it. Its habits appeared to be almost exactly like that of the same species at home. Others have been reported as shot by parties further up the river, and it appears not rare along the edges of the ponds and rivers inland. It probably resides all the year around and breeds.

**DOWNY WOODPECKER**

*Picus pubescens.* — L.

VERY nearly the same remarks will apply to this as to the former bird. I shot one of these the same day that I secured the specimen of *villosus*. It was not one hundred rods from the same spot, and was also hammering away on one of the top branches of a tall tree. It required some patient watching to detect its precise location, as it was rather wilder than the former species. Others are reported from the interior along the river, and it appears, like its neighbor here, by no means rare. It seems to have much the same habits as birds of the same species that I have observed elsewhere. March 29th, my diary says, a specimen was shot and others seen at Old Fort Lake. It is probably a regular resident all the year around and breeds during the summer months.

**BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED WOODPECKER**

*Picoides arcticus.* — (Sw.) GR.

A SINGLE specimen is reported from a collection in the possession of one of the natives on the coast by Dr. Elliott Coles, who states that he saw it there, and thinks that it may not be uncommon in the interior.

**GOLDEN-WINGED WOODPECKER  
FLICKER**

*Colaptes auratus.* — (L.) SW.

IT was regarded by the natives as extremely rare. I saw the wing of one of these birds at L'Anse Clair. No doubt other evidences of its capture are common along the coast.

**GREAT HORNED OWL**

*Bubo Virginianus.* — (GM.) BP.

THIS owl does not appear to be rare in Labrador. I saw

the foot of one, obtained the record of the capture of one, and saw an immense fellow probably of this species on two distinct occasions. "They are often seen, and several at a time," was the answer of an intelligent inhabitant to whom the bird was described. It doubtless occurs all along the Labrador peninsula and perhaps breeds.

### SHORT-EARED OWL

*Asio accipitrinus*. — (PALL.) NEWT.

AN owl of this species, which one of the men had just shot, was brought to me October 16. It was shot at Old Fort Island. My note upon it reads: Though owls are generally regarded as rare in this region, I believe them to be more common than is usually supposed, several species having been observed at different points along the coast. In regard to the one mentioned, it was shot by one of the men who said that about dusk the bird attacked him and he could not drive it away until he had put the whole charge of shot through its body, which so badly blew it to pieces that I was unable to do anything with it but save a few feathers by which to compare the species. It probably frightened him, being frightened by him, by flying about in a bewildered manner in vain endeavors to escape. It appeared to be an extraordinarily dark variety of our common short-eared owl.

### SNOWY OWL

*Nyctea scandiaca*. — (L.) NEWT.

ONE of the most magnificent specimens of the bird family is this same snowy owl, — and a splendid fellow he is, being nearly two feet in length and between four and five in extent, or from tip to tip of the wings. The snowy owl is probably a resident throughout the year and breeds along the coast of Labrador; but I can only speak of its occurrence in Winter, for the only record I obtained of it was at that season of the

year, and well have I occasion for remembering it. The miles and miles that I have tramped for this same "Naseopic," this veritable "American man" or, better still, Labrador man, would count well up into the scores. The one that I followed so persistently over hill and dell, from one part of the island to another, was apparently the same specimen; what a tale would be unfolded could he talk for half an hour. How he would fairly chuckle could he tell of the number of times that he had led the writer of this account of him over hills, across deep ravines, and up to the knees in snow, only to silently rise, flap his great wings, and be off for good, with the aforesaid writer four, five, and even seven miles from his home, at the shades of evening; or, after a long day's hard tramp, without a sight of him, had his ludship come, just as said shades were falling, and planted himself in full view but slowly to fade out of sight in the dusk of the evening! The snowy owl is found all along the coast, and doubtless breeds in many places, even here being much more abundant some years than others as I am informed: But the feeble tongue of man goes a very short way towards adding halo about such an object as the present one, and so I will let the matter-of-fact note book tell its story without comment: — A specimen of this magnificent owl has been about Old Fort Island all the Winter. I have often seen him perched on the summit of some knoll or high hill, whence he can see about everything that is going on and appears to defy approach. It is almost if not quite impossible for a single man to shoot one of these birds, unless he be an exceptionally fine long-distance shot or uses the rifle for his weapon. The owl, apparently at least, can turn his head completely around without moving from his position. Owls are said to see only at dusk or in the night time, but if the white owl cannot see in the daytime then all birds are blind. The most successful hunters of this bird, as of nearly everything else in fact that hunger can render either palatable or in the least nutritious as food, — for the flesh of this bird is eaten by the Labradorians — are the Indians.

The Indians hunt the white owl when possible always with two persons, each going in opposite directions, the one going ahead and attracting his attention while the other crawls up towards him. The owl appears to be unconscious that he is watched by two individuals, and is thus shot without much difficulty. They see easily in the daytime. They seem to feed principally on mice, and I have often found skulls of the same almost perfect in their balls or castings. I have heard them hoot only when, being alarmed, they fly to some place of supposed safety. I got very close to one one day when without my gun, he *seemed* to be perfectly white. Many intelligent persons with whom I conversed on the subject, and who had shot a good many owls upon the coast, insisted that the plumage of the white owl, in Labrador at least, was pure white in Winter, the spots and speckles appearing in the Spring, deepening in the Summer and Autumn, and that the Fall moult leaves them white again. I sought answers to this question of pure white plumage in several distinct localities with always the same result, as above. The birds, they say, are never shot in a white dress at any other time than in mid-Winter, the amount of white being a true mark of the season. The flesh of the white owl, if the bird be not too old, is esteemed good eating by the people on the coast. I saw evidences of newly-killed birds at several places that I visited, in the shape of wings, feathers, etc., and when asked what became of the bird the people would answer, "we eat it, sir!" At a distance, when perched upon some hilltop, one can hardly distinguish the white owl from a cap of snow. The white owl, the great black-backed gull, and the raven have probably been the targets for more charges, and extra large charges at that, of powder and shot than any other birds of the fauna of Labrador that either myself or my friends fired at while on the coast.

### MARSH HAWK

*Circus cyaneus hudsonius*. — (L.) SCHL.

MY notes on this species give the satisfactory record of

"One specimen found at Dead Island Harbor." I have no doubt but that the bird is more or less common in various localities all along the coast. I do not believe it to be a rare bird in Labrador.

### **COOPER'S HAWK**

*Accipiter cooperi.* — Br.

I saw the tail of a Cooper's hawk in the possession of one of the natives, a few miles in the interior up Esquimaux River. He called the bird the "partridge hawk," and said that it was a particular enemy of the partridges and ptarmigan. He did not regard it as at all rare. It also probably breeds.

### **LABRADOR GYRFALCON**

*Falco gyrfalco.* — L. — *obsoletus.* —

OF this same species my notes say: saw the bird and have no doubt but that he had a nest on an inaccessible crag near the house, but was unable to obtain it. I, at various times, saw several hawks in the dim distance that I, at the time, had a very strong suspicion might have been this rare bird. I believe I must have seen it on several occasions. The one mentioned had his nest quite near our house, and we several times queried, very strongly, as to whether or no we could not reach the nest, the edges of which we could see way above us on a crag that apparently could be reached neither from above nor below, with ropes and ladders; but the actual attempt was too foolhardy for the enthusiasm of any of us or all combined, and so we gave it up.

### **PIGEON HAWK**

*Falco columbarius.* — L.

PROBABLY more common on the Gulf coast than either in the Straits or beyond. It does not appear to be uncommon

in either of the two latter places, while it is quite common in the former. We had several alight on our vessel, both going and coming, and found still other evidences of its occurrence on the Gulf coast. It is apparently a shore bird, not going far inland. Yet in this supposition I may be wrong as we saw it hunting land birds principally. The testimony everywhere was that it was not at all rare. It probably breeds. These same remarks *may* also apply to the sparrow hawk, but we have no absolute proof that such is the case from records or specimens.

### SPRUCE PARTRIDGE CANADA GROUSE

*Canace canadensis*. — (L.) REICH.

THIS is another bird of which I have most pleasing recollections; as it served me for dinner on more than one occasion. I do not consider them the best of eating; but they are most certainly delicacies when placed beside corned pork and a steady diet of codfish. The flesh is rather bitter and its odor quite strong though not unpleasant. Both these facts are accounted for by the nature of the berries, buds, and seeds which the bird feeds upon. I am not aware that their flesh is at any time poisoned by the poisonous nature of any of the berries or other food eaten, as too often occurs with our ruffed grouse of the States; and, as far as I could learn, it was eaten with impunity by the natives at all seasons of the year. Regarding the bird and its habits, strangely, my notes furnish very little material. This is the more peculiar to me, as I had occasion to see the bird quite often and ought to have learned considerable regarding it. My first note was written on October 28, at Old Fort Bay. I seem to have made a few notes at that time and none whatever afterward. This species appears to be common everywhere along the coast. I found them in the evergreens bordering the lake and in small patches of tangled growths of fir, spruce, and other low shrubbery on the tops of the hills. They were very tame. They will sel-

dom rise until the hunter is close upon them; then, with a tremendous rush and flutter, they fly to some bush, rock, or tree, in the most open and exposed situation, apparently to see what their danger may be. Like the ostrich who, hiding his head, regards his body as safe from the hunter so the spruce partridge regards himself as safe anywhere but in the very bushes that conceal him from the hunter's approach. Having once gained his perch of observation he cranes his neck and looks blindly about in every direction. At this time the hunter approaches, even recklessly, and secures his game by the very unmanly process of knocking him over with some long pole provided for the purpose, or even with the very muzzle of his gun. Sometimes several will alight upon a tree or be discovered on their roost, then the same process is put into operation; the hunter knocks over the one lowest down upon the branches, so that his fall will not greatly disturb those higher up who either seldom move at all or merely change their position slightly upon the branch on which they rest, or move to the next higher one, so that the hunter is soon able to deal with the whole number without disturbing them sufficiently to cause them to take wing and escape by flight. This is the actual process pursued with this very foolish bird, who does not seem to have even sense enough to know danger when he sees it. The spruce partridge is not nearly as common now as it was a few years ago even, yet there are still enough to furnish an occasional meal to anybody who will hunt them. For the past few years they have not been hunted to any great extent, since the ptarmigan, the bird which usually goes by the name of simply partridge here, is generally so very much more abundant. As a rule the farther inland one goes, within an extent say of fifty or one hundred miles at least, the more abundant the spruce partridge becomes. There is another species of the brown-colored partridges that is occasionally found here, if reports be true, which goes under the name of "pheasant;" whether it be the ruffed grouse of the States or some other species I could not learn. I have

no doubt but that the ruffed grouse might occasionally stray so far out of its range, but am by no means certain.

### **WILLOW PTARMIGAN**

*Lagopus albus.* — (GM.) AUD.

OF the ptarmigans ornithologists, as well as the natives of Labrador, insist that there are three species inhabiting these regions. Several intelligent citizens with whom I conversed upon the subject, and who were themselves hunters of no mean repute, assured me that these three species could be told in connection with the usual distinguishing marks by the color of the iris. They explained that the difference between the cock and the hen, and in breeding and out of breeding season, could also be thus distinguished. One person tried to explain the matter, but ended by leaving it in a much worse jumble than it was previous to his first statement. Two species, certainly, this and the following, are common residents and breed in the interior; and beautiful birds they are either in their snow-white Winter or their dove-colored spotted Summer plumage. The ptarmigan, in relative abundance, has its off and its on years as do many other of the game birds of the States and Lower Canada. Two very intelligent hunters, brothers, told me that the year before I visited the coast, in 1880, they took, with their guns and their traps, three hundred ptarmigan and eight hundred rabbits. The Winter of 1880 and 1881 we took about fifty ptarmigan altogether and not a single rabbit. Later in the season the Indians from the interior reported that a peculiar disease had attacked the rabbits and that they died by the hundreds. The nature of this disease could not of course be ascertained. It was reported that the animals would suddenly rush from the concealed woods to some open space where they would race madly around in a circle until they dropped dead. That year the Indians refused to eat them, at least so they gave us to understand. The flesh of the ptarmigan is very highly es-

teemed as a great delicacy by the natives. We found it indeed very pleasant eating. This species (the *albus*) seemed by far the most common, being called the willow partridge and said never to be found, or rarely if at all, thirty miles inland. The general verdict was that the third species, which was affirmed everywhere we went, replaced the present in the open grounds inland, and that it seldom if ever came down to the coast. We did not find it a wild bird at all, but huddled up, three to eight in a covey, feeding just in the brush bordering the ponds a mile or so inland. They were quite easy to kill. The brief mention of this bird in my notes, though principally confirming what has been previously said regarding the species, may still be of interest: Middle of January; Old Fort Bay; length of specimen, 16.75; extent, 24.50; wing, 8; tail, 5; bill, .40; tarsus, 1.50; middle toe and claw, 1.85; hind toe and claw, about .50; quills with shafts black-centered; tail with the ten outer feathers black, the four middle ones white. Most winters the species is common and sometimes even abundant, this year it is rare. They appear in the lowlands and shrubbery most generally after a northerly breeze, followed by an easterly one and what is called "the glitter," which is that appearance of the air between rain, hail, and snow, when the substance that falls appears to freeze the moment it touches any object and while yet the air is dry and cold. After a light snow their trackings can easily be discovered. They usually lead directly to the covert of the birds, which seldom fly about from place to place unless especially forced to it. Usually the birds are wild only when the weather is stormy or the wind blows, while they are tame even to stupidity in pleasant weather. They often appear soon after the first snow of November and remain about all the Winter. Their note is between a cluck and a whistle, generally sounded while feeding or lying about with their tame or stupid-like pleasant-weather manners. They seldom frequent the hilltops like *rupestris*.

