1216

Herbert Prescott Curtis

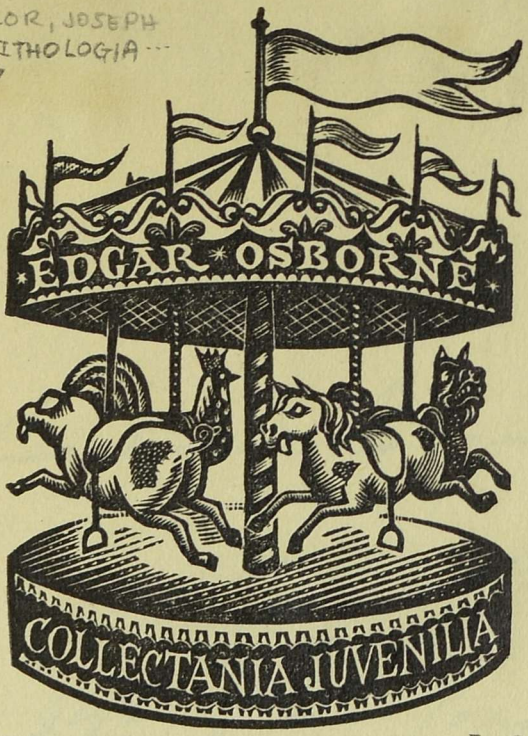
given him by his Papa

Sun. Jan. 10 - 1836

L. H. Curtis

from his Father

Feb: 26th 1865



Thos Jr. Jennett

Corbould Junr. invt.

C. Knight sculpt.

Bijou-the wonderful Prussian Canary Bird.

Published by Lackington, Allen, & Co. Finsbury Square, August 27th 1807.

Ornithologia Curioso:

OR,

THE WONDERS

OF THE

FEATHERED CREATION.

BEING A

Collection of Anecdotes,

Illustrative of the surprising Instinct, Sagacity, &c.

OF

BIRDS.

Selected

BY JOSEPH TAYLOR.

LONDON:

Printed for Lackington, Allen, & Co. Temple of the Muses, Finsbury Square.

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1807.

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ON

THE SAGACITY

OF

Birds.

The wonderful sagacity of Birds must be clearly evident to any person who attentively observes their actions. A Raven may be taught to fetch and carry with all the address of a Spaniel; and some time ago, a Canary Bird was exhibited in London, that could pick up the letters of the alphabet, at the word of command, so as to spell the name of any person in company. A tame Magpie spontaneously learns, from imitation, to pay regard

to some of those shining objects which he notices to be valued by Man. A piece of money, a tea-spoon, or a ring, are tempting prizes to him; and a whole family has been thrown into confusion, by suspicions concerning the loss of such things, which have been afterwards found in the lurking-hole of this bird. In a state of nature, his observation and experience are sometimes applied to the benefit of others of the feathered race: for when a fowler is stealing upon a flock of wild ducks or geese, the Magpie will sound his shrill note of alarm, and rouse them to provide for their safety by immediate flight.

GOLDSMITH.

Birds' Nests.

The Nests of Birds are, in gene-

ral, constructed with astonishing art; and with a degree of architectural skill and propriety, that may defy all the boasted imitative talents of Man, the haughty Lord of the Creation.

Mark it well: within, without,
No tool had he that wrought: no knife to cut,
No nail to fix, no bodkin to insert,
No glue to join; his little beak was all.
And yet, how neatly finish'd! What nice hand,
With every implement and means of art,
And twenty years apprenticeship to boot,
Could make me such another? Fondly then
We boast of excellence, whose noblest skill
Instinctive genius foils.

The Squaller.

In the woods about Senegal there is a species of birds called Nett, Nett, by the Negroes, and *Squallers* by the French; which, as soon as they see a

man, set up a loud scream, and keep flying round him, as if to warn other birds, which, on hearing the cry, immediately take wing.

ADANSON's VOYAGE.

The Lapwing.

With the same intent the lesser birds of our climate seem to fly after a hawk, cuckoo, or owl, and scream to prevent their companions from being surprised by those general enemies of them, their eggs, and their young progeny. The Lapwing, when her unfledged offspring run about the marshes where they are hatched, not only gives the note of alarm, at the approach of men and dogs, that her young may conceal themselves; but, flying and screaming near the adversary, she ap-

pears more solicitous and impatient as she recedes from her family, and thus endeavours to mislead him, and frequently succeeds in her design. These last instances are so apposite to the situation, rather than to the natures, of the creatures that use them, and are so similar to the actions of men in the same circumstances, that we cannot but believe, they proceed from a similar principle.

Dr. DARWIN's ZOONOMIA.

The Raven.

In the year 1766, the especial interposition of Divine Providence was manifested, in a most extraordinary manner, to a poor labourer at Sunderland. This man, being employed in hedging, near to an old stone quarry,

went to eat his dinner in a deep cavity of the quarry, in order to be sheltered from the weather, which was stormy; and, as he went along, pulled off his hedging-gloves, and threw them down at some distance from each other. Being at his repast, he observed a Raven take up one of them, with which he flew away; and very soon after returned, took up the other, and went off with it as before. The man, being greatly surprised, rose to see if he could find out the cause of so odd an incident, and to observe what had become of his gloves; when scarcely had he cleared the quarry, before he saw large fragments of the rock fall down into the very place where he had been seated; and where, had he continued a minute longer, he must inevitably have been crushed to pieces.

The Parrots.

A SOLITARY Gentleman, whose principal delight had been in observing the unsophisticated conduct of animals, and in contrasting it with the corrupt manners of men, which differ so widely from those of nature, gives the following account of the affection of two birds. They were a sort of Paroquet, called Guinea Sparrows, confined in a square cage, such as is usually appropriated to that species of bird. The cup which contained their food, was placed in the bottom of the cage. The male was almost continually seated on the same perch with the female. They sat close together, and viewed each other from time to time with evident tenderness. If they separated, it was but for a few moments,

for they hastened to return and resume their situation. They commonly took their food together, and then retired to the highest perch of the cage. They often appeared to engage in a kind of conversation, which they continued for some time, and seemed to answer each other, varying their sounds, and elevating and lowering their voices. Sometimes they seemed to quarrel, but these emotions were but of momentary duration, and succeeded by additional tenderness. This happy pair thus passed four years in a climate greatly different from that in which they had before lived. At the end of that period, the female fell into a state of langour, which had all the appearance of old-age. Her legs swelled and grew knotty. It was no longer possible that she could move to take her food. But the male, ever attentive

and alert, in whatever concerned her, brought it in his bill, and emptied it into hers. He was in this manner her most vigilant purveyor, during the space of four months. The infirmities of his dear companion increased daily. She became unable to sit upon the perch, she remained, therefore, crouched at the bottom of the cage, and, from time to time, made a few ineffectual efforts to regain the lowest perch. The male, who ever remained attentive and close by her, seconded these her feeble efforts with all his power. Sometimes he seized with his beak the upper part of her wing, by way of drawing her to him; sometimes he took her by the bill and endeavoured to raise her up, repeating these efforts many times. His motions, his gestures, his countenance, his continual solicitude, every thing in this interesting bird,

expressed an ardent desire to aid the weakness of his mate, and to alleviate her sufferings. But the scene became still more interesting when the female was on the point of expiring. The unhappy male went round and round the dying female without ceasing. He redoubled his assiduities and tender cares. He tried to open her bill, with a design to give her nourishment. His emotion increased from instant to instant. He paced and repaced the cage with the greatest agitation, and, at intervals, uttered the most plaintive cries. At other times, he fixed his eyes upon the female, and preserved the most sorrowful silence, It was impossible to mistake these expressions of his grief, or despair. The most insensible of mankind would have been moved. His faithful consort at last expired. From that moment he himself languish-

ed, and survived her but a few months.

CONTEMPLATION DE LA NATURE, par M. Bonnet.

Remarkable Instance of the Sagacity of a Gander.

FROM M. BUFFON.

THERE were two Ganders, the one grey and the other white, (the latter named Jacquot,) with three females. The males were perpetually contending for the company of these dames. When one or the other prevailed, it assumed the direction of them, and hindered its rival from approaching. He who was master during the night, would not yield the next morning; and the two gallants fought so furiously, that it was necessary to be speedy in parting

them. It happened, one day, that being drawn to the bottom of the garden by their cries, I found them with their necks entwined, striking their wings with rapidity and astonishing force; the three females turned round, as wishing to separate them, but without effect; at last, the white Gander was worsted, overthrown, and mal-treated by the other. I parted them; happily for the white one, as he would otherwise have lost his life. Then the conqueror began screaming, gabbling, and clapping his wings; and ran to join his mistresses, giving each a noisy salute, to which the three dames replied, ranging themselves at the same time round him. Meanwhile, poor Jacquot was in a pitiable condition; and, retiring, sadly vented at a distance his doleful cries. It was several days before he recovered from his dejection;

during which time I had sometimes occasion to pass through the court where he strayed. I saw him always thrust out from society: and whenever I passed, he came gabbling to me.

One day he approached so near me, and shewed so much friendship, that I could not help caressing him, by stroking with my hand his back and neck; of which he seemed so sensible, as to follow me into the entrance of the court. Next day, as I again passed, he ran to me, and I gave him the same caresses; with which alone he was not satisfied, but seemed, by his gestures, to desire that I should introduce him to his mates. I accordingly led him to their quarter; and, upon his arrival, he began his vociferations, and directly addressed the three dames, who failed not to answer him. Immediately his late victor sprung upon Jacquot.

I left them for a moment: the grey one was always the stronger: I took part with my Jacquot, who was under; I set him over his rival; he was thrown; I set him up again. In this way they fought eleven minutes; and, by the assistance which I gave him, he at last obtained the advantage, and got possession of the three dames. When my friend Jacquot saw himself master, he would not venture to leave his females, and therefore no longer came to me, when I passed: he only gave me at a distance many tokens of friendship, by shouting and clapping his wings; but would not quit his companions, lest, perhaps, his rival should resume possession. Things went on in this way till the breeding season, and he never gabbled to me but at a distance. When his females however began to sit, he left them, and re-

doubled his friendship to me. One day, having followed me as far as the ice-house at the top of the park, (the spot where I must necessarily part with him, in pursuing my way to a wood at half a league distance,) I shut him in the park. He no sooner saw himself separated from me, than he vented strange cries. However, I went on my road; and had advanced about a third of the distance when the noise of a heavy flight made me turn my head: I saw my Jacquot only four paces from me. He followed me all the way, partly on foot, partly on wing; getting before me, and stopping at the cross-paths to see which way I should take. Our excursion lasted from ten o'clock in the morning till eight in the evening; and my companion followed me through all the windings of the wood, without seeming to be tired.

After this, he attended me every where so as to become troublesome; for I was not able to go to any place without his tracing my steps, so that one day he even came to find me in the church. Another time, as he was passing by the Rector's window, he heard me talking in the room; and, as he found the door open, he entered, climbed up stairs, and, marching in, gave a loud exclamation of joy, to the no small alarm of the family.

I am sorry, after giving the reader such interesting traits of my good and faithful friend Jacquot, when I reflect that it was myself who first dissolved the pleasing connection; but it was necessary for me to use force in our separation. Poor Jacquot fancied himself as free in the best apartments as in his own; and after several accidents of the kind, he was shut up, and

I saw him no more. His inquietude lasted above a year, and he absolutely died from vexation. He had become as dry as a bit of wood, as I am told; for I would not see him: and his death was concealed from me for more than two months after the event. Were I to recount all the friendly incidents between me and poor Jacquot, I should not for several days have done writing. He died in the third year of our friendship, aged seven years and two months.

Vide BUFFON's BIRDS.

Of the Affection of Geese.

PLINY has stated, that at Argos one was enamoured of a fair boy, named Olenus, and also of a damsel called Glauce, who was a skilful player on

the lute: in his latter attachment, he had a rival in a ram. Lacydas the philosopher had the honour of a Goose's love, so ardent, that it never left him night or day; and he was goose enough at the death of his favourite, to have the creature buried magnificently. The affections of Geese in these latter days have apparently taken a different direction, and, like other experienced lovers, have evinced their passion for *old women;* as an instance, an aged blind woman of a village in Germany, used to be led every Sunday to church by a Gander, taking hold of her gown with his bill: when he had introduced her to her seat, he always retired to graze in the church-yard, and no sooner was the congregation dismissed, but he returned to his duty, and led her home. One day the Pastor called at the house of the party, and express-

ing his surprise to the daughter of her mother being abroad, "O, Sir, (said the girl,) we are not afraid of trusting her out, for the *Gander* is with her."

King Henry VIIth's Parrot.

A PARROT belonging to King Henry the Seventh, from having been kept in a room next the Thames, in his Palace at Westminster, had learned to repeat many sentences from the boatmen and passengers. One day, sporting on its perch, it unluckily fell into the water. The bird no sooner discovered its situation, than it called out, aloud, "A boat! a boat! twenty pounds for a boat!" A waterman happening to be near the place where the Parrot was floating, immediately took it up, and restored it to the King:

demanding, as the bird was a favourite, that he should have the reward it had itself offered. This his Majesty refused; but it was agreed, that as the Parrot had offered a reward, the man should again refer to its determination for the sum he was to receive. "Give the knave a groat," said the bird, screaming aloud, the instant the reference was made; which sum was directly paid, and the court continued in a roar of laughter for some time.

Dr. GOLDSMITH.

The Magpie.

PLUTARCH relates the following curious story of a Magpie, belonging to a barber at Rome, that would imitate, to a wonderful nicety, almost any noise it heard. Some trumpets hap-

pened one day to be sounded before the shop; and for a day or two afterwards the Magpie was quite mute, and seemed pensive and melancholy. This surprised all who knew it; and they supposed that the sound of the trumpets had so stunned its senses, as to deprive it at the same time both of voice and hearing, It appears, however, that this was not the case, for the writer observes, that the bird had been all the while occupied in profound meditation, and was studying how to imitate the sound of the trumpets: accordingly, in the very first attempt, it perfectly imitated all their repetitions, stops, and changes. This new lesson, however, from a continued perseverance in study, made it entirely forget every thing else that it had learned before.

PLUTARCH's MORALS.

The Lapwing.

Two Lapwings were given to a Clergyman, who put them into his garden; one soon died, but the other continued to pick up such food as the place afforded, till the winter deprived it of its usual supply. Necessity soon compelled it to draw nearer the house; by which it gradually became familiarized to occasional interruptions from the family. At length, one of the servants, when she had occasion to go into the back kitchen with a light, observed that the Lapwing always uttered his cry of "*Pee-wit*" to obtain admittance. He soon grew more familiar: as the winter advanced, he approached as far as the kitchen, but with much caution, as that part of the house was generally occupied by a dog

and cat; their friendship, however, the Lapwing at length conciliated so entirely, that it was his regular custom to resort to the fire-side when it grew dark, and spend the evening and night with his two associates, sitting close by them, and partaking of the comforts of warmth. As soon as spring appeared, he discontinued his visits to the house, and betook himself to the garden; but on the return of winter, he had recourse to his old shelter and friends, who received him very cordially. Security at length became productive of insolence: what at first he had obtained with caution, was afterwards taken without reserve: he frequently amused himself with washing in the bowl which was set for the dog to drink out of; and while thus employed he shewed marks of the greatest indignation, if either of his companions presumed

to interrupt him. He died in the asylum he had thus chosen, being choked with something which he picked up from the floor.

BEWICK's BIRDS.

Anecdote of the Buzzard,

AS RELATED BY M. FONTAINE TO THE COMTE DE BUFFON.

