



1917



The  
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Review.

A Monthly Journal devoted to  
Literature, Natural History and  
Local News.



## The Rockwood Review.

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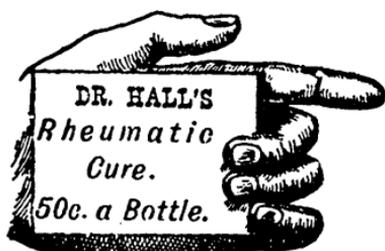
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## The Rockwood Review.

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(CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE.)

hawks. True the English sparrow is a warrior bold, but his warfare is generally of the internecine order, and so far I have been unable to account for any diminution in the numbers of native birds that cannot be accounted for by the small boy and his shot gun. What a chapter might be written on this fellow!

To some people the sparrow's endless chirp is a source of imitation, and I will not deny that the bird has, like some other foreign importations, many bad habits, yet it is still an open question whether his good deeds do not outweigh his faults. To settle this point we must once more come to hard facts. I know that in cities the shade trees are benefited by the sparrows that keep them clear of destructive caterpillars, and from close observation I can positively assert that the sparrow will take insect food in preference to anything else. It is when he is driven by actual want that he does harm. In the spring time he eats buds, and in the fall he destroys a certain amount of grain, but lately he has developed a habit that promises to be of immense value, that is the grasshopper eating habit. Mr. Brodie, of Toronto, has written a very interesting paper on this subject, and gives facts that should make sparrow haters pause in their persecution of Jacob, and induce them to suspend hostilities until the vexed question of his usefulness or destructiveness is settled. Of 307 birds killed, the stomachs of 43 per cent contained insects 27 per cent grasshoppers. These facts are suggestive, and seem to point to a stay of proceedings on the part of those who would destroy every sparrow in America.

Last week I saw it stated that in one part of the U. S. the English sparrow had annihilated a cabbage worm that had in the past proved very destructive. Time will deter-

mine the true place of the English sparrows, and it may then be learned that just as with the birds of prey, we have been "entertaining an angel unawares." It is now an accepted fact that birds of prey are to a great extent beneficial, many of them eminently so, and those persons who are in a position to judge fairly, are loud in their protests against the destruction of these birds.

Kingston is a particularly favorable point for observations on birds, as great numbers cross the river here rather than attempt the passage over the lake. This remark particularly applies to the numerous family of warblers.

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## The Rockwood Review

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# The Rockwood Review.

VOL. 3.

KINGSTON, FEBRUARY 1ST, 1897.

NO. 12.

## LOCAL ITEMS.

In the first round for the Rockwood Currier Trophy, the City came out five points ahead:—

City.	Rockwood.
F. Shaw,	W. Potter,
Col. Drury,	W. Carr,
W. Dalton,	W. Cochrane,
A. Strachan, Skip 23.	J. Dennison, Skip 11.
W. Vantassel,	T. McCammon,
Col. Cotton,	Dr. Forster,
J. Stewart,	J. Davidson,
Dr. Watson, Skip 16.	Dr. Clarke, Skip 23.

The Match was played on perfect ice, and was keenly contested.

The Carnival given by the Hockey Club, on the 28th inst, in our Rink, was attended by a large number from Portsmouth and Kingston.

Councillor McCammon sounds well. Congratulations Thomas. It would have been the same greeting either in or out. Let us now have something to show for our taxes—free water, police protection, freelunches, free schools, anything at all as long as it is free. Make Portsmouth a second Parkdale, even to the boom in real estate. Some question has been raised in regard to the qualifications of the Councillors—we are surprised. If it had been in regard to the qualification of Hatters' Bay, we could not have wondered. We shall now listen for the hum of infant industries in place of the bazoo of the idling infant, so long identified with our little town. Mammoth incubators for the artificial hatching of goslings shall rise up like mushrooms in the night, the school fees exacted from lordly and luxurious government officials shall enable us to build noble schools, and under the spreading chestnut trees in Aberdeen Park, we shall listen to the strains of the Portsmouth Band. Yes, Thomas, we expect much of you.

Mr. Hornibrook has thoughtfully cut down some of the lilac bushes in the corner of his garden, so that cars coming down the Asylum Hill can be seen before the crossing is reached. This has made the most dangerous crossing near Kingston comparatively safe.

The K. P. Choir kindly invited the Rockwood officials to attend a sacred Concert on the 26th January.

