

in each of the three cells of the ovary : nearly all Blume's species belong to other genera.

17. CITRULLUS (Schrad.). Corolla persistent, 5-parted, subrotate ; anthers tri-adelphous, bilocular ; style trifid ; stigma obcordate, convex ; fruit a fleshy or dry and fibrous, many-seeded pepo-nida. *Africa, East Indies*—*Cucurbita Citrullus* and *Cucumis colocynthis*.
18. ECBALIUM (Rich.). Corolla 5-cleft ; anthers tri-adelphous ; ovules in 2 rows in each cell ; stigmas 3, 2-horned ; fruit an elastically and irregularly bursting peponida. *Europe*—*Momordica Elaterium*.
19. MOMORDICA (Linn.). Petals 5, adnate to the base of the calyx, deciduous ; anthers all cohering ; ovules in a single row\* in each cell ; stigma 2-lobed ; fruit a capsular, elastically bursting, 3-valved peponida. *East Indies, South Africa* and *America*.

To this genus seem to belong *Muricia*, Loureiro, and *Neurospermum*, Raf.

20. LUFFA (Cav.). Petals 5, inserted in the base of the calyx, deciduous ; anthers all distinct or di-tri-adelphous ; style 3-fid ; stigma reniform or bipartite ; fruit a peponida, at length dry and internally fibrous, usually opening by a terminal lid, rarely indehiscent. *East Indies* and *Arabia*. There are three sections of this genus.

1st. Stamens distinct, *Luffa pentandra*, *acutangula*, and *Kleinii*.

2nd. Stamens 3-adelphous. *L. amara*, Roxb., and nearly all the species of *Turia*, Forsk.

3rd. Stamens di-adelphous—*L. tuberosa*, Roxb.

21. BENINCASSA (Sav.). Corolla (yellow) 5-parted, patent ; anthers 3-adelphous ; style undivided, very short ; stigma large, thick, irregularly lobed and plaited ; peponida fleshy, indehiscent. *Asia*.

22. LAGENARIA (Ser.). Corolla (white) 5-petaled ; anthers 3-adelphous ; style almost none ; stigmas 3, thick and 2-lobed ; peponida fleshy and indehiscent. *India, South Africa*.

§ 8. *Filaments 3-adelphous, inserted on the tube of the corolla ; connectiva entire ; anthers 3- or mon-adelphous, posticous, linear, bent upwards and downwards ; calyx long, tubular.*

23. TRICHOSANTHES (Linn.). Segments of the corolla lacerated and fringed ; anthers 3-adelphous ? or all united ; style trifid ; stigmas oblong, subulate ; fruit a peponida, many-seeded. *East Indies*.

[In all the species I have had an opportunity of carefully examining, the anthers are mon-adelphous or united. The style is not trifid, nor pro-

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\* This, though practically correct, is not theoretically so, the carpellary structure being the same here as in others ; each margin has its placenta and ovules : and though at any one section only one row appears, we do not find the ovules always attached to the same line of placenta on slicing the ovary successively from end to end, but sometimes on the one, sometimes on the other side of the cell ; such, at least, I find it in *Momordica Charantia*.



perly speaking the stigmas subulate, as they cohere nearly to the apex by their central face, though the stigmatic surface extends for some distance outwardly, and presents a somewhat subulate outline.]

I reunite *Involucrarea* to this as a mere section depending on the bracteas, the character taken from the anther not holding good, at least *T. cucumerina* has frequently the anthers all united, and I suspect also *T. anguina*; perhaps they only become tri-adelphous after fecundating.

[In *T. anguina* they are never tri-adelphous, the anthers cohere to the last as represented in the accompanying figure. This last species, with *T. globosa* and *trifoliata*, Blume, and *Involucrarea*, Serange (*T. Wallichiana*), form a very characteristic section, perhaps a subgenus, distinguished by their curiously bracteated male flowers.—R. W.]

