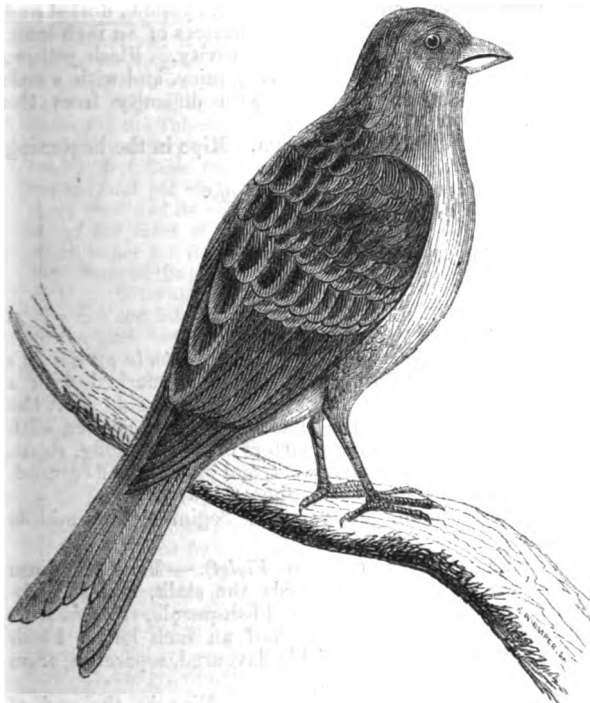


evergreen trees, and by their suitability to the soil and climate, these two Cupresses stand unrivalled.—D. PRESSLY.—(*Dublin Agric. Review.*)

THE CANARY AND THE BRITISH FINCHES.

(Continued from page 26.)

THE WILD CANARY OF MADEIRA (*Fringilla butyracea*).



I HAVE not yet met with a good description of the Wild Canary (*Fringilla Canaria*), of the Canary Islands; but some naturalists regard the *Fringilla butyracea* of Madeira, and *Fringilla Canaria* of the Canary Islands, as identical, or, at least, very similar, possibly a description of the Madeira variety may suffice.

C. Darwin, Esq., has kindly forwarded me the skin of a Wild Canary, brought direct from Madeira. This measures—length of the beak four lines; breadth at base, two lines; and depth of base, three lines. The shank of the leg is eight lines in height; the middle toe measures six lines, and the hind toe four lines in length. The colour of the plumage is what Canary fanciers term grey. The quill-feathers of wings and tail are blackish edged with grey; the top of the head and upper parts of the body are dark grey, with longitudinal black marks between the shoulders; the throat and breast are yellowish-grey tinged with green; the belly white, with a few longitudinal dark spots above the thighs.

From a few I saw in one of the aviaries at the Crystal Palace (1859), they appeared short and rounded in form, much resembling the Norwich birds in shape.

The following description is from Dr. Heineken, "Zoological Journal," vol. v., p. 70. He considers *Fringilla Canaria* and *Fringilla butyracea* as synonymes, and he here gives an elaborate description of the bird as it appears in Madeira. Of its habits, Dr. Heineken says, "that it builds in thick, bushy, high shrubs and trees, with roots, moss, feathers, hair, &c.; that it pairs in February, lays from four to six eggs of a pale-blue colour, and hatches five times (not unfrequently six), in a season. He observes that it is very familiar, haunting and breeding in gardens about the city. It is a delightful songster, says the Doctor, with, beyond doubt, much of the Nightingale's and Skylark's, but none of the Woodlark's song, although three or four Skylarks in confinement, in Funchal, are the only examples

of any of these three birds in the island; and notwithstanding the general opinion that such notes are the result of education in the Canary, it is in full song about nine months in the year. I have heard one sing on the wing, and passing from one tree to another at some distance, and am told that during the pairing season this is common. Each flock has its own song, and, from individuals in the same garden differing considerably, I suspect that each nest varies more or less. After the breeding season, they flock together with Linnets, Goldfinches, &c., and are then seldom seen in gardens. The moult takes place in August and September. An old bird caught and put in a cage will sometimes sing immediately; but it seldom lives longer than the second year, in confinement. The young from the nest are difficult to rear, dying generally at the first moult. They cross readily with the domesticated variety, and the progeny are larger, stronger, better breeders, and, to my taste, also better songsters than the latter; but a pure wild song from an island Canary, at liberty in full throat, and in a part of the country so distant from the haunts of men, that it is quite unsophisticated, is unequalled in its kind by anything I have ever heard in the way of bird music."—B. P. BRENT.

PRUNING BACK CALCEOLARIAS.

DIANTHUS HEDDEWIGII IN SUCCESSION—TOM THUMB GERANIUM CUTTINGS.

Will *Calceolaria Prince of Orange* bear pinching back till the end of July? I want it to succeed a bed that will not be out of bloom till that time.

Will the spring-sown *Dianthus Heddewigii* (up March 16), do to succeed autumn-sown plants?

I see in a back volume that spring cuttings of *Tom Thumb* Geranium go too much to leaf. Would it, therefore, be best to plant them out in pots? and *Crystal Palace Trentham* the same?

Which is best, Gishurst Compound or Parmenter's?—Q. Q.

[You may keep this and all the bedding *Calceolarias* from blooming till late in the summer, by merely cutting off the flower-stalks as fast as they rise, not by stopping the shoots; but if you keep them in the pots in the meantime, you will get very little good out of them. The plants should be planted at good distances apart early in May, and transplanted with very large balls when the beds are ready for them.]

The spring-sown *Dianthus Heddewigii* should be treated generously from pot to pot, and then they will succeed those sown in the autumn certainly; but, to do them justice, they ought to be planted out in May, as early as each of them fills a No. 60-pot with its roots. Then they should stand from a foot to fifteen inches apart to get them into a most gorgeous mass, and the soil should be good enough for Broccoli, but not too strong.

The specimen of *Campanula carpatica* was lost. If it did produce seeds it would be one of the "mad tricks" to sow them. The plants increase at the roots from sixty to six hundredfold faster than you can find room for them. Also, from cuttings like the blue *Lobelias*, when you have only one plant.

You surely never saw from any of our own staff of writers, that spring cuttings of *Tom Thumb* Geraniums went too much to leaf, nor spring or autumn cuttings of the *Crystal Palace Scarlet* either. The latter we have grown seventeen years, and can vouch for it to do better than any other scarlet, from cuttings made anytime the year round.

As to those "compounds," there has not been sufficient time yet to test their comparative merits.]

A HELP TO KEEP WALKS IN GOOD TRIM.

It has been asserted, and, I believe, generally admitted, that well-kept walks are a great "setting off," both to large and small gardens, and, undoubtedly, the assertion is true. For what is more unsightly than a walk, or terrace, with a "little path" as it were down its centre, and, perhaps, weeds or moss continually springing up on its sides, the labour of which, where many have to be attended to, is somewhat considerable?

In walking through a garden (of no small importance in most matters), some weeks back, I could not help noticing some of those "little paths," and which looked (in my mind's eye), little better than "hare's-runs" or "sleep-walks." Now, to an admirer of a well-kept walk, a sight like the above is something odious. In these gardens (Thornham), we make it a rule that no working