**ROCK PTARMIGAN***Lagopus rupestris.* — LEACH.

THIS species was known everywhere I met as the "mountain" partridge. They told me that it was only found high up among the hills and that it did not descend into the open land along the shores of the lakes and rivers, or associate with the "willow" partridge. One or two specimens only were secured by our party. They are much rarer than *albus* but found along the same extent of coast.

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER Quebec Curlew***Squatarola helvetica.* — (L.) Cuv.

I THINK that the name of Quebec Curlew must be a local Canadian name for this bird, for I never heard it except on my journey from Quebec to Labrador. The bird was found in small flocks, wherever we went, from Quebec to Blanc Sablon, and it occurs even farther north and east. It was generally rather wild and, wading deep into the water, fed on the small sea animals that it could capture there. Its flight was low and short. When approached while feeding they would spread out over considerable ground, running at the same time as far into the water as their long legs would let them, before taking flight. If on one side of a creek they rarely flew farther than across to some point of security opposite, while they would go to feeding again at once. If on an opposite side of some creek it was generally very easy to call them across by the usual imitation of their cry of *qu* or *qu-qu-qu* repeated several successive times. It was usually much easier to call them within shooting distance than it was to approach them within such. I found that, with these, as with the majority of the shore birds, the lower that one could bend the body while crawling upon flocks or single birds the more successful would be the attempt to get a shot at them. A man standing

upright and approaching a flock would hardly get within rifle range, no matter how slowly or carefully he proceeded. To play the dog game, drop on all fours and go forward on hands and knees. They say that it is not the part of a good hunter or fisherman to give the "points of the craft" away; but surely there is very little chance that the writer and the reader of these sketches will ever "collide," especially upon the same hunting ground. The birds that we found were all in the gray plumage; I recollect, I believe, a single specimen, in the collection of one of the natives, showing the black most beautifully.

### **GOLDEN PLOVER**

*Charadrius dominicus.* — MULL.

I LEARNED nothing regarding the habits of the golden plover in Labrador, merely seeing an occasional stuffed specimen; but from inquiry they appeared to visit the coast occasionally in small flocks or even in less numbers. They are probably not really rare, and more or less regular as migrants.

### **SEMIPALMATED PLOVER RING NECK**

*Agialites semipalmatus.* — (BP.) CAR.

My principal record of the semipalmated ring neck reads: September 20, on Green Island. I saw several small flocks of this bird but they were associated with flocks of *arenetes* and I thought I distinguished quite positively both birds feeding and flying in the same flocks together; they were at least so near that I was able to separate the species when they flew. The ring neck is one of the characteristic birds of Labrador, and breeds abundantly all up and down the coast. The nest is usually composed of a few dry grasses scraped together in the open field and in the most exposed situations. The eggs are four. The bird's artifice draw the intruder away from her nest or even her young was truly a

display of bird intellect if ever there was anything of that nature displayed in a bird. It was usually successful. The cripple wing and lame foot process were practiced and sometimes both at once. The usual method of dropping one's hat where the bird first started from would not even succeed in revealing to me the nest though the little ones, too impatient to remain still for any length of time, too often revealed their own hiding place in their hurry to run around among the sand and grasses and hunt for food. The old birds in breeding season were very tame; we seldom molested them at this time. The young were remarkably pretty creatures, and had the black parts of the parents replaced with gray. The old birds were very swift runners and as sly as mice. Having run for some distance they would utter a soft, plaintive whistle or *phu-phu* and immediately take wing. Their long, angular wings allowed of a swift, irregular yet not ungraceful flight, with now the body and now the back turned full upon the hunter. They presented the prettiest mark for a wing shot that I ever saw, next to the tern or sea swallow. In fall they fly much more wildly and are then splendid practice for the sportsman. I have wasted more charges of powder in simply practicing upon them than would secure a whole flock if shot one by one. When I first began this target shooting I could not hit one bird in a dozen; after a great deal of wasting of charges I found that by making my gun barrel follow the descending curve of the bird and firing the moment I fairly covered him, or was perhaps an inch or so ahead of him (probably nearer a foot), I could easily kill four out of every five birds. They seemed to prefer to feed high up on the sand flats and beaches, or, if on the mud flats, at the very edge of water. They seldom gathered in flocks of any size, but appeared to me to be family parties of half-a-dozen or so. The people along the coast think a great deal of the bird and will not allow anybody to shoot it in the breeding season. It has little fear of man, often breeding within a few yards of the houses.

### TURNSTONE

*Streptilas interpres.* — (L.) ILL.

MY only note on the turnstone reads: Common at Dead Island and along the coast in small flocks. They are rather rare apparently, when classed with the other sandpipers and waders which frequent the coast.

### AMERICAN SNIPE

*Gallinago wilsoni.* — (TEMM.) BP.

THIS is another species that must be given on other authority than my own, and that from a single specimen only. Yet it is undoubtedly not rare at times all along the coast.

### RED-BREASTED SNIPE

*Macrorhamphus griseus.* — (GM.) LEACH.

THIS bird also undoubtedly occurs, but must be given on the same authority as the last. One or two specimens only are really on record from the coast.

### LEAST SANDPIPER

*Actodromus minutilla.* — (V.) COVES.

THE least sandpiper is simply a diminutive specimen of the "grass snipe," which it resembles in nearly every particular, though frequenting more particularly the mud flats and the water's edge rather than the sandy beach and grassy slopes. The greater part of those that I saw did not appear to associate with any other species, but were found in small flocks feeding by themselves, and usually at a time of day when few of the other species were about, say from 10 a. m. to 4 p. m. They are common all along the coast in Spring and Fall, and breed during the Summer. I saw none of the immense flocks

of this species so abundant in certain localities in the States, though they might have occurred in localities other than those visited by me.

### **PECTORAL SANDPIPER JACK SNIPE**

*Actodromas maculata.* — (V.) COUES.

ALSO called "grass snipe" from the fact of their preferring grassy and open plats of ground above high tide to the sandy shores of the beach. They often compromise very strongly in favor of some muddy flat at low water, where they will wade in the shallow pools and search for food. It does not appear to be so wild a bird as most of its kindred species, and its shrilly whistled *phew-e*, repeated or not, is characteristic of the bird and well known. The flight of the grass snipe is not unlike that of our common snipe, though generally it is more slow and regular. They are seldom found in companies of more than half a dozen together and are more frequently in twos or threes, or even singly. It does not appear to be rare anywhere that I observed along the coast. My notes read: September 30, at Old Fort Island. I shot several of these birds from a passing flock and saw them more than once flying, or on the flats near the house and in the grass on the lawn; they did not appear common at this time. One specimen had a brownish ash suffusion; another was dark and streaked on a clear ash ground. The latter had the hind neck more widely streaked with black, while in the former it was more narrow and of a closer pattern.

### **SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER**

*Ereunetes pusillus.* — (L.) CASS.

THE occurrence of this little sandpiper in Labrador is rather indefinitely fixed in my mind. I can "place" nearly every other species of sandpiper or wader with almost absolute certainty, even in many minute particulars, but either I saw

very few of these or they have become so identified in habits with several other species with which they agree very strongly that I cannot disentangle the meshes with the slightest satisfaction. In my larger work the only notice of them that I can find — taken in the Fall when all the sandpipers were common — reads: An occasional *Ereunetes pusillus* was seen, but they were rare. My manuscript notes come to my rescue here somewhat, and say: September 20, at Green Island, in the river St. Lawrence, I shot several from flocks that landed on the flats. They were rather tame, and alighted all over the island which was covered with small stones, lumps of gray moss, and sand; pools of water were here and there all along the surface of the island. On such a place the glitter of the particles of the whole, even in a clouded sky, prevented one from distinguishing objects very close beside them. Here the "peeps" were very common, and they would spring up from the sand before me in every direction, and so near me that I could often have almost reached them with a good-sized pole. In every direction that I walked I drove them up in scores always singly or in twos or threes. When thus frightened away they would either alight again in the sand alone and run about or remain perfectly quiet until I had passed or again flushed them; or, more often, a great many of them would gather in a flock on the edge of some pool of water, to be hunted from one end of the island to the other, or until they broke up again or left entirely. The singular part of my diary reads: September 30, I shot one at Old Fort Island and only one all the Fall. I found it with a large number of *bonapartii*. I am greatly of the opinion that my notes are correct, and that the locality where I did most of my shore shooting while on the coast did not happen to be as favorable for this species as for the others I secured there. The bird is certainly common along portions at least of the Labrador coast, and it could not easily be mistaken for any other species, as its peculiarities are too decided. The singular habits which these birds possess of wheeling about in an apparently

blind flurry for a short distance, only to return to nearly or quite the same spot again, makes me certain that I have seen flocks of them upon more than one occasion.

### **RED PHALAROPE**

*Phalaropus fulicarius*. — (L.) Br.

I SAW several flocks and single birds, which were undoubtedly of this species, just off the coast at sea, between Belle Isle and Chateau Bay. As Dr. Elliott Coues procured specimens from off Belle Isle I am the more certain that those I saw were of this species. They were very graceful little fellows and not at all wild, except in keeping in the sea off land, all the time that we saw them at least.

### **WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER BONAPARTE'S SANDPIPER**

*Actodromas bonapartii*. — (SCHL.) COUES.

EVERYWHERE I went in Labrador I heard of the "Sand birds." What the sand birds were was a great mystery until I shot some of them and procured the above species. To say that they were abundant would be speaking very mildly; they were everywhere, both up and down the coast. It is the sandpiper of Labrador, and equally common on the rocky and sandy beaches and muddy flats at low water, though it rather favors the latter location. Its history has been well worked up in my larger work, so I will repeat it here: Of the white-rumped sandpiper I saw several immense flocks on the flats near the house; the birds were quite tame. Some had the chestnut edgings of the wings very broad and deep, while several of them had either the head or neck, and one had both, quite ashy; the greater part of them had very little chestnut, that color being replaced by ash; the chestnut edgings seemed to be on birds that were passing from the last stage of young of the year to adult birds, but I may be mistaken. Both

varieties were in the same flock. The flocks were usually from fifteen to several hundreds in number. They would alight in the mud flats and feed, running about in the black, slimy, clay-like muck or mud, running in the water to the tops of their legs, and keeping quite close together meanwhile. They feed in the evening and at dusk, chiefly among the kelp along shore, and I rarely saw even a single bird at high tide. They were very tame, and if I crouched and approached them on "all fours" I could get very close indeed; even if I maintained for a few moments my upright position, in silence, they would often come and alight within a few yards of me. If discovered, single birds and small flocks would try to escape concealment by remaining perfectly quiet for a considerable length of time. As long as they remained thus it was very difficult to see them, even when very near, as their color corresponded so closely to that of the mud or kelp where they happened to be, while the approaching darkness assisted them materially in escaping observation. I have seen them at dusk fly from within a few feet of me when, after careful examination, I had not supposed that they were anywhere near. I saw this species associate only with *calidris arenaria*; the birds did not individually intermingle, but each kept in its own separate flock. Sometimes a single bird would be seen flying high and swiftly in the air, but generally their flight was low and irregular, their notes uttered as two or three faint, shrill whistles, the same as when made while running about in search of food. At any unusual movement or sound they would instantly take wing; but should the object remain still and quiet they would very likely return again to the same place and often within a dozen feet of the person or object which previously frightened them. The large flocks seem to be made up of the union of a large number of single families, and I have many times seen them separate and reunite in repeated succession, thus favoring my supposition; the same large flock of one hundred or more would break in the air and, dispersing into twenty small flocks of five to seven each,

