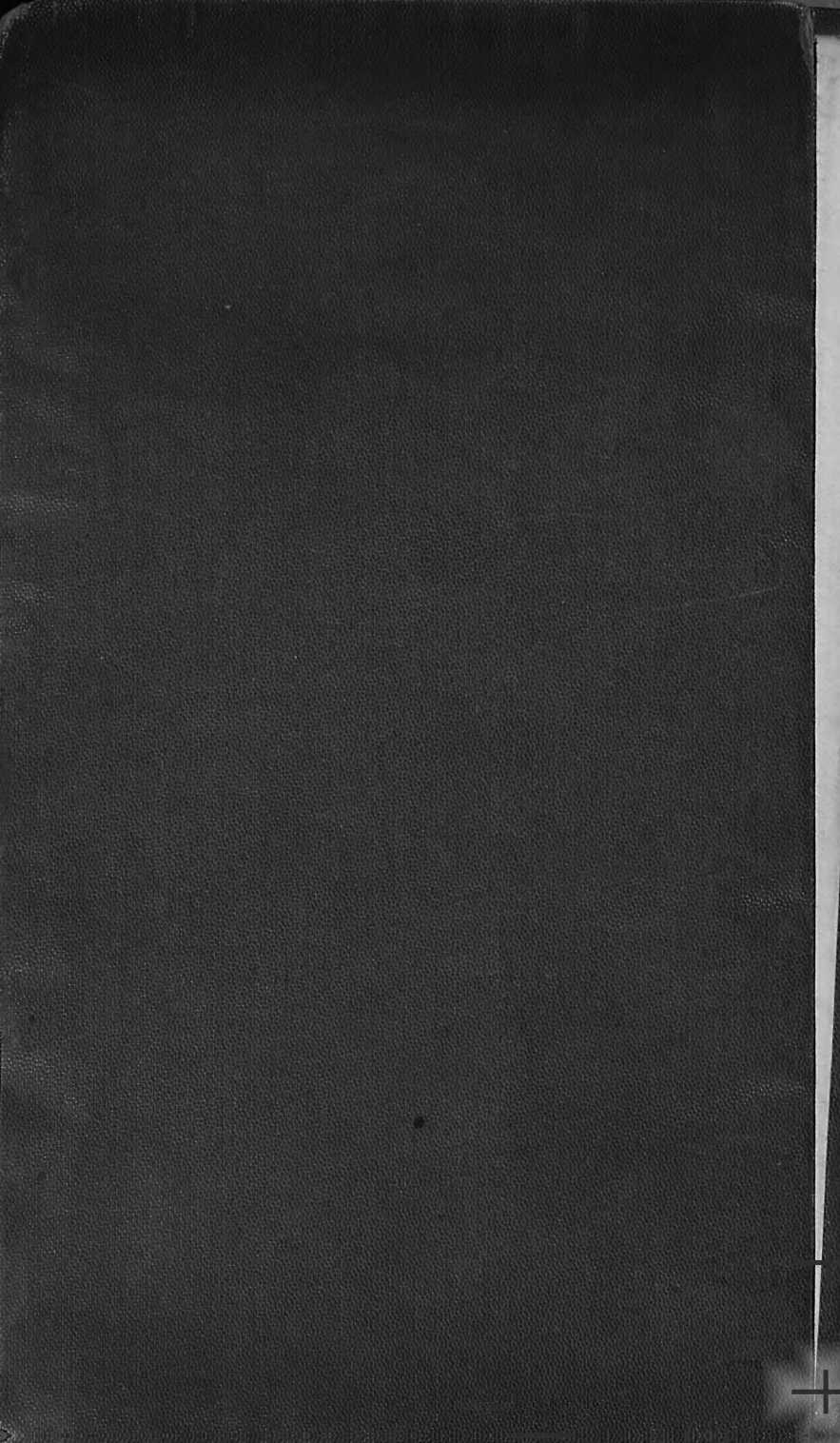

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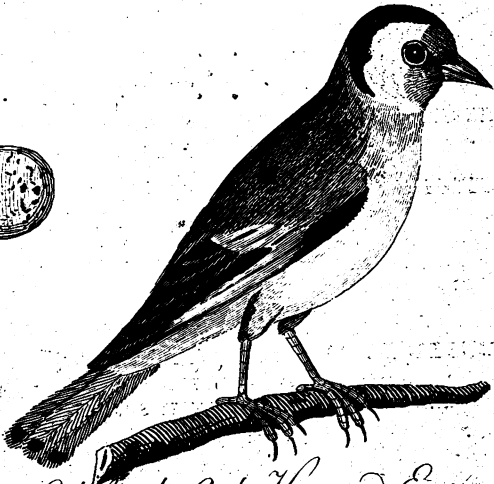
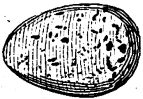
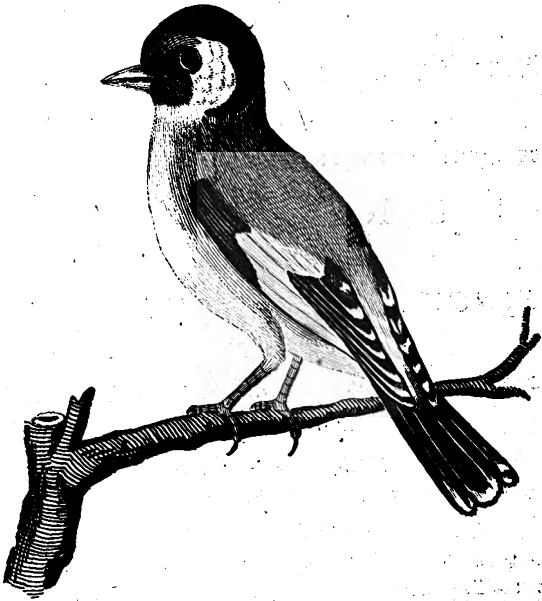




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Goldfinch, Cock, Hen, and Egg.

THE
BRITISH AVIARY,

AND

Bird Breeder's Companion ;

CONTAINING

COPIOUS DIRECTIONS FOR PROPAGATING THE BREED OF

CANARIES:

ALSO,

GOLDFINCH AND LINNET MULES:

THE

BEST METHOD OF FEEDING BIRDS IN GENERAL;

AS WELL AS

PRACTICAL RECIPES

FOR THE CURE OF THOSE DISORDERS TO WHICH THEY ARE LIABLE.

IN WHICH ALSO

*The Cause is assigned why so many Birds are found dead in their Cages,
as well as the Destruction made amongst the young ones in the
Breeding Season ;*

WITH THE

BEST METHOD OF PREVENTION ;

THE GERMAN METHOD OF LEARNING BIRDS
TO SING SELECT TUNES ;

DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING GERMAN PASTE,
&c. &c.

London :

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PREFACE.

THE following Treatise is compiled with the intention of instructing the young Bird Fancier in the best method of feeding birds in general; also the most effectual way of breeding Canaries, Goldfinches, and Linnet Mules.

The remarks are drawn from long and, in some instances, dear-bought experience; but it will be the means, no doubt, of saving the life of many a handsome and melodious songster, as well as of preventing regret at their loss. The author, therefore, presumes to hope that the attempt is, at least, praise-worthy.

Having premised thus much, it may not be improper here to state, in order to guard my readers against deception, that they should never purchase a bird in a hurry, but to let their ears as well as their eyes be equally satisfied.

I would advise those of my readers who may be in want of a bird not to purchase of such persons as hawk them through the streets for sale; for it often turns out quite a different species from that which may have been represented to them. To avoid any mistake, apply to a respectable bird-shop, where you will be more likely of meeting with the description of birds best suited for your purpose.

INTRODUCTION.

THOSE who keep birds in confinement, for their beauty or musical powers, should recollect that these little harmless prisoners can only obtain, through their wry abode, such victuals as their keepers may think proper to give them ; it behoves us therefore to supply them with such food as is best calculated for their support, supplying them as occasion requires with clean water, &c. This is the least we can do in return for their pleasing songs, which they so frequently favour us with. Although Nature has not gifted them with the power of speech, yet she has given them instinct sufficient to make their wants known when neglected by their keepers : instead of their usual song, they will make a shrill and plaintive call, rubbing their beaks against the wires of their prison, with all the force their strength will permit of, in hopes, by these means, of drawing the attention of their keepers towards them. When these signals of distress are thrown out in vain, the poor prisoner has but little chance of relief ; misery and death generally follow. Careless indeed must that person be, who gives cause for such displeasing intel-

ligence ; if, however, some helping hand does not quickly supply them with food, to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and water, by degrees, to moisten their fevered tongues, but little or no hope of life remains. If their keepers were but to see them when in the agonies of death, still struggling to retain that life which had been previously spent for their amusement, they would shudder at their neglect, and would be the means, it is to be hoped, of preventing a similar occurrence. If every person who keeps birds were to make a point of attending to their little charge once a day, either of a morning or evening, it would soon become so habitual, that one could not well forget them ;—it might be done in a very few minutes, therefore it is a poor excuse to say—Oh ! I forget it ! If this plan was persevered in, it would be the means of preventing much unpleasantness both to the keeper and to the innocent prisoners ; their lives would be often saved, and they would thereby be enabled to repeat their usual song, which, in all probability, they would do for years. It cannot for a moment be supposed, that such circumstances arise from a bad or vicious disposition ; for, I trust, there can be no one found who would derive any gratification in the agonizing thought of having starved to death an innocent, as well as a pleasing, prisoner. Death does not at all times proceed from not feeding them regularly, but oftentimes

from causes little known or thought of. They may have plenty of seed in the requisite place for such victuals, but it is most likely of that inferior quality that prevents them from eating it: sometimes it proceeds from small vermin, somewhat of the bug species, which breed more or less in every cage, although imperceptible to the naked eye; they nestle themselves in the crevices and joints of the cage, dispersing themselves in the night, and feed on the life-blood of our feathered songsters, who would be glad to escape, if they could, from the jaws of such a multitude of blood-suckers. When sufficiently glutted, or daylight appears, they return to their hiding place, waiting, like other assassins, the return of darkness, to cover their nightly torments and cruelty. From such repeated sallies the little songsters are worried and sucked to death, and will be found, on examining them, mere skeletons. At other times it proceeds from over kindness, if I may use the term; that is to say, by feeding them too bountifully on such things as are not at all necessary for general use; such as chickweed, groundsel, plantain, lettuce, and other herbage, when not sufficiently ripe, or in too cold weather. Green food is not at all requisite for birds kept merely for their song; it is given them in the breeding season, and also at times when they are ill; too much only tends to bring on a swelling and inflammation in their bowels, frequently producing death.

Seed is the chief food necessary for a great portion of the feathered tribe; in fact, the only thing they require, if good, when in health;—care, however, should be taken to select such seed as is nourishing, which may be done with little or no trouble. Before you purchase any, take care to examine it well; if it is of a bright and glossy surface, without any black particles amongst it, (which denote that mice frequent those places in which it is kept,) it is generally good; but if you find it smell offensive, either from this or some other equally pernicious cause, do not buy it; neither if you find it mildewed, of a dull cast, will it do; but when clean, and heavy in hand, there is no danger, and it may be given freely to your birds. Unwholesome seed oftentimes destroys them; the least we can do is to protect and foster those we admire.

If birds are in health and good condition, their feathers will be sleek and smooth, adhering close to their bodies, while they will jump from place to place with active cheerfulness, straining their little throats to bring forth sounds of harmony, in hopes by such music to obtain the approbation of their kind protectors. When sick and ill, their natural gaiety forsakes them, and a dull lethargy takes possession of their whole frame; they will crouch in a melancholy stupor, with their heads under their wings, and no longer enliven us with their song. When these symptoms shew themselves,

endeavour quickly to find out from what cause it proceeds. First examine the seed and water; next see if they are swelled or inflamed in the bowels, or if they are moulting off their feathers. If none of these are the cause, and the bird appears lean and out of condition, look for vermin in the cage, which at all events had better be cleaned out, and washed with the lotion; do the same to the bird with a soft shaving brush, soap and warm water, and rub it dry with soft muslin before the fire;—this will kill those insects which may have nestled themselves amongst its feathers, and will also do it good. When in moult, swelled, pip, husk, &c. refer to the remedies hereafter stated.

Before I enter further into detail, I shall here state the best method of distinguishing the MALE from the FEMALE. Many persons who have had long practice can, in many instances, tell by the eye, on examination. This last method is unpleasant, and, to many a person not acquainted with the proper means of handling them, dangerous; for many a poor bird loses his life from unskilfulness. To save much unnecessary time and trouble, I would recommend the following, because one can then come to a positive conclusion.

Having seen a bird that pleases the eye, let the ear also be equally gratified; if this is done, no

dispute can possibly arise as to its gender. A cock, when in full vigour and health, will be very loud with his song; hens make only an humble effort to accomplish such an object, repeating the same discordant notes over and over. Not possessing any natural power of music, they are incapable of improvement; still they strive to please. This in general is not considered sufficient inducement to cherish and protect them, and they are consequently treated but indifferently by the generality of persons; they find, however, many friends amongst those who propagate their species; as they well know the value of a good mother, for much depends on her, as regards the rearing of any young; if she is not kind and attentive, but little good proceeds from breeding. **BEWARE OF CATS!**

Cloud not, sweet fair, thy face with grief,
Nor dim thy sparkling eyes with woe;
Since these remarks will bring relief
To sorrows such as captives know.



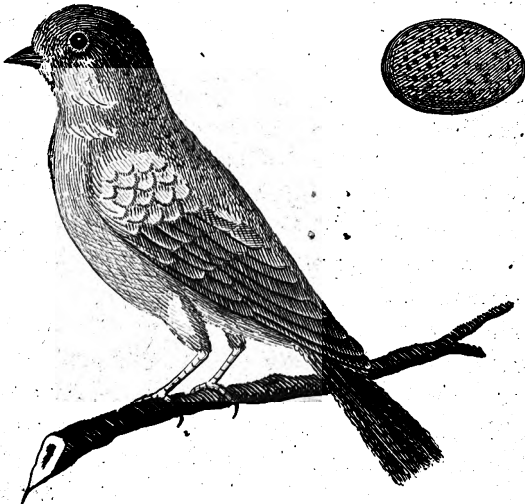
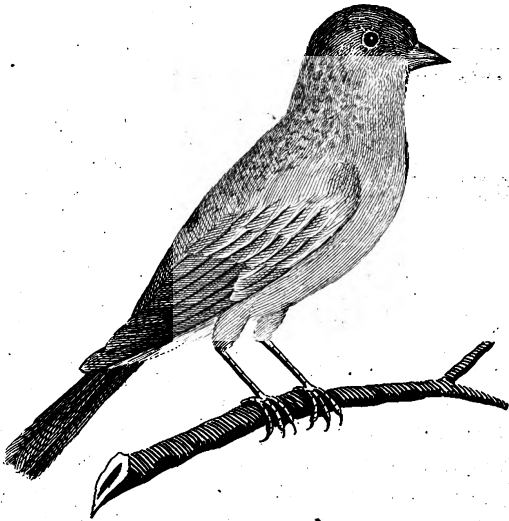
CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
Preface	iii	Robin	54
Introduction	v	Wren	56
Canary Birds, with an account of the FANCY PRIZE BIRDS	13	Black-Cap	56
Breeding Canaries	20	Red Start	57
Ditto Goldfinch Mules	31	Black Bird	57
Ditto Linnet ditto	36	Thrush, or Mavis	58
Ditto Aberdevine ditto	37	Starling	59
The Bullfinch, with the method of learning them to Pipe	39	Jay	60
Chaffinch	41	Magpie	60
Hedge-Sparrows	42	Parrot	61
Green Bird	42	Java Sparrows	63
Yellow Hammer	43	German Paste	65
Nightingale	43	Moulting	66
Sky-Lark	46	Swelling or Inflammation	67
Wood-Lark	50	Surfeit	68
Tit-Lark	52	Pip	69
		Husk	70
		Egg-Bound	71
		Perspiration	73
		Vermin	74

BRITISH MUSEUM







Canary-Bird Cock, Hen, and Egg.

