THE SONG BIRDS COMING.

They Carol The Triumph of Warmth Over Cold.

And When One Strolls in the Woods or Parks to Hear the First Trills and Whistling, the Fragrance of the Earth Enters One's Nostrils, and Life Seems Worth Living.

Everyone has read that dainty poem which describes the plight of the village forsaken by the birds and how the schoolmaster won the maiden by his eloquent defence of his feathered favorites. Perhaps one of the most welcome signs of spring better than the triumph of warmth over cold, of vivid green over cheerless white is the arrival of the feathered orchestra who make the mornings and the twilight merry with their music. If spring holds to its promise of an early coming the birds will be with us soon again. The person who would hear the birds to the best advantage and would delight his eyes with their brilliant plumage and quick motions must go forth in the spring to the woods where they will find some of the songsters already exercising their larynxes in timid trills and roulades. Of course, there are birds that stay the year around. There are the snow birds that chirp disconsolately in sombre garments over the grave of nature. The house or English sparrow, like the poor, is always with us. You will see him in the roadways picking out his precarious living, and strange to say, the hardy little brigand has been not at all inconvenienced by this long and vigorous winter.

But he is not a songster. He says nothing, but saws wood.

THE SONG SPARROW.

The song sparrow is not a migratory bird. During the winter he remains concealed in the long grass of the marshes and meditates upon the operatic score for the coming season. When spring comes he practises, timidly at first, but afterwards with the confidence of his art, the song he has evolved. He it is who welcomes all the other birds, extending to them a friendly chirp of greeting, a musical ode as it were upon their debut. The tree sparrow, too, is new, and gives his brother's song with variations of his own. In this he is not unlike his human brethren, who have been accused of pirating melodies from others' operas.

Also now may we see the bluebird, a brilliant bit of color in the vernal landscape. The lay of the song sparrow is Wagnerian, heavy, brooding, sombre and somewhat pessimistic. But the bluebird is one of the Italian school, something in the Donizetti style, jovial and optimistic. He has more to tell about than the song sparrow and says it better.

The Phœbe fly-catcher has a very flashy spring suit and is popular with the ladies on that account. But he is content to pose and does nothing more than give a quiet "gluck" of satisfaction as he gobbles an early worm or an untimely fly.

The purple finch is occasionally seen all through the winter, although he is something of a southern tourist during cold weather. In any case, he comes back as early as February and chimes in with his fine tenor voice to help out the spring overture. He is a very handsome bird and does not depend on his voice alone to attract his lady love.

But Robin Redbreast, with the pretty legend of his crimson bosom, is before all these. He has a liking for the Canadian climate and leaves his southern hotel early in the year.

Robin Redbreast has no song at first. He contents himself with hopping about to see that everything is getting on well. He casts a critical eye on the buds and looks approvingly at the new grass. With his head on one side he watches the children playing on the walks. And so he occupies himself until he falls in love. And then he sings endless sonnets to his inamorata. He gazes sympathetically at the first lovers strolling about, and mounting the highest tree, pours forth the full flood of his eloquent wooing, the dearest and most harmonious that ever came from a tuneful throat.

THE WREN TRIBE.

In April come the wren tribe who execute duos, trios, quartets and operatic choruses with Robin Redbreast. At the end of April that primo tenoro assoluto of the volent orchestra comes before the footlights and wakes the echoes with his enchanting melody. The rosebreasted grossbeak keeps him company but needs the thrill of a grande passion to call forth the liquid gurgles of his lay.

During April the tribe of shore birds, none of whom are songsters, come as coryphees for the grand ballet that takes place every morning in the tree tops. They do not come in flocks at first. Each kind sends a few in advance, a few braver souls who press close upon the retreat of winter. The linnets are usually among the first to mingle their songs with that of Robin Redbreast. Before the month is far advanced, however, the grass finches, the plovers, the chewinks or ground robins, and that songless bird with the bass drum arrive and go into training for the season's engagements. A great number of singing birds of the sparrow warbler and swallow tribes arrive late in the month, and do not even need to wet their whistle before they tune their pipes. At the beginning of May migration is at its height.