all flying in different directions to round some hill or crest of land, or simply circle in the air, would form again with a *shush*, and the whole sweep majestically to the kelp and begin to feed in common. Most of the specimens obtained at this season of the year (October 8) had a worn and faded look, and were not nearly as plump or as well plumaged as specimens that I shot later which had bright chestnut edgings to nearly all the upper feathers. One of these specimens had the head and neck nearly clear ash, of a very minute pattern. I often found specimens where the tail feathers were half black (the upper and side ones) and half white. I greatly suspect that *Tringa bairdii*, that rare sandpiper, bears a stronger relation to certain forms perhaps of adult, worn breeding plumage of *T. bonapartii* than is generally believed. A single specimen that I secured resembled the *bairdii* form so closely that I will describe it from my note book: September 30, Old Fort Island. I to-day shot a bird that answers nearly to the description of *T. bairdii*. I picked it out of a mess of some eighty of *bonapartii* that I shot one morning for breakfast, but before I could skin it, though I laid it one side carefully, either the cat eat it or it was picked and potted. I never could find out where it disappeared. Its measurements were: length, 7.25; extent, 15; wing, 5; tail, 2.25, bill rather less than one inch and yet more than .88; tarsus, .88; middle toe and claw, .88; hind toe and claw, .18; bill and feet black. There were no chestnut markings that I could observe anywhere, the whole plumage being grayish and black, and looking like a faded specimen of *T. bonapartii*. The two middle feathers of the tail coverts, I believe, alone were perfectly black. I have examined a large series of *bonapartii* and found them with coverts varying from perfectly white to strongly edged with black. The specimen might have been a Summer plumage and found rarely excepting in latitudes where the bird breeds or even there not common. The bright bay or chestnut edgings to the feathers of back and shoulders appear only in late Fall, so far as I could dis-

cover ; Summer specimens having no chestnut anywhere that I could observe. I have noticed frequently that the fatter many species are the more their feathers incline to such colors as rufous, chestnut, etc., and the leaner they are the grayer ; but this is not always true, yet a bird is seldom in high plumage unless fat also. I really grew quite fond of this sandpiper. They were very abundant. I went out one morning to shoot a mess of them for breakfast and had the good fortune to secure eighty-seven of them in five shots besides any amount of wounded birds that I was unable to obtain. I have often had a flock of several hundred alight within easy range or circle over my head or near by from which I have secured a dozen and over at a single shot ; yet their numbers did not appear to diminish or their tameness decrease in the slightest ; but I must hasten to other species.

**ASH-COLORED SANDPIPER ROBIN SNIPE  
KNOT**

*Tringa canutus.* — LINN.

REGARDING this rather rare sandpiper my note book reads : September 30, Old Fort Island. I shot several of these birds to-day from a flock that landed on the flats. I recollect seeing only this one flock during the entire season. They were rather wild ones. One specimen was evidently a young bird and the plumage almost entirely gray, with semi-circles of white and black ; rump white barred with black ; tail ashy, white tipped with a darker edge ; throat faintly streaked, and under parts with slight buff sprinklings, otherwise white. It was very fat. I remember distinctly what a melancholy-looking group they looked, as they stood in or near a small pool of water and searched for food. I verily believe that that one attempt fully satisfied them of the unproductiveness of the Labrador soil and so they left for scenes more productive and climes more congenial.

**RUDDY PLOVER SANDERLING***Calidris arenaria.* — (L.) ILLIG.

THIS is another characteristic bird of the Labrador marshy and sandy low tide flats, though the specimens that I saw preferred mostly the sandy beaches at high tide. They are seen everywhere along the coast, though they are much more wild than the usual run of beach birds, and generally fly in much smaller flocks which do not seem so readily to break up into families or flocks, but fly closer together and keep together most of if not all the time. Now and then a solitary individual would be seen flying or picking up food in company with many of the other species of sandpipers, but for the most part they were alone. I saw numbers of them during my stay on the coast, but seldom many at a time. They were very wild and hard to approach, and kept quite close together in small flocks of from ten to thirty; their flight is wilder and their call different from that of the other birds with which they associated. I found them very plump and fat, and, being larger, much better eating than the majority of the small shore birds.

**HUDSONIAN GODWIT***Limosa hemastica.* — (LINN., 1758).

THURSDAY, September 10, was a red-letter day to me in the bird line. Referring to the notes again they say: To-day I succeeded in obtaining a specimen of the *Limosa hemastica*, the Hudsonian or black-tailed godwit, also called the ring-tailed marlin. It is a rare bird even in these regions, and was the only one I obtained on the coast. It was at the time flying rather high up in the air and with the irregular flight of the spotted sandpiper. Its note, uttered while in the air, sounded more like the squeak of a mouse than any thing else I can name. From its rarity I give the dimensions as I took

them: Length from end of bill to tail, 16 inches; end of bill to toes, 18.50; extent, 28; wing, 8.75; tail, 3.25; bill, 3.25; unfeathered tibia, 1.13; tarsus, 2.50; hind toe and claw, .50; middle toe and claw, 1.65. It was a male bird and had the gizzard full of gravel and nearly digested matter. The people tell me that it is occasionally seen in the Fall, but that it is rare. Audubon speaks of it as "rare along the Atlantic district in Spring and Autumn. Breeds in the barren grounds of the Arctic seas in great numbers." It seems to be confined to the more middle interior parts of the Arctic regions, and the majority of writers whose works I have seen speak of it, as I have generally found it, as rare along the Eastern Atlantic and Gulf coast generally.

#### GREATER YELLOW-LEGS STONE SNIPE

*Totanus melanoleucus.* — (GM.) VIEILL.

THE people of the coast here have a curious name for this "yellow-legs," it being everywhere known as the *nan-sary*. The derivation of the word I was unable to learn. It is by no means a rare bird, though from what I saw of it it seemed to prefer localities up the river and on the shores bordering the mainland rather than the islands, perhaps because it was less likely to be molested there. I found it all along the coast in Spring and Fall and late into the breeding season. It undoubtedly breeds. They occur singly or in small numbers in the most unexpected situations. In rounding small headlands in our boat we often came across a single solitary individual perched upon some rock within a few feet of the water's edge; the moment it was perceived it would fly away with a loud, shrill cry that would wake the neighborhood and send to wing every bird within sound of its call. We occasionally found it on the outside marshes associated with other smaller sandpipers and plovers; but its habits here, as elsewhere, lead it to be cordially detested by the hunters, who lose many a good shot through it.

**SOLITARY SANDPIPER***Rhyacophilus solitarius.* — (WILS.) BP.

NOT rare in Spring and Fall. Breeds. I saw this little sandpiper on several occasions but always alone and standing or running about some slippery water or kelp-covered rock in a most melancholy manner. I would not call it common yet it was hardly rare.

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER***Tringoides macularius.* — (L.) GRAY.

THE same remarks might be made of this bird as of the last, and with equal propriety, as to its occurrence and breeding; but it is much more common, confined more to the land and shore line, and far more tame. It is familiarly known there as here by the names "tip-up," "teeter," etc., though by far its most common epithet is that of the "crooked-winged bird," doubtless from the peculiar way in which it holds its wings when flying.

**HUDSONIAN CURLEW JACK CURLEW***Numenius hudsonicus.* — LATH.

THE Jack Curlew much resembles the Esquimaux Curlew; but it is easily distinguished by its call, which is louder and less refined than that of the latter bird. It appears later in the Fall, in much lesser numbers, is more solitary in its habits, and frequents the water's edge more than the interior sweeps of hillside and meadow, the home of its neighbor. It is not rare in Fall — the only time of the year I saw it.

**ESQUIMAUX CURLEW DOUGH-BIRD***Numenius borealis.* — (FORST.) LATH.

I SHALL not soon forget the many pleasant and exciting

tramps I have at one time or another made after this prince of game birds of the Northeast, the curlew. Other game is as nothing when compared to this true game bird of Labrador, yet it is seldom found excepting in the Fall, and then only for the short space of two or three weeks. Though by no means so common as it was years ago, and even now has years when it is much rarer than at other times, it still maintains its distinctive character of being excessively abundant all along the coast, at least from Belie Isle, if not Ungava itself, to the mouth of the St. Lawrence. The curlews visit the Labrador coast in immense flocks from their breeding grounds, the Hudson's Bay territory, and, according to Audubon, would pass over this region like other regions in its migrating course to the more southern and southwestern fields, were they not periodically detained by the weather. Immediately upon arrival the immense hordes break up into small flocks, which seek feeding grounds upon the extensive plains and hillsides back of the coast where its favorite food, the "curlew-berry," grows in large numbers. This berry is of an inky black color and juicy, and so greedy for it are the birds that they often stuff themselves to repletion; and they stain everything, even to feathers and flesh, with the inky juice of the berry. While on the Labrador coast their chief object seems to be to feed, and they are found at all times of the day on their favorite grounds fairly gormandizing. They eat also molluscs, which are here in abundance at low tide, though they seem to prefer the berries. The best way in which to hunt curlews seems to be for several persons to conceal themselves in favorable localities near the feeding grounds, while another party hunts the birds up and drives them from place to place. In this way the hunters successively procure a large number of victims while the birds fly about from one place to another of fancied security, away from each gunner, only to meet another who forces them back to the first again, and so on. Curlews become very fat in a very short time. Usually large flocks are much more tame

than small flocks; they are usually also much more easily approached. A small flock is generally a wild one, and I have spent hours and hours in following up small flocks, of from ten to thirty birds, over hills and broad stretches of table land without once getting a single shot at them, to come suddenly upon a large flock out of which, without much trouble, I would secure a good mess at a single discharge of my gun. The flight of the curlew is beautiful and graceful, though very hard to describe. It is very swift, and when just about to alight it seems to poise its wings and drop to the ground with a gliding motion most beautiful to the sight. Its note is a clear and mellow whistle which, like that of most shore birds, is easily imitated; the birds respond readily to the imitation. The curlew is everywhere looked upon as the characteristic bird of Labrador, and persons visiting the coast are not considered successful hunters, no matter how large their bag in other direction, unless they have secured at least one mess of curlews. The curlews leave as suddenly as they appear. Usually by the first of September or a few days later they have all gone southward, when the Jack curlews take their place, though in much smaller numbers. When feeding the flight of the curlews is low; when migrating, high. When flying low the flight is short. The flesh is dark; they are much less abundant now than formerly, and are getting wary of their usual feeding grounds from the number of hunters that pursue them.

#### **BITTERN STAKE DRIVER**

*Botaurus mugilans.* — (BARR.) COVES.

THIS bird is not considered as rare by the local sportsmen and trophies of its occurrence here are often seen. I do not believe it to be really common, yet it may occur occasionally. The frequent reports I heard of "a bird with very long neck and tall legs," was probably a reference to this species. The green and the night heron may possibly occur in Labrador though I should hardly look for them so far north and east.

**CANADA GOOSE***Bernicla canadensis.* — (L.) ROSE.

WE saw many a flock and single individual of this noble game bird while in Labrador, and here I might fairly make a most excellent Irish bull and say that of the many we saw we "didn't get but one and that one we didn't get." Flocks after flocks would go honking by us overhead; we could see and hear them, but never a shot could we get. On the flats of a little island, close by our Summer home, I was informed that they made regular visiting places, and many were the stories told of their visits there by the successful as well as the non-successful hunters; still not a specimen. At length, one day in early Spring, we started to go to Bonne Esperance, about eight miles from our stopping place. Our curious experience on this trip may be of interest to some of your readers and I will relate it: There were four of us in the boat and we were just about half way between the islands and at the entrance of a passage completely filled and blocked with floating cakes of ice, and were just wondering how we should accomplish our journey, when one of my companions called out: "There's a wabby?" The wabby is a red-necked grebe, and though not uncommon flies so high as to be usually quite out of range even of a rifle. "No, it's a loon," said another. The flight of both the grebe and the loon, especially if it be a young one, is quite similar, hence the comparison. As it passed our stern we decided, from its long neck and unmistakable honk, that it was a goose. We all ceased rowing and crouched into the bottom of our boat. One of the party immediately hung his cap upon the end of his gun barrel and, swinging it around vigorously, shouted at the same time most loudly. The goose evidently saw or heard or both the signal and began to vary its course: soon it turned completely and flew directly over the boat. It was still high up in the air, so high that nobody would fire at it. Out of despair I raised my four-shot Roper

— the best gun for shooting I ever had in my hands — and gave it a charge. Far away as it was, the old goose doubled up its wings and tumbled head over heels to a block of ice in the very middle of the passage before us. The bird was wounded, not killed. Then began the fun. As fast as we pulled from one block of ice to another the goose would hop just so far ahead, keeping up a most vociferous scoulding at us meanwhile. Work as we would we could not lessen the distance, and after nearly four hours of the hardest kind of toil we left the goose and began to turn our attention to getting home again. It took us some hours to get out the passage into which we had worked our way, but we accomplished it at last and reached our destination about dark. The Canada goose is not rare all along the coast, but it seldom stops, except here and there, over a night or two. We do not call it a representative bird of the region.