24. GYMNOPTALUM (Arn.). Calyx constricted at the mouth; corolla (yellow) 5-parted; segments quite entire; anthers all closely cohering; fruit baccate, ovate, beaked, few-seeded; seeds large, roundish, with a blunt margin. *East Indies*. There are two species:—

1. *G. Ceylanicum* (Arn.). Leaves deeply 5-lobed; perianth glabrous. *Bryonia tubiflora*. W. and A.
2. *G. Wightii* (Arn.). Leaves 3—5, angle-lobed; perianth hairy. *Courtallum*.

§ 9. *Filaments usually tri-adelphous, inserted at the base of the perianth; connectiva entire, unless when produced into appendages beyond the anthers; anthers linear, posticous, bent upwards and downwards (calyx campanulate or rarely infundibuliform).*

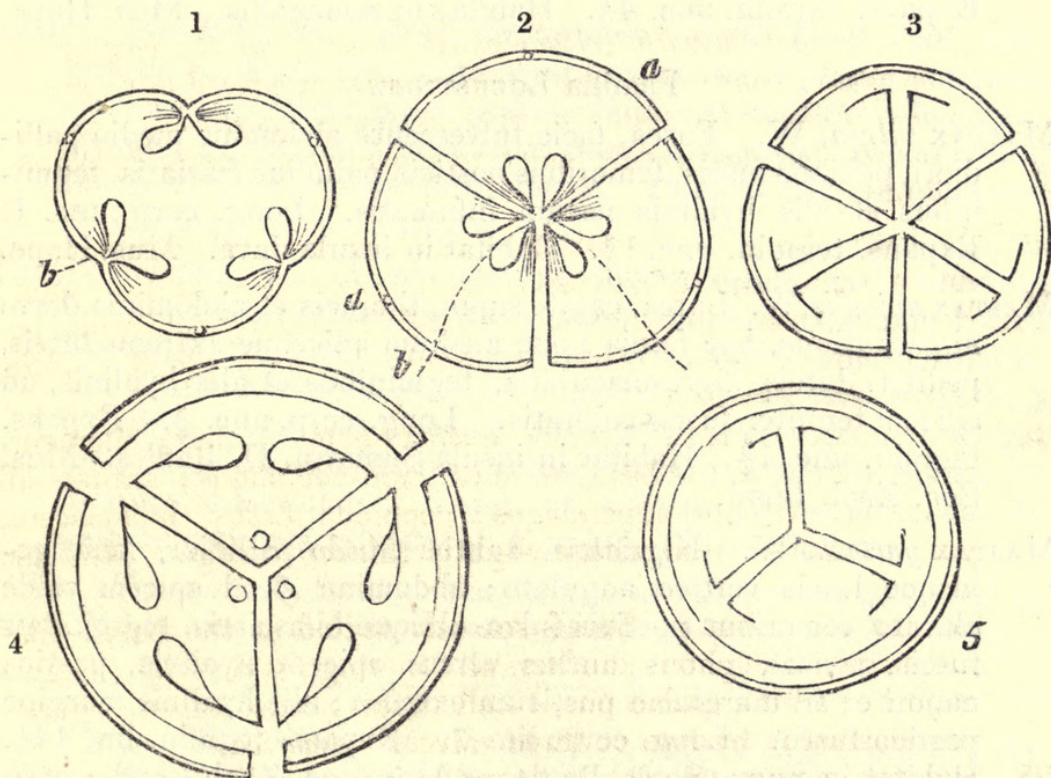
25. CUCUMIS (Linn.). Corolla 5-parted; anthers tri-adelphous, or all of them slightly cohering, with appendages at the apex! Peponida fleshy, indehiscent, or rarely irregularly dehiscent, polyspermous; seeds ovate, compressed, sharp-edged. *Asia, Africa and America*.
26. CUCURBITA (Linn.). Corolla campanulate, 5-cleft; filaments tri-adelphous at the base, or quite mon-adelphous; anthers all cohering, without appendages; peponida fleshy, indehiscent, polyspermous; seed with a slightly thickened edge. *Asia and America*.
27. ELATERIUM (Linn.). Petals scarcely united at the base; filaments mon-adelphous; anthers all cohering; style thick; stigma capitate; fruit a coriaceous, 1-celled, few-seeded capsule, bursting elastically by two or three valves. *America*.
28. SCHIZOCARPEUM (Schlch.). Corolla infundibuliform, quite entire; filaments 3-adelphous; anthers all cohering; peponida many-seeded, bursting by several valves that cohere by their apex. *Mexico*.
29. COCCINIA (W. and A.). Corolla campanulate; segments acuminate; filaments mon-adelphous; anthers tri-adelphous, conniving, without appendages; peponida somewhat baccate, many-seeded. [Usually of an oblong oval shape, and bright red when ripe.] *East Indies*.