Although Jock Harty is light, yet he has been always able to show what can be accomplished by skill, without brute strength, and those who have been content to follow his example have profited thereby. It is conceded that those who know something of all hockeyists east and west that Jock Harty is probably the best exponent of the game Canada has yet seen, and he should receive full credit for what he has done for the game.

Queen's should have a fair chance for the Championship of Ontario, although she has had stronger teams. Still it is almost impossible to gauge the strength of western teams from newspaper accounts, and unless Hockey has improved tremendously, it will be the old story. The great factor of danger is being forced to play in a baby rink like that at Peterboro. No championship game should be played in a small rink, as it handicaps first-class teams.

The Frontenacs will make a bold bid for intermediate honors, their forwards are very fast and the defence fairly strong. Their Junior team is too much a thing of shreds and patches to be expected to win, still they may do the trick.

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This winter's visitation of white winged Crossbills has been the most remarkable known in many years. These birds have been here in large numbers for at least two months, the males and the females as a general rule keeping in separate flocks. They are very tame, and can easily be approached when they come to the ground to gather the seeds from cones which have fallen down. The male birds are very brilliant in plumage—a bright crimson with dark wings slashed with bright white bars—these glaring contrasts in color making the bird conspicuous. When captured the Crossbills do not seem the least alarmed, are not at all worried over captivity, and in a day or so will sit on the captor's hand and pick up seeds. It is characteristic of nearly all northern birds to be free from fear, and their gentle habits make them easy prey for heartless boys and young men, who seem to think that their mission is to destroy everything in the animal kingdom. The structure of the Crossbills beak is very remarkable, the mandibles being crossed at the points in such a manner that the seeds in cones can be extracted with great rapidity. Sometimes the common Crossbill is found with the flocks of white winged birds, and Siskins are to be seen with them also.

Rockwood has decided not to take up the ice-boating just yet awhile, as Hatter's Bay has able representatives in the shape of Reeve Fisher and Mr. Sullivan. It will be time enough to step into the breach when they fail, and although the odds against them are about thirty to one on paper, on ice they are not quite so great.

The Village affairs of Portsmouth are getting somewhat mixed, and with the Auciet bard we can fairly exclaim, "Where are we at." Some sarcastic critics wonder why we require a Council anyway, for they

claim that municipal affairs are pretty well arranged, now that the snow question has been settled against the Street Car Company. The only other question of importance is the goose question, and we all know how every Alderman will vote on that. Free geese and government pasture win every time, and the only chance of getting even, is for the government officials to keep up large families, who will attend school without paying fees. The first meeting of the council was ineffective as it had not a quorum, whatever that means, and several of the aldermen elect refused to swear in the presence of the Reeve, although it is suggested that they had ample provocation to indulge in a mild species of profanity in private. The "Hope" of the new year refused to swear, the hardy man of Stone was silent when the qualification oath was suggested, and the man of the Mill admitted that he needed more grist to enable him to go on. Someone suggested that all should go out and "cut grass" for a pastime, and things looked squally for a while. In the meanwhile several likely candidates have been feeling the public pulse with a view to embarking on a public career.

The advent of the Torpedo in ice yachting circles seems to have resulted in an explosion, but instead of the torpedo going off, as a well directed explosive should, it is the plucky owner who has done so, having resigned from the Kingston Yacht Club. In the meanwhile Portsmouth is wondering what makes all the fuss about international challenges. The Defiance of Portsmouth defeated all of the crack iceboats last year, and the Cup came to stay. After we have downed Cape Vincent, we shall move on with our challenge to the Hudson, with a Canadian boat, a Canadian crew and a Canadian

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spirit, that is if Kingston does not get ahead of us. If Captain Lee will come west and join Hatters' Bay Club, we shall be delighted to give him some cup winning pointers, back up his challenge, furnish him with a first-class crew for his boat, and appropriate all of the glory—of course provided that he foots all bills.

It is evident that the study of navigation is not taken up in the school course, that is if we form opinions on what is to be seen at the Penitentiary buoy on a race day. Some of the gybes made by the iceboats are fearfully and wonderfully done, others not done at all, and many of the sailors might fairly be classed with the Sir Joseph Porter, K. C. B. On the other hand some of the boats are magnificently sailed and handled.