### **BRANT GOOSE**

*Bernicla brenta.* — (PALL.) STEPH.

THE brant goose is much more common in the lower part of the province than on the Labrador coast proper. From Cape Whittle westward along the north shore it is by no means rare, and often even abundant. I saw a number of good sized flocks at and near Mingan and even had an opportunity of tasting this delicious wildfowl. I should hardly call it a bird of Labrador, though in the sense that the word Labrador is so often used (although wrongly) as comprising all the north shore, it is by no means a rare migrant, occurring in flocks just off shore and even a short distance up the rivers along the coast.

### **DUSKY DUCK BLACK DUCK**

*Anas obscura.* — GM.

THIS is the most common fresh water duck of Labrador,

and is abundant everywhere in ponds, pools, and flooded meadow lands. They generally fly in family groups of half a dozen or so, seldom in flocks of any great extent. They are not hard to approach if there be the slightest rock or hillock behind which to conceal the hunter, but in open ground it is impossible to get within shot of them — the usual device practiced with the diving sea ducks being here entirely useless. The islands and mainlands of Labrador are cut up everywhere by ponds and pools of water, both large and small. In these the black ducks delight to revel; you are sure to find them at morning and at evening, and even often in the day. When frightened they immediately take wing and rise high in the air, thus giving the gunner a good opportunity to shoot them while on the wing. Their flight is not over swift, though strong. The birds are pretty hard to kill and need rather large shot. They are splendid eating, and hence much prized by the natives as an article of food. They are found in Spring and Fall all along the coast and evidently breed inland during the Summer in large numbers.

### **PINTAIL DUCK**

*Dafla acuta.* — (L.) JEN.

WE had considerable sport over the manner in which the occurrence of this duck in Labrador was demonstrated. One of the natives, whose prowess in the hunting line was always the sport of the region around, and whose long, old-fashioned, single-barreled relic of a former century seemed as unsportsman-like as its owner, who never went hunting — probably for fear of this same ridicule — one day espied two ducks feeding in the shallow, low-tide pools near the house. Hastily loading his gun — for the first time in a year or more — he hurried to a cover and succeeded in bringing in a specimen of the above species — probably to boast of it forever afterward. The hunters reported it as very rare, and none of them had any name for it, a pretty good sign that it was

seldom taken along the coast. It is not rare in Newfoundland, I believe. This one was secured at Old Fort Island.

### **AMERICAN WIDGEON**

*Mareca americana.* — (L.) STEPH.

A SINGLE female of this species was shot in Old Fort Bay November 27, 1880. They are said to winter here in great numbers clustering in the waters of the river and in other congenial places. In Summer they are said to breed not uncommonly up the river, and that they lay their eggs in hollow trees; and one man told me of a nest of eight eggs that he found in an old birch. It occurs along the north shore in inland streams and other favorable places. It did not seem to be regarded as a rare bird by those to whom I showed the specimen though universally regarded as a fresh water bird and more tame than the wilder sea ducks.

### **ENGLISH TEAL**

*Nettion erycca.* — (L.) KAUP.

A SINGLE specimen of this European straggler was obtained by Dr. Coues in 1860. It probably is occasional though rare at all times and places along our Atlantic coast.

### **GREEN-WINGED TEAL**

*Querquedula carolinensis.* — (GM.) STEPH.

WHILE on the coast I had various reports of a "little" duck common in the inland ponds with "blue" or sometimes "green" on the wings. It used to be much more common than it is now, so they told me, and yet, if reports are true, it is occasionally taken even now on the coast. At any rate, one specimen was seen by Dr. Coues in 1860.

### **SUMMER DUCK WOOD DUCK**

*Aix sponsa.* — (L.) BOIE.

THERE would seem to be sufficient evidence to record this

species as occurring in Labrador. The male bird was described to me as accurately as if from the specimen before me by one of the inhabitants. It is not regarded as rare in the interior and up the river, where it is said to breed.

**RED-HEAD DUCK POCHARD**

*Fuligula ferina americana.* — (EYT.) COUES.

HAVING mislaid my notes on this species most unfortunately I am obliged to trust somewhat to my memory for its occurrence here, but I certainly saw a magnificent specimen of this bird not far from St. Augustine, on our downward trip about September 24. I distinctly remember watching it over the prow of our vessel as we floated past it so near as almost to touch it with an oar. We saw others after this; but none so distinctly. It is probably of frequent occurrence; though not at all common along the coast.

**BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE**

*Clangula albeola.* — (GM.) BR.

COMMON in the rivers as far eastward as Natashquan, and said to occur in Esquimaux River in mild Winters; as specimens have been shown me from that locality, the supposition that it is not a rare river duck in that region is not without foundation in fact; but I cannot speak of it from observation or record any of its peculiarities, of which I heard very little.

**BUFFLE-HEAD BUTTER-BALL  
DIPPER DUCK**

*Clangula albeola.* — (L.) STEPH.

THIS bird is known to the inhabitants of Labrador by the very expressive name of "sleepy diver," from its tameness and its slowness of motions while in the water. It is here a salt water rather than a fresh water bird, and may be shot at almost any time of the year, as it appears to breed in quite large

numbers. It seems to prefer the heads and mouths of the bay to the open water between the islands, and one can seldom row any distance along shore without seeing one or more of them. It is a very poor diver and so falls an easy prey to the gunner. The buffle-heads are common all the Fall until the ice sets in, and seem to like the company of the eiders with which they associate perhaps more than with any of the other species. It is quite a family duck, so far as I could judge, keeping in small clusters, and not venturing far from land; it appeared a timid and tame rather than a bold and wild bird. It is common all up and down the Labrador coast, though apparently more so in Summer and Fall than in the Spring.

**LONG-TAILED DUCK    SOUTH SOUTHERLY**  
**Old Wife    Old Squaw**

*Harelda glacialis.* — (L.) LEACH.

THIS is another not uncommon migrant and also probable Summer resident in the bays which extend into the interior, and the mouths of the rivers all along the coast. It is found in much the same situations as both the preceding and the following species, though occupying a position about midway between them. Even if there were no other means of identifying this as a breeder in Labrador I could so state the fact from an egg, labeled (and identified beyond question as of this bird), from the Straits of Belle Isle. This egg was one of the original collection handed down to me. This and a ptarmigan's egg were preserved long after the others were ruined by time's relentless hand. Upon this and other evidence since procured I can assert, quite positively, that the old squaw breeds in Labrador; without doubt quite commonly. It is called by the natives by the peculiar name of "coc-caw-wee," and pronounced with an inflection which is almost precisely that with which one pronounces the well-known whip-poor-will in the States. The sound is made by the males. This is the Labrador name for these birds; an-

other name, used more in Newfoundland than in Labrador, though it is occasionally heard here, is that of "houns," or "hounds," more likely the former is the correct pronunciation. The female or the "old wife," as it is sometimes called, resembles greatly the female of the dipper duck or buffle-head. The marked difference between the two is the absence of white on the wing of the long-tailed duck; whether the very young birds of the two species are distinguishable or not I could not ascertain. The people on the coast cannot tell you which is the "sleepy diver," as they call it, and which the long-tailed duck, or even distinguish the young; they call them all indiscriminately "sleepy divers." It will never do for a stranger to dispute them upon any subject upon which, from long experience, they consider themselves an authority; nor can they conceive the possibility of a stranger knowing more than they about any object concerning which they are at all familiar.

### HARLEQUIN DUCK

*Histrionicus minutus*. — (L.) COUES.

THIS handsome little fellow frequents the mouths of the rivers and, perhaps, follows the stream a little distance into the interior; also breeds not uncommonly thus all along the coast. This, with the last-named bird, is regarded as about equally common as, though rather rarer perhaps than, *albeola*. It is confined to the rivers and the river mouths along the coast. He is a handsome little bird and, with his more modestly-attired mate, goes by the name of "lord and lady." The name "houns" is also applied to it, probably by some unsophisticated Labradorian who does not know the difference, for I am assured, quite positively and on good authority, that this Newfoundland name, for it appears on good authority also to be strictly such, is applied only to the long-tailed duck. I saw several specimens captured near Esquimaux River, but could learn little of its habits.

**EIDER DUCK**

*Somateria mollissima dresseri.* — (SHARPE) COUES.

IN my recent work I have had considerable to say regarding this and the succeeding species of sea ducks. They have so many habits in common that it did not seem out of place to concentrate my sea duck shooting experience upon this species, and the hunter will be able to judge for himself if I have unwisely allowed an injustice to this or any succeeding species by so doing. My notes start with the species in early Spring, after having been hived up for six dreary Winter months three miles in the interior, or at the head of a bay protruding nearly that far inland. My first Spring ducking was on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 12, when several of us drew one of our small, flat boats over the ice to the clear water beyond and, launching it, started for the gunning point. We brought home a good bag full of birds that night, and you may be sure that they were well served and well disposed of the next day. In describing, in general, the arrival of the Spring birds, my notes say: Soon the ducks began to fly and then such sport as we had. The king eider came first in the season, then the common eider; the former is called the passing, the latter the laying duck. The birds at first fly in large flocks, often thousands in a flock; and generally the different species do not mingle. They have a certain course which they pursue; and the shoales over which they fly are called "gunning points." Here the men and boys congregate and, lying low, behind some rock or cake of ice, await the fight. Some days the birds fly thickly, others rarely any pass; the weather and various causes affect the flight. The people see them at a great distance, and often hear the beating of their wings before they see them. The birds fly over or along the side of the station, and the minute the head of the flock has passed the first or head gunner he rises or turns and fires when all the others follow suit, then the slaughter begins. Often

twenty or thirty birds are thus knocked down by a party of two or three persons with double-barrel guns. Turning back a few pages I find the habits of the eiders more fully described: Monday, September 27. This morning a party of us went out in a boat for a short sail, taking our guns with us. The water was full of birds, especially of ducks and auks. My attention was called particularly to the "sea ducks," of which we shot several from flocks that chanced to fly near enough to us. As the sea or eider duck is one of the peculiar residents of this region a few remarks upon it, collected from the experience of a year's observation, may not be uninteresting. The sea duck, as it is here called, and by the word here I mean all along the coast from Mingan — if not from Quebec — to Red Bay, and perhaps even beyond the Straits of Belle Isle, is the eider duck of the naturalist. The first specimens we obtained were shot September 27, and were young birds. We saw a great many small companies of birds scattered here and there about the harbor, but they were generally, at this season, composed of old birds and their broods of young; the latter were now large enough to kill and were excellent eating. In hunting these birds, especially the old ones, one is obliged to proceed with the greatest caution. A good-sighted hunter will detect a flock or a single duck, in rough water even, at a great distance. This is probably due to the fact of living in a region where one must depend so much upon eyesight that that sense is remarkably quickened: the duck also see the hunter almost as quickly as it is seen by him. When the duck sees any suspicious object it reaches its neck to its fullest extent and takes a long though careful sight: if the hunter sees this movement he knows that he is suspected; if he at once remains perfectly still, the duck is outwitted, since, not seeing the object move, it supposes that it is some stone or piece of wood before unnoticed and continues its feeding; should the hunter move visibly, ever so little, the bird takes fright and is off at once. In a clear day a person peering cautiously over a slight eminence can see, especially

if the water be tranquil, a flock of ducks often a couple of miles to seaward. A patient hunter will then conceal himself near some chosen feeding ground, imitate the call of the male bird, and decoy a flock or single bird quite close and within shooting distance. The call is whistled, and sounds like the single, double, or triple call of a snipe, repeated several times in a sort of guttural tone, if such an expression may be applied to a whistle; after every few repetitions there is an extra low and another similar high note which rounds off the whistle with that peculiar effect so often practiced by small boys in trying to roll the tongue, and which enters into the call of so many water birds. At low and falling tide the ducks assemble in large colonies on their feeding grounds, where the water is shallow and the kelp and muscles thick — generally at evening and in the early morning; at such times they will sit upon the rocks and remain there until urged or driven off; their sight and hearing seem then to be marvelous, and the slightest noise sends them off into the water. I have seen them in midday thus sunning and resting themselves, but they are so watchful that it is rare for you to get near enough for a shot at them. They dive at the flash of the gun. I have fired at them, at a rather long gunshot off, and seen them dive the shot striking the place they had occupied only a second previous.