The chimney swifts and swallows do not pack their valises until late in May. They arrive in time to celebrate the Queen's birthday, a display of loyalty on their part that shows that they have no annexation sentiment. They do not belong to the singing contingent; their short, "peep, peep," resembling rather a pizzicati movement, or a stringendo accompaniment by a highly-strung violin.

THE CATBIRD.

The catbird sings only when the mood is on but makes up for his silence when he lets himself loose. Mid-May finds the golden robins or orioles with their orange and black plumage building their curious nests in the tops of trees.

Other birds there are, both regular and occasional visitors, but those above mentioned include almost all that the average bird lover who is not a student of birds will be likely to see and recognize. In the last days of May the orchestra will be full and may be heard morning and evening, the morning performance being far the better. There will be solos and duos and quartets at all times of the day, and the warblers will play the accompaniments. But at the two performances every throat will be tuned and will send forth its full complement of melody. It is these bird songs that give real and adequate expression to the joy of awakening nature.

Ourselves and Our Neighbors.

President Harrison retired from the White House with an extraordinary reputation so far as his dealings with foreign powers were concerned. With the South American republics and with Italy he earned for his nation the character of a bully, while in Canada we all came to regard him as a man of miserably petty ideas whose bete noir was this unfortunate country. We arrived at that conclusion not hastily, but as a results of acts in which he was the prime mover infinitely small and unworthy the attitude of a great nation towards a smaller one. Among the most despicable of these was the instructions given to men along the frontier not to allow a Canadian who did not permanently reside, and have all his belongings there, to work in the United States. This naturally led to much hardship and much petty persecution among poor people. Even if a man announced his decision to take up residence there with his wife and family inside a week he was hunted forth. And now it has been decided that all this conduct was not only wrong but, under the laws of the United States, actually illegal. It has been proven that the Alien labor law only governs cases where labor is contracted for abroad and not cases where a man crosses the border and is subsequently engaged to work. Our government was astonishingly lax in not testing the matter before, but now that it has been shown that the action taken was illegal and improper, reparation should be demanded for the unfortunate men and their families who have been deprived of their means of subsistence or suffered other injury.

But the foregoing is not all that the revelations of the past week have brought to light. No sooner had the Behring Sea commissioners settled down to work than it was shown that Secretary Blaine and President Harrison had bolstered up their case by means of false translations of Russian documents which fell into their hands at the time the United States acquired Alaska. And unblushingly, Mr. Foster, the representative of our neighbors, acknowledged that he knew the translations were false. He, however, declared that the documents had been withdrawn and the arguments based thereupon cancelled. The latter part of this statement is denied by the British press, which unanimously denounces the contemptible trick as a dirty and silly piece of business. It was by the United States resorting to similar tactics that Canada lost what is now the greater portion of the State of Maine. In the negotiations which ended in the Ashburton treaty the Americans presented a false map of that territory. In that case their trickery succeeded, but in the negotiations now going on in Paris the probabilities are that they will fail miserably in establishing the greedy position they took at the beginning. Again it will be the duty of the Ottawa government to claim reparation. Not only have Canadian vessels following a legitimate pursuit been seized, but men have been deprived of their living, their property plundered and their business ruined. With a Gladstone government in power in England we have grave doubts whether any demand for compensation will be made, but the least the Dominion Ministry can do is to urge it.

New Regulations for Selling Bait.