To the citizens who have been interested in the subject of hypnotism of late, we would commend an article entitled the "Eternal Gullible," which appeared in the Century two or three years ago. In this article Mr. Ernest Hart made a complete exposure of many of the dark ways of professional hypnotism, and his facts were proved beyond doubt. In Chester (England) quite recently, the performances of a subject who was supposed to be in a trance state for several days, were so out of keeping with the requirements of the hypnotic condition, that the affair had to be settled in the Police Court. Kingstonians should feel deeply grateful to the "Daily News" for the plucky way it stood by its guns in a recent discussion on this subject. It sometimes requires a good deal of courage to attack a humbug, when the public is anxious to be pulled.

Mr. John Redmond, who has been seriously ill for some weeks, is slowly convalescing.

**BIRTHS.**—In Kingston, December 30th, 1896, the wife of W. Dehaney, Newcourt, of a daughter.

In Portsmouth, January 18th, 1897, the wife of John Graham of a daughter.

Curling has been going on in the Rockwood Rink for some time quietly and steadily, in the view of some important matches ahead, and the competition is keen. The patients are enthusiastic curlers, and practice with a regularity that makes perfection possible, and the rivalry between different wards is developing. In the local contests, Dr. Forster's Rink has downed the McLean quartette, and Mr. Davidson has done the same thing for Mr. Cochrane. For the Ontario Tankard and Rockwood Trophy, the skips are Messrs. Dennison and Clarke.

The Entertainment given by the Rockwood Staff to the Convicts was much appreciated, although very long, and a more enthusiastic audience it would be difficult to find.

Miss I. N. Walker, of Belleville Institute for Deaf and Dumb, Belleville, is the guest of Mr. McLean. Miss Elsie Lockie, of Parkdale, is visiting at Rockwood House.

The children about Rockwood are to give the patients a unique entertainment in a week or so, and some very novel features are to be introduced.

The Stereoptican is a decided success this year with its electric light attachments.

Columbine hands in the following original joke, and Columbine is fond of a joke too.

Fader: Now, Sammy, dot vas a goot poy—take de castor oil, and his pappa will let him use what is left on de spoon for hair oil.

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### HOCKEYANA.

Rockwood has occupied no insignificant position in Hockey circles this season, and if it had entered the Ontario League, it is almost certain that Junior championship honors would have been secured, as it is the record is very flattering indeed.

On January 1st the players met Napanee in the City Rink, and although the ice was heavy, gave a good exhibition of Hockey, winning by a score of 3 to 2. On January 9th the Gentlemen Cadets from the R. M. C., a team in the Senior League, were defeated by a score of 21 to 4. On the 11th, the Queen's University—minus the immortal Jock Harty—were defeated in a close game by 11 to 10. This was a grand victory indeed, as Queen's hold the Championship of Ontario, and have since won the Intercollegiate Championship of America. It must be said though that the champions were not familiar with our Rink, and this made a difference in their game. On January 12th, the celebrated Frontenacs were defeated, 14 to 13; but on the 21st the Champions defeated our boys in the City Rink, 7 to 1, in a beautiful game, much closer than the score would indicate. Here the large rink was an important factor, and although our boys had excellent combination and effective team play, they did not seem to know how to score. The defeat was an honorable one though, and when the Local League Matches are played, Rockwood should give an excellent account of itself. Our players are a sturdy lot of fellows, fast skaters and clever stick handlers. Those who have played in the different matches are:—J. Shea, W. Hamilton (Capt.), H. Tandy, Stanley Wilson, C. M. Clarke, G. Coxworthy, E. Gilmour, Marshall P. Reid.

The most friendly feeling has existed among the different City Clubs, and the one idea seems to be to work in the best interests of Hockey, rather than foster petty local jealousies which have so often in the past done harm to championship prospects.

Among the juveniles our Beechgroves still remain monarchs of all they survey, and seem to be invincible, although of late they have been making ventures likely to prove fatal to their record. Tired of beating boys of their own size and age, they have ventured into large company, and have managed to win, but must not expect to do so every time. So far they have played six matches, and have won all by very comfortable margins. This Beechgrove Club furnishes a capital illustration of the success of team play. These boys are accustomed to play as a team, are always together and practice as a whole; the result is that they defeat bigger boys, who are much stronger physically and even faster skaters. The lesson is one to be taken note of even by seniors.