An experienced hunter, when on shore, will get as near to a flock or a single bird as possible without alarming it and wait patiently for it to dive, as it so often does while feeding in apparently safety, when he will run ahead to some shelter nearer the object of his desire, repeating the operation until he regards himself as sufficiently near, and then, remaining standing with his gun at his shoulder, fire at the unconscious bird when it rises from some long dive, generally killing it. In the Fall, when a brood of young ducks is surprised, it is quite easy to secure a large number, though the old birds generally escape by flight and swimming under the water: they accomplish this latter act with ease, and often swim long

distances before appearing at the surface for fresh air. In the open water a flock of old birds, when approached, will separate and swim or fly in different directions while the young cluster and thus expose themselves directly to the hunter's fire. The best way to pursue both young and old birds is to drive them into some angular indenture of the surrounding islands or land, and then wait for them to appear on the surface of the water after their long dive. The boat, stationed too far away for them to swim clear of it, the hunter has every chance for bagging his game. I have noticed that wounded birds do not swim far above eighteen inches to two feet below the water; both bill and head are extended forward in a straight line. The old birds will often swim over a quarter of a mile, if not a full half, beneath the water without appearing to take air. As far as my experience goes, the birds are rather tame in the Winter season, or at least in the extreme Fall; they huddle together in close bunches of from fifty to several hundred birds, and I am informed that an old resident once fired into a cluster thus gathered and bagged fifty-nine birds with a single discharge of his gun, a common large-bore fowling piece. Occasionally the old female birds, in full heat, will be shot that have the back and wing coverts edged with deep rusty brown, and often almost brick red; other birds smaller (young), at the same season of the year, will have the feathers, particularly of the breast, edged with deep gray; young birds generally have the top of the head darker and the head much lighter. In some old birds the whole plumage will be unvaried and of a dark brown color. Large flocks are usually made up of a number of small family broods of from five to seven birds that unite from some common cause, and then pursue some common flight until scattered from other causes. The usual feeding grounds of the eider duck are shallow waters over a bed of sea weed or mud at some rods from land on its south, southwest, or west side. They feed principally upon mollusks, barnacles, and a variety of marine animals life, with an occasional piece of sea

weed, such as may be obtained in the shallow basins of accumulated *debris*, and on the "landwash," as the land washed by the tide is here called. In Summer the ducks breed in large numbers on the islands about the harbors, and though their numbers are fast decreasing there are still colonies of them, making their nests of down from their own breasts, beneath some overhanging grassy clump, and laying from three to five olive-colored eggs. The people here will rob the nests several successive times during a season, while the female continues to lay eggs in the hope of securing enough to hatch her brood. When setting, the eider duck remains upon her nest until the very last moment, then takes a forced rapid flight and does not appear again until the intruder has disappeared. To what extent the males assist the females in the matter of incubation I did not succeed in learning with any degree of certainty. I do not doubt but that they do so to a limited extent. They remain upon the coast until the bays are finally frozen, and are then seen no more until Spring returns and the ice thaws once again, when they appear in large flocks in company with the king eider or "king bird" as it is called. The eggs of the eider duck are everywhere eaten and are regarded as of very fine flavor. The females and young birds differ greatly in the "heat" of their plumage, some having nearly or quite every feather covered with a deep fringe of warm chestnut

### **KING EIDER DUCK**

*Somateria spectabilis*. — (L.) BOIE.

CALLED also, by the natives, the "king bird." This is the "passing" duck in distinction from the common eider or "laying" duck. It passes up and down the coast but does not remain to breed, excepting in rare instances. Its occurrence is thus mentioned in my note: Abundant in Spring in large flocks. I shot a great many of them. It is said to breed in this region occasionally. In the *Canadian Sports-*

man and Naturalist, of July 15, 1881, in an article entitled "Bird-nesting in Labrador," Mr. Napoleon A. Comeau, a gentleman personally known to the writer, says of a small island opposite Mingan, which was covered with nests of the common eider: "Here we first found the nest of its congener, the king eider (*S. spectabilis*)." This is, I believe, the first record of this rare nest found on the Atlantic. We found the birds abundant in migrations and in immense flocks both in the Spring and in the Fall. I understood from the natives that the males and females fly in separate flocks, the latter appearing a week or ten days later than the former. Their habits appeared to be quite similar to those of the common eider, especially in the Spring; but this may be from the fact that both flocks appear so simultaneously upon the coast that we were unable to distinguish the species. There are doubtless many points of difference as well as of semblance between the species, but we must wait until we know both better before particularizing.

### PACIFIC EIDER

— *Somateria v-nigra* —

I AM well aware that I censured highly by ornithologists for including this species at all in my list of Labrador birds, yet I fully believe in its occurrence in all North Atlantic. Why may not this species visit the Labrador coast as well as so many others that are not really North Atlantic species? The curlew is really not a North Atlantic bird, yet it is regarded generally as one of the if not the characteristic bird of Labrador. Of this species my notes say: Abundant in large flocks in Spring. I obtained specimens that had the decided "V-shaped black mark," on the chin, and was told by the natives that there were "three different species of Spring ducks so near alike that you could hardly tell the difference." The occurrence of this species has been doubted by several authorities. I still believe that specimens will be eventually secured that will prove it unquestionably.

**AMERICAN BLACK SCOTER***(Edemia americana. — (WILS.) SW.*

THIS and the two succeeding species are abundant everywhere along the coast of Labrador. There are many points of similarity in habits of all three with those of the common eider duck, especially in regard to their feeding habits. These ducks assemble in large flocks, over some low shoal, just off land, to feed. They usually remain at some distance from land, but are easily decoyed by the voice. The gunner must remain perfectly still, as they notice the least movement and are off at once. The present species is said to breed abundantly in the inland ponds and lakes, as it no doubt does. I obtained specimens of all three species.

**WHITE-WINGED COOT SCOTER  
VELVET DUCK***(Edemia fusca. — (L.) SW.*

COMMON in Spring and Fall. I did not find it in the breeding season and do not know as it breeds. Several authorities give it as breeding, and it doubtless does in limited numbers though much less so than the preceding species. I do not recollect an authority that found its eggs in Labrador, though the young birds are frequently obtained. The Spring and Fall migrants are often found in large flocks, and I have seen them alight upon some isolated rock, some distance from land in the water, and blacken its entire apparent surface. They are very difficult to approach and quick at diving; hard to kill and not especially good eating. They are decoyed from shore by the voice and shot like other sea ducks. It is known by the name of "brass-winged diver."

**SURF DUKE SEA COOT***(Edemia perspicillata. — (L.) STEPH.*

NEARLY the same remarks which apply to the other two

species apply to this one also, and this and the last if not all three, associate more or less together. Of its breeding habits I am unacquainted, but believe them to be much like those of the last species, both being different in many respects probably from those of *americana*. It seem to resort more to the mouths of bays, not going out to sea so much as *fusca*. The first specimen I received was from the Indians. It is known by the name of the "bottle-nosed diver." October 20, at Old Fort Bay, I obtained a male of an Indian who shot it in the bay and saw its mate. It is the rarest of the three species and more common in Spring than in Fall.

### MERGANSER GOOSANDER FISH DUCK

*Mergus merganser.* — (L.)

I SAW a single specimen of this species while on the coast. Doubtless it occurs rarely, though it is by no means as common as the succeeding species.

### RED-BREASTED MERGANSER

*Mergus serrator.* — (L.)

COMMON in Spring and Fall. Breeds occasionally if not in localities even abundantly. It is here called the "shell-bird." It feeds in the fresh water ponds principally, though I am informed, and I think I have also noticed, that it frequents also the salt water shoals. They are by no means wild birds and are approached with comparative ease. Those I saw flew low and rather slowly. One hunter had recently found a nest with eighteen eggs in it, all good; he reported finding nearly that number on several other occasions. I have taken male, female, and young birds often and find them an easy bird to shoot and fine eating. They are easily decoyed. The usual number of eggs is eight to ten, sometimes twelve. The males assemble in flocks by themselves while the females incubate. They are fine swimmers and dive read-

ily and quickly, though they are best and most easily shot while on the wing. The hunter will readily tell a flock of "shell birds" from those of any other species at an immense distance.

### HOODED MERGANSER

*Mergus cucullatus.*—(L.)

RARE, but specimens are occasionally secured in localities along the coast.

### COMMON GANNET SOLAN GOOSE

*Sula bassana.*—(L.)

COMMON in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and on the "bird rocks," where they breed in immense numbers. Occasionally a stray specimen is seen on the Labrador coast, where we encountered it a number of times; but it is a rare bird there.

### COMMON CORMORANT SHAG

*Phalacrocorax carbo.*—(L.) LEACH.

THE Shag Rocks, off the St. Mary Islands, are the great abiding place of this and the succeeding species on the coast of Labrador. Both are found here in equal abundance to all appearances, and both are called equally the "shag." My notes on these two species are as follows: Tuesday, May 24: At eight o'clock we were just off the St. Mary Islands, having gone about eighty miles in twelve hours, and, counting the curvature of the coast, a full hundred and sixty in the last twenty-four; and yet on we go! We pass Shag Rocks, a long row of bare rocks, without vegetation of any kind, where the cormorants or shags breed in large numbers upon the ledges of bare rock; they use their own guano deposits for a nest. There are two species of cormorants here; the common cormorant (*carbo*), and the double-crested cormorant (*dilophus*);

both are called shags, but the latter are generally designated by the Indian name, which is, I am informed, *wapitougan*. Both species appear to breed in equal abundance. I have seen thousands at a time lining the rocks. They sit upright in rows, upon the edges of the rocks and cliffs, and seldom one sits behind another, so that, to accommodate them, every edge of every crag presents a living fringe of cormorants; a lively-looking trimming just as some shot is fired that sends them all into the air. The eggs are two to three and, though really bluish-white in color, are almost invariably covered, more or less completely, with a calcareous deposit that renders them white and chalky. At a distance these rocks present the appearance of being covered with snow, but a nearer approach shows that this is a covering of guano from the continual droppings of the birds; while the tops of the rocks are thickly imbedded with an accumulation of guano from the same cause, firmly stamped down by the continual patterings of innumerable feet.

### DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT

*Phalacrocorax dilophus*. — (Sw.) NUTT.

THIS species is so associated with the last that it would require a much closer investigation than any which I had the time or opportunity to give to separate the habits of the two. Though both species seem to be equally abundant, this latter is doubtless the rarer.

### POMARINE JAEGER

*Stercorarius pomatorhinus*. — (TEMM.) LAWR.

As is usually the case, the birds which we are the most eager to learn about are those of which we can obtain the least information. All of these jaeger gulls doubtless occur off the coast of Labrador, and this species has been several times detected by gunners and other persons visiting the coast. I found

it near the mouth of Esquimaux River and it doubtless occurs regularly, though, from its seaward habits, it is seldom captured. It very often follows the boats and picks up pieces of refuse that are thrown overboard therefrom. It is not probably a very common species.

#### **RICHARDSON'S or PARASITIC JAEGER**

*Stercorarius parasiticus.* — (BRUNN.) GRAY.

THIS species occurs along the coast also. I obtained it in the St. Lawrence River, and am sure that it also abounds along the coast farther down toward the Straits. In flight it is easily distinguished by the length of its tail feathers. All three of these species are probably equally common.

#### **BUFFON'S ARCTIC or LONG-TAILED JAEGER**

*Stercorarius buffoni.* — (BOIE.) COUES.

ONE or two specimens alone are reported. If any of the three be rarer than the others this one is doubtless the rarest. Its feathers are very long and slender; its flight very powerful and swift.

#### **GLAUCOUS BURGOMASTER ICE GULL**

*Larus glaucus.* — BRUNN.

THIS large and handsome gull does not appear to be as common in this its southern terminus of its northern home as might at first have been expected. Without doubt it occurs occasionally all along the coast, but it does not appear to be at any time common. We obtained one of these immense snow-white fellows on November 5, at Old Fort Bay. It was sailing about high in the air, and occasionally descending close to the water to watch for food. It was called by the natives the "white Winter gull." There was only the faintest trace of a darker color on the tips of some of the feathers. The eye was a yellowish white; bill white with a purple tinge, horn color at base. Legs and feet almost white;

claws horn color to dusky. Shafts of quills of a most beautiful straw color. The bird showed unusual signs of tameness for one so naturally wild; it was probably reduced from hunger. Its graceful sailing with an occasional downward swoop were most beautiful displays of its immense wing power. The length of the one we captured was twenty-nine inches, its extent nearly sixty-four inches, the wing itself from its flexure being nearly twenty inches.

### GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

*Larus marinus.* — (L.)