American, French, and Canadian fishermen are all concerned in the change of policy which Newfoundland has just announced in her regulations for selling bait. The main result of this change is to allow the purchase of bait, on certain terms, by the Canadian and even by the French fishermen, who have heretofore practically been shut out all together, and to take away the free privilege granted hitherto to the New Englanders, subjecting them henceforth to the fee charged to all comers. The Newfoundland bait laws, which have cut so much of a figure in international diplomacy during the last few years, were originally designed to discriminate against the French of St. Pierre and Miquelon. They received from France so high a bounty that they could undersell the Newfoundlanders everywhere, and notably in the markets of Southern Europe, from which they almost drove the islanders out. Newfoundland protested, but the imperial Government could not, of course, compel France to renounce her bounty system. France not only clung with a natural pride to this industry of the little foothold that remained of what was once a great empire in America, but, under her system of treating the fisherman as part of her reserve navy, regarded subsides for them as wise and merited. In this dilemma Newfoundland had recourse to restrictive bait laws, which were so framed as to exclude the French fleet from the privileges of purchase. But the laws required imperial sanction, and, in seeking it, not only were based on the alleged need of regulating the supply of bait to avoid its destruction, but also were made applicable to all foreign vessels, in certain particulars. Thus Canadian and American vessels could only purchase bait by paying a license fee. Then followed the famous effort of Newfoundland to arrange her own independent reciprocity treaty with us, under the Bond-Blaine protocol. The Dominion, it will be remembered, successfully protested to the imperial Government, which ordered these negotiations to cease. The authorities at St. Johns thoroughly angry at this interference, took their revenge by cutting off the Canadian fishermen from all bait-buying privileges whatever, and, by way of emphasis, permitted Yankee vessels to buy bait without license fee, just as they would have done had the Bond-Blaine agreement been carried out. The Dominion retaliated by reviving lapsed customs duties against Newfoundland products, and the very heat of the quarrel between the neighbours caused it to burn out sooner, and led last year to a mutual repeal of hostile regulations. At the same time, some of our fishermen were charged with abusing the special courtesy that had been given them, and also with violating their oaths by reselling to the French at St. Pierre, at advanced prices, the bait they bought in Newfoundland ports. So it turns out that the fishermen of the Dominion, of New England, and of France start once more on an even footing, with a uniform license fee per ton for the season.

Stagnant water becomes putrid. Summer heat breeds noxious insects. He who is without trouble is often without God.

ASSAILED BY WOLVES.

Adventure of Three Brothers.

An Exciting Encounter in the Woods—A Narrow Escape From a Horrible Death.

Colonel Parker Gilmore writing in the London *Graphic* says: Nothing that I have seen in America pleased me more than a lumberman's camp in the pine-forests. Everything about it seemed so deliciously pure and wholesome; even the air you drank in with as much benefit as you would an invigorating draught. The men employed in this business are splendid types of manhood—tall, well-built, and athletic, worthy descendants of the "Old Country, stock that first settled in the unbroken wilderness. What between the incursions of wild animals, and Indians more savage than the beasts, into the primitive and sequestered homesteads of the emigrants, it is a wonder indeed that the Anglo-Saxon settlers were not utterly annihilated. "Sheer grit," indomitable courage, and perseverance alone prevented this catastrophe—the result being that where the red man shouted his war-whoop or yelled in fierce joy over his bloody scalp-lock, now re-echoes with the hum of commerce, the blow of the ship-builder's hammer, or the musical

CLICK OF THE WOODMAN'S AXE.

To know what can be done with an axe with what skill and exactness it can be handled, you should see a lumberman fell one of the giants of the forest, cut it into cordwood lengths, then split and resplit it to the requisite size. No blow is wasted, each stroke hits the exact place it is intended for; so when the tree falls, the observer, on examining it, might well imagine that it had been cut down by the employment of the most perfect machinery. Not many years ago the centre of the lumber region every winter saw large camps established. Among the employes at one station were three brothers, as fine specimens of humanity as could be seen in a day's march. Soon after the snows fell they had a grievance, some difference of opinion, with the boss, or headman; so they resolved to leave and make their way to the nearest settlement, a distance of about three days' journey. The snow was not yet in good order for travelling, being exceedingly loose and powdery, the result of

THE LOWNESS OF THE THERMOMETER,

no thaw having occurred since it fell. However, our adventurers were lusty of body and stout of heart; so sunrise one brilliant morning saw them start, carrying but a light "pack" and only armed with their axes. As they slowly progressed through the pathless forest they became aware that it was becoming sensibly colder; but this was not a matter of great import to them, for there were sheltered nooks to be found, and fuel in abundance existed on every side. The pine-forests at this season of the year are very silent, for nearly all the birds have emigrated to warmer climates, even the wild quadrupeds seem to be affected by this silence, and with the exception of the bay-lynx and timber-wolf, all have lost their voices. On the third day, as the woodmen were passing along the margin of a cedar-swamp, they became conscious of the vicinity of the wolves, by hearing an occasional yelp. The animals are so little dreaded by mature human beings in this country that the travellers scarcely