THE
BRITISH AVIARY,

AND

BIRD BREEDER'S COMPANION.

CANARY-BIRDS.

I SHALL first call my reader's attention towards these birds, considering them to rank higher, in the estimation of most persons, than any other description of feathered songsters, more particularly in this metropolis and its environs; from their vivacity and familiar disposition, they are much admired; and live, if properly managed, for years in seeming happiness, well reconciled to their wry abode; bringing forth their offspring in cages just as freely as when in their original wild state of freedom, heeding but little those casual noises which frequently occur during the building of their nests, laying their eggs and rearing their little ones; and from such conciliatory and pleasing manners, added to their sweet melody and delicate colour, they have ingratiated themselves into favour.

It will be unnecessary, I presume, to enter into particulars relative to the natural history of these birds; my object being to instruct those who wish to rear and keep them. It will be sufficient to say, that they were first found on those islands from which they derive their name,

and have since been introduced into most parts of Europe, as well as in more distant climes; their breed is abundantly propagated throughout this kingdom; thousands of them are annually brought into this metropolis by various individuals, who collect them from the different breeders; but the greatest portion is brought out of Norfolk and Yorkshire. This influx, in addition to the numbers bred by its inhabitants, particularly in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel, Spitalfields, and Bethnalgreen, fully proves what estimation they are held in. Generally speaking, a house is not considered sufficiently ornamented without one or two of these, or some other feathered vocalist, to amuse its inmates.

The Germans seem to pay more attention to the song of these birds than any other class of persons, teaching them, when young, the notes of the nightingale and titlark, thereby adding more pleasing harmony to the song of their birds. They may be heard throughout that country, singing all times of the day as well as at nights, being instructed to sing at night, without being obliged to adopt a practice revolting to human nature, which I am sorry to say has been done in this country. Can it be believed that a monster will now be found, who would be brute enough to put out, with a red-hot knitting-needle, the eyes of a little harmless melodist, who may with ease be taught to sing at command, without being deprived of Nature's greatest blessing; therefore, to prevent in future such cruelty, I shall state the plan adopted in Germany.

The birds that are intended for evening concerts, are kept covered up during the day, so as to prevent them from seeing their food; they will of course take their rest,

thinking it is night; when they are wanted to sing, they are uncovered, and seeing the light from the candles, they will, if any sort of noise is made, however discordant it matters not, sing almost immediately. Whether this is done from a superior taste for music I know not, but this I know, it bespeaks the humanity of the people. These people lend out their birds to the nobility and gentry of that country, for which they pay a certain sum annually; their owners attend on them daily, to feed and clean out their cages; when any of their stud fall off song, the parties are supplied with others, so they have music every day in the year. Perhaps it is the profits arising from such trade that induce them to be more choice with their birds; of this, however, I am convinced, that if an Englishman would condescend to bestow as much of his time as would be required to obtain this object, our own country-bred birds might be taught to sing the same harmonious strains which the German birds have learned. The best way of accomplishing this, is to keep the young cock canaries, as soon as they can feed themselves, out of the hearing of any other bird, save the nightingale and tit-lark, which should be their only instructors; they would naturally imbibe a portion of each bird's song, thereby adding, to their natural powers, much harmonious and delightful melody, which would render them more pleasing and gratifying to their keepers.

The Germans export, every year, great numbers of these birds into Russia, France, Holland, &c. and were formerly in the habit of doing the same into this country; but of late years it has much fallen off. There is, I believe, only one individual (a German) residing in

St. Martin's-lane, who introduces any of these birds into this metropolis; he goes over to his own country once a year, for the purpose of collecting the sweet song canaries, as well as piping bull-finches; he brings them over for sale, and frequently obtains very high prices for some of them; but the expense of collecting, freightage, as well as Custom-house dues, (about one shilling on each bird) nearly prohibits their introduction. At all events it tends to diminish any extraordinary influx; and taking all these things into consideration, it cannot be wondered at the prices asked for these birds. If, however, the same method of teaching was to be given to those canaries bred in this country, we should have musicians of equal talent, and very superior in external beauty; for there is no place where richness of colour and beauty of plumage are so much sought after as in London. It is here only where numerous individuals form themselves into select societies, for the better improving the breed of these melodious warblers, which is only obtained by perseverance, patience, and great expense; however, many of the members arrive in time to the knowledge of this art, thereby adding much soft and rich colouring to those birds, which are distinguished from the original and common breed, by being called *Fancy Prize Birds*.

There is a class of canaries known by the name of *Lizards*, and another called *Quakers*; the first resemble the fancy birds, having a clean yellow cap, their back and breasts bespangled all over with green and black, resembling the colour of that small creeping creature from which they derive their name; these may be obtained by

matching a pair of very strong fancy birds together, or by substituting a common green canary; but the latter will, in all probability, throw the young ones broken cap'd; that is to say, their principal beauty will be destroyed by having their heads partially, or totally, covered with green feathers. Those birds, which are called *Quakers*, are of a light brown or fawn colour, which expands itself over the whole of their plumage, making them appear very dull and heavy to the eye; but I do not consider this any improvement in fancy. As many of my readers are, no doubt, unacquainted with the principles upon which these societies are formed, I shall give them an outline of their articles, as well as the properties for which they emulate.

Every member is allowed to turn up, for the purpose of breeding, what number he thinks proper; for every pair so turned up, he must pay into the funds of his society a stipulated sum, according to the amount of subscriptions demanded by the different clubs; some of them five shillings each pair; others ten shillings; again we find those who have plenty of money, will subscribe from one to two guineas for every pair which they may have turned up, sometimes to the number of ten or twelve pair. Such subscriptions are arranged into five or six prizes, which are formed into two classes. *Jongues* and *Mealies* being both considered of equal merit, the richest coloured birds in each class take the two first prizes; the second best the two second, and so on, until the prizes are all gained, and given to those persons who may have bred the prize birds. The two first prizes amount, in some of these societies, to the sum of twenty or thirty guineas; the

others in proportion. It seldom happens that one breeder takes first and first; it does, however, sometimes amongst the *big ones*. No member is allowed to show more than one of each colour; these must have been bred from his own stock, or he is not permitted to show them. If he attempts to force any bird forward for a prize, which has not been bred by himself, he is expelled the society. All birds that are shown for prizes must have eighteen black flying feathers in each wing, without a white one, this being the number which most birds are supplied with; they must also have every feather in their tail black, amounting to twelve. The different shows for these prizes take place some time in November or December, and are held at different coffee-houses and taverns; one at the Gray's-Inn Coffee-house, Holborn; another at the British Coffee-house, Charing Cross; one at the Angel and Crown, St. Martin's-lane, and others at different taverns at the West-end of the town. Two umpires and a referee are chosen, to decide on the merits of those birds produced for show. It requires a fine discriminating eye to select and arrange them into their proper classes; and the umpires are oftentimes obliged to handle some of the best ones, perhaps twenty or thirty different times, comparing them close together, so as to find out the richest shade of colouring: the poor little things frequently become quite exhausted from such tiresome process, and have been known, either from fright or unskilful handling, to die under this examination. During the time the umpires are employed, the members are waiting their decision in some other room, often amusing themselves with false hopes, still, however, priding them

selves on their respective breeds, wagering one bird against another. The umpires generally decide all disputes by arranging them into their different classes, which is generally done by one o'clock. When finished, the secretary takes down the names of those persons whose birds are entitled to the different prizes; which being done, the members and their friends enter the show-room, and any other respectable person may do the same, free of any expense whatever. To those who take delight in the beauties of the feathered tribe, the sight is quite enchanting.

Although these birds, when clean moulted off, and exhibited for prizes, appear like a ball of burnished gold; yet, when in their first nestling feathers they resemble a green bird, except their cap and saddle, which are both clean and free from any foul feathers. The properties for which these societies breed are as follows:—

1st. Property.—Cap for colour and magnitude.

From the beak to the back of the neck of a clear orange colour.

2d. Spangled back.

The ground must be of a rich colour, the feathers edged with black.

3d. Open saddle.

The feathers on their loins must be free from black, the same colour as the cap.

4th. Wings and tail for blackness home to the quill.

Every feather in the wings and tail must be black, without any white ones.

5th. Fair breast and regular.

The whole of their breast must be free from black feathers, of the same tint as cap and saddle.

These are the main points for which they breed; for although their articles enumerate several others, they are

now considered trifling and of secondary consideration. This rich and regularly contrasted plumage adds much to their beauty, as well as profit to the breeders of such birds. When arranged, oftentimes to the number of twenty or thirty, on the show-table, they look most beautiful; every cage being alike, it makes the show more uniform, and such an assemblage of feathered beauty becomes quite delightful to the sight of canary fanciers.

These different societies, as it has been shown, breed for richness of colour, and not solely for their musical powers: many persons consider these birds are incapable of singing to perfection; this, however, is a mistaken notion, and I am not aware that high bred creatures are deprived of strength or courage. If we may judge from the game cock, or blood-horse, superior breed does not take away courage; we may, therefore, naturally conclude, these fancy canaries would sing, if taught, equal to the generality of their species; we should then both please the eye and gratify the ear. Having said thus much, I shall now enter upon breeding of canary-birds.

BREEDING OF CANARIES.

MANY of my readers are, no doubt, fond of this innocent and rational pastime, and find much pleasure and amusement in propagating the species of such delightful and harmonious songsters; I shall, therefore, give them a few useful lessons for the better accomplishing this

object, which, being drawn from long experience, may be followed with every probability of success, and will be the means of preventing, in a great measure, those disappointments which too often occur during the breeding season.

Valentine's Day is generally looked forward to as the time most proper for beginning this amusing pastime; but from too much anxiety and haste, disappointments often arise. To avoid them, do not turn your birds into the breeding-cage too soon; however, as most persons are in the habit of following the old system, I shall not entirely draw their attention from this loving day, but merely quote the old proverb, "the more haste, the less speed." On this, or some future day, the birds may be matched, agreeable to one's own fancy; some preferring *Fancy Prize Birds*, others *Clean Jonque*, and others again *Pied*; or perhaps some will prefer all *Green*. Those who wish to enter into the Fancy Clubs, should first make themselves masters of the art of breeding and managing of the commoner sort; this, in fact, becomes necessary, as it requires a pretty round sum to obtain such birds as are likely to produce that description of stock, as will be likely to repay you for your expenses. If you wish to breed these birds out of society, it might be done at much less expense, not having any subscription to pay; but then, it must be observed, you stand no chance of taking a prize, neither will your birds produce such high prices; no member of these societies being permitted to buy birds out of them. The expenses are therefore, in some measure, balanced by these considerations. If you wish very high colour, breed *Jonque* and *Jonque*; each bird

should have all the properties specified in the before-mentioned articles; but I would recommend a *Jonque Cock* matched with a *Mealy Hen*, or you may transverse them: one should be what is termed strong, the other fine; strong means those birds with plenty of black; fine, the reverse. Although the old ones may be of the best breed, still many of their offspring may be foul: for instance, either broken capped, or having one or two white feathers in their wings or tail; either of these defects prevents them from obtaining a prize. These birds are oftentimes very high coloured, and will answer the purpose of those who wish to breed high coloured birds, without belonging to a society. They are in general considered by those gentlemen who breed prize birds as refuse stock, and are in consequence sold off at much lower prices, and may be bought from ten to twenty shillings each.

Clean JONQUE of the common sort of birds are obtained by selecting your birds of the same colour, without either of them having any dark feathers; those produced from this stock, however, are in general very thin and short feathered, which makes them always appear rough and ragged: although of a rich colour, it certainly takes away much of their beauty.

JONQUE and MEALY paired together oftentimes produce equally high coloured birds, much handsomer in shape, as well as beauty of plumage, and possessing much softness; their sleek and glossy appearance make them much admired.

PIED BIRDS are produced by matching a green Jonque with a clean Jonque, or a Mealy hen. I would recommend breeders at all times to match them one of each

colour; because the birds will be larger and equally handsome.

GREEN BIRDS are thrown by pairing two of the same colour; but if they should be both green Jonques, their offspring often prove clear Jonques. These are the kind of birds usually bred; breeders have therefore a variety of sorts to please their fancy.