"In 1763, (says this Gentleman,) a Buzzard was brought to me, that had been taken in a snare. It was at first extremely wild and unpromising. I undertook to tame it; and succeeded, by leaving it to fast, and compelling it to come and eat from my hand. By pursuing this plan, I brought it to be very familiar: and, after having shut it up about six weeks, I began to allow it a little liberty: taking the precau-

tion, however, to tie both pinions of its wings. In this condition it would walk out into my garden, and return upon my calling it to feed. After some time, when I judged that its fidelity might be trusted, I removed the ligatures, and fastened a small bell, an inch and half in circumference, above its talon, and also hung over its breast, a small plate of copper, with my name engraved on it. I then gave it entire liberty, which it soon abused; for it took wing, and flew as far as the forest of Belesme. I naturally gave it up for lost; but four hours after I saw it rush into my hall, which was open, pursued by five other Buzzards, who thus drove it again to its asylum.

"After this adventure, it always preserved its attachment to me, and coming every night to sleep on my window, it grew familiar, and seemingly

took singular pleasure in my company. It attended constantly at dinner; sat on a corner of the table, and very often caressed me with its head and beak, emitting a weak sharp cry, which, however, it sometimes softened. It is true, that I alone had this privilege. It one day followed me, when I was on horseback, more than two leagues, flying above my head.

"It had an aversion both to dogs and cats; but was not in the least afraid of them: it had often tough battles with them, and always came off victorious. I had four very strong cats in the garden with my Buzzard: I threw them a bit of raw flesh; the nimblest cat seized it; and the rest pursued her; but the bird darted upon her body, bit her ears with his bill, and squeezed her sides with his talons so forcibly, that the cat was obliged to

relinquish her prize. Often, another cat would snatch at it the instant it dropped; but she suffered the same treatment, till the Buzzard got entire possession of the plunder. He was so dexterous in his defence, that when he perceived himself assailed at once by the four cats, he took wing, and uttered a cry of exultation. At last, the cats, chagrined with their repeated disappointments, would no longer contend.

"This Buzzard had a singular antipathy to a red cap, nor would he suffer one to be upon the head of any of the peasants; so alert was he in whipping it off, that they found their heads bare without knowing what was become of their caps. He also snatched away wigs, without doing any injury; and he carried these caps and wigs to the tallest tree in a neighbouring park,

which was the ordinary deposit of his booty.

" He would suffer no other bird of prey to enter his domain: but attacked them very boldly, and put them to flight. He did no mischief in my court-yard: and the poultry, which at first dreaded his prowess, soon grew reconciled to him. The chickens and ducklings received not the least ill-usage; and yet he basked or washed among the latter. But, what is singular, he was not gentle to my neighbours' poultry; and I was often obliged to publish that I would pay for the damages he might occasion. However, he was frequently fired at, and, at different times, received fifteen musket shots, without suffering a fracture. Unfortunately, one morning early, hovering over the skirts of a forest, he dared to attack a fox; and the keeper,

seeing him on the animal's shoulders, fired two shots at him: the fox was killed, and the Buzzard had his wing broken; yet, notwithstanding this fracture, he escaped from the keeper, and was lost for seven days. The man having discovered, from the noise of the bell, that it was my bird, came next morning to inform me. I sent to make search after it near the spot; but the bird could not be found, nor did it return for a week. I had been used to call him every evening with a whistle, which he did not answer for the first six days; but on the seventh, a feeble cry was raised at a distance, which I judged to be that of my Buzzard: I repeated the whistle a second time, and heard the same cry. Going to the place from whence the sound proceeded; I found my poor Buzzard with his wing shattered, he had travel-

led more than half a league on foot to regain his asylum, from which he was then distant about a hundred and twenty paces. Though extremely reduced, he gave me many caresses. It was six weeks before he recovered, and his wounds were healed; after which, he began to fly as before, and followed his old habits for about a year: he then disappeared for ever. I am convinced that he was killed by accident; since he would not have forsaken me from choice."

Monsr. FONTAINE to the COMTE DE BUFFON.

The Canary Bird.

A BIRD-CATCHER in Prussia, who had rendered himself famous for educating and calling forth the talents of the feathered race, had a Canary Bird,

which was introduced by the owner to a large party at Cleves, to amuse them with his wonderful feats. The Canary being produced, the owner harangued him in the following manner, placing him upon his fore finger. "Bijou, (Jewel,) you are now in the presence of persons of great sagacity and honour; take heed therefore, that you do not deceive the expectations they have conceived of you from the world's report: you have got laurels; beware of their withering: in a word, deport yourself like the *Bijou*, (the Jewel,) of Canary Birds, as you certainly are." All this time the bird seemed to listen, and, indeed, placed himself in the true attitude of attention. He sloped his head to the ear of the man, then distinctly nodded twice, when his master had left off speaking; and if ever nods were intelligible and promissory, these were of

that nature. "That's good," said the master, pulling off his hat to the bird: "Now let us see if you are a Canary of honour. Give us a tune:" the Canary sung. "Pshaw! that's too harsh: 'tis the note of a raven, with a hoarseness upon him: something pathetic." The Canary whistled as if his little throat was changed to a lute. "Faster," says the man—"slower—very well—what a plague is this foot about, and this little head? No wonder you are out, Mr. Bijou, when you forget your time. That's a Jewel—bravo! bravo! my little man!" All that he was ordered, or reminded of, did he to admiration. His head and foot beat time; humoured the variations both of tone and movement; and the sound was a just echo to the sense, according to the strictest laws of poetical, and, (as it ought to be,) of musical compo-

sition. "*Bravo! bravo!*" re-echoed from all parts of the room. The musicians declared the Canary was a greater master of music than any of their band. "And do you not shew your sense of this civility, Sir?" cried the Bird-catcher, with an angry air. The Canary bowed most respectfully, to the great delight of the company. His next achievement was going through the martial exercise with a straw gun; after which, "My poor Bijou, said the owner, thou hast had hard work, and must be a little weary: a few performances more, and thou shalt repose. Shew the ladies how to make a courtesy." The bird here crossed his taper legs, and sunk and rose with an ease and grace that would have put half our subscription assembly *belles* to the blush. "That's my fine bird! and now a bow, head and foot correspond-

ing." Here the striplings for ten miles round London, might have blushed also. "Let us finish with a hornpipe, my brave little fellow: that's it, keep it up, keep it up." The activity, glee, spirit, and accuracy with which this last order was obeyed, wound up the applause, (in which all the musicians joined, as well with their instruments as their clappings,) to the highest pitch of admiration. *Bijou* himself seemed to feel the sacred thirst of fame, and shook his little plumes, and carolled an *Io pœan*, that sounded like the conscious notes of victory. "Thou hast done all my biddings bravely," said the master, caressing his feathered servant; "now then take a nap, while I take thy place." Hereupon, the Canary went into a counterfeit slumber, so like the effect of the poppied god, first shutting one eye, then

the other, then nodding, then dropping so much on one side, that the hands of several of the company were stretched out to save him from falling; and just as their hands approached his feathers, suddenly recovering, and dropping as much on the other; at length sleep seemed to fix him in a steady posture; whereupon the owner took him from his finger, and laid him flat on the table, where the man assured us he would remain in a good sound sleep, while he himself had the honour to do his best to fill up the interval. Accordingly, after drinking a glass of wine, (in the progress of which he was interrupted by the Canary Bird springing suddenly up, to assert his right to a share, really putting his little bill into the glass, and then laying himself down to sleep again,) the owner called him a saucy fellow, and began to

shew off his own independent powers of entertaining, when a huge black cat, who had long been on the watch, sprung unobserved, from a corner, upon the table, seized the poor Canary in its mouth, and rushed out of the window, in spite of opposition. And though the room was deserted in an instant, it was a vain pursuit; the life of the poor bird was gone; and its mangled body was brought in by the unfortunate owner, under such dismay, and accompanied by such looks and language, as would have awakened pity in a misanthrope.

PRATT.

The Pigeon.

Mr. John Lockman relates a singular story of the effect of music upon

a Pigeon, in some reflections concerning operas, &c. prefixed to his musical drama of Rosalinda. Being at the house of Mr. Lee, a gentleman who lived in Cheshire, and whose daughter was a fine performer on the harpsichord, he observed a Pigeon, which, whenever the young lady played the song of "Sperisi," in Handel's opera of Admetus, (and this song only,) would descend from an adjacent dove-house, to the room window, where she sat, and listen to it apparently with the most pleasing emotions; and when the song was finished, it always returned immediately to the dove-house.

Small Birds.

Some few years since, a foreigner exhibited in this country, a collection

of small birds, such as Goldfinches, Linnets, and Canary Birds, whose wonderful performances astonished every beholder. One appeared dead, and was held up by the tail, or claw, without any apparent signs of life: A second stood on its head, with its claws in the air: A third imitated a Dutch milk-maid going to market, with pails on its shoulders: A fourth mimicked a Venetian girl looking out of a window: A fifth appeared as a soldier, and mounted guard as a sentinel: The sixth was a cannoneer, with a cap on its head, a firelock on its shoulder, a match in its claw; and discharged a small cannon: The same bird also acted as if it had been wounded: it was wheeled off in a little barrow, as if to convey it to the hospital; after which it flew away before the company: The seventh turned a kind of

windmill: And the last bird stood in the midst of some fireworks, which were discharged round it; and all this, without exhibiting the least sign of fear.

The Sparrows.

"When I was a boy, (says Mr. Smellie,) I carried off a nest of young Sparrows, taken about a mile from my place of residence. After the nest was completely removed, and while I was marching home with them in triumph, I perceived, with some degree of astonishment, both parents following me at some distance, and observing my motions in perfect silence. A thought then struck me, that they might follow me home, and feed the young

ones, according to their usual manner. When just entering the door, I held up the nest, and made the young utter the cry which is expressive of the desire of food. I immediately put the nest in the corner of a wire cage, placed it on the outside of a window, and chose a situation in the room, where I could perceive all that should happen, without being myself seen. The young birds soon cried for food. In a short time, both parents, having their bills filled with small caterpillars, came to the cage; and after chatting a little, as we should do with a friend through the lattice of a prison, gave a small worm to each. This parental intercourse continued regularly for some time; till their young were completely fledged, and had acquired a considerable degree of strength. I then took one of the strongest of them,

and placed him on the outside of the cage, in order to observe the conduct of the parents to one of their emancipated offspring. In a few minutes both arrived, loaded as usual, with food. They no sooner perceived that one of their children had escaped from prison, than they fluttered about, and made a thousand noisy demonstrations of joy both with their wings and their voices. These tumultuous expressions of unexpected happiness at last gave place to a more calm and soothing conversation. By their voices, and their movements, it was evident that they earnestly entreated him to follow them, and to fly from his present dangerous state. He seemed impatient to obey their mandates; but, by his gestures, and the feeble sounds he uttered, plainly expressed that he was afraid to try an exertion he had never before at-

tempted. They, however, incessantly repeated their solicitations; and, by flying alternately from the cage to a neighbouring chimney-top, they endeavoured to shew him how easy the journey was to be accomplished. He at last committed himself to the air, and alighted in safety. Upon his arrival, another scene of clamorous and active joy was exhibited. Next day, I repeated the same experiment, by exposing another of the young ones on the top of the cage. I observed the same conduct with the remainder of the brood, which consisted of four; and I need hardly add, that not one, either of the parents or children, ever afterwards revisited the execrated cage."

SMELLIE's PHILOSOPHY of NATURAL HISTORY.

The Stork.

THE disposition of the Stork is mild, neither shy nor savage: it is an animal easily tamed; and may be trained to reside in gardens, which it will clear of insects and reptiles. It has a grave air, and a mournful visage: yet, when roused by example, it shews a certain degree of gaiety, and will sometimes join in the frolics of children, by hopping and playing with them.

"I saw in a garden, (says Dr. Hermann, where the children were playing at hide-and-seek, a tame Stork join the party; run its turn when touched; and distinguish the child, whose turn it was to pursue the rest, so well, as, along with the others, to be on its guard."

To this bird the ancients ascribed many of the moral virtues; as tem-

perance, conjugal fidelity, and filial and paternal piety. The manners of the Stork are such as were likely to attract particular attention from them. It bestows much time and care on the education of its young, and does not leave them till they have strength sufficient both for defence and support. When they begin to flutter out of the nest, the mother bears them on her wings: she protects them from danger, and will sometimes perish rather than forsake them.

A celebrated story is current in Holland: that when the city of Delft was on fire, a female Stork in vain attempted several times to carry off her young ones; and finding that she was unable to effect their escape, even suffered herself to be burned with them!

The following anecdote affords a singular instance of sagacity in this

bird: a wild Stork was brought by a farmer, in the neighbourhood of Hamburgh, into his poultry-yard, to be the companion of a tame one he had long kept there; but the tame Stork disliking a rival, fell upon the poor stranger, and beat him so unmercifully, that he was compelled to take wing, and with some difficulty escaped. About four months afterwards, however, he returned to the poultry-yard, recovered of his wounds; and attended by three other Storks, who no sooner alighted, than they all together fell upon the tame Stork and killed him.

BINGLEY.

The Storks.

A TAME Stork lived quietly in the

court-yard of the University of Tubingen, in Suabia, till Count Victor Gravenitz, then a student there, shot at a Stork's nest, adjacent to the college, and probably wounded the Stork in it. This happened in autumn, when foreign Storks begin their periodical emigrations. In the ensuing spring, a Stork was observed on the roof of the college, and, by its incessant chattering, gave the tame Stork, walking below in the area, to understand, that it would be glad of its company. But this was a thing impracticable, on account of its wings being clipped; which induced the stranger with the utmost precaution first to come down to the upper gallery, the next day something lower; and at last, after much ceremony, quite into the court. The tame Stork, unconscious of harm, went to meet

him with a cheerful note, and a sincere intention of giving him a friendly reception, when, to his great astonishment, the other fell upon him with the utmost fury. The spectators present drove away the foreign Stork, but this was so far from intimidating him, that he came again the next day to the charge; and during the whole summer continual skirmishes were interchanged between them.

Mr. Gravenitz had given orders that the tame Stork should not be assisted, as having only a single antagonist to encounter; and by being thus obliged to shift for himself, he came to stand better on his guard, and made such a gallant defence, that at the end of the campaign the stranger had no great advantage to boast of.

The next spring, however, instead of a single Stork, came four; which,

without any of the foregoing ceremonies, alighted in the college area, and immediately attacked the tame Stork, who, in the view of several spectators standing in the galleries, performed feats of valour, defending himself by the arms nature had given him with the utmost bravery; till, at length, being overpowered by superior numbers, his strength and courage began to fail, when very unexpected auxiliaries came to his assistance. All the turkies, geese, ducks, and fowls that were brought up in the court, (to whom, undoubtedly, the gentle Stork's mild and friendly behaviour had endeared him,) without the least dread of danger, formed a kind of rampart round him, under the shelter of which he might make an honourable retreat from so unequal an encounter; and even a peacock, which could never

live in friendship with him, on this emergency took the part of oppressed innocence, and was, if not a true-bottomed friend, at least a favourable judge on the tame Stork's side.

On this, a stricter look-out was kept against such traitorous incursions of the enemy, and a stop put to more bloodshed: till at last, about the beginning of the third spring, above twenty Storks alighted in the court, fell with the greatest fury upon the poor tame Stork, and, before his faithful life-guards had time to form themselves, deprived him of life, though, by exerting his usual gallantry, they paid dear for the purchase.