In the city, Hockey has reached a greater state of perfection than ever before, and although we have fewer great hockey players than in some years in the past, still the general average is far above the standard. It is only occasionally we find a Jock Harty, a Geo. McKay or a Randy McLennan, but now it is not impossible to pick out at least a dozen stars of the second magnitude, players good enough for any team in Canada, the great eastern cities not excluded. Possibly Jock Harty deserves credit more than anyone else for the improvement, for he has always been an ideal to work up to, and boys have admired him and taken him for their model, not only on account of his beautiful play, but also because of his clean ideas in regard to the game.

## The Rockwood Review.

### THE CRUSADE OF THE CHILDREN.

A. D., 1212.

The strangest army on sea or shore,  
Told in legends and tales of yore,  
Read, and wondered, and pondered o'er,  
Was the tragic rising the children made  
Six hundred years ago and more ;  
When the boy Saint Stephen preached and prayed,  
In cassock, and staff, and stole arrayed,  
And thousands joined in the wild crusade  
To rescue the Holy Sepulchre.

And the lanes of Europe were all astir,  
From Cloyes in France and Boulogne-Surmer,  
When the wonderful mission and march began,  
To the smallest hamlet among the hills,  
The little ones gathered in tiny rills,  
'Till at length a mighty river ran,  
And the Cross marched ever in the van  
To rescue the Holy Sepulchre.

Nor threats availed, nor bolt nor bar,  
Nor tears by sorrowful mother shed,  
Nor the gleam of the Paynim Scimitar,  
Where the Knights of the Rosy Cross lay dead  
To the children bound for the holy war.  
And the cruel stones of the foreign street  
Bruised and wounded the childish feet,  
And the dimpled limbs were torn and bled,  
And baby voices cried for bread,  
Where hundreds perished of thirst and heat.

And some were wrecked on the dreadful sea,  
And some were sold to the brutal Moor,  
The waves more pitiful far than he  
To the helpless babes on a heathen shore.  
And so but a wreck in rags arrayed,  
That never had met the Moslem foe,  
Came wandering back, forlorn and slow,  
To the desolate homes that had mourned them so,  
And there was the end of the strange Crusade,  
And the Holy War which the children made  
Ever and ever so long ago.

K. S. McL.

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### NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

#### HATCHLEY.

##### MEMORANDA.

December 19th, 1896.—It is perhaps to be regretted that a number of our young men are so fond of gun practice, as to be prone to seek their principal holiday pastime in killing or attempting to kill all the wild animal life that still haunts our woods, and semi-wild areas and banks of streams; and there seems some reason to fear that as this decimating process goes on, such places will be deprived in time of their principal charm to the peripatetic philosopher or naturalist.

The Ruffed Grouse, Quail, Meadow Larks, Bluejays, etc., have in this district, during the autumn just now passed, been much thinned off by the class of amusement seekers referred to above, and the interesting gray Squirrel and the Mink are now rarely met with in the haunts where some years ago those quadrupeds were of frequent occurrence.

Just lately a youth of our acquaintance brought down by the use of his Winchester a very large (extraordinarily so, it is said) and patriarchal specimen of white-necked or Eagle Owl. The presence of *Strix*, who had quietly perched amid the dark branches of a lofty pine tree, was discovered by the "cawing" of a bevy of crows, who were doing their best to render the emotions of their big-eyed visitor as uncomfortable as possible. The wild rabbits, ruffed grouse and also a number of poultry resorts may have cause of rejoicing at the removal of this savage visitor, whose activities are of the malign stripe indicated by the phrase, "he cometh as a thief in the black darkness of the night."

Two of my personal friends who as they were wood cutting in the bush near here, the day before yes-

terday, aroused by chance a wild gray Rabbit from his temporary hiding place. As the rodent bounded away in quest of a new and safe retreat, a large Goshawk, with immense force and adroitness, pounced down from a branch of a tree, and grasped Bunny by the shoulders, with a ferocious and sanguinary stroke of talons, and the distressed outcries of the bleeding and struggling rabbit were sympathetically responded to, by the wild screams of a pair of large pileated Woodpeckers which happened to be near, but which had not been previously noticed by the woodcutters. The birds' sympathy or symphony was on this occasion of no benefit to the dying rabbit—just relieved from the fierce clutch of its winged destroyer by the coming up of the woodmen. The snow marks along the rabbit's swift line of retreat, were bordered by the wide spreading imprints of the big hawk's fluttering wings, showing the barbarous resolve of the raptore to retain its prey. When picked up, the bunny had "given up the ghost," but instead of its corporal part finding a last resting place in the maw of the hawk, destiny determined the final page of its history to have a tangible connection with the woodman's supper table.