Having matched your birds agreeable to your taste, place them cage to cage for a week or so, to make them better acquainted, when they may be turned together, so as to mate with one another. Before they are turned into the breeding-cage, supply them with egg, which must be boiled quite hard, and chopped fine; if a great number of birds, it is quicker done by rubbing it through a wire sieve, or a coarse tin grater. Mix with the egg crumbled bun, sponge biscuits, small cakes, commonly called ladies' fingers, or captains' biscuit, powdered fine, and dissolved in a little water; in fact, any of this description of food is better than common bread. Bruised hemp-seed, or hemp-seed whole, which has been soaked in water for a day or two, placing the vessel which contains it in the sun, so as to open the seed; maw-seed; a few heads of ripe groundsel—the whole or any part of these things will tend to make them mate much sooner than their common daily food: no doubt the cock will, in a few days, be observed feeding his mate. During this courtship, their intended new place of residence should be cleaned out; not only for their own comfort and your profit, but for the purpose of keeping out troublesome and unwelcome intruders. Wash, therefore, their cages well with soft or strong black soap; you need

not be sparing of the soap or water;—when dry, take a clean painting-brush, and with the hereafter-mentioned lotion, (page 74,) wash the joints of the cage, as well as the inside and outside of the nest-boxes; this will prevent vermin from breeding. Every time a fresh nest-box is given, do the same. At the latter end of *March*, and not before, the birds may be turned into the breeding-cage; but if they are kept back a little longer, so much the better, as cold weather only tends to injure your birds, without any probability of producing and rearing any young ones. Over haste oftentimes makes the poor hens lay their eggs with difficulty, if at all; hence arises that distressing complaint termed *egg-bound*. This disorder (proceeding from cold) often kills hens, which in all probability might have lived to have brought up a good number of young birds; breeders should recollect this. Old mortar, such as may be found among ruins, should be kept in their breeding-cage, also plenty of fine red gravel; the birds are fond of this, and it will, in a great measure, prevent this complaint, as well as their laying soft eggs, which is more dangerous, and when it happens, it in general produces death. Soft meadow hay or dry moss are the best materials for forming their nests; you may do this yourself, which will save the poor hens much time and trouble. A sufficient space should be left for the hen to finish it with soft elks' hair, which they generally do in a day or two. Stuff for nesting is sold at most bird-shops in small nets; this will do very well, provided the hair is well washed with soap and water, so as to get out the dust which remains from the process used to get it off the deer skins. Some breeders, perhaps, will say

this is useless trouble—a mere waste of time, from which no advantage will arise. I am convinced of the contrary. Before I adopted this plan, I have lost hundreds of young birds from vermin breeding more freely in dirty nests, than in such as have been washed. Oftentimes hens forsake their nests when the young ones have been formed in their shells. These beastly vermin so completely worry the poor hen, that she can sit no longer on her eggs. Before I found out this, as well as the lotion, I have lost out of my breeding stock old as well as young ones; of the latter perhaps a hundred in a season. On going into my breeding room, I have found, in one or two instances, hens dead on their eggs; the poor things were mere skeletons. On examination, I found them covered with small insects, and the nests swarming with the same sort of troublesome vermin, which must have sucked them to death; the poor old hens were sitting on their eggs in their usual position, suffering themselves to be worried to death rather than quit their charge. We do not, however, generally find them inclined to put up with such repeated torments; and they are therefore necessitated to forsake their eggs or young. One cannot well see these insect with the naked eye; but if observed through a microscope, they resemble somewhat of the bug species. If you kill them on white paper, it is stained with blood; in fact, it is evident that they wholly subsist on the blood, which they extract by slow degrees from the vitals of those little songsters, who are obliged to submit to such cruel torments. Hence arises much disappointment as well as vexation during the breeding seasons. The poor hens often get blamed for neglect;

but are not such nightly torments enough to make them quit the dens of these insatiated monsters? They would, no doubt, if not imprisoned, fly from the attack of such a numerous body of blood-suckers; and as we make them prisoners for our gratification, we should strive all in our power, to apply those things calculated for the destruction of their enemies, and for the poor birds' future comfort. I would, therefore, recommend, particularly in hot weather, to give a fresh nest the day before the hen hatches, which should be made of clean stuff, so as to resemble the one which is intended to be taken away: it should be formed round by shaking a hot egg in it, such a one as you have just boiled for your birds. While the nest remains warm, move the canary's eggs into it; be careful not to break them; a bone or wooden spoon is best. If this is done quickly just before their roost time, the hens will sit on the eggs as if nothing had happened; the warmth prevents them from being chilled, and also prevents any immediate danger to the young ones as soon as they are hatched; the vermin would perhaps have destroyed them ere they were two days old. Breeders should not match two turned-crowned birds together; it makes them bald-pated.

These birds mostly have three or four nests of young every season, and lay from four to six eggs, seldom more; when it does happen, it is but of little advantage; four or five are sufficient for any small bird to cover. Some mischievous birds will break and suck their eggs as soon as they are laid; if you find them do this, put a little mustard, or bitter aloes dissolved, inside a bad egg: when they begin to peck it, the taste will not perhaps be very

tempting; they will therefore avoid a repetition, and in all probability prefer rearing instead of destroying their progeny. Other hens, who are too careful of their eggs, will begin to sit on them as they are laid, thereby hatching them day after day. Nature has appointed the number of fourteen days to engender their young, which remain blind for seven days; but by such anxiety, one bird is hatched two or three days before the last laid egg is brought to maturity; consequently, the first born becomes, by that time, stronger, and will in all probability prevent the younger branch from arriving to perfection. To avoid this, I take the eggs away as soon as ever they are laid, which is generally somewhat about seven o'clock in the morning, substituting a bone egg, made to resemble a bird's egg; these may be bought at any bird-shop; the real eggs should be kept covered with bran, or in a nest covered with elks' hair. When you find the hen has omitted her morning's present, take away the artificial eggs, and return her own; by which means the young will be hatched all at one time, and therefore better enabled to cope with one another, and more likely to obtain an equal share of food from the fostering mouths of their parents. Eggs will oftentimes prove barren, and of no service. The birds are not enabled to know this; they will therefore sit on such eggs with the same care as if good, continuing their warmth for the stipulated time of hatching, and oftentimes two or three days longer, in hopes of producing some little ones. All this useless attention only tends to weaken your hens. When they have sat for four or five days, it may be known whether the eggs are barren or not; but one had better defer this exami-

nation for a few days longer, say the eighth day, for fear of too hasty a conclusion: if they appear thick and muddy, take one up lengthways, and look at it against a strong light; if transparent, without any difference or change of colour from that which it had when first laid, it is useless. Do the same to the others; if all alike, they may be destroyed; but, on the other hand, if thick, so as to prevent your seeing light through it, it is good; be quick in returning it to the depository. When the eggs are bad, do not suffer the hen to go to nest for a week or so, so that she may be enabled to regain her strength from the weakness of her last laying. On the thirteenth night, being the night before you expect the young to be hatched, give the old ones plenty of soft victuals; the yolk of fresh laid eggs, which must have been boiled quite hard, mix with sponge-biscuit, stale bun, small cakes, called ladies' fingers; in fact, any kind of light nourishing thing, such as is given to young children, in preference to common bread, which is often impregnated with alum, or other deleterious ingredients; add to this a little maw-seed, making such victuals fresh every day, giving the birds a good quantity of it every night, and again about the middle of the day. If given over night, it will be in readiness for the old ones to feed their young as soon as daylight appears, and prevents any chance of their having to wait for a late breakfast, either from the sleepiness of their keepers, or from some other cause equally remiss. Let them also have, in an earthen pot, plenty of ripe groundsel and seeded chickweed, supplying them with a fresh potful every day; do not by any means give large-leaved unripe groundsel or chickweed,

as it only brings on swelling and inflammation in their bowels. Look at the nest of young once or twice a week, to see if all is going on right; if they appear red, with their crops full of victuals, you may be assured they are doing well; in case, however, you find them of a sickly pale hue, without any food in their neck or crops, most likely the nest and birds are infested with vermin.— Change their nest for a new one immediately, which should be done as expeditiously as possible; for many hens are of a fretful disposition, and will not sanction any interruption to their maternal care, often forsaking their young by too much familiarity. When this happens to be the case, feed the young occasionally with a small bit of the yolk of hard egg, dissolved by one or two drops of clean water; add to this a little sopped bun or sponge-cake, forming it into a thinish paste, and with the point of a wooden skewer feed them every hour, so as to keep up their strength. If the old hen or cock should feed, you need not do this. Oftentimes the cock will bring them up, although the hen may have forsaken her little ones; do not, therefore, keep them out of the breeding-cage too long at one time, but give the cock every opportunity to supply them with food from its fostering mouth. In case he does not do this, they may be taken entirely away, and brought up by hand; keeping their nest covered with flannel to prevent cold, feeding them on the before-mentioned soft food. When five or six days old, scalded rape seed may be given with the egg, &c.; and when they get older, you need not bruise the scalded rape, but give it whole, mixed up with the other ingredients; so continue until you find they can feed themselves on the same food,

which should be placed in small quantities against the wires of their cage, so as to tempt them to peck at it, giving them bruised rape and a little bruised hemp seeds, they not being enabled to crack whole seed until a month old. Do not therefore omit soft food until four or five weeks old. A few heads of ripe groundsel may be given occasionally, but not persevered in for any length of time. The hen will frequently begin to make a fresh nest when the young are about a fortnight old, leaving the cock to bring them to maturity. In this case, care should be taken to supply her with a sufficient quantity of proper materials in due time—in order that she may not disfigure the young, which she will often do, by plucking out their down feathers to form the lining of the new nest—hereby preventing much inconvenience to the young ones, as well as keeping them more perfect in plumage. When this plan is adopted, they may remain with the old ones until the day before the hen again hatches; by which time they in general feed themselves on soft food. When caged off, give them plenty of egg, &c., and a little groundsel, twisted round the wires of the cage, particularly near their water-trough, placing the cage opposite the window, so that they may more easily find out the places in which their victuals are kept. Do not keep above two in one small cage, for they are apt to pull one another's feathers out; and if they once begin to do so, they seldom leave it off, being supposed to be fond of the blood of the quill feathers after having once tasted it. Should you find them do this, put them into separate cages.

All the feathered tribe go into moult in the autumn,

sometime in September; do not therefore continue to work your birds after August; it only tends to weaken them, without any probability of their strength affording them the means of fostering any later hatched birds, and prevents in a great measure their getting over this sickly and tiresome disorder. (See page 66.)

It is rather a nice point to decide for a certainty on the gender of young canaries; they are generally distinguished by their high colouring, more particularly on the cap of the head, saddle, point of the shoulder, or butt of the wing; also a few feathers over the eye richer in colour than the others, forming a sort of eye-brow; no such points are observed in hens, they are always paler than the cock bird, and may be pretty well distinguished.

The common or gay canaries are never so high coloured as the fancy bird; their tinting is more of a lemon colour; whereas the prize birds are of a red or orange cast, and may be contrasted just in the same proportion as a lemon is to an orange.

GOLDFINCHES.

THESE birds are natives of our own climate, and may be seen in large flocks flying through most parts of it; if this was not the case, they would, in all probability, from their rich and variegated plumage, be more admired than any other description of feathered songsters. There are, however, some individuals in this, as well as in foreign

countries, who take much pleasure in their song, as well as find gratification in looking at their handsome plumage. In India they find a ready market, at equal, if not higher, prices than the generality of others imported into that country; great numbers are sent from this kingdom. Of late years, they have been cross bred with hen canaries, the produce of which are more handsome, and their strength of song is improved by these means. When marked with an equal portion of each species, they are termed Pied Mules, and are more admired on account of their rich and beautiful external appearance, as well as their improved song, and are oftentimes sold for very high prices. Breeders differ in their opinion respecting the most effectual way of obtaining them; some considering it necessary to have a Chibald or Cheviot goldfinch. From whence this name is derived I know not, unless first found on those hills; they are but seldom caught; perhaps not one out of a thousand will be found amongst those taken by our regular bird-catchers. They are, in my opinion, a chance bird, bred by the common and only kind of goldfinch found in this country, not being two distinct sorts: they are distinguished by having a white mark under their throat, which divides the circle of red found round the heads of all goldfinches. If persons were to wait for this particular bird ere they attempted to breed mules, their patience I think would be exhausted, and but few mules would be bred. Those who have not sufficient patience, or more probably think the same object might be obtained without having to wait so long, will therefore procure one of the usual sort some time in April, when on flight seeking their mates; the cocks being

then considered to be in a fit state for breeding, either with their own species, or with a hen canary. This, to some certain extent, is true; but it must be acknowledged by all bird-fanciers, that this very rankness makes them very sulky in confinement, and they will but seldom be reconciled to such a small place of abode; nor will they feed on such sort of seed as is given in general, but require hemp-seed; this tends to make them more hot, and ultimately kills them. It is, therefore, advisable to procure them before they arrive at this forward state, because they are more easily brought to feed on canary, flax, and rape-seed, without the necessity of supplying them with a quantity of other seed, which rots them to death, or else deprives them of their natural rich colouring; and if freely given when they are in moult, it will actually cause their new feathers to be of a dull brown, without the least tint of yellow or red remaining on their feathers. To prevent this, feed them at all times, unless breeding, on canary and flax-seed, equal quantities of each; all other things are unnecessary when in health. The cock may be distinguished from the hen by its high colouring; the shoulder quite a jet black, instead of a brown; the few feathers close to their bills black instead of brown; the red of their heads bright and transparent; the same to be observed in regard to the yellow in the wing feathers; but the two first points are certain. Many a rich hen will be high coloured; but the feathers round the beak, and at the points of their shoulders, will be found, on handling them, of a brown cast—the cocks quite black. If a person compares one of each sex together, he will soon find out the difference.—

When the cock is first taken it should be placed near the cage of the hen canary, which should be supplied with proper materials for making her nest, feeding them both on rich and nourishing food, as egg, &c. the same as stated in breeding of canaries. When she appears to be inclined to form her repository for her eggs, nature will induce her to call for a mate; when this is observed, turn the goldfinch into the breeding-cage over night, so as to prevent a quarrel, which would otherwise happen, no doubt; she will, in all probability, make her morning's call as soon as the break of day appears: the gentleman will sometimes take advantage of this forwardness, and most likely, if the same exercise is permitted every morning during her laying, young mules will be produced. Goldfinches are naturally fond of pecking at every thing which comes in their reach, oftentimes destroying the nest or eggs; if they are found doing such mischief, they must be sent back to learn better manners, adopting the plan of turning them, at night, into the breeding cage. In case they appear kind towards the female, let them remain in their happy quarters, watching them narrowly, so as to notice whether they have a taste for raw egg or not. As soon as you find the hen has laid, take away her egg, and place it in some small box, covering it with bran or hair: in preference to a bone egg, put in a bad egg; this may be easily done, most breeders having rather too many of that sort. Mark it with ink so as to distinguish it from the others, for by this method you have a better opportunity of knowing the disposition of the goldfinch. Do this until the end of her laying, when follow the same plan as laid down in breeding canaries.

(See page 27.) If you find the eggs are good, be careful and watch him narrowly, to prevent his becoming a murderer. They will frequently pull the young ones out of their nests, and throw them to the bottom of the cage, thereby killing them on the instant, or breaking some of their little limbs; from such accidents they are left to perish with cold and hunger. Breeding from fresh-caught birds is both dangerous and troublesome; I would, therefore, advise my readers who intend to enter upon this description of fancy, to procure their birds some considerable time before hand, by which means much labour and vexation is saved: some time in July or August, get these young goldfinches, commonly called grey-pates, from not having moulted off their nestling feathers about their head. These birds should be kept until two years old before they are turned up to breed from; if turned sooner they are of no use. These birds will be very familiar in pairing with a hen canary, if matched in the same manner as laid down in the directions for breeding canaries, just as freely as if with one of their own breed; feeding their young with the same attention as a cock canary would do, preventing thereby a vast deal of unnecessary trouble. These birds should be kept amongst canaries, so as to make them better acquainted with one another, against the commencement of the breeding seasons.