PAID ATTENTION TO THE CIRCUMSTANCE,

but when they had gained a well-timbered ridge a cry was heard in the distance, as if a pack of fox-hounds were in full chase of game. The lumbermen at once concluded that the pursuit was after a moose or cariboo, and, with natural curiosity, halted with the hope of witnessing a part of the hunt. This they did sooner than expected, and in a more disagreeable way than anticipated, for, coming up the slope which they had already traversed, were distinctly to be seen several large wolves, followed by a numerous retinue, and without a doubt they were running upon the men's trail. No time was to be lost; immediate action had at once to be taken; so the three brothers placed their backs to a giant pine-tree, and, with their trusty axes, resolved to sell their lives as dearly as possible. The first onset was led by four most powerful beasts. Two of the lumbermen, with adroit skill, disposed of their respective foes; not so with the third man. His leading assailant fell, but, before he could raise his axe he was

PULLED DOWN BY THE OTHER BRUTE,

and but for his prompt presence of mind he must have been severely torn, if not killed. Finding that his axe could not be further used, the brave fellow dropped it, threw himself on his knees, and buried his sheath-knife in the ribs of his assailant. This thrust was so immediately successful in its results that in a moment after he had recovered his former weapon and his position against the tree. In the meantime his brothers had been busy; their coolness and dexterity had done fearful execution, well attested by the dead and maimed brutes that surrounded them. The lesson that had been taught the leaders began to tell upon their followers, for they now hesitated to charge home, but retained a respectful distance, which was soon followed by all retiring into their forest retreats, doubtlessly conscious that lumbermen could not be molested with impunity. The truth of this story cannot be doubted, for next spring the heads of the slain were presented to the proper authorities, to enable the brothers to claim the royalty upon wolves' skulls.

"By Women for Women."

In an article entitled "By Women for Women," in the North American Review for April, Lilian A. Mercur says:—"Is it not 'borne in upon' the sensible women of to-day that there is an alarming amount of trash being written by women for women? The chief offender is the daily press. Magazines sift more carefully, and we all know the moral tone of most of the successful women's publications to be above criticism. But it is the 'Society Column' of the Sunday and week day newspaper which we arraign—the columns headed 'Fair Women's World,' 'Follies of the Fair,' 'Feminine Foibles,' and the like—pardon a strong quotation from Shakespeare—'damnable iteration.' Well for the men that such columns are so labelled, otherwise they might read themselves into attacks of nausea. But what of the women for whom such columns are so labelled? The press declares that it 'caters to popular taste.' In the name of all robust and normal womanhood, where the mental and physical inanities do who crave such pabulum? From a pile of respectable city journals, gathered absolutely at random, I have compiled a few choice illustrations. The writers cover a large range of subjects with great impartiality. They write of actresses, clothes, Russian tea, complexions, corsets, and sleeves with a versatility that suggests the combination of 'scissors and hope, smiles and soap' in the 'Hunting of the Snark'! One article unfolds a plan whereby two sisters may become—useful and happy? Oh, no, 'decorative' and 'effective.' In condensing the scheme I will omit quotation marks, but retain as far as possible the phraseology, as being likewise both 'decorative' and 'effective.' Girls who go in for this sort of thing can set each other off by wearing gowns that suit each other, and posing about harmoniously, making pictures of themselves. They should, of course, provide themselves with good contrasting complexions. One might be, for instance, a vivid blonde and the other a dull-ashen blonde. As a basis of operations a corner is very appropriately suggested where they may best weave the web of their fascinations. The writer assures us it works beautifully for both; the pretty one, who hasn't very much brains, attracts the admirers to the corner, and once they are there the plain but brilliant foil does the entertaining. While it hardly seems worth while to adopt a superior moral attitude towards such an effusion as this, we cannot refrain from charging the writer with a daring plagiarism on the good old nursery fable of the Spider and the Fly. Another of these authorities tells us that Empire frocks, being worn without stays, have a distinctly demoralizing tendency, for a woman without corsets 'loses all moral backbone and wants to loaf on divans, read novels, and drink tea or smoke cigarettes.' Still another of these babblers—who seem to be the lineal descendants of Tennyson's 'Brook'—gives hints for the furnishing of a boudoir. Statistics are not at hand for the number of women in the United States outside of novels who own boudoirs. The boudoir is first defined: It is the room where a woman 'thinks, dreams, dresses, talks and reads. The bed must be a 'dainty dream,' the pillows 'snowy invitations.' A silver rack must hold the ivory-backed brushes of the 'spotless washing-stand,' the toilet-table must have its 'pretty profusion of oxidized silver, cut glass and flowers,' but, 'of course, the principal thing is the looking-glass.' The writing-table must 'lock into privacy the love secrets of its owner,' and contain two or three sorts of letter-paper 'for friends, for business, for lovers, and so on.' Is any comment necessary, or possible? I am uncovering no new atrocity. Every one knows the brand, and these are no worse than dozens of other contributions from dozens of other industrious scribblers for the society column."