This malevolence of strangers against an innocent creature, could proceed from no other motive than the shot fired by Count Victor from the college, and which they doubtless suspected to

have been done by the instigation of the tame Stork.

KEYSLER's TRAVELS.

Col. O'Kelly's Extraordinary Parrot.

COLONEL O'Kelly bought a Parrot for a hundred guineas, at Bristol, which not only repeated a great number of sentences, but answered many questions: it was also able to whistle a variety of tunes. It beat time with all the air of science; and so accurate was its judgment, that, if by chance it mistook a note, it would revert to the bar where the mistake was made, correct itself, and, still beating regular time, go through the whole with wonderful exactness. Its death was thus announced in the General Evening Post, October the 9th, 1802.

" A few days ago died, in Half-Moon street, Piccadilly, the celebrated Parrot of Colonel O'Kelly's. This singular bird sang a number of songs in perfect time and tune. She could express her wants articulately, and give her orders in a manner nearly approaching to rationality. Her age was not known; it was, however, more than thirty years. Mr. O'Kelly bought her, at Bristol, for a hundred guineas. The Colonel was repeatedly offered five hundred guineas a-year for the bird, by persons who wished to make a public exhibition of her; but this, out of tenderness to the favourite, he constantly refused. The bird was dissected by Dr. Kennedy, and Mr. Brooke; and the muscles of the larynx, which regulate the voice, were found, from the effect of practice, to be uncommonly strong."

The Sparrow and Martens.

A SPARROW observing that the nest of a Marten stood very conveniently for her accommodation, immediately took possession of it. The Marten finding an usurper in her house, sallied out for assistance. Presently a thousand Martens arrived, and attacked the Sparrow with great fury: but the latter, being well covered on every side, and presenting only her large beak at the entrance of the nest, by this means became invulnerable, and made the most resolute, who approached, repent of their temerity. After a quarter of an hour's combat, all the Martens disappeared. The Sparrow, without doubt, now concluded she had vanquished them; and the spectators judged that the Martens had abandoned

their undertaking.—By no means.—"We saw them, (continues our author,) return to the charge. Each of them had provided some of the tempered earth, with which they build their nests; and all of them, with one consent, deposited a portion on the entrance into the nest, which thus enclosed the Sparrow, whom they intended should perish there."

Father Bougeant's PHILOSOPHICAL AMUSEMENTS.

The Eagle.

A GENTLEMAN, who lived in the south of Scotland, had, not many years ago, a tame Eagle; which the keeper one day injudiciously thought proper, for some petty fault, to lash with a horsewhip. About a week afterwards, the man chanced to stoop within reach

of his chain: when the enraged animal, recollecting the late insult, flew in his face with so much fury and violence, that he was terribly wounded, but was luckily driven so far back by the blow, as to be out of all farther danger. The screams of the eagle alarmed the family; who found the poor man lying at some distance, in a very bloody condition, equally stunned with the fright and fall. The animal was still pacing and screaming, in a manner not less formidable than majestic. It was even dreaded whether, in so violent a rage, he might not break loose; which indeed, fortunately perhaps for them, he did, just as they withdrew, and thus escaped for ever.

BINGLEY.

The Lark.

ON Wednesday, the 6th of October, 1805, as a Gentleman was sitting on the rocks, at the end of Cullercoats sands, near Tynemouth, dressing himself after bathing, he perceived a Hawk in the air, in close pursuit of, and nearly within reach of a Lark. To save the little fugitive, he shouted, and clapped his hands, when immediately the Lark descended, and alighted on his knee, nor did it offer to leave him, when taken into the hand, but seemed confident of that protection, which it found. The Hawk sailed about for some time. The Gentleman, after taking the Lark nearly to Tynemouth, restored it to its former liberty.

Vide BELL's MESSENGER of that Day.

The Ostrich, the American Humming-Bird, and the Canary.

Of all birds the Ostrich is the largest, and the American Humming-Bird the least: in these the gradations of nature are strongly marked, for the Ostrich in some respects approaches the nature of that class of animals immediately placed above him, namely, the quadrupeds, being covered with hair, and incapable of flying; while the Humming-Bird, on the other hand, approaches that of insects. These extremities of the species, however, are rather objects of human curiosity than use. It is the middle order of birds, which man has taken care to propogate and maintain, these largely administer to his necessities and pleasure, and few there are which are not capa-

ble of shewing attachment to the person that feeds them. How far they are capable of receiving instruction by long assiduity, is obvious from a late instance of a Canary Bird, shewn in London, which, among other surprising feats, had been taught to pick up the letters of the alphabet, at the word of command, with the most perfect exactness.

The American Mocking-Bird.

The Honourable Daines Barrington in a very interesting letter on Singing-Birds, addressed to the Royal Society of London, mentions his having seen a Mocking-Bird in London, who would not only faithfully imitate the Woodlark, Chaffinch, Blackbird, Thrush, and Sparrow, within the space

of one minute, but would also bark like a dog in the most wonderful manner.

Extraordinary Affection of an Eagle.

THERE was a wonderful example of the affection of an Eagle, at the City of Sestos: upon which account that bird is much honoured in those parts. A young maid had brought up an Eagle by hand, from a young one; the Eagle, to requite her kindness, would first, when she was but little, fly abroad a birding, and always bring part of what she had taken to her nurse. In process of time, being grown bigger and stronger, she would set upon wild beasts also in the forests, and furnish her young mistress continually with store of venison: at length it happen-

ed that the young woman died, and when her funeral fire was burning, the Eagle flew into the midst of it, and there was consumed to ashes, with the corpse of the virgin. In memorial whereof, the inhabitants of Sestos erected in that very place a stately monument which they call Heroum, because the Eagle is a bird consecrated to that God.

PLINY's NATURAL HISTORY.

The Affectionate Crane.

Busbequis tells of a Spaniard who was so beloved by a Crane of Majorca, that the poor bird would walk any where with him, and in his absence seek about for him, make a noise that he might hear her, and knock at his door; and when he took his last fare-

well, not able to sustain her loss and passionate desire, she abstained from all food and died.

The Sagacious Raven.

A GENTLEMAN who resided near the New Forest, in Hampshire, had a tame Raven, a few years since, which used frequently to hop about the verge of the forest, and chatter to every one it met.

One day, a person in travelling through the forest to Winchester, was much surprised at hearing the following exclamation.—"Fair play, gentlemen!—fair play! for God's sake gentlemen, fair play. Two against one will never do!" The traveller on looking round, to discover from whence the voice came, to his great

astonishment, beheld no human being near. But hearing the cry for fair play, again repeated, he thought it must proceed from some fellow-creature on the point of assassination, and conceiving it to be his duty to render service in distress, he immediately rushed into that part of the forest from whence the cries came, where, to his unspeakable astonishment, the first object he beheld, was two Ravens combating a third, with great fury, while the sufferer, which proved to be the tame one aforesaid, kept loudly vociferating for fair play, which so diverted the traveller, that he instantly rescued the oppressed bird, by driving away its adversaries, and returned highly pleased with his morning's adventure.

Eagles' Nests.

It is said that a countryman once got a comfortable subsistence for his family out of an Eagle's nest during a summer famine. He protracted the assiduity of the old birds beyond their usual time, by clipping the wings of the young ones, to retard their flight: and tying them, so as to increase their cries, which is always found to stimulate the dispatch of the parents in supplying their wants. It was lucky for him that the old ones did not detect their plunderer, since their resentment might have proved fatal.

Not many years ago, a peasant resolved to rob an Eagle's nest, which he knew to be built on a small island in the beautiful lake of Killarney. He stripped himself for this purpose, and

swam over when the old birds were gone; but, on his return, while yet up to the chin in water, the parents coming home, and missing their offspring, quickly fell upon the delinquent, killed him on the spot, and rescued their young.

PENNANT's BRITISH ZOOLOGY.

The Rooks.

A LARGE colony of Rooks had subsisted many years in a grove on the banks of the river Irwell, near Manchester. "One serene evening, (says Dr. Percival,) I placed myself within the view of it, and marked with attention the various labours, pastimes, and evolutions of this crowded society. The idle members amused themselves with chasing each other through end-

less mazes; and, in their flight, they made the air resound with an infinitude of discordant noises. In the midst of these playful exertions, it unfortunately happened that one Rook, by a sudden turn, struck his beak against the wing of another. The sufferer instantly fell into the river. A general cry of distress ensued; the birds hovered, with every expression of anxiety, over their distressed companion. Animated by their sympathy, and, perhaps, by the language of counsel known to themselves, he sprang into the air, and, by one strong effort, reached the point of a rock which projected over the water. Their joy became loud and universal; but, alas! it was soon changed into notes of lamentation; for the poor wounded bird, in attempting to fly towards his nest, dropped again into the river, and was

drowned, amidst the moans of the whole fraternity.

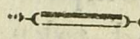
Dr. PERCIVAL's DISSERTATIONS.

Royal Exchange Rooks.

In the year 1783, a pair of Rooks, after an unsuccessful endeavour to establish themselves in a rookery, at no great distance from the Royal Exchange, were compelled to abandon the attempt, and take refuge in the spire of that building; and, although constantly interrupted by other Rooks, they built their nest on the *top of the vane*, and reared their young, undisturbed by the noise of the populace below them: the nest and its inhabitants were, of course, turned about by every change of the wind. They returned, and built their nest every year

on the same place, till the year 1793, soon after which the spire was taken down. A small copper-plate was engraved, the size of a watch-paper, with a representation of the top of the spire, and the nest; and so much pleased were the inhabitants and other persons with it, that as many copies were sold as produced to the engraver the sum of ten pounds.

BINGLEY.



The Parrot instrumental in restoring a Monarch from Prison.

Leo, son to the Emperor Basilius Macedo, was accused by Theodorus Sandabarenus, a Monk, of having a design upon the life of his father, and was thereupon cast into prison, from whence he was freed by these strange

means. The Emperor, on a time, feasted divers of the greatest Lords in his court: they were all seated, when a Parrot, that was hung up in the hall, (in a mournful tone,) cried, "Alas! alas! poor Prince Leo." It is likely he had frequently heard courtiers passing to and fro, bewailing the Prince's hard fortune in those terms: and when he had often spoke these words, the Lords at the table were seized with such a sudden sadness, that all of them neglected their meat: the Emperor observed it, and called to them to eat, inquiring the reason why they did not? When one of them, with tears in his eyes, replied, "How should we eat Sire, when we are thus reproached by this bird of our want of duty to your family? The brute creature is mindful of its Lord: and we, that have reason, have neglected to supplicate your Ma-

jesty in behalf of the Prince, whom we all believe to be innocent, and to suffer under calumny." The Emperor, moved with their words, commanded them to fetch Leo out of prison, admitted him to his presence, and restored him first to his favour, and then to his former dignities.

ZUING. THEAT. Vol. 2, Page 315.

The Frightened Parrot.

A LARGE *Owl* was one evening taken into the tap-room of a public-house, at Blackwall, in which a *Parrot* was suspended. The Parrot, which speaks remarkably well, immediately cried, "*Poor Poll's afraid!*" and then vociferated, "*Murder! murder!*" with such strength of lungs, as really to alarm the neighbourhood;

nor could she be silenced, until the Owl was removed.

The Mass of the Magpie.

A BELL-FOUNDER in the parish of Saint Jean en Greve, at Paris, having lost from time to time several silver spoons, and other articles of value, at length, suspected his servant-maid to be the thief, and, in order to satisfy himself, and to detect her, if possible, he laid a couple of silver trinkets in an apartment, to which himself, his wife, and the said servant, were the only persons who had access. On the following day the trinkets were missing, and suspicion of course fell on the maid. The master questioned her, as to her having been in the room: the girl hesitated for some moments,

and then, in a faultering tone of voice, said she remembered to have opened the door of that room on purpose to admit the air, but had seen nothing of the things lost: this reply seemed but to confirm her master the more in his opinion of her guilt; accordingly, he had her taken up on suspicion, and she was fully committed for trial.

After the usual ceremonies of trial, in which the passions and prejudices of the judges and accusers but too frequently usurp the seat of impartial investigation, she was found guilty of the alleged crime, and suffered death accordingly. Some time afterwards, the Bell-founder was sent for to arrange and repair the church bells, and on entering the steeple, to examine the same, he was much surprised to find a favourite Magpie he had long kept about his house, perched up near the

church clock: struck with the appearance of his old inmate in so uncommon a place, he could hardly believe it to be the same; to satisfy himself, he therefore called the bird by its name, Mag! Mag! The bird then hopped a few paces towards the man—stopped suddenly—ruffled up his plumage, chattered in his way, and then fled away to a hole in the roof. Curiosity led the man to follow it: but what words can express his astonishment and confusion, when he beheld deposited in a corner of the hole, the very identical articles for which the poor unfortunate girl had lost her life, with several others he had missed at different times.

The whole of this extraordinary affair was soon publicly known; the people, in a paroxism of enthusiastic zeal, threatened vengeance on the girl's

accusers and judges; and, to prevent those serious consequences so much apprehended, it was found necessary to appease the multitude, by an order that Mass should be said, and a solemn *Domine Exaude* offered up, for the peace of her soul, in the church of St. Jean en Greve; where this tragedy is recorded, and where the virgins of the surrounding neighbourhood repair annually, at midnight, dressed in robes of the whitest lawn, and bearing each a branch of cypress, to sing a *requiem*, and to implore divine protection for the innocent sufferer. This ceremony is still commemorated, and is called the Mass of the Magpie.

Rooks and Herons.

A REMARKABLE circumstance re-

specting these birds occurred, a few years ago, at Dallam Tower, in Westmoreland, the seat of Daniel Wilson, Esq. There were two groves adjoining to the park; one of which had for many years been the resort of a number of Herons, that regularly, every year, built and bred there: in the other was a very large rookery. For a long time the two tribes lived peaceably together. At length, in the spring of 1775, the trees of the heronry were cut down, and the young brood perished by the fall of the timber. The parent birds, not willing to be driven from the place, endeavoured to effect a settlement in the rookery. The Rooks made an obstinate resistance; but, after a desperate contest, in the course of which many of the Rooks and some of the Herons lost their lives, the latter at length succeeded in obtaining

possession of some of the trees, and that very spring built their nests afresh. The next season a similar contest took place; which, like the former, terminated by the victory of the Herons. Since this time, peace seems to have been agreed upon between them: the Rooks have relinquished part of the grove to the Herons, to which part alone they confine themselves; and the two communities appear to live together in as much harmony as before the dispute.

HUTCHINSON's CUMBERLAND.

Parrots.

During the government of Prince Maurice, in Brasil, he heard of an old Parrot that was much celebrated for answering, like a rational creature,

many of the common questions that were put to it. It was at a great distance; but so much had been said about it, that his curiosity was roused, and he directed it to be sent for. When introduced into the room where the Prince was sitting, in company with several Dutchmen, it immediately exclaimed, in the Brasilian language, "What a company of white men are here!" They asked it—"Who is that man?" (pointing to the Prince:) the Parrot answered, "Some General or other." When the attendants carried it up to him, he asked it, through the medium of an interpreter, (for he was ignorant of its language,)—"From whence do you come?" the Parrot answered, "From Marignan." The Prince asked,—"To whom do you belong?" it answered, "To a Portuguese." He asked again,—"What do you here?"

it answered, "I look after the chickens." The Prince, laughing, exclaimed,—"You look after chickens!" the Parrot, in answer, said, "Yes, I: and I know well enough how to do it," clucking at the same time, in imitation of the noise made by the hen to call together her young.