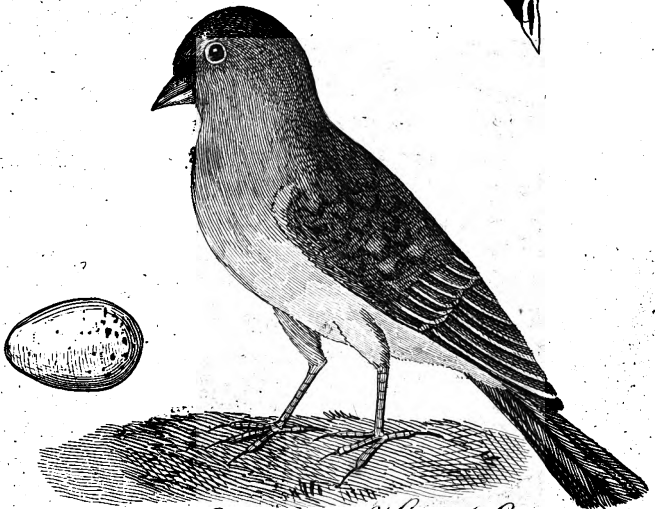
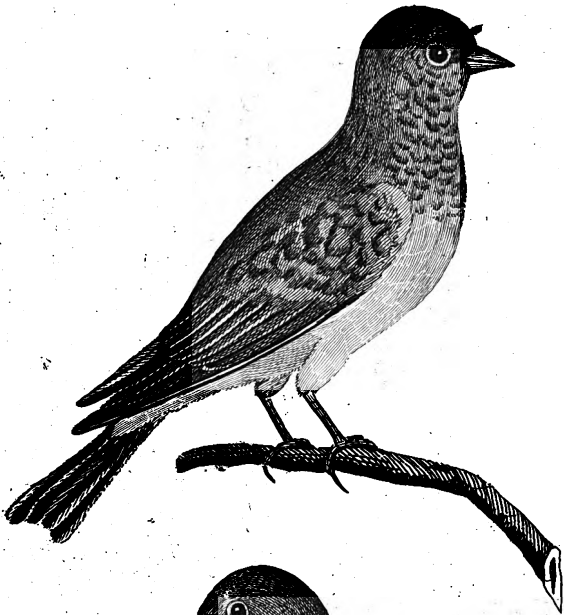
I have had hatched this very morning (July 11, 1825,) two nests of young ones from one cock and two hens, five in one nest, out of five eggs; in the other nest four young ones, out of the same number; they were all brought to life at the same time; this is a sufficient proof of the advantage herein laid down. I have just put down my pen

to see how they are going on, and I am happy to say very well, their maternal parents feeding them with their fostering mouths, on egg, sponge cake, and maw seed mixed together, with ripe groundsel in a pot of water placed inside their cage. These articles I shall make a point of replenishing every night and noon, so as to give the old plenty of *sweet* and *nourishing* food; to supply the call of their little ones.

LINNETS.

These birds are considered very common; it is true they are very numerous, and do not possess any striking colour to attract the eye; their sweet, soft, and melodious notes, however, fully compensate for this deficiency, if it is to be called one; for they are continually swelling out their little throats to bring forth pleasing sounds, to gratify the ears of those who may be fond of hearing them. They are often crossed with a hen canary; but their dark plumage takes away any perceivable share from their offspring, of their maternal parent. Linnet mules, therefore, are not so much sought after as the pied goldfinch ones, most persons being desirous of pleasing the sight, as well as gratifying the ear.

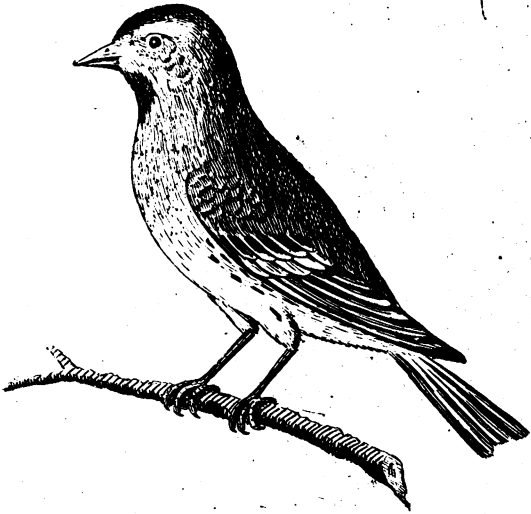
The same plan should be followed as laid down in goldfinch mules. Get nestlings or branchers, which will do equally as well, and prevent the trouble of rearing them by hand; they are taken before clean moulted off, in June and July. When first caught they should be



Linnet, Cock, Hen, & Egg.







Aberdevine Cook & Hen

kept quiet; feed them on rape, flax, and a few corns of bruised hemp-seed; this must be left off as soon as they are found to feed freely on the other seed; rape and flax of equal quantities is the best food for these birds, and they should not be turned up to breed until the second season. They are often brought to sing the wood-lark's song, and many of them, particularly at Birmingham, where this fancy is much admired, will go through the whole of that bird's song without making one of their natural jerks. Birds so true to the notes of the wood-lark are invaluable, as we have their song nearly all the year through, without the same chance of losing the bird by moult. Being of an easy and familiar disposition, they will live for years in confinement, moulting off their feathers at the proper season, which their tutors but seldom accomplish, unless forced. This makes wood-lark fancy both expensive and vexing; for it is unpleasant to lose them just at the time they are in full song, and become domesticated. To prevent, in some measure, this occurrence, see page 66.

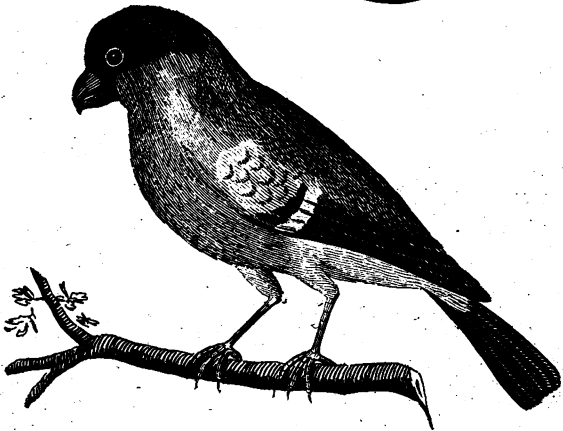
ABERDEVINE.

This is a merry little bird, and arrives here from the South of France early in the Spring. In their plumage, which is of a yellow green cast, they resemble the canary; though somewhat smaller; their song is soft and pleasing. There are some few persons in this metropolis, who endeavor

vour and succeed, to some trifling extent, to cross them with the hen canary; when obtained, I do not see any advantage arising from such breed, being much smaller, and not gifted with any degree of power of voice, neither in size equal to the canary, goldfinch, or linnet. Why this peculiar breed should be sought after I know not, unless indeed from one's natural propensity of wishing to procure something novel, and out of Nature's usual course.

Breeding any sort of mules is a very troublesome pastime, from which fancy but little advantage arises: Nature having ordained that man shall not, from his fancied ideas, push her out of her regular course; neither is it permitted that their offspring shall increase and multiply, although they may be somewhat of the same species. Birds are by naturalists classed into two distinct and separate species; one called *hard billed*, the other *soft beaked*; one living on seeds, the other on live food. Any seed birds may be matched together; and they should be turned into a large room, in preference to breeding cages. A soft meat bird cannot be brought to breed with a seed bird; otherwise we should find some fanciers who would cross the nightingale with the canary. God, in his superior wisdom, has not thought proper to create from two opposite species; neither will he suffer man to take such power out of his hands. Female mules are, therefore, quite useless; the males also, save and except their musical talents, under these considerations, (one half at least of such produce) become useless stock; the other of no more value than the common canary, unless they should be handsomely marked with soft and rich colouring, so that they may be termed pied mules: this





Bullfinch, Cock, Hen, & Egg.

description of bird will repay the breeder, in some measure, for the expense which he has been at in breeding them, as they are often sold for a considerable sum.

Young birds are like young children, sleeping away the greatest portion of the day as well as the nights: during these slumbers, the birds place their heads under their wings. When observed in this position, many persons imagine they are ill; but if you find when they awake that they are cheerful and active, jumping from one position to another, you need not apprehend any immediate danger from sickness, as this lethargy will soon leave them, and, in all probability, you will be favoured with a little soft and pleasing music.

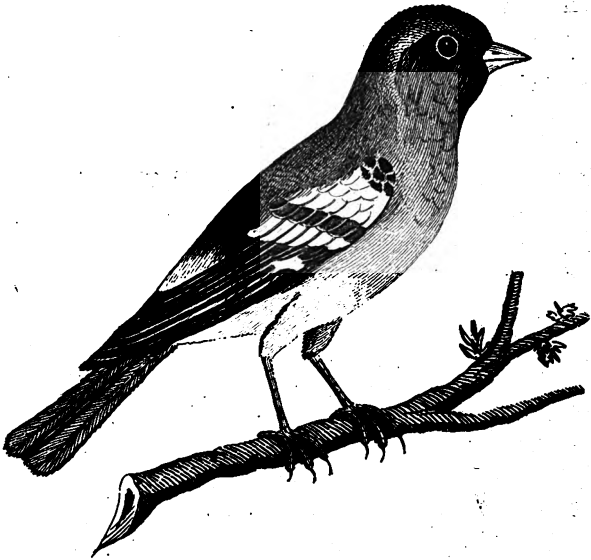
THE BULLFINCH.

THESE birds are natives of this country, and may be found, although not in great numbers, in most parts of it. They are called by various names; in some counties hoops, in others bull-heads, and in some thick-bills, &c. They are very destructive in robbing the orchards and gardens of their blossoms and young fruit; consequently, the farmers and gardeners take every opportunity of destroying them, their eggs, and their young: a reward of twopence is given by the churchwardens in some parishes for every head; such bribery of course tends to diminish their breed, and therefore it is but seldom that a nest of young is found. Their natural note is a mere shrill and plaintive whistle, without any claim to admiration; their beautiful plumage, as well as their quickness of learning

and retentive memory, induces the German people to teach them different national and other airs; and when proficient in this art, they are pleasing companions. The expense and trouble required to bring them to this state of perfection cause them to be very dear; and they are but seldom found amongst the lower orders of society in this country, the prices required by their owners for such birds preventing their becoming common. The method of teaching them is as follows:—

The young ones should be taken when about twelve or fourteen days old; the best time of finding their nests is about June or July; they should be kept covered down in a wicker basket, as this will give sufficient air, as well as make them gape for food when uncovered. Keep them in this manner until they are full feathered; feed them every hour on soft food, as stated in rearing young canaries by hand (page 29). When quite fledged, put them into separate cages, still feeding them through the wires; leave a little of the victuals against the wires, so as to tempt them to peck it, thereby bringing them on to feed themselves. If they are intended to learn one and the same tune, they may remain all together in the same room; but if otherwise, they must have different school-rooms out of the hearing of one another. A tune on a small bird-organ made for the purpose is constantly played to them in slow time; during these lessons, their cages should be covered with some sort of cloth, so as to darken them, thereby preventing any thing taking off their attention during such instruction. When they can feed themselves, let them have canary, rape, and flaxseed, the greatest portion of the former; they are parti-





Chaffinch, Cock, Hen, and Egg.

cularly fond of hemp-seed, but should not be given it unless ill, and then in small quantities, as it tends to destroy the beauty of their plumage. It is necessary to continue their different lessons for some considerable time;—these bird-organs have several tunes pricked on their barrels, so that the tune may be shifted to the air which each bird has to learn, playing it with a very slow hand every hour, or oftener. Continue this plan, as well as that of darkening their cages, until they become proficient musicians. It requires plenty of patience and perseverance to bring them to a state of perfection, so as to pipe the tune correctly; this, perhaps, is the reason why we have not English piping bullfinches;—however, I am well convinced, if our own country people would afford themselves the necessary time required to accomplish this fancy, an English bird might be taught,

With equal harmony, to pipe or sing,
Rule Britannia and God save the King.

The cocks are much richer in colour than the hens, particularly about their breast, being of a bright red; the female a dull brick-dust colour.

THE CHAFFINCH.

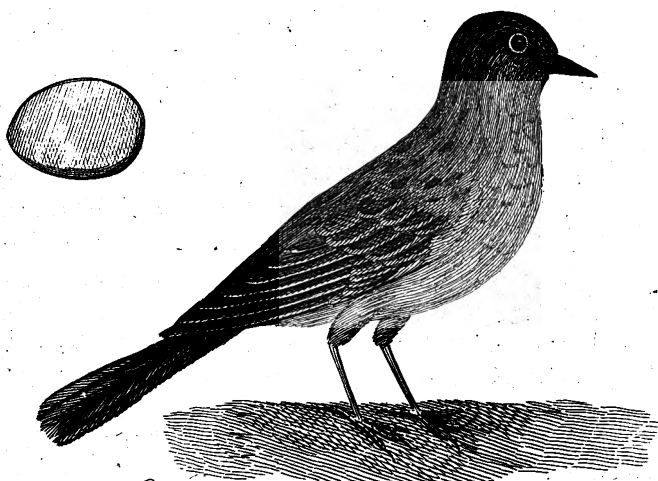
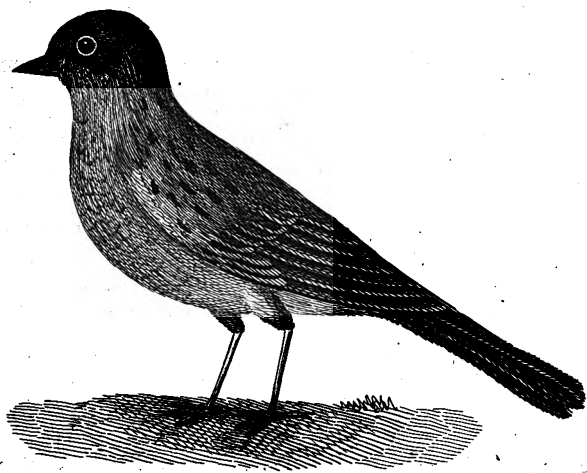
THIS is a very pretty bird, possessing much variety in the colours of its plumage. Their natural note is not very musical, although loud; yet they are taught a peculiar kind of note, to bird-catchers considered pleasing and harmonious; however, there is no accounting for taste. They are fed on the same seed as a goldfinch or linnet.

HEDGE-SPARROWS.

THESE birds are found all over England, and are sometimes kept in cages by persons in this metropolis. Their natural song is very sweet, and may be improved if brought up from the nest under the canary or tit-lark. They are to be reared as you would linnets; when they can feed themselves, keep them on canary and rape-seed, giving a few corns of hemp-seed now and then.