LITTLE DWARF GIRLS.

Two Pigmies from the Central African Forest Taken to Europe.

Two interesting young people from Central Africa have just been brought to Europe. They are pigmy girls from the forests through which Stanley's expedition wandered. They are Akka dwarfs, and a description of them printed in England says that they are the first specimens of their race brought to Europe. This is a mistake for several Akka dwarfs have been taken to Italy, but none of them thrived there.

Dr. Stuhlmann and his companions, while members of Dr. Emin's expedition, rescued these two young girls from the hands of their Arab captors. They are supposed to be between 17 and 20 years old, are well proportioned, and about as tall as boys of 8 years. They bore the sea voyage from Zanzibar to Italy well. Neither was afflicted with seasickness, and they became very fond of the ship and the sea, of which they had never heard before. They were sent to Europe in charge of a young Swahili, a coast native from the neighborhood of Zanzibar, who had been Dr. Stuhlmann's man servant for five years. They learned to speak the Swahili tongue and thus were able to communicate through the interpreter with the whites they met upon landing in Italy. They are on the way to Germany, where they will be taken before all scientific societies interested in anthropological research. The intention is to take them back to Africa in a few months, as they might not endure the winter of Europe.

The young women have small heads, promising foreheads, with lustrous black eyes, a copper-colored complexion (few of the pigmies of Africa are black), hair which grows in separate tight twisted curls, flat noses, and protruding red lips. Their eyes are very wide open, their hands and feet are small, and the forearm and wrist are perfectly shaped. The spine curves strongly inward, making the back hollow and the stomach protrudes proportionately, which is a characteristic of their race. In behavior they are described as infantile, wild and shy. One of them is rather cross in disposition, while the other is of a sunny temperament and was much pleased with the bead bracelets and other trinkets that were given to her. While in Naples they were taken to the house of a wealthy man, and a number of people were invited to meet them. The sunny-faced girl showed her appreciation of chocolate bonbons, and was proud of the red lining of her blue frock, and kept showing it and her stockings to the bystanders.

They made a capital dinner on rice and meat, eating heartily as long as they were alone with their attendant and the white man servant, but stopping at once when any member of the family came into the room. At first they ate with their fingers, but, seeing the forks, picked them up and helped themselves with those instruments. They would not touch oranges, and the Italian man servant had to taste every dish before they or the Swahili boy would partake of it. It is evident that they were suspicious of being poisoned in that strange land, and followed the practice of African chiefs, many of whom have all their food tasted before they eat it.

After dinner, the little women were led into a pretty garden where they sat under a fine palm tree. They enjoyed the sunshine, gradually acquired confidence, and allowed themselves to be photographed arm in arm, with the little son of their hostess. The sunny faced girl shook with laughter while the photograph was being taken, but the cross girl looked glum and suspicious. They showed neither wonder nor admiration of the people and things around them. They will attract great attention in Germany, and ethnologists will be particularly glad to improve this opportunity to acquire a better knowledge of the language of the Akkas.

FIGHTING LOCUST FOES.

How the Chinese go at Them With Armies of Men and Ducks.

The great province of Kiang-Soo is being devastated by locusts. Consul Jones at Chin-Kiang sends the State department an account of the curious efforts made by the afflicted sections to dispel the scourge. Some of the methods resorted to are as striking as the suggestions offered to the Kansas people when they were suffering from a similar visitation some years ago. When the locusts make their appearance in one of these Chinese districts there is consternation among the unfortunate peasantry, who assemble in the fields with wild clamor and din of gongs, armed with long bamboos with streamers attached, and vainly endeavor to drive off the terrible invaders who are settling down in myriads and devouring their crops before their eyes. Every leaf and twig is covered thick, giving the appearance of some hideous yellow fruit or plant. A faint sour smell, like that of fermenting vegetable matter, is always perceptible in the neighborhood. It comes, no doubt, from the droppings of the insects.