This account came directly from the Prince to Mr. Locke; who said that though the Parrot spoke in a language he did not understand, yet he could not be deceived, for he had in the room both a Brasilian who spoke Dutch, and a Dutchman who spoke Brasilian: that he asked them separately and privately, and both agreed in giving him the Parrot's discourse.

Vide Locke's ESSAY on the HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

A PARROT belonging to the sister of the Comte de Buffon, would fre-

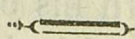
quently speak to himself, and seem to fancy that some one addressed him. He often asked for his paw, and answered by holding it up. Though he liked to hear the voice of children, he seemed to have an antipathy to them, and bit them till he drew blood. He had also his objects of attachment, and though his choice was not very nice, it was constant.

He was excessively fond of the cook-maid; followed her every where, sought for her when absent, and seldom missed finding her. If she had been some time out of his sight, the bird climbed with his bill and claws to her shoulders, and lavished on her his caresses. His fondness had all the marks of close and warm friendship. The girl happened to have a sore finger, which was tedious in healing, and so painful as to make her scream. While

she uttered her moans, the Parrot never left her chamber. The first thing he did, every day, was to pay her a visit; and this tender condolence lasted the whole time of her cure, when he again returned to his former calm and settled attachment.

Yet all this strong predilection for the girl seems to have been more directed to her office in the kitchen, than to her person; for when another cook-maid succeeded her, the Parrot shewed the same degree of fondness to the new comer, the very first day.

BUFFON.



PARROTS have been known not only to imitate discourse, but also to mimic gestures and actions. Scaliger saw one that performed the dance of the Savoyards, at the same time that it

repeated their song. The one last mentioned was fond of hearing a person sing; and when he saw him dance, he also tried to caper, but with the worst grace imaginable, holding in his toes, and tumbling back in a most clumsy manner.

Willoughby tells us of a Parrot, which, when a person said to it,—"Laugh, Poll, laugh," laughed accordingly, and then instantly after screamed out,—"What a fool, to make me laugh."

Another, which had grown old with its master, shared with him the infirmities of age. Being accustomed to hear scarcely any thing but the words "I am sick:" when a person asked it, "How d'ye do, Poll? how d'ye do?" "I am sick," it replied in a doleful tone, stretching itself along, "I am sick."

A GENTLEMAN who resided at Gosport in Hampshire, and had frequent business across the water to Portsmouth, was astonished one day, on going to the beach to look for a boat, and finding none, to hear the words distinctly repeated,—"Over, master? Going over?" (which is the term usually made use of by the watermen when they are waiting for passengers.) The cry still assailing his ears, he looked earnestly around him, to discover from whence the voice came; when, to his great surprise, he beheld a Parrot in a cage, suspended from a public-house window on the beach, vociferating the boatmen's expressions.

The Nightingale.

THE delicacy, or rather the fame of

this bird's music, has induced many to abridge its liberty, the better to secure its harmony. Its song, however, in captivity is not so very alluring; and the tyranny of taking it from those hedges where only it is most pleasing, still more depreciates its imprisoned efforts.

Gesner assures us, that it is not only the most agreeable songster in a cage, but that it is possessed of a most admirable faculty of talking. He tells the following story in proof of his assertion, which he says was communicated to him by a friend. "Whilst I was at Ratisbon," says his correspondent, "I put up at an inn, the sign of the Golden Crown, where my host had two Nightingales. It happened at that time, being the spring of the year, when those birds are accustomed to sing, that I was so afflict-

ed with the stone, that I could sleep but very little all night. It was usual then, about midnight, to hear the two Nightingales jangling and talking with each other, and plainly imitating men's discourse. Besides repeating the daily discourse of the guests, they chanted out two stories. One of their stories was concerning the tapster and his wife, who refused to follow him to the wars, as he desired her; for the husband endeavoured to persuade his wife, as far as I understood the birds, that he would leave his service in that inn, and go to the wars in hopes of plunder. But she refused to follow him, resolving to stay either at Ratisbon, or go to Nuremberg. There was a long and earnest contention between them, and all this dialogue the birds repeated. They even repeated the unseemly words which were cast out between them,

and which ought rather to have been suppressed and kept a secret. The other story was concerning the war which the Emperor was then threatening against the protestants; and which the birds probably heard from some of the generals that had conferences in the house. These stories they repeated to each other at night after twelve o'clock, or when all was still. But in the day time, for the most part, they were silent, and seemed to do nothing but meditate and revolve with themselves upon what the guests conferred together, as they sat at table, or in their walks." Such is the sagacity ascribed to the Nightingale.

GESNER. [Vide BUFFON's ABRIDGMENT.]

The Pelican.

With all the seeming indolence of this bird, it is not entirely incapable of instruction in a domestic state. Father Raymond assures us, that he has seen one so tame and well educated among the native Americans, that it would go off in the morning, at the word of command, and return before night to its master, with its great paunch distended with plunder: a part of which the savages would make it disgorge, and a part they would permit it to reserve for itself.

The Pelican, as Faber relates, is not destitute of other qualifications. One of them was brought alive to the Duke of Bavaria's court, where it lived forty years, and seemed to be possessed of very uncommon sensations. It was

much delighted in the company and conversation of man, and in music, both vocal and instrumental; for it would willingly stand by those that sung, or sounded the trumpet; and, stretching out its head, and turning its ear to the music, would listen very attentively to its harmony, though its own voice was little pleasanter than the braying of an ass.

Gesner tells us, that the Emperor Maximilian had a tame Pelican, which lived for above eighty years, and always attended his army on their march.

BUFFON.

The Great Horned Owl.

Mr. Cronstedt has recorded a pleasing instance of the attachment of this species of birds to their young. That gentleman resided several years on a

farm in Sudermania, near a steep mountain, on the summit of which two Eagle (or Great Horned) Owls had their nest. One day in the month of July, a young one, having quitted the nest, was seized by some of his servants. This bird, after it was caught, was shut up in a large hen-coop; and the next morning Mr. Cronstedt found a young Partridge lying dead before the door of the coop. He immediately concluded that this provision had been brought hither by the old Owls: who he supposed had been making search in the night time for their lost young one, and had been led to the place of its confinement by its cry. This proved to have been the case, by the same mark of attention being repeated for fourteen successive nights. The game which the old ones carried to it consisted principally of young Partridges,

for the most part newly killed, but sometimes a little spoiled. One day a Moor-fowl was brought, so fresh, that it was still warm under its wings. A putrid lamb was also found at another time, which, probably had been spoiled by lying a long time in the nest of the old Owls; and it is supposed that they brought it merely because they had no better provision at the time. Mr. Cronstedt and his servants watched at a window several nights, that they might observe, if possible, the time when this supply was deposited. Their plan, however, did not succeed; but it appeared that these Owls, which are very sharp sighted, had discovered the moment when the window was not watched; as food was found to have been deposited for the young Owl before the coop, one night, when this had been the case.

In the month of August the parents discontinued this attendance: but at that period all birds of prey abandon their young to their own exertions. From this instance it may be readily concluded, how great a quantity of game must be destroyed by a pair of these Owls, during the time they employ in rearing their young. And as the edible species of forest animals repair chiefly in the evening to the fields, they are particularly exposed to the acute sight, smell, and claws of these birds of the night.

The Raven.

When brought up young, the Raven becomes very familiar; and, in a domestic state, he possesses many qualities that render him highly amusing.

Busy, inquisitive, and impudent, he goes every where, affronts and drives off the dogs; plays his tricks on the poultry; and is particularly assiduous in cultivating the good-will of the cook-maid, who is generally his favourite in the family. But with the *amusing qualities*, he often also has the *vices* and *defects* of a *favourite*. He is a glutton by nature, and a thief by habit. He does not confine himself to petty depredations on the pantry or the larder; he aims at more magnificent plunder; at spoils that he can neither exhibit nor enjoy, but which, like a miser, he rests satisfied with having the pleasure of sometimes visiting and contemplating in secret.

Mr. Montagu was informed by a Gentleman, that his butler having missed many silver spoons, and other articles, without being able to account

for the mode in which they disappeared, at last observed a tame Raven, that was kept about the house, with one in his mouth; and on watching him to his hiding-place, there discovered upwards of a dozen more.

Notwithstanding the injury these birds do to the farmer, a popular respect is paid to them, from their having been the birds that fed the prophet Elijah in the wilderness. This prepossession in favour of the Raven is of very ancient date, since the Romans themselves, who thought the bird ominous, paid to it, from motives of fear, the most profound veneration.

A Raven, as Pliny informs us, that had been kept in the temple of Castor, flew down into the shop of a tailor, who was highly delighted with its visits. He taught the bird several tricks; but particularly to pronounce the names

of the Emperor Tiberius, and the whole Royal Family. The tailor was beginning to grow rich by those who came to see this wonderful Raven; till an envious neighbour, displeased at his success, killed the bird, and deprived the tailor of all his hopes of future fortune. The Romans, however, thought it necessary to take the poor tailor's part; and they accordingly punished the man who offered the injury, and gave the Raven all the honours of a magnificent interment.

Of the perseverance of the Raven in the act of incubation, Mr. White has related the following singular anecdote:—In the centre of a grove, near Selborne, there stood an oak, which, though shapely and tall on the whole, bulged out into a large excrescence near the middle of the stem. On this tree a pair of Ravens had fixed their re-

sidence for such a series of years, that the oak was distinguished by the title of "The Raven Tree." Many were the attempts of the neighbouring youths to get at this eyry: the difficulty whetted their inclinations, and each was ambitious of surmounting the arduous task; but, when they arrived at the swelling, it jutted out so much in their way, and was so far beyond their grasp, that the boldest lads were deterred, and acknowledged the undertaking to be too hazardous. Thus the Ravens continued to build nest after nest, in perfect security; till the fatal day arrived on which the wood was to be levelled. This was in the month of February, when those birds usually sit. The saw was applied to the trunk, the wedges were inserted in the opening, the woods echoed to the heavy blows of the beetle or mallet,

the tree nodded to its fall; but the dam persisted to sit. At last, when it gave way, the bird was flung from her nest; and, though her parental affection deserved a better fate, was whipped down by the twigs, which brought her dead to the ground.

The Sky Lark.

THE instinctive warmth of attachment which the female Sky Lark bears to her young, often discovers itself at a very early period: and even before she is capable of becoming a mother, which might he supposed, in the order of nature, to precede maternal solicitude.

A young hen bird, says the Comte de Buffon, was brought to me in the month of May, which was not able to

feed without assistance: I caused her to be educated; and she was hardly fledged, when I received from another place a nest of three or four unfledged Sky Larks. She took a strong liking to these new comers, which were scarcely younger than herself; she tended them night and day, cherished them beneath her wings, and fed them with her bill. Nothing could interrupt her tender offices; if the young were torn from her, she flew back to them as soon as she was liberated, and would not think of effecting her own escape, which she might have done, a hundred times. Her affection grew upon her; she neglected food and drink; she now required the same support as her adopted offspring, and expired at last, the victim of maternal anxiety. None of the young ones survived her; they died one after

another; so essential were her tender and judicious cares.

The Bee Cuckoo, or Moroc.

The Bee Cuckoo, in its external appearance, does not much differ from the common Sparrow; except that it is somewhat larger, and of a lighter colour; it has also a yellow spot on each shoulder, and the feathers of its tail are dashed with white.

This bird is peculiar for its faculty of discovering and pointing out to man, and to the animal called the Ratel, the nests of wild bees. It is itself exceedingly fond both of honey and the bee maggots; and it knows that when a nest is plundered, some must fall to the ground, which consequently comes to its share: but, in general,

a part is purposely left by the plunderers as a reward for its services. The way in which this bird communicates to others the discovery it has made, is as surprising, as it is well adapted to the purpose.

The morning and evening are its principal meal times; at least, it is then that it shews the greatest inclination to come forth, and with a grating cry of *Cher, cher, cher,* to excite the attention of the Ratel, as well as of the Hottentots and Colonists, of whose country it is a native. Somebody then generally repairs to the place from whence the sound proceeds: when the bird, continually repeating its cry of *Cher, cher, cher,* flies on slowly, and, by degrees, towards the quarter where the swarm of bees have taken up their abode. The persons thus invited, accordingly follow; taking great care at

the same time not to frighten their guide by any unusual noise; but rather to answer it now and then with a soft and very gentle whistle, by way of letting the bird know that its call is attended to. When the bees' nest is at some distance, the bird often makes long stages or flights, waiting for its sporting companions between each flight, and calling to them again to come on; but it flies to shorter distances, and repeats its cry more frequently and with greater earnestness, in proportion as they approach nearer the nest. When the bird has sometimes, in consequence of its great impatience, got too far a head from its followers, but particularly when, on account of the unevenness of the ground, they have not been able to keep pace with it, it has flown back to meet them, and with redoubled

cries, denoting still greater impatience, upbraided them as it were for being so tardy. When it comes to the bees' nest, whether built in the cleft of a rock, in a hollow tree, or in some cavity of the earth, it hovers over the spot for the space of a few seconds, (a circumstance to which Dr. Sparrman was twice eye-witness); after which it sits in silence, and for the most part concealed, in some neighbouring tree or bush, in expectation of what may happen, and with a view of receiving its share of the booty. It is probable that this bird always hovers more or less, in the manner just mentioned, over the bees' nest, before it hides itself, though the people do not always pay attention to this circumstance: at all events, however, one may be assured that the bees' nest is very near, when, after the bird has

guided its followers to some distance, it is on a sudden silent.

Having, in consequence of the bird's directions, found and plundered the nest, the hunters, by way of acknowledgment, usually leave it a considerable share of that part of the comb, in which the young bees are hatching; which is probably to the bird the most delicate morsel.

SPARRMAN's VOYAGES.

The Wild Messenger Pigeon.

It is through attachment to their native place, and particularly to the spot where they have brought up their young, that these birds are thus rendered useful to mankind. The bird is conveyed from its home to the place

whence the information is intended to be conveyed; the letter is tied under its wing, and the Pigeon is let loose. From the instant of its liberation, its flight is directed through the clouds, at an amazing height, to its home: by an instinct altogether inconceivable, it darts onward in a straight line to the very spot from whence it was taken; but how it can direct its flight so very exact, will probably for ever remain unknown to us.

These birds are not now rendered of the same use as formerly, in carrying letters from governors of besieged cities to generals about to relieve them; from princes to their subjects, with tidings of some fortunate event; or from lovers to their mistresses, with the dictates of their passion; nor, since the executions at Tyburn have ceased, will they again be let loose the moment the

fatal cart is drawn away, to notify to distant friends the departure of a wretched criminal.

The rapidity of their flight is very wonderful. Lithgow assures us, that one of them will carry a letter from Babylon to Aleppo, (which, to a man, is usually a thirty days' journey,) in forty-eight hours. To measure their speed with some tolerable degree of exactness, a Gentleman some years ago, on a trifling wager, sent a Carrier Pigeon from London, by the coach, to a friend at St. Edmund's-Bury; and along with it a note, desiring that the Pigeon, two days after its arrival there, might be thrown up precisely when the town-clock struck nine in the morning. This was accordingly done: the Pigeon arrived in London, and flew into the Bull inn, in Bishopsgate street, at half an hour past eleven o'clock, of the same

morning; having flown seventy-two miles in two hours and a half.

ANNUAL REGISTER for 1765.

The Secretary Falcon.