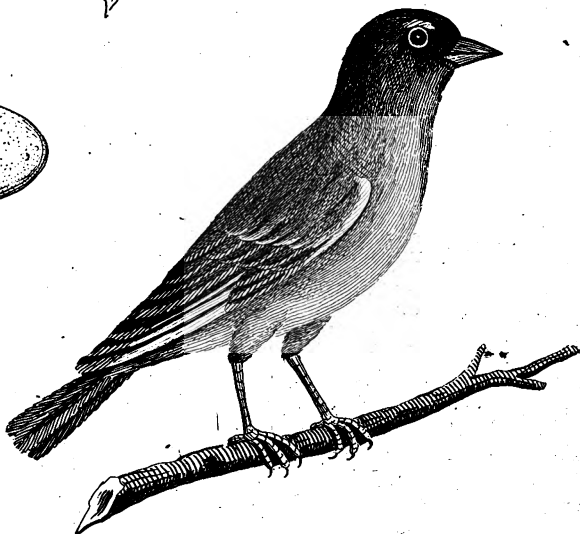
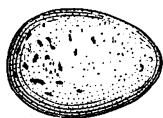
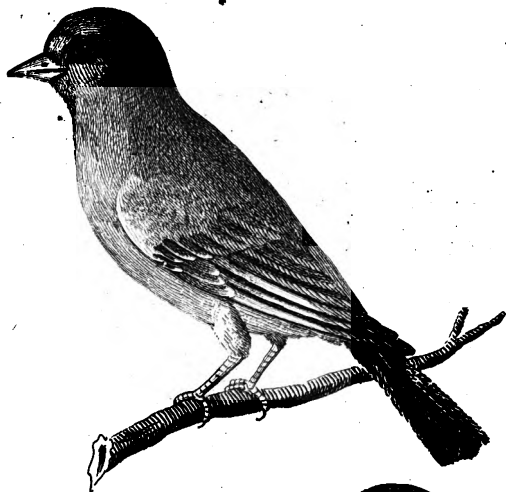
THE GREEN BIRD.

THESE birds go by different names in various parts of the country: in some places they are called green-finches, in others green-linnets. They have but an indifferent song of their own; still we find some fanciers who will be bold enough to turn them up with the hen canary; but their labour is generally bestowed without any recompense for their pains. These birds may be brought to copy the song of other birds, if brought up from the nest amongst them; they should be fed in like manner as the linnet, but in my opinion they are scarce worth the trouble of keeping: however, we often see them in confinement, ringing the bells in cages made for the purpose. They are much larger than the canary or linnet, and but ill calculated for pairing with the canary.



Hedge Sparrow, Cock, Hen, & Egg.

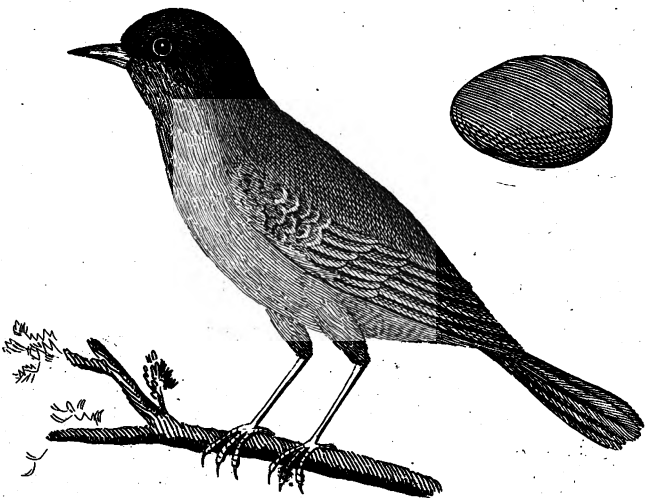
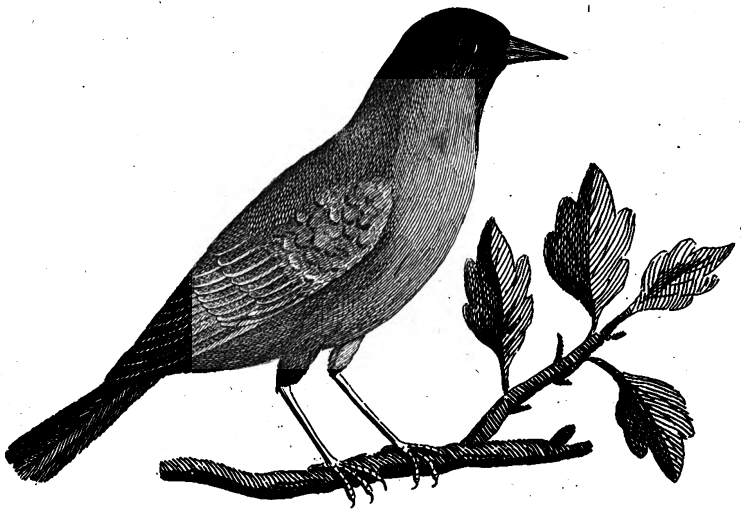




Green-Bird Cock, Hen and Egg.

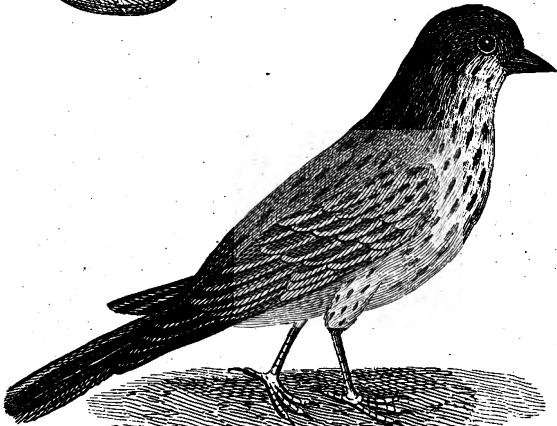
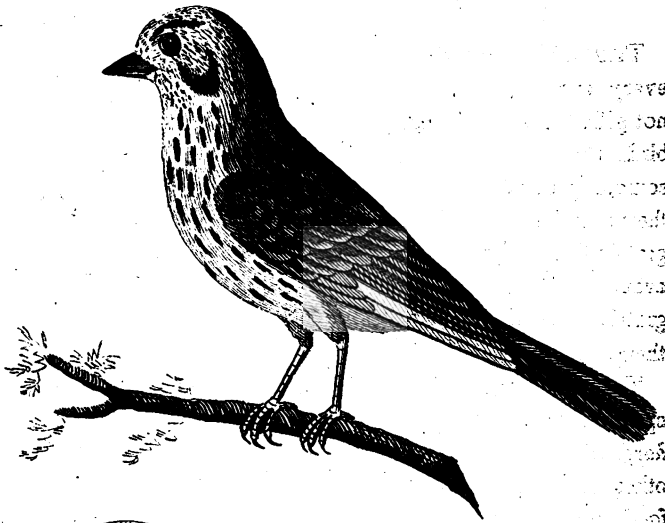






Nightingale, Cock, Hen, and Egg.





Yellow-hammer, Cock, Hen, and Egg.

THE YELLOW-HAMMER.

THESE birds are very common, and are to be seen in every county; their plumage is beautiful, but they are not gifted with much musical powers. Like most other birds they may be improved, and taught to sing with some degree of harmony; and when they are so taught they may be kept in confinement, as they will no doubt gratify their keeper with a soft and musical song; at all events their plumage must be admired, therefore some gratification will arise for the trouble bestowed on feeding them.

The whole of the foregoing birds are considered of one species, as they feed on seed, and are thereby called *hard billed birds*. I shall now proceed to enter upon the other class, called *soft meat birds*, as they feed on living food when in their wild state of freedom. I shall therefore begin with the leader of the feathered choristers.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

THESE birds arrive in this country, if the weather is fine, generally in the beginning of April; the cocks arrive some few days before the hens: it would therefore be advisable to take them on their first arrival, as it is then more likely to have one that can sing. Their loud and melodious notes are heard in most counties, and may oftentimes be heard early of a morning or late in the evening in Kensington Gardens, the neighbourhood of Battersea, and in various places equally near to the

metropolis. They are a very timid and shy bird when in a state of freedom; and it is but seldom that they are seen and not often heard during the day, frequenting some sequestered coppice or wood, in preference to the haunts of man. In such retirement they find themselves less interrupted, and thereby better enabled to amuse with their harmonious voice their opposite sex. From such fascinating sounds they are, no doubt, in hopes of captivating their hearts, and from such delightful music to make an impression on one of them, so as to pair off in triumph. It is but seldom they favour us with a song after this courtship is ended; yet they will sometimes oblige the wearied traveller with a little music, to pass away more pleasantly his irksome hours of travel. Perhaps, during his sojournment in this clime, he would favour us a little oftener with his harmony, but I rather expect he has got other employment on hand, by procuring live insects for his mate during her confinement, as well as to attend to his little family when brought to life.

Such persons who are desirous of hearing them sing in cages should obtain them early in April, immediately on their first arrival, ere they become mated with the opposite sex; if deferred until this time, they become sulky, pining after their mates, and but seldom reconciled to confinement. Immediately on their being taken, they should have the points of their wings tied together, so as to prevent their injuring themselves against the wires of their cage, which they would most probably do, if this plan was not adopted to prevent it. A few small pieces of raw beef should be forced down their throats every

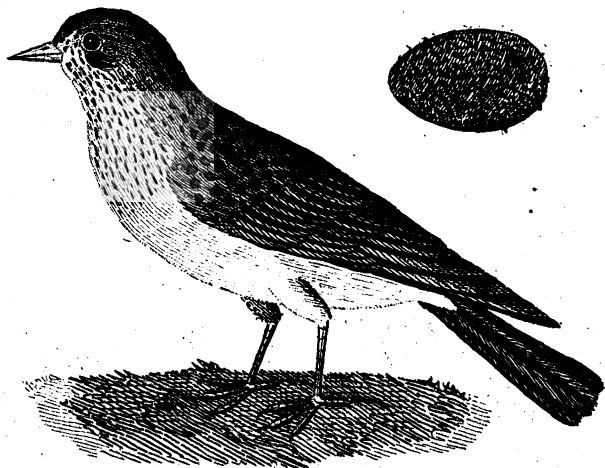
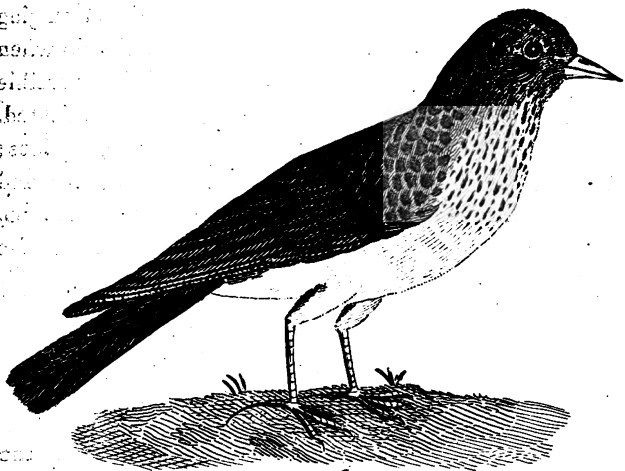
hour; a little of the same scraped quite fine, and free from strings; to which add the yolk of a hard boiled egg, forming it to a proper consistency with clean water; put into the tin pans a few gentles, brandling worms, ants, or very small meal worms, covering them with the above paste; their moving about will tempt the birds to peck, and thereby sooner induce them to feed on prepared food. Still continue to cram them with small pieces of raw and lean beef, to keep them from starving. When you find they eat the soft food freely, you may omit the forced meat balls, and gradually leave out the living food; for, if continued, they will always look after them, and not feed bountifully on the meat, egg, &c. They should be kept quiet, with their cages fronting the light, and a thin cloth thrown over, so as to prevent any interruption. Their pans should be kept sweet and clean; for if the meat is the least tainted, they will not touch it. Their pans must be boiled out every day without fail; and in hot weather give them fresh made victuals twice a day; if any be left in their pans, it must be thrown away, to prevent its becoming offensive. Such food should neither be too thick nor too thin; the first will prevent their feeding freely, because it cannot be well separated; the latter tends to make them laxative, and frequently brings on weakness or death.

A wicker-fronted cage is preferable to a wired one, and it should have a green Persian roller blind, so that it may be drawn up or let down at pleasure; thereby keeping them from unnecessary interruption, by which means they may be made by slow degrees as familiar as a canary. They have been known to live for many years in such

confinement, singing with all their natural melody ; and in time they are brought to great perfection, being often heard in this metropolis and its neighbourhood singing with the same cheerfulness as others generally do when not placed in confinement, although not believed possible by those who have not seen them thus domesticated. When in full song, they are sold for very high prices ; and so they ought, when we reflect on the expense and trouble required to bring them to this state of perfection. Young canaries that are brought up under them are also sold for high prices, and sought after with avidity.

THE SKY-LARK.

THIS is a very melodious bird, and ranks high in the estimation of most individuals. They are natives of our own climate, and may be found in all parts of the country ; in winter they flock together, and may be taken in great numbers, particularly when the snow lays on the ground. Birds taken at this time will sometimes turn out good song birds, although wild for a considerable time after having been caged ; some will prefer nestlings or branchers, because they are tamer and soon reconciled to confinement ; these will do very well, provided you have a good old song bird, true to its natural song, to bring them up under ; if not, they will mock any song bird, and thereby destroy the greatest portion of their melody ; for nothing can be more gratifying to one's ear, as we pass through the corn fields of a morning or evening, than to hear these delightful songsters warbling their loud and pleasing



Sky-Lark, Cock, Hen and Egg.



songs for a considerable length of time, still continuing to mount on high, hovering their expanded wings in space, until lost to the naked eye, but still heard by those who listen to their harmonious notes. Such music adds comfort to its mate during her confinement to the nest; her bodily warmth produces young from those eggs she may have deposited; when they are brought to life, we seldom hear for some time the old cock's notes—he has other employment to do: the greatest portion of his time must be taken up in seeking live insects for his mate and her little ones. She takes the food from his mouth, and immediately supplies the same to her young; and the cock continues his employment until they can fly out of their nests, which is generally when they are about fourteen or sixteen days old. When arrived to this age, he takes them out with him, in order to learn them to cater for themselves; and when they can do this, we again hear him in song, teaching his male offspring to follow his harmonious strains.

The sky-lark is very apt, when in confinement, to copy from other birds; to prevent this, they should be kept amongst their own species—such should be also correct and true to their song: they generally improve in song every year; when seven or eight years old, they are considered to be in their prime.

In this place (London) they are generally fed on German paste, (see page 65,) stale bun, crumbled fine, about one third of the quantity; in other parts of the country, where this paste or composition is not known, they are fed on whole grits and hemp-seed, bread and cheese, &c. They should have a turf of clover every

other day, and plenty of clean red gravel at the bottom of their cages, which should be cleaned out once a week; a meal worm now and then tends to enliven their spirits, and make them sing more loud; they are naturally a very strong and healthy bird, and may, if their cages are well sheltered both at top and at the sides, be kept out of doors both day and night from May to August, or beginning of September, when they will most probably go into moult. If not well protected from sudden winds and rain, they are apt to take cold, which brings on the husk. This is a very unpleasant complaint, as it frequently stops them when in full song, which takes off much of their harmony. If their cages are properly boarded at the sides as well as at the top, they will do better out of doors; it makes them stronger, and they will continue longer in song, favouring their keeper, as well as his neighbours, with their songs at the break of day, when their keeper, like the great men of the east, may lie in bed, and have delightful sounds to gratify his ears while he reclines on his pillow to rest.