This is the "great bald eagle" of Labrador and the gull tribe, and a veritable rascal he is. The largest of the gulls and but little inferior in dimensions to the eagle itself, he sails high in the air and tyrannizes over all that are beneath him. So high does he sail that even extra large wired cartridges fail to reach him; or, if they reach, he laughs with a shrill laughter at the leaden rain that patters, harmlessly, against or through his plumage. A swoop, and he has sailed unhurt away from the very muzzle of your gun before you have had even a chance to cover him; as knowing as a crow, he is often within shot yet you can rarely ever shoot him. Labrador is the home of this snowy, black-backed king of birds. Here he breeds in all the harmless security of low islands, in nests scraped together from the topmost knoll of his island home, and often a few feet only from the very water's edge. The nest and eggs are very difficult to distinguish from those of the herring gull, which also breeds in abundance with this species, the two nests being often almost side by side. The eggs are usually given by authorities as being only three, but I am positive that I have found four a number of times. They resemble those of the herring gull both in size and shape. While we are examining the nest and eggs in their exposed situation, often upon the almost bare rock, the owner is soaring in majestic beauty way, way up in the heavens far above

our heads, silently watching the threatened destruction of his or her treasure. Sometimes he utters a harsh and malicious *aw-awk, aw-awk!* as he seems to anticipate the destruction and to throw a malediction upon the destroyer. Sometimes this malicious laugh is turned into an impish chuckle of *hawe-hawe-hawe! hawe-hawe-hawe! hawe-hawe-hawe-hawe!* as he flies swiftly out of sight or remains upon motionless pinion watching his tormentor. I have often noticed a sound like that made by many of our hawks, seemingly proceeding from this species, when sailing high up in the air, sounding like a shrill *kee* with a much lower *aw*, as *kee-aw kee-aw*. I am sure that I have seen them on the coast in large numbers the last of August and thought they seemed much wilder than more early in the season, perhaps from the fact that they were probably preparing to leave *en masse* on their trip southward. The hunters shoot the bird in characteristic manner. They thoroughly conceal themselves among the high cliffs of some jutting crag near the sea, and with gun ready fire the moment one appears overhead. They aim to break the wing bone as this cripples the bird, and if not securing him then renders a second shot effective at short range. Many an old as well as young bird have I seen tumble from an almost incredible height by this process. By and by the birds become wary of the locality, then the hunter changes his position. When at sea in a boat or schooner, they are often tolled near to in cloudy weather or just at dusk by throwing offal overboard, especially pieces of cod liver; the birds are attracted by its sight and smell and venture within shot for the sake of the to them palatable prize. The great black-backed gull is a characteristic bird of Labrador. On every clear day hundreds of them may be seen, like so many sentinels, sitting upon every peak or solitary water-bound rock, sunning themselves while yet alert to everything around them. But one must see them in all the grandeur of their native home to fully realize their attractions. I have often dreamed of being wafted about in vast colonies of these snowy creatures, sporting for a mo-

ment in the atmosphere of a real world of rocks, crags, and water, to be the next moment fading dimly into *ouline* and nothingness, to a dream-world pure, while I was just awakening — to the realities of the present.

### COMMON HERRING GULL

*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*. — *CORP.*

This is the most abundant of the gulls upon the Labrador coast, and seems to be everywhere common. I have found them living in colonies and literally swarming upon every crag and rocky resting place in Southern Labrador. I shall never forget the year of 1875, when I made my first visit to the coast. From the Bird Rocks we made Mecattina Islands; from these we skirted along the coast, inside of the smaller islands, to St. Augustine; everywhere the gulls flew about and around us like puffs of white, fleecy clouds. Every resting place seemed covered with them and, in one locality, we passed through a narrow inlet and ascended a small *rigoulette* with high cliffs above us and rocks everywhere around us. Here we landed many times and pursued the birds or hunted for nests and eggs while the air was filled with the noise of their wings, and the birds themselves as they flew here and there seeking security from their unwonted intruder. The birds were hard to shoot for, although there were so many, they flew so high that our shot would scarce reach them; yet we secured a few of the many thousands seen. The herring gulls seem to breed in colonies much like the auks and puffins, at least we found them so. They are doubtless scattered all along the coast, in colonies of from ten to a thousand. I did not find them on the coast in Winter, and judge that they begin their southward migration about the first week in September or thereabouts. Their nests are built usually on the bare rocks of the low islands or cliffs everywhere along the coast. They make quite a nest of bits of moss, dried grasses, and like material, apparently scraped together from just around the locality where

the nest is situated. The eggs are usually three, though I am confident that I found four on more occasions than one. These gulls appear to have no special time for depositing their eggs, excepting, of course, keeping within the usual limits of the breeding season to this locality. We found fresh eggs and young birds in nests closely situated to each other. Young birds appeared early in the season and fresh eggs late in the season. I do not remember to have found, as I have among the bank swallows, instances of perfectly fresh eggs and young birds in the same nests, but the case was almost as bad from a scientific standpoint at least. With the young birds of all the larger species of gulls, the sailors make great pets. They rear them and the birds become quite tame and know their owners, at least sufficiently to come when they are called to be fed, and to be wary when called at any other time or by any other person. The young birds grow well in confinement, and feed greedily upon small fish and scraps of refuse fish and other articles of food. At nearly all times of the day and in all weathers these birds, with others of the same family, hover about the waters in large numbers looking for food or sail placidly about the waters of the bays or open sea, near the islands, sometimes in flocks of many hundreds. They are either very tame or very wild. I have noticed that the wildest of them will be enticed within gunshot by the prospect of food or pieces of garbage thrown overboard for this purpose from the vessel's galley. Hundreds of them hung about our vessel's stern, especially at dusk, both while anchored in some pleasant and quiet harbor and while on excursions up or down the coast. When fishing they pounce directly upon their prey, which they grasp with both feet. I have repeatedly seen specimens of either this or the great black-backed gull, perhaps both, pounce upon and grapple a fish too large for them to secure, and have watched the fight with great interest. Usually the gull succeeds in securing its victim. I am told that occasionally they fasten upon a large salmon from which they cannot break loose, and that both

are eventually dragged under the water and either one or both overcome and drowned. These (and other gulls) are generally most abundant at low tide, when they collect in large bodies and rest upon the rocks or swim in the waters just off shore. They are dreaded by the duck hunters, as they are alarmed at the slightest appearance of danger, and frighten off every particle of game by their cries and wariness. Though at times and in some places they are quite tame they are more often wilder than the wildest hawks. They are hunted in the same way as are the former species.

### KITTIWAKE GULL

*Rissa tridactyla*. — (L.) Br.

WHILE on the coast I several times saw a small gull that might have been, and probably was, of this species. It is doubtless of rather rare occurrence, and as it has been noted several times by other authorities it seems best to include it as a regular visitor in Spring and Fall, and doubtless breeding occasionally.

### BONAPARTE'S GULL

*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*. — (ORD.) LAW. R.

I FOUND this handsome little gull abundant all along the Labrador coast, more so, perhaps, in Southern Labrador, yet it was apparently common in the farthest northern locality we visited. It is a handsome little fellow, and its graceful and well-sustained beating flight made it a great favorite with those on shipboard. We often practiced firing at them, and their tameness and apparently unsuspecting and confiding nature almost shamed us for the wanton destruction not wanted, for we preserved as many as them as we could secure in good condition. Off the Fox and Meeattine islands, off Natashquan and other neighboring places, we often found this gull in flocks of say from five hundred to a thousand.

They were very tame. A short clause from my notes reads: To-day we all put off Nabisippi. We spent the time lying to about a mile off shore and shooting at the gulls, of which large numbers surrounded us. It was the species known as Bonaparte's gull, which abounds about the shoal waters and fishing grounds everywhere along this part of the coast. I cannot find any record of its breeding in Labrador, though it doubtless does breed here.

### ARCTIC TERN

*Sterna macrura.* — NAUM.

I SUPPOSE both this species and the next to come under the general name of "steerines," given them by the native fishermen. They appear common along the coast, at least from Esquimaux River and Mingan, where I saw vast flocks of them flying swiftly, apparently on their southern Fall migration. They do not seem to remain to breed.

### COMMON or WILSON'S TERN

*Sterna hirundo.* — Auct. —

ONE or two specimens of this species have been secured in Labrador, but it does not appear to be anywhere near as common as its neighbor, the Arctic tern.

### FULMAR FULMAR PETREL

*Fulmarus glacialis.* — (L.) STEPH.

THIS species doubtless occurs more or less abundantly all along the coast, but its peculiar habit of remaining at a great distance off shore, and its only occasional occurrence, render it very rare of capture. It has been recorded in one or two instances and doubtless it, with others of the same family, are regular visitants.

**LEACH'S PETREL**

*Gymochorea leucorhoa*. — (V.) COUES.

MORE or less common, at least all through the gulf, and one of the standbys, especially in "squally" weather. I doubt if any breed. I do not recollect seeing it close in shore on the Labrador coast, though I see no reason why it may not be common here as in the neighboring waters where it was met with regularly.

**GREATER SHEARWATER**

*Puffinus major*. — FABER.

THIS is the hagdown or hagdon of Labrador, and more or less common, just off shore, all along the coast. I have seen them frequently and watched their strong, graceful flight. They followed our vessel in rough weather flying to and fro across our stern and bows for hours at a time. I secured specimens from the local hunters on shore, and am convinced that it is a regular visitor. As I know so little of its general occurrence I will not attempt to describe it further from present knowledge of its habits.

**SOOTY SHEARWATER**

*Puffinus fuliginosus*. — A. STRICKL.

A FEW were seen by Dr. Coues on the Labrador coast. They were in company with *P. major*. The habits of all these species are probably not unsimilar. The sailors are said to call this the "black hagdon."

**LOON GREAT NORTHERN DIVER**

*Colymbus torquatus*. — BRUNN.

THIS is an abundant bird in Labrador, where it breeds in the inland ponds and lakes there so frequently to be met with.

Along the seacoast the bird seems to be common also, and is often seen either flying high in the air when it much resembles a Canada Goose with its long neck and short, tapering wings, or in the water just out of gunshot from the shore. It is always a hard bird to shoot, but the natives have a strange theory regarding its diving at the flash. They say that if you can creep up to one without its first seeing you you can easily shoot it when it is not looking at you. In proof of this assertion native gunners, time and again, brought me birds (and I often saw them shot at a single discharge of the gun) which they declared were so killed. I, with others, have chased these birds for hours together, in a boat about the harbors and bays, shooting at them as they emerged from a long dive only to redive with a swiftness that continually baffled us. Loons are very common in the early Spring, both flying and in the open water of the bays and harbors or just off the islands outside. Strangely enough the natives, who will eat almost anything eatable, will not touch the loon, though the young bird is extremely good eating, at least we, who had been shut up for six months of Winter with little or no fresh meat, found them so in Spring. A good number of eggs were reported to me while on the coast, though I do not remember positively of seeing any of them.

### **RED-THROATED DIVER**

*Colymbus septentrionalis.* — L. —

THIS species doubtless occurs, though the next, although a very rare bird, is often found in this region. One of the priests from Bersarlis informed me that he knew of several captures of the latter.

### **BLACK-THROATED DIVER**

*Colymbus arcticus.* — L. —

SEVERAL well-authenticated instances of the capture of

this species have come under my observation, and I am told that at the museum at Bersamis there are several specimens taken from these waters, one having been taken the same year I was there (1880). The same parties left with me the impression that there were also eggs of this bird in the same place, though I was unable to verify the statement or hypothesis at the time.

### **AMERICAN RED-NECKED GREBE**

*Podiceps grisegena holballi.* — (REINH.) COUES.

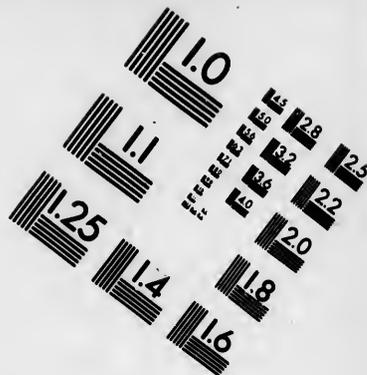
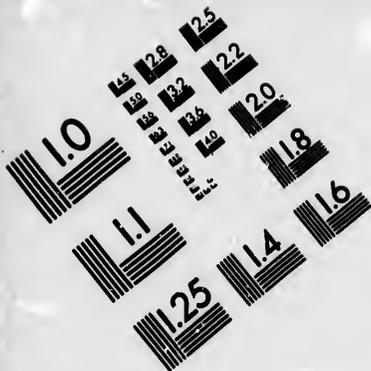
THIS is called locally the "Wabby," and much resembles a small loon in its flight and general appearance. It occurs more to the southward, and breeds occasionally on the islands with other sea birds. It is by no means rare, yet can hardly be called common.