HOWEVER shrewd and cunning this bird may be, in its general conduct, yet, M. de Buffon seems to have attributed to it a much greater degree of intelligence than it really possesses. "When a painter, (says he, quoting a letter of the Viscount de Querhoet,) was employed in drawing one of the Secretary Falcons, it approached him, looked attentively upon his paper, stretched out its neck, and erected the feathers of its head, as if admiring its own figure. It often came with its wings raised, and its head projected, to observe what he was doing. It also

thus approached me two or three times, when I was sitting at a table in its hut, in order to describe it."

The Fighting Magpie.

A few years since, a publican of the name of Whiteingstall, who lived in the neighbourhood of the New Forest in Hampshire, had a Magpie, which he tamed and rendered so domesticated, that he would follow his master about, call him by name, and apparently understood every thing that was going forward in the house, as will appear from the following extraordinary circumstance.

One day, on cleaning the kitchen floor, Mag was considered in the way, and ordered into his cage, which hung against the wall of the said kitchen.

No sooner had he been enclosed, than a Cock from the farm-yard adjoining, made his appearance, and, strutting about the kitchen, roused the indignation of the Magpie to such a degree, that he vociferated, "Let me out, Mr. Whiteingstall! let me out! I'll do for him presently!" On hearing this, the master let him out, and a combat immediately ensued between Mag and the Cock. After a few tumbles, the Magpie was completely overthrown, and had his leg broke in the conflict; notwithstanding which, he exclaimed, with the *sang froid* of a Frenchman, "Take me up, Mr. Whiteingstall! take me up! for he has broke my leg."

The Common Turkey.

A GENTLEMAN of New York received from his friend at a distance, a

Turkey cock and hen, and a pair of Bantams, which he put into his yard with other poultry. Some time after, as he was feeding them from the barn door, a large hawk suddenly turned the corner of the barn, and made a pitch at the Bantam hen: she immediately gave the alarm, by a noise which is natural to her on such occasions; when the Turkey cock, who was at the distance of about two yards, and no doubt understood the hawk's intentions, and the imminent danger of his old acquaintance, flew at the tyrant with such violence, and gave him so severe a stroke with his spurs, when about to seize his prey, as to knock him from the hen to a considerable distance; and the timely aid of this faithful auxiliary completely saved the Bantam from being devoured.

AMERICAN MEDICAL REPOSITORY.

In the month of May, 1798, a female Turkey, belonging to a Gentleman in Sweden, was sitting upon eggs; and as the cock in her absence began to appear uneasy and dejected, he was put into the place with her. He immediately sat down by her side; and it was soon found that he had taken some eggs from under her, which he covered very carefully. The eggs were put back, but he soon afterwards took them again. This induced the owner, by way of experiment, to have a nest made, and as many eggs put in as it was thought the cock could conveniently cover. The bird seemed highly pleased with this mark of confidence: he sat with great patience on the eggs, and was so attentive to the care of hatching them, as scarcely to afford himself time to take the food necessary for his support. At the usual

period, twenty-eight young ones were produced; and the cock, who was in some measure the parent of this numerous offspring, appeared perplexed on seeing so many little creatures picking around him, and requiring his care. It was, however, thought proper not to intrust him with the rearing of the brood, lest he should neglect them: they were therefore taken away, and reared by other means.

NEW TRANSACTIONS of the ACADEMY of SCIENCES, at STOCKHOLM.

The Chimney Swallow.

PROFESSOR Kalm, in his Travels into America, says, that a very reputable Lady and her children related to him the following story respecting these birds; assuring him, at the same

time, that they were all eye-witnesses to the fact.

"A couple of Swallows built their nest in the stable belonging to the Lady; the female laid eggs in the nest, and was about to breed them. Some days after, the people saw the female still sitting on the eggs; but the male, flying about the nest, and sometimes settling on a nail, was heard to utter a very plaintive note, which betrayed his uneasiness. On a nearer examination, the female was found dead in the nest, and the people flung her body away. The male then went to sit upon the eggs; but after being about two hours on them, and perhaps finding the business too troublesome, he went out, and returned in the afternoon with another female, which sat upon the nest, and afterwards fed the young ones, till they were able to provide for themselves."

KALM's TRAVELS.

The Marten.

During the residence of a Mr. Simpson, at Welton, in North America, he one morning heard a noise from a couple of Martens, that were flying from tree to tree near his dwelling. They made several attempts to get into a box or cage fixed against the house, which they had before occupied; but they always appeared to fly from it again with the utmost dread; at the same time repeating those loud cries which first drew his attention. Curiosity led the Gentleman to watch their motions. After some time, a small Wren came from the box, and perched on a tree near it; when her shrill notes seemed to amaze her antagonists. Having remained a short

time, she flew away. The Martens took this opportunity of returning to the cage, but their stay was short. Their diminutive adversary returned, and made them retire with the greatest precipitation. They continued manœuvering in this way the whole day; but the following morning, on the Wren's quitting the cage, the Martens immediately returned, took possession of their mansion, broke up their own nest, went to work afresh with extreme industry and ingenuity, and soon barricaded their door. The Wren returned, but could not now re-enter. She made attempts to storm the nest, but did not succeed. The Martens, abstaining from food nearly two days, persevered during the whole of that time in defending the entrance; and the Wren, finding she could not force the works, raised the siege, quitted her

intentions, and left the Martens in quiet possession of their dwelling.

AMERICAN MEDICAL REPOSITORY.

The Canary-Finch.

"On observing a Canary Bird, (says Dr. Darwin,) at the house of Mr. Harvey, near Tutbury, in Derbyshire, I was told it always fainted away when its cage was cleaned, and I desired to see the experiment. The cage being taken from the ceiling, and the bottom drawn out, the bird began to tremble, and turned quite white about the root of his bill: he then opened his mouth, as if for breath, and respired quick; stood up straighter on his perch, hung his wings, spread his tail, closed his eyes, and appeared quite stiff and cataleptic for nearly half an hour; and

at length, with much trembling and deep respirations, came gradually to himself."

DARWIN's ZOONOMIA.

The Domestic Cock.

THIS bird's beautiful plumage, and undaunted spirit, as well as his great utility, have rendered him a favourite in all countries where he has been introduced. His courage is scarcely to be subdued by the most powerful assailants; and though he should die in the effort, he will defend his females against enemies that are much stronger than himself.

"I have just witnessed, (says the Comte de Buffon,) a curious scene. A Sparrow Hawk alighted in a populous court-yard: a young Cock, of

this year's hatching, instantly darted at him, and threw him on his back. In this situation, the Hawk, defending himself with his talons and his bill, intimidated the hens and Turkies, which screamed tumultuously around him. After having a little recovered himself, he rose, and was taking wing; when the Cock rushed upon him a second time, overturned him, and held him down so long, that he was caught by a stander-by."

The Cock is very attentive to his females, hardly ever losing sight of them. He leads, defends, and cherishes them; collects them together when they straggle; and seems to eat unwillingly till he sees them feeding around him. Whenever any strange Cock appears within his domain, he

immediately attacks the intruder, and, if possible, drives him away.

His jealousy does not, however, seem to be altogether confined to his rivals, it has been sometimes observed to extend even to his beloved female; and he appears capable of being actuated by revenge, founded on suspicions of her conjugal infidelity. Dr. Percival, in his Dissertations, relates an incident which happened not long ago, at the seat of a Gentleman, near Berwick, and justifies the above remark. "My mower, (says this Gentleman,) cut a Partridge on her nest; and immediately brought the eggs (fourteen) to the house. I ordered them to be put under a very large beautiful hen, and her own to be taken away. They were hatched in two days, and the hen brought them up perfectly well, till they were five or six weeks old. During that time they

were constantly kept confined in an out-house, without being seen by any of the other poultry. The door happening to be left open, the Cock got in. My housekeeper hearing the hen in distress, ran to her assistance; but did not arrive in time to save her life. The Cock finding her with the brood of Partridges, had fallen upon her with the utmost fury, and killed her. The housekeeper found him tearing her with both his beak and spurs; although she was then fluttering in the last agony, and incapable of any resistance. This hen had formerly been the Cock's greatest favourite."

The Golden Eagle.

SEVERAL instances have been recorded of children being seized and car-

ried off by Eagles to their young. In the year 1737, in the parish of Norderhougs, in Norway, a boy, somewhat more than two years old, was running from the house to his parents, who were at work in the fields at no great distance, when an Eagle pounced upon, and flew off with him in their sight. It was with inexpressible grief and anguish that they beheld their child dragged away, but all their screams and efforts to prevent it were in vain. Anderson, in his History of Iceland, says, that in that island, children of four and five years of age have been sometimes taken away by Eagles: and Ray relates, that in one of the Orkneys, a child of a year old was seized in the talons of an Eagle, and carried above four miles to its nest. The mother knowing the place, pursued the bird, found her child in the nest, and took it away unhurt.

The Common Cuckoo.

It has been conjectured by some, that the Cuckoo remains in this country hidden in hollow trees, and in a torpid state, during the winter. In support of this opinion, Willoughby, on the credit of another person, relates the following story:—"The servants of a Gentleman in the country, having stocked up, in one of the meadows, some old, dry, rotten willows, thought proper, on a certain occasion, to carry them home. In heating a stove, two logs of this timber were put into the lower part, and fire was applied as usual. But soon, to the great surprise of the family, was heard the cry of a Cuckoo, chirping three times from under the stove. Wondering at so extraordinary a cry in winter time, the

servants drew the willow logs from the furnace, and in the midst of one of them saw something move; when, taking an axe, they opened the hole, and thrusting in their hands, first they plucked out nothing but feathers; afterwards they got hold of a living animal, and this was the Cuckoo, that the fire had waked. It was, indeed, (continues our historian,) brisk and lively, but wholly naked and bare of feathers, and without any winter provision in its hole." This Cuckoo the boys kept two years afterwards, alive in the stove; but whether it repaid them with a second song, the author of the tale has not thought fit to inform us.

A FEW years ago, a young Cuckoo was found in a torpid state, in the

thickest part of a close furze bush. When taken up, it soon exhibited signs of life, but was quite destitute of feathers. Being kept warm, and carefully fed, it grew and recovered its coat. In the spring following it made its escape: and in flying across the river Tyne, was heard to give its usual call.

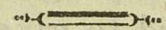
BEWICK's BIRDS.

The Carrion Crow.

On the northern coast of Ireland, a friend of Dr. Darwin's saw above a hundred Crows at once preying upon muscles: each Crow took a muscle up in the air, twenty or forty yards high, and let it fall on the stones: and thus, by breaking the shell, got possession of the animal.

It is related, that a certain ancient

philosopher walking along the sea-shore to gather shells, one of these unlucky birds mistaking his bald head for a stone, dropped a shell-fish upon it, and killed at once a philosopher and an oyster!!



The familiarity and audacity of Crows in some parts of the east is astonishing. They frequent the courts of houses belonging to Europeans: and, as the servants are carrying in dinner, will alight on the dishes, and fly away with the meat, if not driven off by persons who attend with sticks for that purpose.

PENNANT.

The Common Creeper.

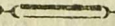
This little bird seems peculiarly fond of the society of man; and it must be confessed, that in some parts of the world it is often protected by his interested care. From observing its utility in destroying insects, it has long been a custom, in many parts of the United States, to fix a small box at the end of a long pole, in gardens, and about houses, as a place for it to build in. In these boxes the animals form their nest, and hatch their young; which the parent birds feed with a variety of different insects, particularly those species that are injurious in gardens.

A Gentleman who was at the trouble of watching these birds, for the purpose, observed that the parents gene-

rally went from the nest and returned with insects from forty to sixty times in an hour; and that, in one particular hour, they carried food no less than seventy-one times. In this business they were engaged during the greater part of the day. Now, allowing twelve hours to be thus occupied, a single pair of these birds would destroy at least six hundred insects in the course of one day, even on the supposition that the two birds took only a single insect each time: but it is highly probable that they often took more.

BARTON.

N. B. This anecdote merits the attention of Horticulturists.



It is supposed that the Common Creeper is the bird which Mr. St. John has called a *Wren*; recording the following story of its bravery and selfish-

ness:—Three birds had built their nests almost contiguous to each other. A Swallow had affixed hers in one corner of a piazza, next his house; a bird he calls a *Phebe*, in the other corner; and a Wren possessed a little box, which he had made on purpose, and hung between them. These were all quite tame. The Wren had for some time shewn signs of dislike to the box which had been assigned to it, though it was not known on what account. At length, however, it resolved, small as it was, to drive the Swallow from her habitation; and, astonishing to say, it succeeded, "Impudence," says Mr. St. John, "gets the better of modesty; and this exploit was no sooner performed, than the Wren removed every material to its own box with the most admirable dexterity. The signs of triumph appeared very visible: it flut-

tered its wings with uncommon velocity; and an universal joy was perceivable in all its movements. The peaceable Swallow, like the passive Quaker, meekly sat at a small distance, and never offered the least resistance. But no sooner was the plunder carried away, than the injured bird went to work with unabated ardour, and in a few days the depredations were repaired." Mr. St. John, to prevent any repetition of the same violence, removed the Wren's box to another part of the house.

LETTERS of an AMERICAN FARMER.

The Mocking Bird.

The Mimic Thrush, or Mocking Bird, is about the size of a Blackbird, but somewhat more slender: the plum-

age is grey, but paler on the under parts than above.

It is common throughout America and Jamaica; but changes its place in the summer, being then seen much more to the northward than in winter. It cannot vie with the feathered inhabitants of those countries in brilliancy of plumage; but is content with much more rare and estimable qualifications. It possesses not only natural notes of its own, which are truly musical and solemn; but it can, at pleasure, assume the tone of every other animal in the forest, from the Humming Bird to the Eagle, descending even to the Wolf, or Raven. One of them, confined in a cage, has been heard to mimic the chattering of a Magpie, and the creaking of the hinges of a sign-post in high winds.

This capricious little mimic seems

to have a singular pleasure in archly leading other birds astray. He is said at one time to allure the smaller birds with the call of their mates; and when they come near, to terrify them with the scream of an Eagle. There is scarcely a bird of the forest that is not at some time deceived by his call.

But he is not like the mimics among mankind, who very seldom possess any independent merit. A Garrick and a Foote have not pleased more in their own characters, than the Mocking Bird does in his. He is the only one of the American singing birds that can be compared with those of Europe; and, were it not for the attention he pays to every sort of disagreeable noise, which tends to debase his best notes, there can be little doubt that he would be fully equal to the song of the Nightingale, in its whole compass. He fre-

quents the dwellings of the American farmers; where, sitting on the roof or chimney, he sometimes pours forth the most sweet and animated strains imaginable. The Mexicans, on account of his various notes, and his imitative powers, call him "The bird of four hundred tongues." In the warmer parts of America, he sings incessantly, day and night, from the month of March till August; beginning with his own compositions, and frequently finishing by an adoption of those of the whole feathered choir. He repeats his tunes with such artful sweetness, as to excite both pleasure and surprise.

It is not, however, in the powers of voice alone, that these birds are pleasing; they may even be said to dance. When excited into a kind of ecstacy by their own music, they gradually raise themselves from the place where

they stand, and with their wings extended, drop, with their head down, to the same spot, and whirl round, accompanying their melody with a variety of pleasing gesticulations.

BROWN, PENNANT, and BINGLEY.

The Humming Bird.

THE length of this minute volatile is little more than three inches, of which the bill alone occupies three quarters of an inch. The male is green and gold on the upper part, with a changeable copper gloss; the under parts are grey. The throat and forepart of the neck are of a ruby colour,—in some lights as bright as fire. When viewed sideways, the feathers appear mixed with gold, and beneath of a dull garnet colour, The two middle

feathers of the tail are the same as the upper plumage, and the rest are brown.