There is a curious and widespread belief among the Chinese in the existence of a "king" locust—"wang," he is called—of colossal size and quasi supernatural character, who hovers invisibly in the upper regions of the air, directing and controlling the migrations of the different swarms. At some places the leading officials have publicly sacrificed and made offerings to the king of the locusts in order that he might be influenced to spare their localities.

"I know of few sights," writes the Consul, "more extraordinary than a swarm engaged in pairing. The air is filled with clouds of locusts drifting, circling, crossing and recrossing, with a faint, whirring noise, and settling on the ground in thousands of couples. The ground is carpeted thickly with them; you cannot make a step without crunching heaps of them under your feet, while thousands more start up in pattering volleys against your legs, hands and face."

The eggs are deposited in holes drilled by the female an inch or more deep in the ground. The time required for hatching depends entirely on the temperature. In very hot weather the new brood begins to make its appearance at the end of a week. At this stage they are very small, black, and as active as fleas, making extraordinary bounds by means of their muscular hind legs. At a little distance they suggest the idea of a swarm of black ants seized with sudden insanity. In shape they are exact copies of their parents, save for the want of wings. They are greedy feeders, and grow rapidly. By the eighth or nineth day wings have budded and the color begins to change, yellow spots appearing and in about a month they are full grown.

The destruction, by suitable measures, of this formidable pest, involving, as it does, the prevention of famines, fever epidemics and riots, is a matter of grave public concern. One constantly hears of mandarins losing their buttons and being disgraced as the penalty of remissness or failure to destroy the enemy.

U.S. Consul Jones says the Chinese consider that the visitation of the locusts is a "calamity from Heaven, and that there is no help for it." Chinese records chronicle many instances of the appearance and the calamities inflicted by locusts in former times, but they have no peculiarly effective methods of destroying them. The Government usually issues proclamations ordering out the soldiers and encouraging the farmers to destroy them. The latter are given a bounty for their destruction.

The soldiers, with their officers at their head, are used against the locusts as against an adverse army in the field. Instead of a gun or a lance, however, each soldier is armed with a coarse hempen bag attached to a bamboo pole, which, with wide-open mouth, is waved back and forth among the swarms until filled, when they are killed and the action renewed.

"In this section of the province," writes Mr. Jones, "the army has taken the field, and the district magistrate has taken up his quarters in the country where the locusts are thickest, to overlook the work of destruction and to pay the farmers the bounty.

"The farmers use large brooms made of bamboo twigs and other bushes, and each armed with this weapon goes forth to slaughter. When killed and collected they are paid for by weight, which is at the rate of 40 cash, or 4c. per pound. The locusts' eggs are dug up and paid for on a similar scale.

"During a walk on the hills one day I came upon a spot more than usually covered with locusts. At a distance I saw two or three men and as many boys directing the march of a small army of ducks, which they do by the use of long bamboo poles and the voice. It is astonishing to see the absolute control they exert over the movements of the ducks, and the apparent intelligence of the latter. From the opposite direction a small boy, about twelve years of age, stark naked and burned by the sun to a dark bronze, lithe and beautiful as a young gladiator, bounded upon the scene. He saw the locusts, and with a shrill yell called to the men directing the ducks. In a few moments the ducks came up. They fell upon the locusts, and in less than a minute every locust—and there were millions of them—had been gobbled up. The army of ducks seemed more efficacious in their destruction than the army of Chinese.

"In one district near by it is prohibited to kill the ducks at such times notwithstanding their value in the markets, and they are kept to use against the locusts. This district has one flock of 3,500 ducks."

Christian workers sometimes make the mistake of adding more machinery when it is more steam that is needed.

Figures such as the following, culled from the Statesman's Year Book for 1893, are interesting to all Canadians and to British citizens everywhere:

Area of the United States and Territories	2,939,000
Indian Territory	31,000
Alaska	531,409
	3,501,409

The area of British North America is given as follows:

Canada	3,456,383
Newfoundland and Labrador	162,200
	3,618,583

Canada may be as proud of its material progress and political position as it must of the immense area with which its people have been dowered by native pluck and British conquest or gift.