Nestlings require great care and trouble in rearing, being very subject to the cramp; they should be kept in a wicker basket covered down, to prevent their flying away. Soak a little stale bun and rape-seed in cold water for five or six hours; then put it into a piece of clean cloth, about one-third the quantity of rape as of bun, or best white bread; let it simmer over a slow fire for about half an hour, then form it into a custard by rolling it to a complete pulp; add to this a little yolk of a hard boiled egg; feed them with this food until they can feed themselves. This mixture must be made fresh twice

a day, or it will turn sour ; and if given to the birds when in this state, it will certainly kill them ; a bit of raw beef may be given occasionally. As soon as they get pretty strong with their legs and wings, they need be caged off, keeping clean soft hay at the bottom of the cages, shifting it for fresh once a week at least. When they can feed themselves, give a little German paste, stale bun, crumbled very fine, and chopped egg, mixed together ; when about a month or five weeks old, cage them off, supplying them with fresh turf and clean gravel. You may continue the egg, &c. for a short time, and break them off it by degrees ; also a bit or two of lean beef ; continue this until they have moulted off.

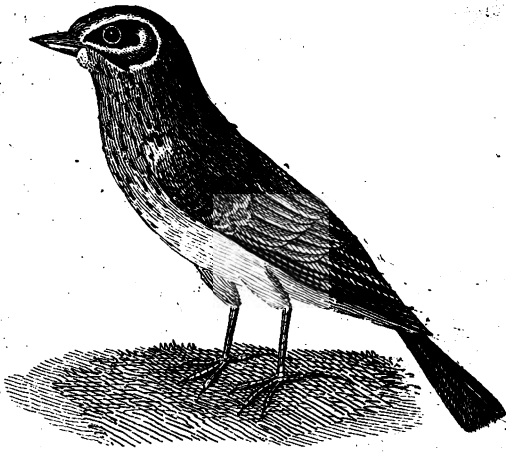
Branchers are taken in June or July, and are as likely to turn out equally good with the nestlings, if taken before they have begun to moult ; if taken when in moult, they seldom turn out to be good for any thing. When in moult, give them nourishing food, and keep them in doors ; a little saffron and a rusty nail occasionally in their water. When laxative, give bruised chalk at the bottom of the cage ; also a little mild Cheshire cheese, grated fine, mixed with their common food ; also a meal worm or spider now and then.

The cocks are generally distinguished by their size and boldness, being much bolder in their carriage than the hens, and may be told by their length and strength of wing. If you feel their pinions, the cocks will appear to be thick and muscular ; the reverse of it is a hen. As to their long heel or spur, it is no criterion to decide by ; the only method known is what I have above stated.

THE WOOD-LARK.

These birds are taken about Michaelmas, and if kept quiet, require but little trouble to reconcile them to confinement, as they soon become familiar and domesticated, and will soon feed on the usual description of food given to soft meat birds, without the trouble of tempting them by live insects. They have been known to sing with freedom and cheerfulness in a week after having been caught; and no bird will tempt them to deviate in the least from their natural song, which is truly melodious, no other bird having the number of changes in its song as this chorister, who sings with ease and seeming pleasure to himself, as well as gratifying to his hearers. They live but a short time in confinement, not being able to cast off freely their old plumage when confined in a small cage. Nature requires that this change must take place every autumn; if not, death must inevitably follow: this happens yearly to ninety-nine out of a hundred wood-larks, which are kept in cages, to the no small loss and regret of their admirers. To prevent a great portion of this misfortune, I have adopted a plan as follows:—

As soon as they leave off song, I turn them into a very large breeding cage, four or five together, giving them plenty of clean water to wash in, keeping the cage well covered, only admitting sufficient light to see their food, which should be good; German paste, chopped egg, crumbled bun, &c. also saffron and cochineal in their



Wood-Lark, Cock, Hen, and Egg.



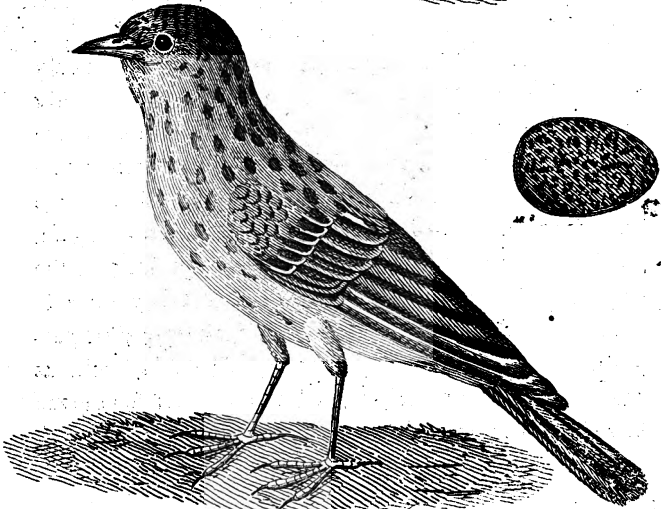
water alternately. This exercise and washing will tend to throw them into moult; and to assist them over this distressing malady, I have adopted the plan of plucking out their wing and tail feathers, three or four at a time; that is to say, one after the other, so continuing day after day until I have drawn them all out; their breast and back feathers may be served the same, if the other does not have the desired effect. This may appear, and in fact it is, cruel treatment; but, on the other hand, as it is done to save the life of a poor bird, who would otherwise most assuredly die, some excuse must be made. We find this practice followed, in the case of the poor geese, out of season, and not to save the life of the poor things, but for man's luxurious comforts; those persons study not their health or comfort, but pluck off their plumage at one and the same time, and leave them in nakedness, to wander over their usual common, which had been their place of comfort and delight for many a long day. It would have been too much trouble to have had them moult off their feathers naturally, so as to have gathered them together from their different resorts; this would have cost money, and therefore to save expense and trouble, the poor geese are plucked alive.

Wood-larks should have a few meal worms occasionally; feed them on German paste, crumbled bun, &c.: their cages should be kept very clean, with plenty of fine clean gravel at the bottom, also wood-ashes now and then; being subject to vermin, this will tend to destroy them, as the birds are very fond of cleaning themselves in the ashes and clear fine sand, and are observed continually pecking the butts of their wings. Strew a

little Scotch snuff over them, but be careful of their eyes—this will destroy the vermin. Wash out their cage with boiling water and soft soap; when quite dry, wet the joints with the lotion hereafter mentioned, to prevent an increase of these troublesome visitors: do not turn the bird into it immediately, but let it well soak in first. (See page 74).

THE TIT-LARK.

These birds arrive in this country about the same time as the nightingale, and like them the male arrives some few days before the female. They are considered to have emigrated from some warm climate, frequenting, on their first arrival, those pastures which sheep are kept on, and no doubt nestling themselves in their warm clothing; for, when taken, sheep-ticks are often found sticking to them, more particularly about their heads. These vermin often fasten themselves so firmly on the poor birds, that it is only with difficulty they can be taken off, and are frequently so buried in their flesh, that it becomes necessary to take them off by force. These birds should be taken immediately on their first arrival, and also have their wings tied, as stated in the directions respecting the nightingale, for the same reasons as specified when speaking of the disposition and rankness of that bird. If taken early in the Spring, they are more likely of answering your purpose, both as regards the probability of being a cock, as well as being more likely to feed on the usual food given to soft meat birds. These birds, although extremely soft



Tit Lark, Cock, Hen, & Egg.



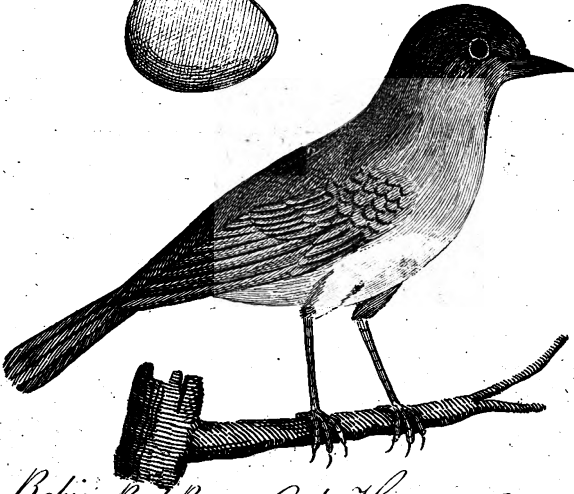
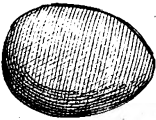
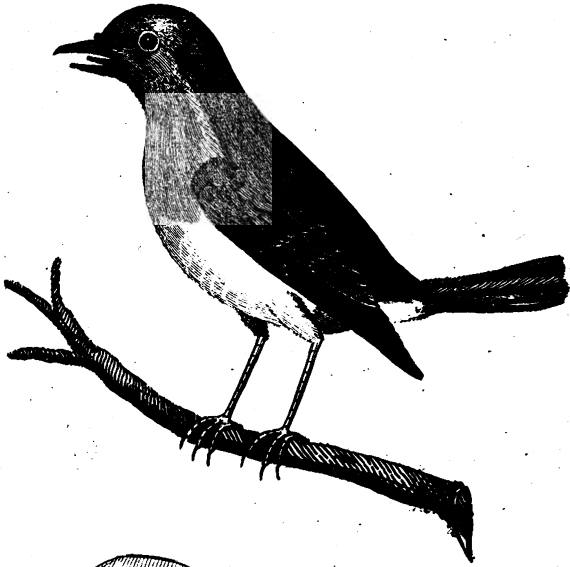
and melodious, singing with a degree of ease but seldom observed in other birds, are but little known or thought of out of London, or in Germany, where they are much looked up to as teachers, with the nightingale also, to their young canaries: they are very deliberate in their song, and it consists of what is termed, in fancy, the beauty of song, either in their own or in that of the canary. These birds, like every other kind, have their different qualities of song, some of them singing much better than others; they begin, "sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, chaw, chaw, chaw, fare, fare, fare," &c. The nightingale learns the canary to rattle, what is commonly called, the sweet jug and water bubble.

The tit-lark lives on the same sort of food as wood-larks, and must be broken off live food by slow degrees: when first caught, their wings having been tied together, put them into a breeding cage four or five together; in a saucer put a quantity of ants, very small meal worms, gentles, or brandling worms, which may be got at any fishing-tackle shop; strew over them plenty of chopped egg, crumbled bun, bruised hemp-seed, and German paste, placing the cage fronting a window, which should be covered over with a silk handkerchief or some other light substance, leaving a sufficient light for them to see their food. If kept quiet, and this food given them for two or three days, most likely they will be brought to eat the soft victuals, without being decoyed to do so with the live bait. Do not leave off the live food too hastily for fear of their pining after it; but do so by degrees, until you find them eat their other food without any other temptation, and give them a few small meal worms occa-

sionally. These birds, like the wood-lark, seldom moult off in confinement; at the proper season, treat them in the same manner as laid down for that bird. In case you keep both of these birds, turn them into the hospital together; what is good for one is good for the other. I know of no other method of distinguishing the gender of these birds, but by their song.

ROBINS.

THESE little harmless warblers are well known to every one; and every child, in its infancy, is taught to respect and not injure this tame and melodious songster; it would seem, indeed, from their affability and domestic habits, as if nature had ordained that they should fly to mankind for shelter and protection. It is but seldom that they are observed at any very considerable distance from the residence of some human being, frequenting the noble mansion as well as the humble cottage, the inmates of which, particularly the younger branches, are very careful of saving the crumbs which fall on the table for their favourite little melodist, ~~whose visits are welcomed by a~~ daily repast, and who, in return for such kindness, perches himself on the window-ledge or at some short distance, singing his song of thanks, and amusing those who are set round the humble board. So familiar, in fact, does he at length become, that, in the depth of Winter, he will frequently intrude himself, if an opportunity offers, and peck such things as may have fallen from



Robin-Red-Breast, Cock, Hen, and Egg.



the table; and when Winter's bleak and dreary winds arise, these poor little harmless warblers flock around our dwelling, swelling their little throats with musical strains, with as much apparent glee, as if the great luminary was displaying his full radiancy to warm their cold and shivering limbs. It would be unnatural in man, if their musical strains did not, at such times, bring forth some food from the hands of the charitable and humane, since they are unable of themselves to procure a sufficiency to supply the calls of hunger, from the frost and snow covering the ground, and preventing them from finding any live insects. During such severe weather, therefore, they often become inmates of our dwellings, and introduce themselves into the breakfast or dining parlour, where they will frequently keep themselves to such things as the table affords, best suited to their tastes. From their natural tame disposition they are soon rendered quite docile, and reconciled to a wiry prison, and will, if properly attended to, live for years in such confinement, singing with all their wonted cheerfulness, and requiring but little trouble when in health. They should be fed on the same food as given to wood-larks. When ill, give them a few living insects, such as small meal worms, ants, ear-wigs, wood-lice, or carpenters, spiders, &c. Any of these in small quantities at a time, will be beneficial; a little grated cheese in their German paste and egg, bruised hemp-seed, a few bits of raw beef occasionally: in their water put hay-saffron, changing it for clean water once or twice a week, in which you may, however, put a rusty nail. The nestling birds are best if you have good old birds to bring them up under; if not, those

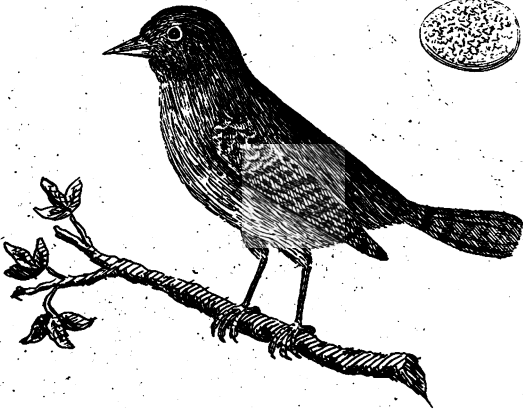
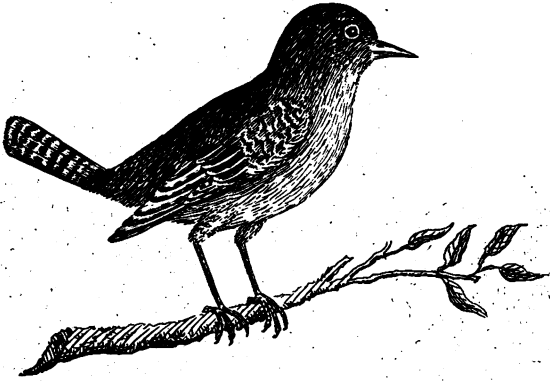
taken in June or July will prove equally good, and be of less trouble to rear. The cocks are distinguished by the bright red under the breast, as well as that on the head, extending itself more than in hens; and they are larger in size, their eyes bolder.

WRENS.

THE wren is a very small bird, and is considered the smallest found in this kingdom; their little song is sweet and soft. They frequent out-houses, and generally make their nests in the thatch of cow sheds, which they form completely round, leaving a hole for the ingress and egress, about the size of their own body. They lay a great number of eggs, oftentimes to the number of fourteen. They are pretty little things, but not at all worth the trouble and expense of keeping, and therefore no reason can be urged for their being placed in a state of confinement. They will feed on the same food as robins.