The instinct of sympathy shown by wild creatures is a fit subject for contemplation and wonder. The screams of the two big *Picadæ* just referred to were said to be almost human in their energy and painful impressiveness, and a friend, whose name one need not here mention, relates that on the occasion—now several years ago—of his shooting a pileated woodpecker, the piercing lamentations of its dissociated mate, seemed notes of such inconsolable sorrow, that the conscience smitten gunner mentally resolved NEVER "to do it again."

At the beginning of the past

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month of November, all the samples of the Canadian Hare, that fell a prey to the guns of our local sports, had their furry covering of the ordinary dun gray tint. Yet those shot immediately after the snowfall of the 13th November, were entirely white in color. It is evidently not a moult, but a bleaching, or a strange and almost inexplicable loss of color, perhaps somewhat analogous to the sudden turning white of the green leaves of certain herbs, (as the Canadian leek,) by a fall of the temperature to below freezing of the atmosphere in a single night.

A large Hawk has been depredating among the poultry of our neighbors later in the fall than is normally the case. Two or three instances have lately come to one's knowledge where the poultrymen had been attracted by the terrified outcries of the roosters, etc., and in a number of instances the invader was driven off. The boldest and most troublesome hawk was described as being of "about the color of a Heron." One of the farmers mentioned that he had happened to witness this (apparently or conjecturally) same hawk swoop down in the field, striking on the back of a nearly full-grown game cockrell; the assault in this instance proved a failure, but a tuft of fine feathers flew and scattered from the vicinity of the intended victim's back—said the narrator of the incident—"just as if a rifle bullet had grazed the back of chanticleer."

### A RARE INCIDENT.

A Fish Hawk was seen hovering over the water surface of a millpond near here about a month ago. As none of the species had been known to frequent the pond during several past seasons, the Miller took more notice of the doings of this one, and describes with animation the overall poise of the hawk, and subsequent descent with great violence,

and brief disappearance, below the surface of the pool, and subsequent emergence with a fish, seemingly six or seven inches long, and immediate flight towards the forest in the vicinity.

The hawk's success in the capture of rabbits, etc., is achieved by perching motionless but vigilant on the branch of a tree, or eminence where their prey emerge from cover in quest of food, and at a critical moment, with almost incredible wing power, instantly pounce on the victim selected, and the coup is said by numbers of observers to be a success for the raptore nine times out of ten.

Perhaps I should have remarked at the close of a former paragraph, that the Pileated Woodpeckers are when met with about here, always in pairs, and their very loud calls can be heard from afar. When woodmen are employed in the wintry gloom of a February dull day, these big Picadæ seem (like the Chicadee) to be attracted by the sound of the blows of the workmen, and there seems often a sense of companionship, certainly on one side, as the birds loudly and forcefully hammer away with their chisel-like beak, at the half decayed top of a nearby tree, and make chips of the rotten wood fall in showers to the surface of the snow covered earth at the base of the trees.

Ten or twelve days ago, when there was a few hours of weak sunshine, but no snow on the ground, the late blooming dandelions made, in favored sunny nooks, feeble attempts to expand their dwarfish disks. The very common but almost unnoticed flowers do not seem so much stimulated by warmth or mildness of the atmosphere as they do by the brightness of the sun's rays. It may be noticed that if that grand god of day only show his dazzling countenance, from a blue space in the sky, for the space

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of only a few minutes time, the humble wayside dandelion is immediately responsive to the extent indicated above.

At the date just referred to, two friends of the writer spoke also of the vivifying effect that the bright crisp atmosphere and sunlight produced on the activities of the smaller rodents in the bush. Mice came out from their hiding places, and gambolled and squeaked amid their play with evident enjoyment and glee; one of the cosy mouse nests was broken up by the chance removal of a big prostrate log, and the sociable family were unceremoniously scattered and reduced to desperate shifts; and although the "best laid schemes" went somewhat a-glee in this instance, as in many another, alarm and surprise were soon succeeded by wise resolution and effort, and the worker numbers of the *mus sylvestris* compact could soon after be seen running hither and thither with sizeable bunches of grass fibre in their mouths. A suitable site for a new dwelling place had been selected, and ere the going down of the sun, the ant-like foresight and perseverance and success was an object lesson to all and sundry. The wood mouse, like the mole, and also like the shrew mouse, is sometimes captured by the house cat, but none of these are relished by the feline tribe. The wood mouse is said to have a strong civet like odour that perhaps is a protective trait in mouse economy. When in the extreme of hunger, the house cat happens to overcome gastro-momic scruples, and regales on the wood mouse. It is said that emetic symptoms are the invariable result.