### **RAZOR-BILLED AUK TINKER TURRE**

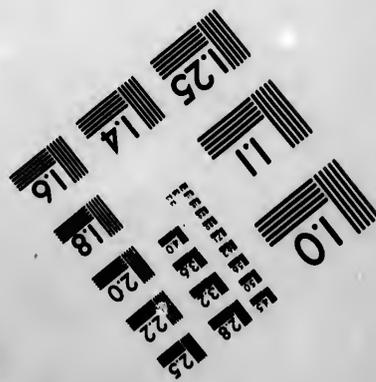
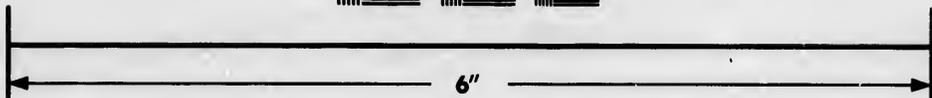
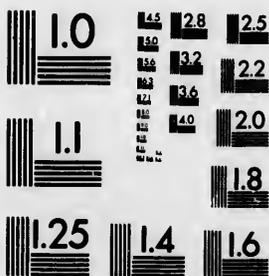
*Utaania torva.* — (L.) LEACH.

REGARDING this and the succeeding characteristic birds of Labrador a book could well be written, but we must pass them by with notices merely brief but to the point. With regard to the razor-billed auk, the "tinker" or "turre" as it is often called, I have noticed them breeding at the Fox Islands, off Kekarpwei River, in almost as large colonies as the "parakeets" off Parakeet or Greenley Island. I noticed them, also, in thousands about several other small islands, and found that this species was always very abundant about this locality while much rarer and replaced by the foolish guillemot or "murre" farther northward. Here they breed in the crevices of the rocks, long, deep, and narrow clefts being sought. I did not find but a single egg in a nest, but was repeatedly told by the inhabitants that, if I took the eggs, the birds "will lay again another day." The people here systematically take all the eggs they can find regularly twice a week through-





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out the breeding season, and find the birds so wonderfully accommodating that the last batch taken is nearly as numerous as the first. The "turrets" associate with both the "murrets" and the black guillemots. The egg of the latter bird, though smaller and otherwise distinct, is not unsimilar in appearance, and often the two are found breeding side by side, though seldom in any very great numbers. The razor-billed auks are among the first birds to be seen on approaching the Labrador coast. We found them much more abundant in Southern than in Northern Labrador. With both the razor-billed auk and the foolish guillemot considerable similarity of habits appear to exist; possibly this results from the fact that both species are so numerous that the chances of individualizing them is reduced to the shape of the bill as seen at short range only, but regarding the flight and habits of the two I know of no one who has satisfactorily, to me at least, distinguished between them. We saw thousands of both species; they passed and repassed us so rapidly and so thoroughly bewildered us, as they seemed to be bewildered themselves, that I could not tell surely in describing either species whether the remark applied equally to both or exclusively to one. It appeared to me that both were remarkably similar in habits. On approaching the coast we saw single birds or long lines of them flying here and there in a frightened manner close to or a little above the water, often almost touching the waves with their wings as they veered or rose and fell in undulations like the billowy crests beneath them. They were never wild, but flew directly over our vessel or across her bows with as much freedom as along the surface of the sea on either side of us. Their flight was strong and well-sustained, the beats of their wings rapid and powerful. At times they would turn from side to side quickly, so as to show alternately their white bellies and their black backs. They appeared to prefer a long, straight line from which, if they veered at all, it was suddenly and in a right-angled direction. The nearer we approached the coast the more abundant they became. They filled the

waters and the air around about and above us. We could have shot hundreds from the deck of our schooner, as she bowled along, without apparently diminishing the number about us or frightening off those already around. They would often drop suddenly, as if shot, to the water beneath them, where they would remain, evidently perfectly at home, keeping pace with us almost with their swift swimming or diving with incredible alacrity and remaining beneath the water for several minutes to appear in some direction contrary to that looked for to continue their gambols, or to take wing as suddenly as they took to the water and disappear in the distance. On the approach of stormy or foggy weather this species, or its neighbor the foolish guillemot, I could not learn which, though perhaps it is a habit of both species, assemble in large numbers near some shoal, out at sea a little ways, and seem to go through with a sort of mock caucus or citizens' assembly, each bird uttering a hoarse, rasping note that together can be heard a mile away. From the resemblance of the sound to the word used, the people call them, at such times, "gudds," and the noise reminds one more of the wrangling of human voices at a "town meeting" than of anything else that I can imagine. Nor at these "meetings" did the sound of our guns seem to frighten them in the least; they would simply move off, in a body, farther to sea, and then continue their strange manœuvres even more fiercely than ever. When in flying they wish to turn in some contrary direction, they open and shut the feathers of the tail as if, thereby, to more surely direct or assist their motions. The people shout and wave their hats at them and call out "turn-about, turn-about," or "gudd, gudd, gudd," and various other words and expressions, thinking thereby, so they say, that the birds will turn and fly directly at them, and in fact it seems as if they often did this very thing. Many a fine hour's sport have I had practicing upon these same fellows while on the wing, and it requires a good gun and a heavy charge to kill, at the first shot, these tough, hardy birds, yet we often ate the flesh of their breasts,

when thoroughly boiled, and found them very good and not at all fishy. I will not attempt to describe the eggs of this bird. When once seen they can never be mistaken for the eggs of any other species with which I am acquainted. The ground color is white, and there are black serawls all over its surface chiefly concentrated into a blotched ring at the greater end, with rarely any markings at all on the smaller end. They are deposited anywhere in clefts of rocks, in open situations, and wherever the bird happens to be when desirous of laying. The breeding habits of this bird are, like their other habits, to me at least, so similar to those of the foolish guillemot, that I must leave the discriminating between them more closely for others.

### COMMON PUFFIN PARRAKEET

*Fratercula arctica.* — (L.) STEPH.

HOWEVER similar in habits the razor-billed auk and foolish guillemot may be, it is different with the puffin, another of Labrador's characteristic birds, which has habits peculiar to itself. We found the puffin occasional only as we approached the Labrador coast, and occasionally only until we reached its vast breeding places, the Parrakeet and Greenley Islands, just within the mouth of the Straits of Belle Isle. Here they congregated in tens of thousands, nor was hardly a single bird seen until we were within half a mile of the Island, then they rose, of one accord, and, as if with a common impulse, began circling around their abode and nesting-place. If there were one hundred birds there were as many thousand. They flew above, about, and around us; they lined the waters, they sat like sentinels upon the shore and rocks, like flies on a plate of molasses, or hornets about a sugar-barrel. They seemed utterly bewildered by our presence; and so tame that we could almost catch them or pick them up in our hand. They had tunneled the ground with their holes in every direction, and hundreds peered cautiously from these burrows or

flew from them to join the dense black ring that wound around and around the island. Their burrows extended far into the loamy earth of which the island was composed, notwithstanding the impediments in the shape of rocks everywhere, above and below the ground. I doubt if man or animal could have picked its way across this island without stepping upon or breaking the earth's crust into one of these holes. They are made by the bird itself, aided by its strong bill and sharp and powerful claws. They are about the size of the body of the bird or a little larger, and generally from two to three feet deep. They wind and bend and often intermingle, much as in the case of the well-known bank swallow. At the extremity is a very little dried grass and a single white egg, with seldom any other marks excepting perhaps a few obsolete scrawls or spots, and a general bluish or brownish tint often replacing the otherwise white shell. My notes add a few remarks which may be of interest: A great trick of the Labradorians is to get a greenhorn to stick his hand into one of the burrows of this bird when the bird is supposed to be within. If you examine carefully the bill — of horn, nearly two inches in length and about the same in height — you will see that a most alarming pair of forceps may be thus put into motion, and, as the bird is one of the fiercest of its kind, can readily imagine why the victim never repeats the experiment. The number of birds that I saw on Greenley Island was simply immense, and could never have been counted. I have often seen the water covered with a clustered flock, all engaged in making the hoarse, rasping sound that has been mentioned before and is not unlike the filing of a saw, that is made by both the auks, and which gives all alike the name of "gudds." When on the wing I seldom if ever saw them mix with other birds. Though they appear in large numbers at stated times, they disappear or rather disperse after breeding almost as suddenly as they came; yet stragglers do not leave until the harbors are nearly or quite blocked up with ice. At Greenley Island, although there is a large fish-canning establishment, houses,

and a lighthouse on the northeast end, these birds occupy the other side unmolested and are seldom interfered with by gunners; yet the island is scarcely three-quarters of a mile long and even less than half a mile wide. The flight of the puffin is swift as an arrow. It has no notes that I could perceive. When in the water it is obliged to rush over the surface some feet, flapping its wings and apparently paddling vigorously before it can gain sufficient impetus to take flight. When sitting sentinel-like on some rock, previous to taking a downward plunge into the air to wing, it reminds one greatly of pictures of auks and penguins, which birds they greatly resemble in many respects. We found the breasts of this bird when made into a soup and boiled thoroughly not bad eating, though much tougher than were the auks we tried.

### SEA DOVE

*Alle nigricans.* — LINK.

THIS little fellow is very common some years in the waters about the islands and harbors all along the Labrador coast. My notes say: From October 15, until the ice sets in, I found them common everywhere in the waters of the bays and harbors, and they are generally quite tame. The people on the coast regard their arrival as a sign of cold weather; but it certainly did not prove to be the case this year, since the birds were unusually abundant and the Winter an unusually mild one. The popular and local name is pronounced as if spelled "bun-num." The birds associate with the black guillemot and possesses with it many habits in common. It dives at the flash of the gun, swims long distances under water, but is generally very tame and quite easy to approach, though quick in its movements. I have seen them killed with an oar, after a long chase in a boat. When first taking flight they half fly and half push themselves along the surface of the water, since their small wings and unequally balanced bodies make it extremely difficult for them to fly freely. I have seen one pur-

sued in a boat by a number of men, who amused themselves by throwing the oars and pieces of wood, together with the ballast of the boat, at it, and yet not a single missile hit its mark since the bird was able to dodge each article thrown at it by diving and appearing in a most unexpected direction; the bird was scarcely a dozen yards away, yet it escaped unharmed. I have noticed nearly all the changes of plumage in this bird that I have seen in the pigeon guillemot during the first year, though the head, so far as I have seen, is always black. It is a familiar little fellow, and seldom killed, unless scarcity of food demands even this small morsel.

### **BLACK GUILLEMOT PIGEON**

*Uria grylle.* — (L.) BRUNN.

My notes read: Friday, the 15th. I became quite well acquainted to-day with the "pigeon," as it is here called, otherwise known as the black guillemot. This little bird is one of the most abundant of the waterfowl, next to the eider ducks, puffins, and murre, that we have upon the coast. Near St. Augustine we saw this bird for the first time, though it is found in Winter all along the Atlantic seaboard as far south as New Jersey, growing more and more rare as it approaches the latter place. I have seen them everywhere in the waters in and about the islands, though never very far from land, from the opening of the bay in the spring until the ice closes the last open waters early in December. I have found several stages of plumage of this bird (referable to the different ages) which takes three years to mature. A very extraordinary form marks the second year's growth. The whole plumage is inky black, both above and below, and with white blotches imperfectly rounded, the size of an ordinary thimble head, scattered irregularly all over its body; the bill is blackish carmine; the legs and feet dusky carmine; the wings with a pure white patch as usual. I think the white tail feathers were present, but am not sure on this point. I cannot learn if

this plumage appears at any other time than in the Fall of the year; in this dress the birds are rare here, and apparently pass its stages in some wild place, or region where they are not easily detected. The hunters about the coast told me that these spotted birds were very rare. In the early Fall the pigeon is quite tame, but grows wilder as the cold weather advances. When pursuing them with a boat they are at times easy to approach, while others most difficult, and they are often very wild without any apparent reason. The pigeon will usually dive "at the flash"; but often, especially when feeding, it allows you to approach quite near to it. In feeding the bird bends its neck forward and dips its beak into the water; at this time, when the head is turned forward and a little away from the hunter the latter is generally sure of securing his game. Sometimes the pigeon takes wing nearly as soon as it perceives a boat approaching, and it is then impossible to get within shooting distance of it; its flight is at such times rapid but easy, generally low and in a straight line. When tame they usually escape by diving rather than by flight and by swimming long distances under the water; they do this easily and in any direction they may choose. When wounded they often dive, as do many of the duck family, swim or sink to the bottom, and, clinging to the seaweed, die there. I have often watched them dive at such times and never return. On still, warm days they stay near the land feeding, often in large numbers. In large flocks specimens showing a greater or less degree of albinism may be frequently taken or seen. When flying low over the water a long distance away, if fired at and not hit, I have seen them drop suddenly to the water and dive, thus escaping the hunter who does not know, at so great a distance, in what direction to watch for their reappearing. The flesh, especially of the young bird, is excellent eating, and for this reason they are shot in great numbers; they are regarded as the hardest bird to kill, next to the loons, that dwell here. The pigeon breeds in large numbers on several of the small islands along the coast. On one island a colony of

these birds breed exclusively. They lay usually three eggs in some exposed situation, or in the cleft of some rock, making no nest, and seem to let the sun do the greater share of the hatching; they are oblong and ovoid in shape, tapering suddenly, the ground color being from greenish to pure white, and the varied streaks and blotches or spots scattered more or less thickly all over their surface, especially so in a concentric ring around the tip of the egg, are of black or various shades of brown. Nearly all the birds of this family have what are apparently purplish spots upon their eggs, but these are black primarily and appear purple only from a slight covering of the white line of the shell itself. If the line be scraped away the spots will show up black.