> Who can paint
> Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
> Amid its gay creation, hues like these?

The female, instead of the bright ruby throat, has only a few obscure small brown spots; and all the outer tail feathers, which in the male are plain, are in the female tipped with white. The bill and legs are black in both sexes.

This beautiful little bird is as admirable for its vast swiftness in the air, and its manner of feeding, as for the elegance and brilliancy of its colours. It flies so rapidly, that the eye is incapable of pursuing it; and the perpetual motion of its wings is so quick, as to be imperceptible to the nicest observer. Lightning is scarcely more

transient than its flight, nor the glare more vivid than its colours.

It never feeds but on the wing, suspended over the flower from which it extracts nourishment: for its only food is the honeyed juice lodged within the nectariæ of the flowers, which it sucks through the folds or cavities of its curious tongue. Like the bee, having exhausted the honey of one flower, it wanders to the next in search of new sweets. It admires chiefly those flowers that have the deepest tubes; and in the countries inhabited by these birds, whoever sets plants of this description before his windows, is sure to be visited by multitudes of them. It is very entertaining to see them swarming around the flowers, and trying every tube by the insertion of their little bills. If they find that their brethren have anticipated them, and

exhausted the flower of its honey, they will, in a rage, (if possible,) pluck it off, and throw it on the ground, and sometimes even tear it in pieces.

The most violent passions agitate these diminutive creatures. They have often dreadful contests, when numbers happen to dispute the possession of the same flower. They will tilt against each other with such fury, as if they meant to transfix their antagonists with their long bills. During the fight, they frequently pursue the conquered into the apartments of those houses whose windows are left open; and then, taking a turn round the room, as flies do in England, they suddenly regain the open air. They are fearless of mankind; and in feeding, will suffer persons to come within two yards of them; but on a nearer approach, they dart away with won-

derful celerity. Mr. St. John says, that their contentions often last till one or other of the combatants is killed.

The red-throated Humming Bird most commonly builds on the middle branch of a tree; and the nest is so small, that it cannot be seen by a person who stands on the ground. Whoever, therefore, is desirous of seeing it, must climb up to the branch, that he may view it from above; and on this account it is that their nests are not more frequently found. The nest is quite round: the outside for the most part composed of green moss so common on old pales and trees; and the inside of the softest vegetable down the birds can collect. Sometimes, however, they vary the texture, using flax, hemp, hairs, and other similar materials. The female lays two

eggs, of the size of a pea; which are white, and equal in thickness at both ends.

Ferdinandez Oviedo, an author of great repute, speaks from his own knowledge, of the spirited instinct of these diminutive birds in defence of their young:—"When they observe any one climbing the tree in which they have built their nests, they attack him in the face, attempting to strike him on the eyes; and coming, going, and returning, with such velocity, as hardly any man would credit who had not himself seen it."

The Humming Bird is seldom caught alive; but a friend of M. Du Pratz was indulged with this satisfaction. He had observed one of them enter the bell of a convolvulus; and, as it had quite buried itself to get at the bottom, he ran immediately to the place, shut

the flower, cut it from the stalk, and carried off the bird a prisoner. He could not, however, prevail upon it to eat; and it died in the course of three or four days.

Charlevoix informs us, that he had one of them, in Canada, for about twenty-four hours. It suffered itself to be handled; and even counterfeited death, that it might escape. A slight frost in the night destroyed it.

"My friend, Captain Davies, informs me, (says Dr. Latham, in his Synopsis,) that he kept these birds alive for four months, by the following method:—He made an exact representation of some of the tubular flowers, with paper fastened round a tobacco-pipe, and painted them of a proper colour: these were placed in the order of nature, within the cage in which the little creatures were con-

fined; the bottoms of the tubes were replenished with a mixture of brown sugar and water, as often as emptied; and he had the pleasure of seeing them perform every action; for they soon grew familiar, and took their nourishment in the same manner as when ranging at large, though close under his eye."

CHARLEVOIX, LATHAM, and BINGLEY.

The Ptarmigan.

THE voice of this species of birds is very extraordinary; and is seldom exerted but in the night. It is very rarely that they are found in Denmark; but, by some accident, one of them, some years ago, happened to stray within a hundred miles of Stockholm, which very much alarmed the common people of the

neighbourhood; for, from its nightly noise, a report very soon arose, that the wood where it took up its residence was haunted by a ghost. So much were the people terrified by this supposed sprite, that nothing could tempt the post-boys to pass the wood after dark. The spirit was, however, at last happily removed, by some gentlemen sending their gamekeepers into the wood, by moonlight, who soon discovered and killed the harmless Ptarmigan.

BINGLEY.

The Swan.

The Swan will swim faster than a man can walk. It is very strong, and at times extremely fierce: it has not unfrequently been known to throw

down and trample upon youths of fifteen or sixteen years of age; and an old Swan, we are told, is able to break the leg of a man with a single stroke of its wing.

A female, while in the act of sitting, observed a fox swimming towards her from the opposite shore: she instantly darted into the water, and having kept him at bay for a considerable time with her wings, at last succeeded in drowning him; after which, in the sight of several persons, she returned in triumph. This circumstance took place at Pensy, in Buckinghamshire.

Dr. LATHAM.

The Gigantic Crane.

A YOUNG bird of this kind, about five feet in height, was brought up

tame, and presented to the Chief of the Bananas, where Mr. Smeathman lived; and soon became perfectly familiar. It regularly attended the hall at dinner-time; placing itself behind its master's chair, frequently before any of the guests entered. The servants were obliged to watch it carefully, and to defend the provisions, by beating it off with sticks; yet, notwithstanding every precaution, it would frequently snatch off something from the table. It one day purloined a whole boiled fowl, which it swallowed in an instant.

It used to fly about the island, and roost very high among the silk cotton trees: from this station, at the distance of two or three miles, it could see when the dinner was carried across the court; when, darting down, it

would arrive early enough to enter with some of those who carried in the dishes.

When sitting, it was observed always to rest itself on the whole length of the hind part of the leg. It sometimes stood in the room for half an hour after dinner, turning its head alternately, as if listening to the conversation.

Its courage was not equal to its voracity: for a child of eight or ten years old was able to put it to flight; though it would seem at first to stand on the defensive, by threatening with its enormous bill widely extended, and crying out with a loud hoarse voice.

It preyed on small quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles; and though it would destroy poultry, it never dared openly to attack a hen with her young. It was known to swallow a cat whole; and a

bone of a shin of beef being broken, served it but for two morsels.

BINGLEY.

The Corvorant.*

THE indefatigable nature of this bird, and its great power in catching fish, were, probably, the motives that induced some nations to breed them up tame, for the purposes of fishing.

They are carried to the fish-pools, from the rooms wherein they are kept, hood-winked, that they may not be frightened by the way. The hoods are then taken off; and, having tied a leather thong round the lower part of their necks, that they may not swallow what they catch, they throw them into the river. They presently dive

* Vulgarly termed CORMORANT.

under water; and there, for a long time, with wonderful swiftness, pursue the fish; and when they have caught them, rise to the surface, and pressing the fish lightly with their bills, swallow them; till each bird hath, after this manner, gorged five or six fishes. Their keepers then call them to the first boat, to which they readily fly; and, one after another, vomit up the fish, a little bruised with the first nip given in catching them. When they have done fishing, setting the birds on some high place, they loosen the string from their necks, leaving the passage to the stomach free and open; and, for their reward, throw them part of their prey: one or two fishes to each; which they will catch most dexterously, as they are falling in the air.

At present, the Corvorant is trained up in every part of China for the same

purpose. It is very pleasant to behold with what sagacity they portion out the lake or the canal where they are upon duty. When they have found their prey, they seize it with their beak by the middle, and carry it without fail to their master. When the fish is too large, they then give each other mutual assistance: one seizes it by the head, the other by the tail, and in this manner carry it to the boat together. They have always, while they fish, a string fastened round their throats, to prevent them from devouring their prey.

BUFFON.

The Secretary Falcon.

MONSIEUR Le Vaillant tells us, that he was witness to an engagement

between the Secretary Falcon and a serpent. "The battle was obstinate, and conducted with equal address on both sides. But the serpent at length feeling the inferiority of his strength, employed, in his attempt to regain his hole, all that subtlety which is attributed to the tribe; while the bird, apparently guessing his design, stopped him on a sudden, and cut off his retreat, by placing herself before him at a single leap. On whatever side the reptile endeavoured to make his escape, his enemy still appeared before him. Then, uniting at once both bravery and cunning, he erected himself boldly to intimidate the bird; and hissing dreadfully, displayed his menacing throat, inflamed eyes, and head swoln with rage and venom.

Sometimes this threatening appearance produced a momentary suspen-

sion of hostilities; but the bird soon returned to the charge, and, covering her body with one of her wings as a buckler, struck her enemy with the bony protuberances of the other. I saw him at last stagger and fall: the conqueror then fell upon him to dispatch him, and with one stroke of her beak laid open his skull."

At this instant, Monsieur Vaillant fired at, and killed her. In her craw he found, on dissection, eleven tolerably large lizards; three serpents, as long as his arm; eleven small tortoises, most of which were about two inches in diameter; and a number of locusts and others insects, several of them sufficiently whole to be worth preserving, and adding to his collection. He observed too, that, in addition to this mass of food, the craw contained a sort of ball, as large as

the egg of a goose, formed of the vertibræ of serpents and lizards, shells of different tortoises; and wings, claws, and shields of different kinds of beetles. This indigestible mass, when become sufficiently large, the Secretary would, doubtless, have vomited up, in the manner of other birds of prey.

VAILLANT's TRAVELS.

The White, or Screech, Owl.

THE Mogul and Kalmuc Tartars pay almost divine honours to the White Owl; for they attribute to it the preservation of Jenghis Khan, the founder of the empire. That Prince, with a small army, happened to be surprised and put to flight by his enemies. Compelled to seek concealment in a

coppice, an Owl settled on the bush under which he was hidden. This circumstance induced his pursuers not to search there, since they supposed it impossible that that bird would perch where any man was concealed. The Prince escaped; and henceforth his countrymen held it sacred, and every one wore a plume of feathers of the White Owl on his head. To this day the Kalmucs continue the custom on all their great festivals: and some tribes have an idol, in the form of an Owl, to which they fasten the real legs of this bird.

PENNANT.

The Brown Owl.

On examining a nest of these Owls, were found two young ones, several pieces of young rabbits, leverets, and

other small animals. The hen and one of the young ones were taken away; the other was left to entice the cock, which was absent when the nest was discovered. On the following morning, there were found in the nest no fewer than three young rabbits, that had been brought to his young one, by the cock, during the night.

These birds are occasionally very furious and bold in defence of their young. A carpenter, some years ago, passing through a field near Gloucester, was suddenly attacked by an Owl that had a nest in a tree near the path. It flew at his head: and the man struck at it with a tool that he had in his hand, but missed his blow. The enraged bird repeated the attack; and fastening her talons in his face, lacerated him in a most shocking manner.

GENTLEMAN's MAGAZINE.

The Jay.

When kept in a domestic state, the Jay may be rendered very familiar, and will catch and repeat a variety of sounds. One of them has been heard to imitate so exactly the noise made by the action of a saw, as to induce passengers to suppose that a carpenter was at work in the house.

A Jay kept by a person in the north of England had learned, at the approach of cattle, to set a cur dog upon them, by whistling and calling him by his name. One winter, during a severe frost, the dog was by this means excited to attack a cow that was big with calf; when the poor animal fell on the ice, and was much hurt. The Jay was complained of as a nuisance, and its owner was obliged to destroy it.

BEWICK's BIRDS.

The Magpie.

In most countries the Magpie is esteemed a bird of omen. In various parts of the north of England, if one of these birds is observed flying by itself, it is accounted by the vulgar a sign of ill-luck: if there are two together, they forebode something fortunate: three indicate a funeral; and four a wedding.

BINGLEY.

The Great Shrike, or Butcher Bird.

The muscles that move the bill of this bird are very thick and strong; an apparatus peculiarly necessary to a species, whose mode of killing its prey is so singular, and whose manner of devouring it is so extraordinary. He

He seizes the smaller birds by the throat, and thus strangles them; and it is probable for this reason that the Germans call him by a name signifying "The Suffocating Angel."—When his prey is dead, he fixes it on some thorn; and thus spitted, tears it to pieces with his bill. Even when confined in a cage, he will often treat his food in much the same manner, by sticking it against the wires before he devours it.

In spring and summer, he imitates the voices of other birds, by way of decoying them within his reach, that he may destroy them: excepting this, his natural note is the same throughout all seasons. When kept in a cage, and even where he seems perfectly contented, he is always mute.

Mr. Bell, who travelled from Moscow, through Siberia, to Pekin, says,

that in Russia these creatures are often taken by the bird-catchers, and made tame. He had one of them given to him, which he taught to perch on a pointed stick, fixed in the wall of his apartment. Whenever a small bird was let loose in the room, the Shrike would immediately fly from his perch, and seize it by the throat in such a manner as almost to suffocate it. He would then carry it to his perch, and spit it on the end, (which was sharpened for that purpose,) drawing it on carefully and forcibly with his bill and claws. If several birds were given him, he would use them all, one after another, in the same manner. These were so fixed, that they hung by the neck till he had leisure to devour them. This uncommon practice seems necessary to these birds, as an equivalent for the want of strength in their claws

to tear their food to pieces. From this they derive their title of "Butcher Birds." They are much admired by the Russians, on account of the diversion they afford in seizing and killing their prey.

BINGLEY.

In America, the Great Shrike has been observed to adopt an odd stratagem, for the apparent purpose of decoying its prey. A Gentleman there, accidentally observing that several grasshoppers were stuck upon the sharp thorny branches of some trees, inquired of a person, who lived close by, the cause of the phenomenon; and was informed that they were stuck there by this bird, which is called by the English in America, Nine-killer.

On farther inquiry he was led to

suppose, that this was an instinctive stratagem adopted by the bird, in order to decoy the smaller birds, which feed on insects, into a situation from whence he could dart on, and seize them. He is called Nine-killer, from the supposition that he sticks up nine grasshoppers in succession. That the insects are placed there as food to tempt other birds, is said to appear from their being frequently left untouched for a considerable length of time.

BINGLEY.

The Pigeon.

In October, 1803, Mr. Nimmo, of George-street, Manchester-square, sent down to Salisbury a Pigeon from his dove-cote, to be dispatched with a billet round its neck, the next day, at

twelve o'clock precisely, in order to ascertain what dependance could be placed on Pigeons, in case of extraordinary expedition being necessary. The bird arrived, with the billet round its neck, seven minutes past three in the afternoon,—a distance of eighty-three miles, in three hours and seven minutes.

BELL's WEEKLY MESSENGER.

The Hawk.

At Lady Salisbury's hunt, in January, 1803, a curious circumstance occurred:—A covey of Partridges was sprung, and almost instantaneously a Hawk appeared in the chase, and was seen to strike the uppermost bird; when one of the Gentlemen, with more attention and curiosity than the rest, followed the Hawk, and its prey,

for more than three miles; the Hawk continually resting, and rising, according to its ability and strength; till at last, through fatigue, it resigned its prey to its pursuer. The Partridge weighed sixteen ounces. It had received no farther injury than from the gripe of the Hawk at the bottom of the neck.

BELL's WEEKLY MESSENGER.

The Crane.