One neighbouring poultryman, whose feathered stock have this fall been diminished by the murderous visits of *Strix Virginiana*, set a trap on or near the mutilated, half devoured body of a hen—a

victim of the Strixine visitor—the previous night. Next morning on examining the trap, a tuft of Owl feathers were found fast in the trap jaws. No more visits therefrom this fall! to a purblind Owl "a wink is as good as a nod."

In New Zealand, says the "London and China Telegraph," the Chinaman absconds, and he has to resort to strategy to make good his position. In Otago, where Scotchmen are in the majority, a contract for mending a road was to be let, and the most acceptable bid was signed "Macpherson." Notice was sent to the said Macpherson to complete the contract, and lo!—he appeared in all the glory of yellow hue and pigtail! "But," gasped the President of the Board, "your name can't be Macpherson." "All lightee," cheerfully answered John Chinaman, "nobody catchee contract in Otago unless he named Mac." The contract was signed, and the Mongolian Macpherson did his work as well as if he had hailed from Glasgow.

Landlady (to lodger): "Beg pardon, sir. Did I understand as you were a doctor of music?"—Lodger: "I am, ma'am. Why?"—Landlady: "Well, sir, my Billy 'ave just bin and broke his concertina, and I thawt as 'ow I should be glad to put a hodd job in yer way.

Here's a yarn, not new, but good, and attributed to the composer, Cherubini. One day a young fellow called on him to have his voice tried. Cherubini heard him give a song or two, and then the youth asked, "What branch of the profession do you advise me to go in for?" "Auctioneer," promptly replied the maestro; and then the interview ended.

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### THE STUDY OF NATURE.

(CONTINUED.)

We never tire of his sprightly song. I cannot understand the prejudice that at least one Canadian ornithologist has against this finch, although he bases his uncomplimentary remarks on the fact that the bird destroys buds in the early spring. What if he does? If this is his only fault, he has it in common with many of our birds, in fact early in the season when foods are scarce, numbers of the birds live on buds. Does this cause harm to the trees? My impression is that it does not.

Man is at best a selfish creature, and the moment a bird begins to interfere with the prospect of the cherry crop, the shot gun is put into active use. No allowance is made for the good deeds of Robin Redbreast, his one fault merits the death penalty. A white haired old gentleman remarked not long ago, in tones that betrayed deep vexation: "Not only do the robins carry off my cherries, but they actually select the ripest ones." just as if the rollicking fellows should content themselves with half ripe fruit, when mortals objected to the same thing. My sympathies are all on the side of robin redbreast and his fruit loving companions, and if those who love to grumble would pay a little more attention to black knot, and remember the adage that "it is the early bird gets the worm," we should all be able to agree, and let the shot gun grow rusty on the wall. As it is I have not yet heard of a law demanding the death penalty in the case of the irresponsible small boy who steals cherries. I have pleasant recollections of a quaint old garden where birds and berries, the small boy and several other persons flourished in delightful harmony, and the cherry trees and strawberry vines seemed

to furnish an ample supply of fruit for all.

There is a great deal of nonsense talked about the harm done by birds, evil reports are constantly magnified. Some chronic grumbler tells his neighbor that his crops have been destroyed or his cherries carried off by birds, the neighbor repeats the story, and as usual adds a little to it, and so the yarn is wound and rewound until the list of misdeeds necessitates an Act of Parliament to legalize the murder of insectivorous birds. It is a significant fact that the persons who observe the closest have the least to say in condemnation of the birds, and the superficial observers are those who constantly pose before the public as sufferers. I am of the class that demands absolute facts, arithmetical facts, not sweeping general statements in regard to the bad habits of my friends before I condemn them. I will not deny that many of the birds have destructive habits; but before asking for the punishment of the offenders I wish to know something of their good qualities, and toward the end of this paper I shall have something to say in regard to the favorite theme of bird haters—the English Sparrow.