BLACK-CAPS.

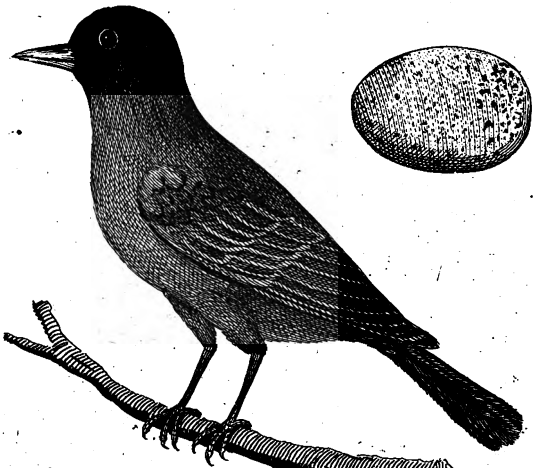
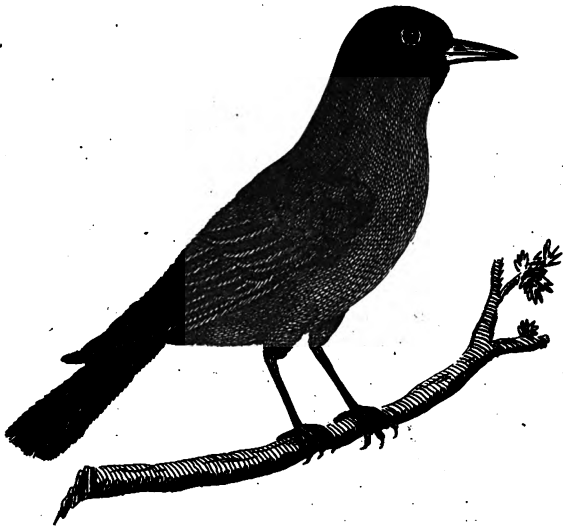
The black-cap may be most assuredly classed amongst our songsters; it is a pretty looking bird, but seldom or ever found domesticated. In some counties, particularly in Norfolk, it is called the mock nightingale. It feeds on living insects; and although their song is melodious when in a state of freedom, I doubt much if it will be worth



Wren, Cock, Hen & Egg.

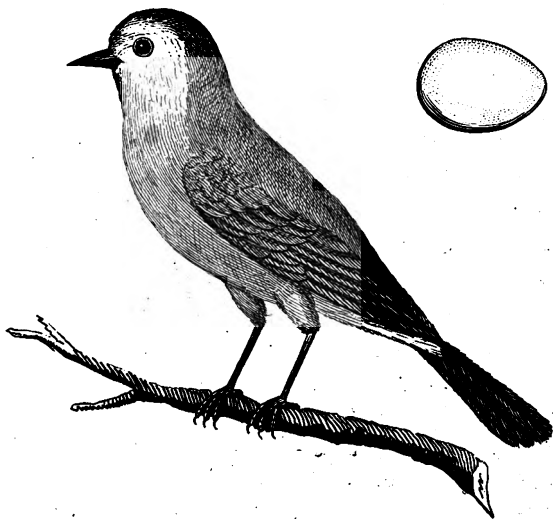
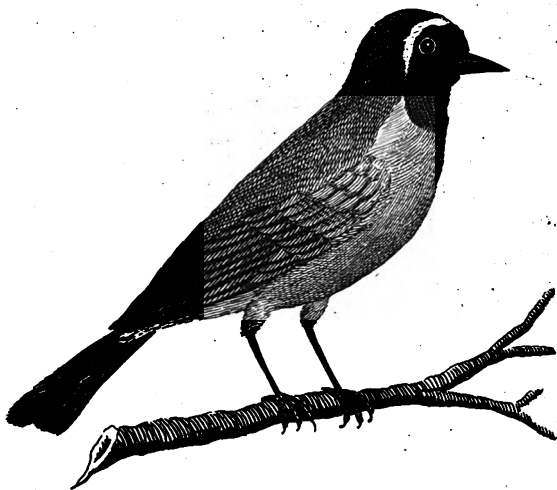






Black-Bird, Cock, Hen & Egg.





Redstart, Cock, Hen, and Egg.

while to domesticate them; however, if it is done, they must be fed on the same food as laid down for nightingales.

RED-STARTS.

THE red-start is a pretty song bird, although short in its notes; still he continues to warble forth his music in quick succession, and if taken when young, may be brought up under the wood or tit-lark, and will then answer its keep. They require the same victuals as given to nightingales.

BLACKBIRDS.

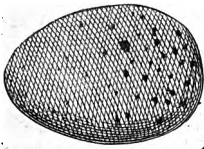
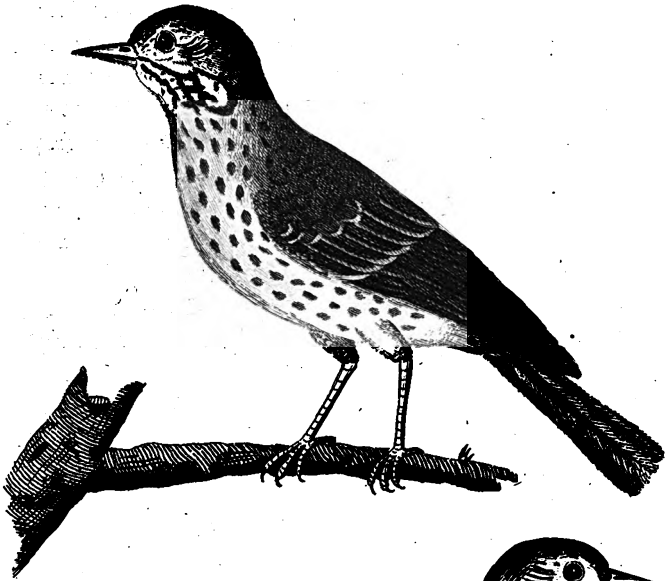
THESE birds are well known throughout all parts of the kingdom, and are found domesticated in every town and village. They should be taken away when about fourteen days old; their cages should be covered at the bottom with soft hay, and changed once or twice a week, so as to keep them clean. Feed them, when young, on lean meat chopped quite fine, mixing it with soft bread which has been sopped in water, or oatmeal formed into a stiff paste with cold water. When they can feed themselves, they will eat almost any kind of soft food. Some persons give them raw meat and cheese curd, oatmeal and water, bread and cheese, snails, worms, apple, and a variety of other food, according to their fancy, or from being enabled to procure such things without much trou-

ble or expense. Their natural song or whistle is very soft and melodious; but being a mock bird they often lose this qualification, by imitating those birds which may be in their hearing. Being of a laxative habit, they make much dirt about a house; I always keep them on German paste, with a few bits of lean meat, and meal worms occasionally, finding this food agree with them very well, and preventing much smell and dirt. I have known them whistle different tunes very correctly; they do not continue in song above a few months in the year; and from their size and other considerations, they are better calculated for out doors than for the interior of dwelling houses. The cocks are generally distinguished by their blackness, the hens being much browner. When twelve months old, the cock's beak turns quite yellow.

THE THRUSH, OR MAVIS.

THIS is a very loud-song'd bird, and sings throughout the greatest part of the year: being very similar in their habits and disposition, they may be managed in the same manner as the blackbird. From their loud and powerful notes, it is more pleasing to hear them at a distance; and they are therefore better calculated for extensive pleasure grounds, than for the interior of a dwelling house.

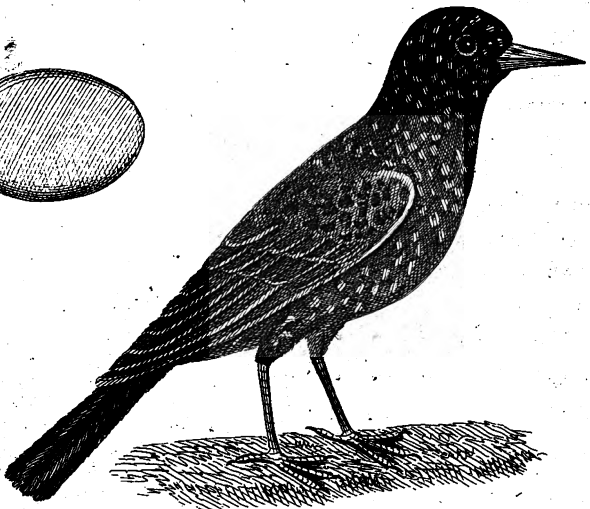
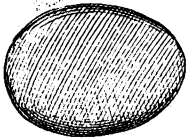
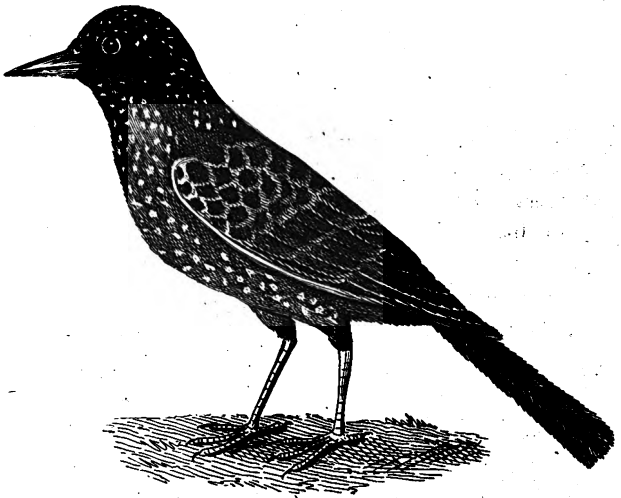
It is almost impossible to be certain which are cocks by their plumage; the best and only true criterion to judge by is, if not sufficiently old to record their song, by their size and boldness; their eyes are in general more piercing.



Song Thrush, Cock, Hen & Egg.







Starling, Cock, Hen, and Egg.

THE STARLING.

THESE birds are seen during the Winter season in immense flocks, completely darkening the sky with their numbers. I have known a vast number to have been shot at one discharge from a fowling piece. Their plumage is extremely beautiful, particularly that of the cock bird; and they may be taught to articulate sounds so as to resemble the human voice. They ought to be taken when very young, say twelve or fourteen days old; keep them in darkness, and instruct them at every meal in the lessons you wish them to repeat, not beginning with any fresh words until they have repeated their first lesson fluently. It is a piece of useless cruelty to slit their tongues; for although it is attempted to improve their volubility, it has not the desired effect, and they will, if properly tutored, talk as well, if not better, without this operation. Feed them as you would blackbirds. When able to feed themselves, still keep them covered over, and continue their lessons of instructions every hour, or at every opportunity, the oftener the better. When in moult keep them warm, and administer such things as laid down in moulting off most other birds. Give them a few meal worms.

The cock is distinguished by a black line under its tongue, the hen has little or none.

THE JAY.

THIS bird possesses much cunning, and may be taught to pronounce various sentences, so as to resemble the human voice. Many are found to talk equal to the parrot, and are as beautiful in plumage; their feathers resembling the rich colouring of the peacock, diversified with much soft colouring about the head and wings, and the feathers on the cap of the head are raised at pleasure.

It is but seldom they are seen, not being a very common bird; still they are found in small numbers throughout most counties. These, like all other birds intended to be taught any thing out of their usual or natural course, should be taken when young. Instruct them in the same manner, and feed them on the same food as any other soft meat bird; viz. German paste, raw beef, &c.

THE MAGPIE.

THIS is a very mischievous bird, and called by many persons an omen of ill luck. They are a very common bird, feeding on carrion, or when driven to extreme hunger, preying on small birds. Their colour consists of nearly equal parts of black and white, therefore termed pied. This bird may be taught to talk and speak very fluently: teach them as you would a jay or starling, and give them the same food. The wings of the cock are much brighter in colour, both as regards the black and blue, and the richness throughout the whole of their plumage.

PARROTS.

THERE are various sorts, varying in size and colour, yet they may be considered of one species. What is proper food for one is the same for others. Parroquets, Loving-birds, &c. have been known to live for a great number of years in confinement, although this variable climate differs materially from their native soil. When in a state of freedom they live on different fruits, berries, and various seeds: when domesticated, they are generally fed on meat, bread and butter, sopped bread and milk, tea, &c.; but such slops tend to make them very dirty; and if much meat is given them, it brings on a very unpleasant itching, causing them to gnaw their flesh and to pull out their feathers, much to their disfigurement. They may be brought to feed on German paste, stale bun, bruised hemp-seed in small quantities, the soft part of a French roll sopped in water, and squeezed dry; then beat up a new laid egg in skimmed milk, beating the whole together; to which add two or three flakes of hay-saffron and a tea-spoonful of moist sugar, then boil it over a slow fire until it becomes a custard. The best way is to put these ingredients into a custard-pan or tea-cup, which should be placed in boiling water; let it continue to boil, but not sufficiently to boil over into the custard; in about half an hour it will be solid enough; add to this a small quantity of maw-seed. Give them this once or twice a week; it must, however, be made fresh every time you give it them; at other times feed them on German paste, bruised hemp-seed, and bun crumbled

fine, alternately; this is more nourishing than tea slops, particularly at the time of moult: when in such sickness keep them both dark and warm, with saffron occasionally in the water. These birds are all fond of fruit, as cherries, &c. which may be given, if not to excess.

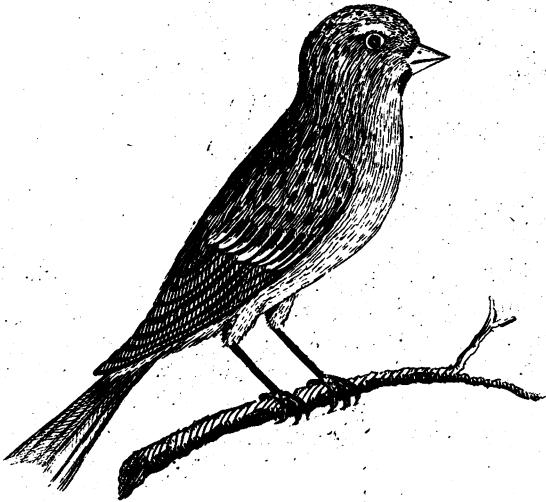
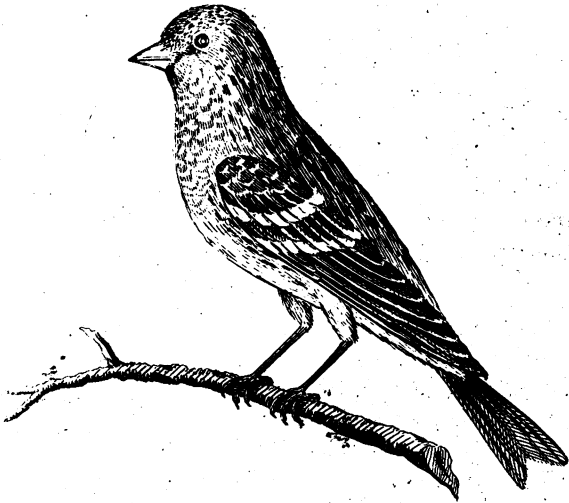
The toes of these birds answer the purpose of hands; for they generally convey their food to their mouths by this means, supporting themselves in the mean time on one leg. Their legs are very short, not being formed for hopping from place to place like many other birds; they therefore apply their toes and beak to climb to such places as their fancy or necessity may lead them, forming their nests at the utmost extremity of the boughs, so as to prevent any intrusion from the monkeys, who are mischievous enough to climb the trees after them.