EXTRAORDINARY is the caution which the Cranes observe in their flight: for when the wind is very high, and the air very tempestuous, they move, not, as in fair weather, with their beaks in their breasts like a half moon, but forming a triangular body; with the sharp angle of that figure

they penetrate the wind that ruffles round about them, and by that means preserve their order unbroken. On the other hand, when they fall upon the ground, those that are upon the night-watch, stand with the whole weight of their bodies upon one leg, holding a stone in the claw of the other foot. For the holding of the stone keeps them awake for a long time together; and wakes them again with the noise of the fall, if they happen to drop asleep.

PLUTARCH.

Silesian Geese.

These birds being afraid of the Eagles every time they cross Mount Taurus, carry great stones in their mouths, to the end, that by that means, as it were bridling their loquacious

tongues, they may traverse the mountain in silence, without alarming their enemies.

PLUTARCH.

The Partridge.

The cunning, united with the extraordinary affection of this bird towards its offspring, is worthy of observation. They instruct their young ones, while unable to fly, and when pursued by the fowlers, to lay themselves upon their backs,—their breasts covered with some clod of earth, or little heap of dirt rolled together like a ball. On the other hand, the old Partridges, to deceive the fowlers, and draw them a contrary way, make short flights from one place to another, thereby enticing the fowlers to follow

them, till thus allured from their young ones, the fowlers give over all hopes of being masters of their game.

PLUTARCH.

The Trochilus.

The Trochilus is a sort of water-fowl, that guards and watches over the Crocodile, not as one that feeds at his table, but in order to live upon the scraps and leasings only of his prey.

When this bird observes the Crocodile asleep, and the Ichneumon armed with mud and dirt ready to assail him, he never leaves crying and pecking him with his beak, till he rouses the torpid monster. In return for which, the Crocodile is so tame and gentle towards this bird, that he permits him to enter his yawning chaps, and is

pleased with his pecking out, and cleansing away with his beak, the remainder of the devoured flesh that sticks between his teeth. And when the monster has an inclination to shut his mouth, he gives the Trochilus notice by a gentle lowering of his jaw; nor will he close his chaps till he finds the bird has flown away.

PLUTARCH.

The Raven.

THE Raven is found in every country in the world. Strong and hardy, he is uninfluenced by the changes of the weather; and when other birds seem benumbed with the cold, or pining with famine, the Raven is active and healthy, busily employed in prowling for prey, or sporting in the coldest

atmosphere. As the heats of the line do not oppress him, so he bears the cold of the polar regions with equal indifference. He is sometimes indeed seen milk white, and this may probably be the effect of the rigorous northern climates.

A Raven may be trained to almost every purpose to which the power of birds can be converted. He may be trained up for fowling like a Hawk; he may be taught to fetch and carry like a spaniel; he may be taught to speak like a Parrot; but the most extraordinary of all is, that he can be taught to sing like a man. I have heard, (says a modern author,) a Raven sing a song with great distinctness and humour.

BUFFON.

The Parrot.

THE ease with which this bird is taught to speak, and the great number of words it is capable of repeating, are equally wonderful. We are assured, by a grave writer, that one of these birds was taught to rehearse a whole sonnet from Petrarch; and, that I may not be wanting in an instance to this effect, (says a late writer,) I have seen a Parrot, belonging to a distiller who had suffered pretty largely in his circumstances from an informer that lived opposite him, very ridiculously employed. This bird was taught to pronounce the ninth Commandment,—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," with a very clear, loud, articulate voice. The bird was generally placed in its cage over

against the informer's house, and delighted the whole neighbourhood with its persevering exhortations.

BUFFON.

The Fly Catcher.

The Rev. Mr. White relates in his Natural History of Selborne, that the Fly Catcher of the Zoology (the Stoparola of Ray) builds every year in the vines that grow on the walls of his house. A pair of these birds had one year inadvertently placed their nest on a naked bough,—perhaps in a shady season,—not being aware of the inconvenience that followed. But a hot sunny change of weather coming on before the brood was half fledged, the reflection of the wall became insupportable, and must inevitably have de-

stroyed the tender young, had not affection suggested an expedient, and prompted the parent birds to hover over the nest all the hotter hours; while with wings expanded, and mouths gaping for breath, they screened off the heat from their oppressed offspring.

WHITE's NATURAL HISTORY.

The Turkey.

Mr. Peacock, of Hockley, in January, 1804, kept a Turkey, under two years of age, which at that season, had laid more than one hundred eggs, hatched ninety, and brought to perfection seventy-five, mostly cocks.

BELL's WEEKLY MESSENGER.

On the Migration of the Swallow.

THE following account of some Swallows on the Rhine, communicated to Mr. Peter Collinson, by Mr. Achard, was read before the Royal Society, the 21st of April, 1763.

"In the latter end of March, (says Mr. Achard,) I took my passage down the Rhine, to Rotterdam. A little below Basil, the south bank of the river was very high and steep, consisting of a sandy soil, sixty or eighty feet above the water.

"I was surprised at seeing, near the top of the cliff, some boys tied to ropes, hanging down, and busily employed. The singularity of these adventurous boys, and the business they so daringly attempted, made us stop our navigation, to inquire into the

meaning of it. The waterman told us they were searching the holes in the cliffs for Swallows, or Martens, which took refuge in them, and remained there all the winter, until warm weather; and then they came abroad.

"The boys being let down by their comrades to the holes, put in a long rammer, with a screw at the end, such as is used to unload guns; and, twisting it about, drew out the birds. For a trifle, I procured some of them. When I first had them, they seemed stiff and lifeless; I put one of them into my bosom, between my skin and shirt, and laid another upon a board, the sun shining full and warm upon it; and one or two of my companions did the like.

"That in my bosom revived in about a quarter of an hour; feeling it move, I took it out to look at it, and saw it

stretch itself upon my hand; but perceiving it not sufficiently come to itself, I put it in again; in about another quarter, feeling it flutter pretty briskly, I took it out, and admired it. Being now perfectly recovered, before I was aware, it took flight; the covering of the boat prevented my seeing where it went. The bird which was placed on the board, though exposed to the full sun, yet, I presume, from a chillness of the air, did not revive, so as to be able to fly."

Such is this Gentleman's account; on which the following observations were made by Mr. Collinson.

"What I collect from Mr. Achard's relation, is, that it was the practice of the boys annually to take these birds, by their apparatus, and ready method of doing it; and the frequency of it was no remarkable thing to the water-

man. Next, it confirmed my sentiments, that some of the Swallow tribe go away, and some stay behind, in these dormitories, all the winter. If my friend had been particular as to the species, it would have settled that point."

SIR Charles Wager gives the following account of what happened to him in one of his voyages. "Returning home, in the spring of the year, as I got into soundings in our channel, a great flock of Swallows came and settled on all my rigging; every rope was covered; they hung to each other like a swarm of bees; the decks and cabins were filled with them. They seemed almost famished and spent, and were only feathers and bones; but

being recruited with a night's rest, took their flight in the morning."

PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS.

The Partridge.

THE following very curious fact was communicated by a respectable Gentleman in the neighbourhood of Blandford; and we give the relation in the writer's own words:—"James Cox, Mr. Grosvenor's under keeper, in his road to speak to me, on Friday, the 15th of June, 1804, heard an old Partridge, as if in great distress, beyond the hedge, in a piece of oats; and judging that some enemy was among her young, he leaped over to examine into the matter; but seeing nothing, and still finding the old bird running round him, in the same con-

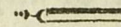
tinued distress, he looked more minutely amongst the corn; and, at last, found a large snake in the midst of the infant brood. Willing to see if any mischief had been done, he immediately cut open the snake's belly, when, to his inexpressible astonishment, two young Partridges ran from their horrid prison, and joined their distressed mother, apparently very well; and two others were found in the same rapacious maw, quite dead. Strange as this may appear, it is not more curious than really true."

BELL's WEEKLY MESSENGER.

The Thrush.

THE affection of a parent bird for its young was never more forcibly exemplified than in the following in-

stance:—A boy having purloined a Thrush's nest, near Rockcliffe, bore off his prize towards Carlisle, where he lived. The mother, who had just been separated from her young, with unceasing solicitude pursued them step by step; which the boy and his companions perceiving, frequently put down the nest, when she as constantly resumed her place, refusing to retire until almost grasped by the hand. Thus they travelled on together, until, at the distance of five miles, the boy reached his home; and having taken the nest into the house, the disconsolate parent watched an opportunity, and springing in at the window, she seated herself as before, and could not be driven from thence.



Mr. Haugh, now living at Stan-

wix, is in possession of a Thrush, that has excited the admiration of some hundreds of persons. This bird (brought up from the nest) he has kept in a cage upwards of eight years: it is remarkable both for feather and song, and has never pined under either hurt or sickness; yet it has gradually obtained a complete regeneration of its legs and feet! About the close of the seventh year, these members gave signs of decay, when from each thigh there appeared to issue two bones, like two slender pipes cemented together; and, as the old legs and feet, on the one side shrunk and diminished, the new ones protruded on the other, daily acquiring strength and activity.

BELL's WEEKLY MESSENGER.

The Cock with a Wooden Leg.

NICHOLAS Cannon, the driver of one of the Kentish stages, has a favourite Game Cock, named Trumpeter, who has won every battle he has fought; but a short time since had the misfortune to break one of his legs in a rat trap.

Cannon, who was uncommonly attached to this feathered hero, determined, if possible, to save his life: and striking off the broken part of the limb, gathered up the fibres of the leg, and placed his favourite securely in a sling; and, after having attended and fed him for five weeks, he took off the bandage, and found the wound completely cicatrized. He next set about making an artificial foot, and being an ingenious fellow, soon fash-

ioned a wooden leg and foot, armed with a spur, and affixed it to the stump of the amputated limb; upon which the Cock now actually struts among his barn-door wives, at Canterbury, a terror to all his feathered rivals.

BELL's WEEKLY MESSENGER.

The Fly Catcher.

"NOT only Martens, (observes a celebrated Naturalist,) but every other summer bird of passage, of the diminutive tribe, return to the same district, nay to the very same spot, which they inhabited in a former season.

"Fly Catchers I have known to build, eight, nine, and even ten years successively, in a crevice of an old wall, not far from my dwelling. Apprehensive that it was the same bird

which, annually, and invariably, visited the spot, curiosity prompted me to try an experiment, which put the matter out of doubt. When an opportunity offered, I took the female, cut off the extremity of the upper mandible of the bill, and with a knife made several perspicuous marks on its claws: this done, I set her at liberty: the succeeding spring the same bird returned, with the distinguishing marks I had given it, which was at once satisfactory. Perhaps some will say, it is impossible the bird should survive, after it was deprived of the point of its bill: they will, however, please to observe, that what was cut off was so very inconsiderable, that the loss of it could hardly be perceptible to the bird; and could not therefore be any way detrimental to its feeding."

The Woodcock.

Woodcocks are frequently seen in their migrations, passing to the north in pairs. Stragglers are sometimes found so wearied with their journey, that they are unable to proceed. A learned writer informs us, on the authority of Mr. Thomas Travers, of Cornwall, that the mariners of a ship, which was farther from land than any birds are usually found to be, discovered a bird hovering over them.—When they first saw it, it seemed among the clouds, and was but just discernable: however, it gradually descended, took several circuits round the vessel, and at length alighted on the deck. The bird was so wearied and fatigued, that they took it off with their hands, and found it was a Woodcock.

Probably the poor creature was steering northward, in order to follow his feathered mates; but had lost his way in the passage, and by the force of winds, was driven from the true aerial track. Instances of this kind often occur. Voyagers of veracity, whom I cannot but credit, have informed me, that they have seen Swallows and other birds light on their ships sometimes, when they have been very remote from shore. A stronger proof of the real migration of birds cannot be given.

It is very remarkable, that when the Woodcock first arrives here, the taste of its flesh is quite different from what it is afterwards; it is very white, short, and tender, and seems to have no blood in it; but after it has been in this country a considerable time, it becomes more tough, stringy, and fibrous, like that of domestic fowls. If

you shoot a cock just before the time of migration, it bleeds plentifully; whereas, at the beginning of winter it scarcely bleeds at all. From this, it seems evident, that in those countries where they spend their summer, they meet with a different kind of nourishment from what they find here. Probably the luxurious and succulent kind of nourishment, which they meet with among us, prepares them for breeding in those countries to which they retire, with the companions of their choice.

The Parrot.

When Augustus entered victorious into Rome, after the battle of Actium, several Parrots saluted him from the windows, crying out, "Honour and victory to Cæsar!" He had a few of those birds purchased at a pretty high price.

Some curious persons informed him, that the same citizens had taught other birds to pronounce the same compliment to Anthony, in case of the contrary event. This reflection made Augustus very indifferent to so versatile a species of flattery; and some days after, a Roman Knight, having presented a Parrot to him, that pronounced several words in praise of Augustus, the Emperor answered coldly, "I have enough of those winged courtiers." Hereupon the Parrot said very distinctly, "Ah, poor bird! thou hast lost all thy care and trouble;" words which his master had taught him at all events. This incident so pleased the Emperor, that he gave a very considerable sum for the Parrot; thus crowning its labour, whilst baffling the force of its oratory.

The Sparrow Hawk.

This is not only a bold, but a very obedient and docile bird; and when properly trained, is capable of great attachment. A compiler of "The Beauties of Natural History" observes: That he had one, which used to accompany him through the fields, catch his game, devour it at his leisure, and, after all, find him out wherever he went. So that after the first or second attempt of this kind, he was never afraid of losing him. A peasant, however, one day shot him, for having made too free with some of his poultry. He was about the size of a Wood-pigeon, and had been seen to fly at a Turkey Cock; and when beaten, return to the charge with undaunted intrepidity.

He had also been known to kill a fowl five or six times as big as himself.

The Chaunting Falcon.

In the breeding time the male bird is remarkable for its song, which it utters every morning and evening; and, like the Nightingale, not uncommonly all the night through. It sings out in a loud tone for more than a minute, and after an interval begins anew. During its song, it is so regardless of its own safety, that any one may approach very near it; but at other times it is very suspicious, and takes flight on the slightest alarm.

Should the male be killed, the female may also be shot without difficulty: for her attachment to him is such, that she continues flying round him

with the most plaintive voice; and, often passing within a few yards of the gunner, it is an easy matter to kill her. But if the female happens to be shot first, the affection of her mate does not prove so romantic: but he retires to the top of some distant tree, where he cannot be easily approached; he does not, however, cease to sing, but becomes so wary, as to fly entirely away from the neighbourhood, on the least alarm.

BINGLEY.

The Water Ouzel.

This bird frequents the banks of springs and brooks, which it never leaves; preferring those limpid streams whose fall is rapid, and whose bed is broken with stones and fragments of rocks.

Its habits are very singular. Aquatic birds, with palmated feet, generally swim or dive; those which inhabit the shores take care not to wet their body, by wading with their tall legs; but the Water Ouzel walks quite into the flood, following the declivity of the ground. It is observed to enter by degrees, till the water reaches its neck; and it still advances, holding its head not higher than usual, though completely immersed. It continues to walk under the water; and even descends to the bottom, where it saunters as on a dry bank. The following is Mr. Herbert's account of this extraordinary habit, which he communicated to the Comte de Buffon.