To return to the song birds. Who does not hail with delight the advent of the Song Sparrow in the spring. If I were far away from Canada, the happiest dreams of home would be full of the modest ditty of the song sparrow, the merry call of the robin and the sweet low note of the blue bird; for these sounds are a part of our daily lives, so familiar, that unconsciously we listen for them in the bright days of spring, when winter's iron grasp begins to loosen, and bare patches of steaming earth remind us that soon we shall have the unrivalled days of the Canadian summer with us. The man who does not feel

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brighter and better when he listens to the happy spring song of the Grey Bird, and cannot rejoice in the blithesome welcome to brighter days, must possess a soul dead to much that is best in nature.

Early in June if we sit quietly near the edge of a hardwood clearing, we shall be rewarded by a song so beautiful that we cannot help feeling enchanted. The notes are few, but the quality of tone is indescribably sweet and satisfying. There is a woodsy flavor to the song that is delightful. Some difficulty in locating the songster may be experienced, and when you discover him, if you have read your bird book well you will recognize the red-eyed Vireo. Last summer the enjoyment of a cruise up the Bay of Quinte was greatly intensified by the music of the red-eyed Vireos. The Bluffs at Glenora and along the Reach seemed alive with these songsters. In the grey of morning, when the mists were stealing up the wooded heights, it was my delight to have the yacht's skylight open, and to listen to the hymn of praise by the birds, but none of the performers at Glenora could approach the Vireos as they answered each other with a rhythm and regularity suggestive of a well balanced orchestra. In *By Ways and Bird Notes* Maurice Thompson has called attention to the fact that THEORETICALLY the Blue Jay should be an accomplished singer, as he has a structurally perfect larynx, and he details an instance where this bird was heard singing beautifully. This statement seems incredible in view of the fact that the Jay ordinarily delights in screaming in a discordant manner, that is suggestive of a bragging defiance of the whole world. The blue jays are constant visitors in the Rockwood grounds during winter, and two years ago were more common than usual. One bright morning

in February a friend was with us enjoying a brisk walk before going to the office, when suddenly we were astonished at hearing a bird singing brilliantly and sweetly. The bird could be seen sitting in the top of a high tree some two hundred yards away, and the notes sounded like those of a robin, but more varied. The whole thing was so unusual and mysterious that curiosity was at once aroused, and immediately steps were taken to unravel the mystery. It required a good deal of perseverance and hard work to get through the deep snow to a vantage spot, but fortunately the bird was so much taken up with his song, that we succeeded in getting a good view of what proved to be a musical bluejay. The performance entitled him to a high place among songsters, and if he would relieve the monotony of the winter by an occasional selection, he would soon occupy a more reputable position in society than is at present accorded to him.

In rambling notes of this kind it is impossible to do justice to any of the birds, and if numbers of our songsters are unnoticed, it is not because they are forgotten, but because the object of this lecture is to direct attention to some of the common birds rather than to attempt even a simple classification.

Possibly some or all of you know the smallest of our blackbirds, popularly styled the Cow Bird, which of course must not be for one moment confounded with the Crow Blackbird or Grackle. Generally speaking I find it difficult to harbor resentment against any bird, but I should like to see the Cow Bird educated to a realization of the fact that the desire to escape the worries of maternity is not an honorable desire, even if it is fashionable with a large class of the community. The habit of nest building, if ever possessed, has

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been forgotten by the cowbird and warblers, chipping sparrows and other small birds are utilized in a mercenary manner. One egg of dull white, mottled or splashed with brown spots, is deposited in the nest selected, and with that the cares of the real mother end, while the poor little foster mother unconsciously works the certain destruction of some of her own children when she hatches the parasitic egg. When the brood is hatched, young Mr. Cowbird increases in size and importance, with a rapidity that astonishes the foster parents, and his constant demands for "more" are coupled with the once popular refrain "there's only room for one." This is really the case, and the only "one" is the cowbird, the other little fellows are crowded over the edge of the nest and meet a miserable death below. In connection with the history of the cowbird we discover another example of a wrong founded on tradition. Because the European Cuckoo is a parasitic bird, the careless observer in Canada immediately saddles the strange large egg found in the small nest as our Cuckoo. How much truth there is in this I shall state further on certainly the mistake is a common one among those who are not well informed. Two summers ago a farmer who is fond of birds came to me and said: "If you will come with me, I will show you a young cuckoo in a Chipping Sparrow's nest." We were soon at the nest, and at once I saw a grand opportunity to correct the farmer's mistake in a practical manner, and in addition to do a good turn for the Sparrows. Originally there had been four young chipping sparrows, but two had been crowded "overboard" by the intruder, and the other two were occupying a precarious seat on his back. A day more as things were meant the death of the chippies, so