**COMMON or FOOLISH GUILLEMOT MURRE**

*Lomvia troile.* — (L.) BRDT.

BEFORE reading the present remarks upon this species one should compare the notes as given upon its congener the razor-billed auk. The egg is noted for its variable size and the nature of its markings. I have taken them all the way from pure white, though an endless series of blotches, and waved lines of black, purple, and brown, to almost pure green and even a delicate pink barely spotted or marked at the larger end. The people on the coast cannot tell whether either the turre or murre lays more than a single egg, or whether they sit upon their eggs or allow the sun to hatch them. I have been told, on apparently good authority, that they *do* sit upon their eggs, and consequently are furnished with a large, bare place upon the lower belly, where they have picked the feathers from themselves in order to make the proper hollow in their downy covering for the egg to rest in; but I failed to notice the spot upon any of the birds shot. I could not ascertain, either, the period of incubation. While laying to, one morning, off the Fox Islands, near the Mecattina Islands, several of us landed and filled our pails with murre's eggs, while

with our guns we shot nearly a hundred of the birds in little less than an hour; and yet we left them flying as thickly over and by the island as when we had first landed. We boiled some of the eggs and found them excellent eating. They are not quite as rich in flavor as the hens' eggs, but certainly equal to them for eating purposes, especially to hungry men.

**THICK-BILLED or BRUNNICH'S GUILLEMOT**

*Lomvia arva.* — (PALL.) COUES.

THIS bird doubtless occurs in abundance with the other species, but we did not, at the time, discriminate between them. The species was so indefinitely mentioned by our ornithologists generally that we had not looked for it.



*Bird-Life in Labrador.*

APPENDIX.

ANDRÉ visited Labrador in the Summer of 1833, with his youngest son and four companions whose names have been handed down to us as Thomas Lincoln, William Ingalls, George Shattuck, and Joseph Coolidge. The schooner Ripley was chartered in Boston, and the party sailed from Eastport, Me., on June 6. The course which they pursued the writer followed in 1875 and again in 1882, and from Audubon's journal accounts must have had nearly the same experiences from fog, wind, and weather. In one of the harbors Audubon met Captain Bayfield, then prosecuting his survey of the Canadian coast. This was, I believe, at Natashquan. Even the great naturalist can become facetious upon occasions, as the following remark will show: "The seals are carried home on sledges drawn by Esquimaux dogs," he says, "which are so well trained that, on reaching home, they push the seals from the sledges with their noses and return to the killers with regular dispatch." He adds, however, "This, reader, is hearsay!" July 23, he visited the sealing establishment of Mr. Robertson. July 26, he came opposite Bonne Esperance, but, as the pilot did not know the harbor and it was dark, he passed on to Bradore. He speaks of icebergs bearing rocks beneath them, "hundreds of tons," and depositing them wherever they stand and melt or go to pieces. But we must pass on to other matter, and, taking my own list as a basis of comparison, surely an allowable proceeding for any writer, will see what additions can be made to it from outside sources, in order to make it a true exposition, as far as possible to date, of our knowledge of the subject. I am helped in this by Mr. Lucien M. Turner's very excellent resumé of the subject, entitled: "List of the Birds of Labrador, including Ungava, East Main, Moose, and Gulf Districts of the Hudson Bay Company, together with the Island of Anticosti," to be found in the "Proceedings of the United States National Museum," volume 8, 1883, page 233. In this he reviews what has been said upon the subject of Labrador birds by Audubon, Nuttall, Richardson, Kumlein, and others.

On the authority of Audubon we may add Wilson's thrush (young, July 20), both the kinglets (breeding), red-bellied nuthatch (rare: "one which had probably been driven there by a storm"), winter wren (Southern Labrador, July 20), black and yellow warbler (breeding), cerulean warbler ("a dead one"), blackburnian warbler ("several"), red-poll warbler (plentiful), Canadian fly-catching warbler (breeding), white-eyed vireo ("few were seen"), bank swallow ("said to be plentiful on the South

### Bird-Life in Labrador.

shore"). Lincoln's finch ("found young, July 4"), swamp sparrow ("abundant"), chewink ("northward to Labrador"), common crow ("few"), kingbird ("breeding"), pewee flycatcher ("breeding"), olive-sided flycatcher, wood pewee, least flycatcher ("nesting"), ruby-throated hummingbird ("few"), yellow-billed cuckoo ("few"), black-billed cuckoo (with a question as to the exact locality), pigeon hawk ("the eggs in three instances, which occurred at Labrador, were five"), marsh hawk ("saw it in Labrador"), ruffed grouse ("from Maryland to Labrador"), American oyster-catcher ("found several breeding"). Turner credits Audubon with "*Gavia alba*, ivory gull," white-winged gull ("few"), least tern ("breeding: Southern shore"). I strongly suspect that many of these were discovered along the northern portions of the Province of Quebec — the north shore of the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence I mean — north of Natushqnan and south of Blanc Sablon, the line of Labrador proper.

On the authority of Mr. C. Drexler and Mr. James McKenzie, many species were found at Moose Factory; these occur so near Labrador that they are of interest from the possibility of their crossing the line into the interior of this peninsula. In the true acceptation of the word they are not Labrador birds, as can be easily proved. Black and white creeper (two specimens, Drex.), Cape May warbler (one, Drex.), Summer yellow bird (one, Ft. George, Drex.), bay-breasted warbler (one, Drex.), small-billed water thrush (one, Drex.), Philadelphia vireo (one, Drex.), cedar waxwing (one, Drex.), purple finch (Drex.), Lincoln's finch ("specimens," Drex.), least flycatcher (Drex.), belted kingfisher (one, Drex.); saw-whet owl (one, MeK.), broad-winged hawk (one, MeK.); passenger pigeon (one, Drex.); green blue heron (one, MeK.); American bittern (breeding, Drex.), Wilson's snipe ("specimens at Rupert House," Drex.), sora rail (Drex.); Cassin tern (one, MeK.).

Mr. Turner's own list, made for the most part at Fort Chimo and Ungava, Northern Labrador, is very valuable. He records: Allee's thrush ("common, breeds") white wagtail or *Motacilla alba* ("four individuals"), bay-breasted warbler ("three, black river, Hamilton Inlet, July 9, 1882"), small-billed water thrush ("several"), great northern shrike ("not common, breeds"), barn swallow ("breeds at head of Hamilton Inlet"), white-winged crossbill ("abundant, breeds"), mealy redpoll *A. hornemanni* and greater redpoll *A. horn. rosivata* ("common in winter"), white-rumped redpoll *A. horn. exilipes* and common redpoll *A. liuaria* ("abundant and resident"), goldfinch ("occurs in southern portions of Labrador"), Lincoln's finch ("rare"), black Canada jay ("resident and breeds, coastwise and interior"), ruby-throated hummingbird (one), black-backed and banded-backed three-toed woodpeckers ("common and resident"), yellow-shafted flicker and short-eared owl ("common in Summer only"), dusky horned owl *B. virginianus saturatus* ("not rare, resident"), the gerfalcons *H. islandicus*, *H. rusticolus*, and *H. rusticolus*

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*obsoletus*, duck hawk, osprey ("on Northwest River"), goshawk, rough-legged hawk ("light and dark"), golden eagle ("breeds"), ruffed grouse, greater and lesser yellow-legs, red and northern phalarope, Virginia rail ("one, Hamilton Inlet"), eoot ("one, Nain"), whistling swan *O columbiana* ("occasional"), greater snow goose ("occasional"), green-winged teal, Barrow's golden-eye, American golden-eye, Sabine's gull ("one"), Arctic tern, Richardson's jaeger, fulmar ("abundant from Chidley to Belle Isle"), stormy petrel ("two"), Wilson's and Leach's petrel ("Atlantic, Labrador"), red-throated diver also loon (not rare), [razor-billed auk common pullin, and common guillemot, not observed in Hudson's Straits] sea dove, black guillemot, Maudt's guillemot, Brünnich's guillemot ("common, breeds in Hudson Straits"). Besides these Turner also mentions as common in Northern Labrador the majority of the species which are known to be common in Southern Labrador.

Still further we have Kumlein's record of the purple finch ("one on shipboard off Resolution Island"), goldfinch *S. tristis* ("on shipboard off Cape Mngford"), and cinereous shearwater ("common from Belle Isle to Grinnell Bay"). Richardson's of the sharp-shinned hawk ("one near Moose Factory"). Nuttall's of the fish hawk ("from Labrador"), and bald eagle as "breeding and rearing their young in all the intermediate space from Nova Scotia to Labrador." Elliott Cones of the possible occurrence of the sparrow hawk, though I have grave doubts of this little fellow as reaching true Labrador north of Blanc Sablon, "a single individual," he says, though does not give the locality; of Wilson's snipe ("a single individual"), buff-breasted sandpiper ("a single individual"), ring-billed gull ("three young-of-the-year at Henley Harbor"), sooty shearwater ("few"). Dr. Cones's record of the pine-creeping warbler in Labrador, as appearing in the "Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Science, of Philadelphia," p. 220, is denied in the "Birds of the Northwest," in the following words, (p. 69): "The quotation 'Labrador' originated in an error of mine some years since. The specimen was young of *striata*."

Labrador ought to give us further knowledge of *Cepphus mandtii*, which Stejneger ("Proceedings of the U. S. Nat. Mus." vol. 7, p. 216) says to "breed in Greenland," and which is not "a synonym of *C. columba*" but, as he says, "a perfectly good species," and that the "National Museum possesses adult birds in breeding plumage from St. George, Hudson's Bay, collected by Mr. Drexler." Mr. Turner says of it: "Occurs in Hudson Straits occasionally only, according to my own observation, plentiful on the Eastern coast of Labrador." Also of the curious form of *U. carbo*. Kumlein, in "The Natural History of Arctic America," p. 105, says: "I have seen three entirely black specimens, of which I considered to be *U. carbo*. One was obtained in Cumberland." Mr. Ridgeway describes a new variety of jay [referred to above] in the "Proceedings of the U. S. Nat. Mus." vol. 5, p. 15, as "*Perisoreus Canadensis nigricapillus*," Labra-

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bor, April 2, 1880; "Schneider;" presented by Dr. L. Stejneger. Mr. Turner records this as "coastwise and interior especially abundant. Resident and breeds at Fort Chimo."

I should like to know more of Brünnich's guillemot in Labrador; also of the so-called "blue gulls" of the inhabitants, who talk of the "fresh-water blue gull" and of the "salt-water blue gull" of which I "never took a specimen," according to the local hunters there, — could they have been *leucopterus* and *delawarensis*? possibly. Another point, I believe that the great black-backed gull and the herring gull lay, respectively, three and four eggs almost if not quite invariably. In Mr. Edward A. Samuel's "Ornithology and Oölogy of New England," Mr. William Cooper, of Quebec, is credited with: rough-legged hawk ("breeds in Labrador"), hawk owl ("breeds in the northern portions of Hudson Bay and Labrador"), white-winged crossbill ("breeds"), northern phalarope *P. hyperboreus* ("common"), and ring-billed gull *L. delawarensis* ("breeds"). In another place he affirms Audubon's statement relative to the Blackburnian warbler, thus: "I saw numbers of this species in the woods of Labrador on the seventeenth of June, but could not discover the nest."

From the above references it will be seen at a glance that it is highly probable that a further careful research into the bird fauna of Labrador will reveal many treasures and rarities hitherto unlooked for in so arctic a climate. As a rule birds are found where Summer is. While, then, the warmth of Summer o'erspreads, even for a short time, the otherwise frigid climate of arctic North America, of Labrador, at least, birds swarm as in more favored regions. You will see that I have bounded Labrador by the bird fauna of the land north and west, and of the water east and south. The interior of the peninsula remains yet to be explored. In these days it is as much as one's life is worth to give a bird a scientific (Latin) name, and though I have given, generally, only the English names of the species here they will hardly be misunderstood I think.

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*Finis.*