"I lay concealed on the verge of the lake Nantna, in a hut formed of pine branches and snow; where I waited till a boat, which was rowing on the

lake, should drive some wild ducks to the water's edge. Before me, in a small inlet, (the bottom of which gently shelved, that might be about two or three feet deep in the middle,) a Water Ouzel stopped for more than an hour, and I had full leisure to view its manœuvres. It entered into the water, disappeared, and again emerged on the other side of the inlet, which it thus repeatedly forded. It traversed the whole of the bottom; seemed not to have changed its element, and discovered no hesitation or reluctance in the immersion. However, I frequently perceived, that as often as it waded deeper than the knee, it displayed its wings, and allowed them to hang to the ground. I remarked too, that when I could discern it at the bottom of the water, it appeared enveloped with air, which gave it a brilliant sur-

face: like some sorts of beetles, which in water are always inclosed in a bubble of air. Its view in dropping its wings on entering the water, might be to confine this air: it was certainly never without some, and it seemed to quiver.

"These singular habits were unknown to all the sportsmen with whom I conversed on the subject; and, perhaps, without the accidental circumstance of the snow hut, by which I was concealed, I should also have for ever remained ignorant of them; but the above facts I can aver, as the bird came quite near my feet; and that I might observe it accurately, I refrained from killing it."

BUFFON.

The Falcon.

The common Falcon is a bird of such spirit, that, like a conqueror in a subdued country, he keeps all birds in awe and subjection to his prowess. Wherever he is seen flying wild, the birds of every kind, which had seemed entirely to disregard the Kite, or the Sparrow Hawk, fly off with screams, at his most distant appearance.

In order to train up a Falcon, the master begins by clapping straps upon his legs, which are called jesses, to which there is fastened a ring with the owner's name, by which, in case he should be lost, the finder may know where to restore him. To these are added little bells, which serve to mark the place where he is, if lost in the chase. He is always carried on the hand, and is

obliged to be kept without sleeping. If he be stubborn, and attempts to bite, his head is plunged into water. Thus, by hunger, watching, and fatigue, he is constrained to submit to having his head wrapped up in a hood, or cowl, which covers his eyes. This troublesome employment continues often for three days and nights without ceasing. It rarely happens but at the end of this, his necessities, and the privation of light, make him lose all idea of liberty, and bring down his natural wildness. His master judges of his being tamed when he permits his head to be covered without resistance, and, when uncovered, he seizes the meat before him contentedly. The repetition of these lessons, by degrees, ensures success. His wants being the chief principle of his dependence, endeavours are used to increase his ap-

petite, by giving him little balls of flannel, which he greedily swallows. Having thus excited hunger, care is next taken to satisfy it; and thus gratitude attaches the bird to the man, who but just before had been his tormentor.

When the first lessons have succeeded, and the bird shews signs of docility, he is carried out upon some green, the head is uncovered, and, by flattering him with food, at different times, he is taught to jump on the hand, and to continue there. When confirmed in this habit, it is then thought time to make him acquainted with the lure. This lure is only a thing stuffed like the bird which the Falcon is designed to pursue,—such as a Heron, a Pigeon, or a Quail; and on this lure they always take care to give him his food. It is quite necessary that the bird

should not only be acquainted with this mode of treatment, but fond of it. The use of the lure is to flatter, and bring him back when he has flown in the air, which he sometimes fails to do; and it is always requisite to assist it by the voice and signs of the master.

When the familiarity and the docility of the bird are sufficiently confirmed on the green, he is then carried into the open fields; but still kept fast by a string, which is about twenty yards long. He is then uncovered as before, and the falconer calling to him at some paces distance, shews him the lure. When he flies upon it, he is permitted to take a large morsel of the food which is tied to it. The next day the lure is shewn him at a greater distance, till he comes at last to fly to it at the utmost length of his string. He is then to be shewn the game itself

alive, but disabled or tame, which he is designed to pursue. After having seized this several times, while confined with his string, he is left entirely at liberty, and carried into the field for the purpose of pursuing that game which is wild: at that he flies with avidity; and when he has seized or killed it, he is brought back by the voice and the lure.

By this method of instruction, a Hawk may be taught to fly at any game whatsoever: but falconers have chiefly confined their pursuit only to such animals as yield them profit by the capture, or pleasure in the pursuit. The Hare, the Partridge, and the Quail, repay the trouble of taking them; but the most delightful sport is, the Falcon's pursuit of the Heron, the Kite, or the Woodlark. Instead of flying directly forward, as some other birds

do, these, when they see themselves threatened by the approach of the Hawk, immediately take to the skies. They fly almost perpendicularly upward, while their ardent pursuer keeps pace with their flight, and tries to rise above them. Thus both diminish by degrees from the gazing spectator below, till they are quite lost in the clouds; but they are soon seen descending, struggling together, and using every effort on both sides,—the one, of rapacious insult, the other, of desperate defence. The unequal combat is soon at an end: the Falcon comes off victorious, and the other, killed or disabled, is made a prey to the bird or the sportsman.

BUFFON.

The Canada Goose, and the House Dog.

CANADA Geese are not fond of a poultry yard, but are rather of a rambling disposition:—One of these birds, however, was observed to attach itself, in the strongest and most affectionate manner, to a House Dog, and would never quit the vicinity of his kennel, except for the purpose of feeding, when it would return again immediately. It always sat by the Dog, but never presumed to go into the kennel, except in rainy weather. Whenever the Dog barked, the Goose would cackle, and running at the person she supposed the Dog barked at, would try to bite him by the heels. Sometimes she would attempt to feed with the Dog; but this the Dog, who treated

his faithful companion rather with indifference, would not suffer.

This bird refused going to roost with the others at night, unless driven by main force; and in the morning, when turned into the field, would never stir from the yard gate, but sit there the whole day, in sight of the Dog. At last, orders were given that she should be no longer molested, but suffered to accompany the Dog as she liked. Being thus left to herself, she ran about the yard all night; and—what is particularly extraordinary, and can be well attested by the whole parish,—whenever the Dog went out of the yard, and ran into the village, the Goose always accompanied him, contriving to keep up with him by the assistance of her wings; and in this way, either running or flying, would follow him all over the parish.

This extraordinary affection towards the Dog, (which continued till his death, two years after it was first observed,) is supposed to have originated from his having accidentally saved her from a fox, in the very moment of distress.

While the Dog was ill, the Goose never quitted him day or night, not even to feed; and it was apprehended that she would have been starved to death, had not orders been given for a vessel of corn to be set every day close by her. At this time the Goose generally sat within the kennel, and would not suffer any one to approach it, except the person who brought the Dog's or her own food.—The end of this faithful bird was truly melancholy; for when the Dog died, she would still keep possession of the kennel, and a new House Dog being introduced,

which in size and colour resembled that lately dead, the poor Goose was unhappily deceived; for on her going into the kennel, as usual, the new inhabitant seized her by the throat, and killed her immediately.

WILLOUGHBY.

The Humane Raven.

In the year 1785, a Gentleman going into the Red-Lion inn, at Hungerford, his chaise ran over, and sorely bruised the leg of his Newfoundland dog. Whilst examining the injury, and bathing the wound, a Raven which belonged to the people of the house attended, and was, apparently, a much concerned spectator. The dog's leg being dressed, he was tied up in the manger, where Ralph not only imme-

diately visited him, but fetched him bones, and attended him with repeated marks of attention. The bird's notice of the dog was so very extraordinary, that the Gentleman questioned the hostler concerning the affair; who informed him that the Raven had been bred from his pin-feather in intimacy with a dog; and that the affection was mutual. Ralph's poor dog, by some accident, had also broken his leg; and during the long time he was confined, his friend waited upon him constantly, carrying him provisions, and scarcely ever quitting him.

One night, by accident, the hostler had shut the stable door, and Ralph was deprived of the company of his friend the whole night; but the hostler found in the morning the bottom of the door so pecked, that had it not been opened, Ralph would, in another

hour, have made himself an entrance. The Gentleman then inquired of the people of the house, who confirmed the above account, with several other traits of kindness which this bird had shewn to all dogs in general; but particularly to maimed or wounded ones.

ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA.

Curious Account of a Blue Macaw,

THE PROPERTY OF DR. THORNTON.

This extraordinary bird was for many years in servitude at Mr. Brooks's Menagerie, in the Haymarket. Like others of his species, he was chained by the leg, and fed upon scalded bread. Here he learned to imitate the cackling of fowls, the barking of dogs; to mimic his exhibitors, and other human sounds.

Dr. Thornton bought him for fifteen guineas, to grace his museum, or botanical exhibition. When in a confined room, in Bond-street, he made the screaming noises so offensive in his tribe. He seemed sulky and unhappy; but being brought to the doctor's house, (his botanical exhibition being closed,) the doctor, from motives of humanity, as well as for experiment, took away the chain that confined him to his perch. His feet were so cramped, and the muscles so much weakened from long disuse, that he could not walk. He tottered at every step, and appeared, in a few minutes only, greatly fatigued. His liberated feet, however, soon acquired uncommon agility; his plumage grew more resplendent, and he became completely happy. No longer he indulged in screams of discontent, and all his ges-

tures denoted gratitude. His food was now changed, and he breakfasts with the family, having toast and butter; and dines upon potatoes, hard dumplings, with fruit occasionally after dinner. Like other Parrots, he never drinks. His smell is uncommonly quick. He marks the time of meals by a continued agitation of the wings, running up and down the pole, and a pleasing note of request.

When he receives his food, he half opens his wings, contracts the pupils of his eyes, and utters a pleasing note of thankfulness. If he gets what he is not very fond of, he takes it in his left leg, and having fed on it, throws it down; but if the food be nice and abundant, he carefully conveys it to his tin reservoir, and leaves for another repast what he cannot eat in this. He soon forgot his barbarous sounds, and

now imitates words; and for hours together amuses himself in saying,—"Poll,"—"Macaw,"—"Turn him out,"—"Pretty fellow,"—"Saucy fellow,"—"What's o'clock;"—laughing, and calling out the names of the doctor's children. If any is hurt, he gives the first alarm; nor does he desist until they are attended to. The doctor's son observing the sagacity of this bird, undertook to instruct him. He taught him, at word of command, to descend from his perch, and stand upon his finger; then, by another order, he turns himself downwards, and hangs upon the fore finger by one foot, although the body is swung about with much violence. Being next asked—how a certain person should be served? the spectator attends an answer; but the bird, by his bill, is pendant on the finger, and has all the appearance of

one hanging. At desire, he extends his wings, and shews their beauty. He next fans the spectator; and being put upon the ground, walks backwards as readily as forwards, with his two toes in front, and two behind. He then clambers like a sailor up the mizen, and with his two open mandibles embraces his perch, which is nearly two inches in thickness. Placed there, he is asked—if a certain gentleman was to come here, how he would serve him? He shakes his head several times, raises his wings, erects all his feathers, opens his mouth, catches hold of the finger, and, seemingly in earnest, keeps on biting, as though he would take it off, opposing every resistance; and when he liberates the finger, utters a scream. He is then asked—how he would serve his master?—when he gently bites the finger, caresses it with his beak and

tongue, and holds his head down, as expecting it to be scratched. Nor is this all:—Being given a nut on his stand below, he mounts the upright stick, and the nut somehow disappears. He then, at a word of command, presents it to the company, holds it in his paw, and cracks it. The nut was hid under his tongue, in the hollow of the under mandible. Given a peach-stone, he finds out its natural division, and, after many efforts, opens it for the kernel. When any nuts are presented him, he is in one universal agitation; and he has so much sagacity, that, without cracking, when he takes up a bad nut, he very indignantly throws it on the ground. He is remarkably fond of music; and, with motions of his feet along the perch, movements of his wings, and his head moving backwards and forwards, he dances to

all lively tunes, and keeps exact time. If any person sings in wrong measure, he quickly desists.

He is very friendly to strangers, puts on a terrific appearance towards children, for fear of injury, and is very jealous of infants. In rainy weather the blue feathers look green; and also in clear weather, when there are vapours in the sky: hence he is an admirable weather-gage. What proves a peculiar sagacity in his imitations is, that these he effects sometimes without his voice; for instance, there is a scissars-grinder, who comes into the street where the bird is every Friday. All the Parrots have a file in the inside of the upper mandible, with which they grind down the under bill, and in this they are employed for an hour every evening. This sound people usually mistake for snoring. This scraping

was attempted, but the nice ear marked the difference, and he had recourse to his claws, which he struck against the perch, armed with tin, and observing the time of the turning of the wheel, he effected a most exact imitation, which he repeats every Friday. Sometimes the child's pap would be taken to the window, and beaten with the spoon: this he would immediately imitate, by striking his broad bill against the sides of his perch.

The light of candles awaken him, and he will then dance, and discriminate persons; but presented with sugar, or any food, he often misses it. He often then will invite to be held upon the hands, to flutter his wings; but he seems to have no inclination to fly, and appears perfectly happy in the partial liberty he enjoys.

MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

An Affectionate Parrot.

Mr. Jennings, of Great Wakering, in Essex, had a Parrot which for many years manifested the strongest attachment towards him. When in the house, the Parrot was the constant companion of his shoulder; and if compelled to move, which he would not without the greatest reluctance, he could by no means be induced to go farther than the back of his master's chair.

The bird expressed the greatest uneasiness during his master's absence; and at the hour of dinner would uniformly go to the end of the garden court, call him frequently by name, and anxiously remain there until he had attained his object.

After some years the master became ill, which the faithful bird felt with

the most poignant sensibility; and when, at length, death deprived him of his kind protector, the bird declined all sustenance; and perching himself on the back of the chair, which had been the scene of his happier days, gave himself up to the most exquisite grief, until the day of his master's interment: when, after moaning and lamenting, in a manner so audible and impressive as to increase the affliction of the family, he sunk down and died, a victim to an attachment as faithful as ever subsisted between human beings.

The Musical Pigeon.

AN ANECDOTE FROM MRS. PIOZZI'S OBSERVATIONS IN A JOURNEY THROUGH ITALY.

"An odd thing, (says she,) of which I was this morning witness, has

called my thoughts away to a curious train of reflections upon the animal race, and how far they may be made companionable and intelligent. The famous Bertoni, so well known in London by his long residence among us, and from the undisputed merit of his compositions, now inhabits this his native city; and being fond of *dumb creatures*, as we call them, took for his companion a Pigeon: one of the few animals which can live at Venice, where scarcely any quadrupeds can be admitted, or would exist with any degree of comfort to themselves.

"This creature has, however, by keeping his master company, obtained so perfect an ear and taste for music, that no one who sees his behaviour, can doubt for a moment of the pleasure he takes in hearing Mr. Bertoni play and sing: for as soon as he sits down to the

instrument, Columbo begins shaking his wings, perches on the piano-forte, and expresses the most indubitable emotions of delight. If, however, he or any one else strikes a note false, or makes any kind of discord upon the keys, the Pigeon never fails to shew evident tokens of anger and distress; and if teazed too long, grows quite enraged; pecking the offender's legs and fingers in such a manner, as to leave no doubt of the sincerity of his resentment.

"Signora Cecilia Guiliani, a scholar of Bertoni's, who has received some overtures from the London theatre lately, will, if she ever arrives there, bear testimony to the truth of an assertion very difficult to believe, and to which I should hardly myself give credit, were I not a witness to it every morning that I choose to call and confirm my own belief. A friend present

protested he should be afraid to touch the harpsichord before so nice a critic; and though we all laughed at the assertion, Bertoni declared he never knew the bird's judgment fail; and that he often kept him out of the room, for fear of his affronting or tormenting those who came to take musical instructions.

"With regard to other actions of life, I saw nothing particular in the Pigeon, but his tameness and strong attachment to his master: for though not unwinged, and only clipped a very little, he never seeks to range away from the house, or quit his master's service, any more than the Dove of Anacreon.

> "While his better lot bestows
> Sweet repast, and soft repose;
> And, when feast and frolic tire,
> Drops asleep upon his lyre."

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