I procured a small canary cage, placed the nest and birds in it, and hung the cage in a tree near the original nesting place. The old birds were but little disturbed by the interference, and continued to feed the young. In a few days the grey birds were able to slip between the bars and flew away, but the stranger was too large, and in time I had the satisfaction of showing the supposed cuckoo to be a lively and healthy blackbird. As soon as this point was satisfactorily determined, the stranger no longer mysterious, was set at liberty and taken in hand by his foster parents.

About Kingston we have two members of the Cuckoo family, the black-billed and the yellow-billed cuckoos, but the latter are exceedingly rare in this district. In the Asylum grounds the black-billed cuckoo arrives in the early part of June, and immediately makes his presence known by his peculiar mournful notes. These notes do not make up the sound cuckoo, but ordinarily cuck-koo-oo, and this cannot be translated into anything else. On the Rideau I once heard a specimen say cuckoo in a half hearted way, but this must have been the exception that proved the rule. The cuckoos' note is so characteristic that the children recognize it at once, and run to tell me when the birds arrive. In the mating season the cuckoos are easily approached, but later in the summer become extremely shy. These birds are commonly found in orchards, and wage persistent war on caterpillars, showing a preference for the destructive tent caterpillar. In England the cuckoo is parasitic in its habits, as much so in fact as our cowbird, but the Canadian cuckoo has shown himself superior to his relative over the seas, and assuming that my friend the Britisher referred to in the early part of this lecture was correct in his classification,

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the American climate has acted beneficially on the cuckoo, and he has ascended in the process of evolution. Most ornithologists are inclined to believe that the American cuckoo invariably builds a rough nest, but without doubt the bird occasionally shows a tendency to revert to the parasitic habit, or possibly to develop it. Two instances at least have come under my observation, in which there was no doubt about the guilt of the cuckoo, much as I wished to believe to the contrary. On one occasion the bird was caught in the act of frequenting the nest of the foster mother selected, and the strange green egg told a tale that was conclusive. In the other instance the evidence was of a character that could not be gainsaid. The parasitic habit must be rare indeed when such an accurate student as John Burrough has not been able to verify it by personal observation, although he has obtained satisfactory proof from others in regard to it.

Some time ago, a letter headed "Our Feathered Enemies" appeared in the *GLOBE*, and although the whole effusion was full of sweeping general assertions that might be criticised severely, I shall confine myself to a few statements in regard to the first portion of it.

This poor grumbling farmer has been harshly treated by the Grass Bird—whatever that is—possibly he refers to the Vesper Sparrow, certainly to one of the grey birds, if he only knew it, the best friends he has. Sweeping as his assertions are in regard to the depredations of the birds he accuses, I for one must positively assert, that I believe the farmer to be mistaken in regard to the habits of these insectivorous birds, and nothing but post mortem evidence of the most accurate description would satisfy me to the contrary. I am

obstinate enough to believe that bad seed and "the subsequent dry weather" mentioned by our grumbler had much to do with the crop failure, (I think we have heard these mentioned as possible causes of failure before to-day); and I am also inclined to question several other statements made about the grassbirds. He says before he left the field it was covered with scores of grassbirds. Unfortunately for the farmer these little greybirds are not found by the scores, and the absurd remarks upon the amount of manure, throw some light on the exaggerated ideas of the sore headed correspondent.

It is fashionable "nowadays" to breathe anathemas on the English Sparrow, nearly every one considers it "good fun" to call Jacob a nuisance, but very few can give sufficient reason for doing so. The first sweeping general accusation made against him is that he drives native birds away. How many of you have seen him chasing native birds? I have seen him defending bird houses against the attacks of swallows and bluebirds, that had arrived too late in the season to move in first, and of course it was a pity that there was not room for all. I will admit that bird houses which at one time were generally occupied by native birds, have become the property of the English sparrow, but it is nonsense to assert that the native birds have been driven away. They have merely accepted the inevitable, given up the refinements of civilization, and occupy the places for nest building which existed in the good old days that most folks are anxious to make us believe were a thousand times better than the present. As a matter of fact the British invader is forced to accord the deference due such swaggerers as the catbird, and affords many a delightful repast to the shirkes and

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