The parrot jabbars a good deal, and may be taught, if taken in time, to imitate to a nicety the human voice, so as often to deceive strangers by their loquacious and incessant mocking.

There are a vast number of anecdotes recorded of this bird; the following is mentioned in Goldsmith's Natural History:—

“ A person who had been greatly injured by the malevolence of an informer, who lived opposite him, taught the parrot to repeat the ninth Commandment; this the bird often repeated, to the great mortification of the informer, and to the no small entertainment of the neighbours, who were acquainted with his ungenerous conduct.”





Redpole Cuckoo & Hen.

THE REDPOLE.

THIS little bird, which by some is called the French linnnet, is easily known by his red head and breast; but his little chattering song has no great deal of melody to recommend him to the notice of bird-fanciers, who generally pronounce him scarce worth the trouble of keeping. The food that is recommended for linnets or chaffinches suits the redpole, and he is a hardy bird, so that there is no danger of losing him through the want of delicate treatment. The redpole is one of those birds that migrate from the north at the approach of our winter, and return to it in the spring, that season being in our climate too warm for them. In the north of Scotland they are very common, as well as in Germany, France, and other parts of the Continent; but as they possess merely a chattering note, they can hardly be classed among the birds of song.

JAVA SPARROWS.

These birds are brought from the island of Java, in the East Indies, and may often be seen in this metropolis; they are a pretty bird enough, and resemble in size and make the bullfinch. They are of a black, grey, and pink colour, but not of any musical powers; they are kept merely to look at, not having any more claim to musical strains than our own country house or hedge sparrow. They should be kept on canary and flax-seed; a small

quantity of rape and hemp may be given occasionally ; if too much hemp-seed is given, particularly at the time of their moult, it tends materially to destroy the richness of their plumage, thereby taking away the whole of their beauty.

When in moult keep them warm, and administer such things as are laid down in the directions to be observed when moulting off canaries. There is no perceptible difference, unless in shape and size between the cock and hen ; one is just as useful as the other ; in fact, they are in general kept in pairs, for whether cocks or hens it seems to matter not, as no harmony will proceed from their mouths.

HAVING in my opinion stated the whole species of song birds found or known in this country, with the best plan of management when in health, I shall now draw my readers' attention to those things best calculated to keep them in health, and also, in case of need, to cure them when in sickness. Before I enter into remedies, I shall give my readers a recipe for making a composition, which is nourishing for all birds, more particularly for that class distinguished by being called soft meat birds. The whole of these will live on the following paste, if mixed with about one-third of crumbled bun, sponge cake, or, in fact, any soft and good bread. Occasionally cheer up their spirits with a few of their natural insects, &c. &c.

GERMAN PASTE.

Take ~~one~~ pint of pea flour, in which rub up a new laid egg; then add two ounces of fresh lard, and three ounces of honey or treacle; continue to rub this well, so as to prevent its being in too large lumps; when got to a fine powder, put it into a clean earthen pipkin, and place it over a slow and clear fire until warm through, stirring it all the while to prevent its burning; when sufficiently hot, take it off and pass it through a fine wire sieve; then add about two ounces of maw-seed, and if hemp-seed is thought essential, give the small Russia whole, in preference to bruised, as it only tends to bring on the husk or dry cough. They will ~~not~~ eat it whole, and it will do them

equal good, and prevent nasty and troublesome complaints, which oftentimes stop the birds, when in full song, to bring up the small particles of the hulls.

MOULTING.

This sickness is what all the feathered tribe is liable to, during which time (about three months,) they undergo much pain; they require, therefore, care and nourishing food, as well as being kept warm and out of any draft of wind. Cold brings on swelling and inflammation in their little bowels, and frequently will, if not taken in time, cause death. During the first season they only cast their down feathers, but every other year they throw off the whole of their plumage; at least this must be done by Nature or force, or they will be certain to die ere long. When you find them begin to moult, which may be known when their feathers are seen at the bottom of their cages, immediately put them in some warm place; if their cages were to be covered over with cloth or paper, they would moult off much faster; there is no occasion to clean out their cages during this sickness, as it tends from the warmth to force off their feathers much quicker, than when cleaned out or exposed to the open air. When clean moulted, take off the covering by degrees; clean and feed them as usual: give them when in moult, in addition to their common food, chopped egg and bun, a little maw-seed, a few flakes of hay-saffron in their water, changing it every other day for clean water, or toast and water,

At other times put a few grains of cochineal in their water, or else a rusty nail; continue to vary these things; as birds, like human beings, are fond of change of diet during sickness. If this plan is followed, the breeder will find its beneficial results, and the life of many a valuable bird will be saved.

SWELLING, OR INFLAMMATION,

Most frequently proceeds from a sudden change of weather, or from the birds being kept in a room which has during the day a fire, and at nights, when the birds are asleep, not exercising themselves, where there is no warmth; or sometimes from feeding them on unripe herbage too early in the Spring, or too late in the Autumn, when the great luminary has not sufficient power by its warmth to extract their cold juices. In very hot weather, a little ripe groundsel or seeded chickweed may be given occasionally. When birds appear dull and heavy, with their heads under their wings, appearing all of a heap, take them out, and see if their bellies are inflamed or swollen; if so, give whole grits amongst their seed, boiled bread and milk, with a little moist sugar, in their tin pans; next day scald a little rape-seed and bread in a bit of cloth, squeeze out the water in their glasses, and let them drink it; bruise the seed to a complete pulp, then add a little yolk of hard-boiled egg; the next day give them bread and milk and clean water, with a few flakes of hay-saffron; so continue this regimen, keeping them quite warm, until cured. If, however, you find them, in about a week or ten days, getting no better, and

the swelling or inflammation not abated, still continue the opening physic, and give them three warm milk baths, one every other day; keep them covered, except their heads, for three or four minutes; do not scald them, nor increase the disorder by cold; then take them out, and rub them quite dry with a soft piece of muslin, before a slow and clear fire;—when got thoroughly dry, turn them into the cage, which should be covered with a warm cloth; repeat the bath if necessary, and continue the opening medicine until the inflammation and swelling is completely gone down. A little nourishing food, and a few grains of bruised hemp-seed, must be given now and then to keep up their strength.

I have known a very small quantity of magnesia be of service; take just as much as may be taken up on a sixpence, dissolved in a wine glass of spring water, and give it to them over-night; so that they may drink two or three times the first thing in the morning; take it away at breakfast time, and in lieu of it, give toast and water; so change for two or three mornings, and give at the same time scalded rape-seed, &c.

THE SURFETT.

THIS disorder proceeds from a sudden change of diet; either from poor to a luxurious and richer kind of food, or from being fed on unwholesome food, such as bad seed, unripe green victuals, &c. This distemper spreads itself in small scabs, particularly about their heads; the humour

issuing from them is so sharp as to eat off the feathers from the whole of their heads, leaving it quite naked. When this disorder is first perceived, wash the bird's head in a strong solution of common salt and spring water, and rub it quite dry with a piece of soft muslin; then rub on a little capon or other fowl's grease with your finger; repeat the solution and ointment every morning for a week or so; this will kill the disorder, and most probably bring on the feathers; it will kill the disorder at all events, and as for the feathers, whether they come on immediately or not until their next moult, it is only a secondary consideration;—it will be of no injury to the bird, although of unpleasant appearance.

During this disorder, they require cooling diet; give them therefore grits, bread and milk, and milk boiled; when cold, take off the cream, *if you find any*, and give them the skimmed milk only. Care must be observed not to let it stand above five or six hours, as it is apt in hot weather to turn sour, and kill the birds instead of curing them. Give also carrot seeds, lettuce seeds, a little small leaved and seeded chickweed occasionally, or stick liquorice in thin slices in their water.

THE PIP.

ALL birds have a small projection on their rumps, from which they extract, with their bills, a kind of oily substance to keep their feathers smooth and sleek. Many a person, on seeing this natural prominency, thinks imme-

diately the bird has got the pip; with a pin they hastily make an incision, and force out that which is of service to them; and through this error many a poor bird is killed. This disorder does sometimes make its appearance, and may be known when a bladder of matter is formed round this projection, very much inflamed, and extending with humour some considerable space round their natural projection. When this is found to be the case, pass a needle through the surface of the skin, and with the same instrument gently press out the whole of the corruption; then drop one drop of oil of sweet almonds, or sallad oil, on the place, and it will not require, at that time, any further surgical operation; in all probability this will make a complete cure, without applying any thing else.

THE HUSK.

THIS disease is similar in birds to a dry cough in the human body; it oftentimes arises from wet and cold, proceeding from neglect and carelessness. Persons are too much in the habit of placing their birds out of doors when the sun shines, although there is no certainty of its remaining so for any length of time. In this variable clime we have often sudden and unexpected changes of weather; the poor birds, particularly canaries, whose cages but seldom afford any covering to shelter them from such sudden storms of wind and rain, are obliged to weather it out; and these birds are not at all calculated for being kept out of doors.

This disorder frequently happens to sky-larks, from cold, or from eating the husk of hemp-seed, which frequently sticks in their throat, and brings on inflammation. This seed should not be bruised, as they will eat it quite as well whole. When troubled with this complaint, give them as follows:—

Take a bit of the yolk of hard boiled egg, about the size of a small marble, on which drop two or three drops of clean cold water; this will immediately reduce it to a fine powder, to which add a little loaf sugar grated fine, and sponge biscuit; make it into a powder, not too moist, with a few drops of *oil of sweet almonds*. Give them some of this every morning in their tin pans; take also a small quantity of linseed and stick liquorice, boiled up for some time, and give them this liquor to drink; be careful, however, it is not too glutinous to prevent their doing so: let them have this for two days; when substitute clean water, in which a bit of sugar candy has been dissolved. A head or two of water-cresses in hot weather is good for them. They should be kept out of any draught of wind.

EGG-BOUND.

This complaint proceeds from cold, and is brought too frequently from over anxiety by breeders in general, who turn their birds up to breed before the weather is sufficiently warm. Not having the same scope for exercise as when in a state of freedom, brings on this distressing

malady, which is very dangerous : the poor hens get over this complaint but slowly, if at all ; it frequently prevents their services for the whole season, and often kills them just at the juncture of time when one is looking forward for an increase to his stock of feathered songsters. Do not endeavour to out-do your neighbours by striving to produce birds out of season, as you will only flatter yourself with false notions.

Most birds when breeding their eggs will appear dull and heavy, particularly as the time draws near of their laying, which they generally do, if in health, a day or two after they have finished their nest. You may know when the time of laying approaches, as the hen sleeps over-night in her nest : look in the morning for an egg ; if you do not find one, and she appears much swollen and heavy with egg, take her out gently, and drop a single drop of oil of sweet almonds, from the point of a feather, into her mouth and vent, giving whole grits and bread and milk boiled in their tin pans. If you find she does not lay her egg the next morning, substitute castor oil, of which drop one drop into her mouth ; oil of sweet almonds, or sallad oil, repeated at the vent. Some foolish persons will introduce the head of a pin to break it, thinking it might be brought away easier : this is a mistaken idea—it can be brought away safer whole than if broken. If castor oil does not do, little or no hopes remain. I have known some who will drop a single drop of mustard on their vents : this is cruel, as it gives much excruciating pain ; but it will sometimes force them to bring it away.

PERSPIRATION.

THIS complaint proceeds either from over-anxiety or too much care, sitting on her young until the heat produces this effect, or from natural weakness. When you notice the hens sit too much on their young, not allowing sufficient air, neither feeding themselves, nor suffering the cock to foster its young, you may naturally conclude it proceeds from over fondness; and it frequently happens to young hens when they have hatched their first nest of young. Take away the cock for a few days, hanging him by the side of the breeding-cage, and supply her with plenty of ripe green victuals; this will tempt her off her young to feed herself, and when she returns to her nest, the young will gape for food, and induce her to feed them. Keep plenty of fresh groundsel and chickweed in a pan of water inside the cage, so as to keep it fresh; give also a saucer of cold spring water for them to wash in. When you find she feeds her offspring, the cock may in a day or two be returned to assist in rearing them. If it should proceed from weakness, wash the hen with a solution of common salt and water, rubbing her dry as soon as possible before the fire; then turn her into her young. Do not adopt this plan unless the other fails of having the desired effect, for fear of her forsaking her little charge. In case it is found necessary to adopt this process, and she should forsake them, bring them up by hand. Feed as before stated, page 29.

VERMIN.

ALL birds and their cages are more or less infested with these small insects, which cannot well be seen by the naked eye, but will be found, on looking at them through a magnifying glass, to resemble the house bug; they nestle and breed in the joints of the cages, or such crevices as will afford them shelter from observation.— Wherever a sort of mouldy appearance is seen round the opening of the cage door, or in the joints and corner, there they will be found in swarms. In the breeding season they become troublesome, frequenting the nest boxes and nests, oftentimes committing much damage both to the old as well as young birds. Keep their cages clean, which should be washed in water and black or barrel soap, their nest boxes also; then wet them on the corners and joints with the following lotion:—

Take equal quantities of spirits of wine and spirits of turpentine, in which dissolve camphor and soda, of each about the size of a horse-bean, keeping it close stopped; when wanted for use, shake it well, and with a clean painter's brush wet the nest box and cages. Do not turn the birds into such cages for a day or so; not that it will injure, but perhaps the smell will be too powerful for them if turned in immediately.

If the birds are much infested with these insects, particularly under their wings, sprinkle a pinch of Scotch snuff on them; the same may be done into the nest just before the hens have finished building. If the snuff is not found

sufficiently efficacious to destroy them, make a solution of precipitate powder; as much as will be bought for a penny will make three washings: put it in a wine glass of water, and wash the bird over with this solution; after which wash her well over with warm water and white soap; be careful none of the solution gets into its *mouth* or *eyes*, for it may prove dangerous.

I recollect seeing a magpie in the fields, who appeared in great pain, continually picking himself, and hopping with difficulty. I had not much trouble in catching it; it did not appear wounded in the body, neither were its wings or legs broken. I could not account for the reason of such tameness; but on examining it, I found it a mere bunch of bones, and observed many insects running over my hands, which the warmth had drawn from the body of the poor thing. On looking more attentively, I found swarms of living insects; for the moment I threw it down, not thinking what would assist the poor bird so as to get rid of such troublesome creatures: I still found the bird incapable from weakness of proceeding out of my reach; therefore, on reflection, I took it home, and washed it with the before-mentioned solution, which proved beneficial, by completely eradicating the whole brood; the bird soon got well, and was enabled to take its flight with ease and freedom.

THE END.

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