§ 10. *Filaments mon-adelphous, connate into a column, which is capitate at the apex, and then bearing the gyrose posticous anthers.*  
 30. CEPHALANDRA (Schräd.). *South Africa.*

EXPLANATION OF THE FIGURES.

- Fig. 1.* A tricarpellary 1-celled ovary; that is, the placentiferous margins of the carpellary leaves meeting in the circumference, and bearing their ovules on the walls or parietes of the cell.  
*a.* Supposed position of the midrib. *b.* Placentæ parietal.  
*Fig. 2.* A tricarpellary 3-celled ovary, the laminæ of the carpellary leaves folded inwards until they meet in the axis, and there produce ovules.  
*a.* Supposed position of midribs. *b.* Placentæ axillary.  
*Fig. 3.* An imaginary section of a *pepo* explanatory of Dr. Arnott's theory of its construction; copied, but with some modification, to render it more explanatory, from his figure in the *Encycl. Brit.*  
*a.* Supposed position of the midrib.  
*b.* The placentiferous margins represented introflexed, reaching nearly to the dorsal suture, dividing the carpel into two cells.  
*Fig. 4.* Section of the ovary of *Coccinia indica*; the calyx divided in the line of the partitions of the carpella, by which they are permitted to fall apart.  
*Fig. 5.* Section of the same; the parts *in situ*.



*Obs.*—The original is also accompanied by dissections of *Momordica Charantia*, *Trichosanthes anguina*, *Cucurbita maxima*, *Coccinia indica*, *Lagenaria vulgaris*, and *Mukia scabrella*, prepared with the view of showing that sections 7 and 9 are not distinguishable by the characters assigned, the anthers being lobed or entire; and that, by taking our characters rather from the form of the anthers than the insertion of the filaments, *Trichosanthes* and *Cucurbita* might be advantageously placed in the same section, leaving the character taken from insertion available as a generic distinction between them.



XXXV.—*Insectorum novorum Centuria, auctore*  
J. O. WESTWOOD, F.L.S., &c.

*Decadis tertiæ, ex ordine Dermapterorum, DeG., Synopsis.*

Familia MANTIDÆ.

VATES (Burm. = *Theoclytes*, Serv.) *Ashmolianus*, W. Fuscus, capitis vertice rotundato, antennis gracillimis, prothorace longissimo angusto, lateribus serrulatis; hemelytris et alis abdomen haud tegentibus, cercis analibus latis foliatis, pedibus 4 posticis brevibus, femoribus ad apicem 3-foliatis tibiisque ante medium supra parùm foliatis. Long. corp. unc.  $4\frac{1}{3}$ ; (prothor. unc.  $1\frac{2}{3}$ .) Habitat —? In Mus. Ashmol. Oxon.

TOXODERA (Serv.) *tenuipes*, W. Fusca, tegminibus brunneis posticè pallidis, alis infumatis, nigro fasciatis cyaneo-iridescentibus, coxis anticis longis anticè lobatis et spinosis, femoribus anticis basi vix crassioribus, femoribus 4 posticis longis apice subtus foliolis duobus minutis instructis, supra inermibus, cercis analibus latis foliatis, ut videtur 6-articulatis. Long. corp. unc. 5. Expans. tegmin. unc.  $4\frac{1}{2}$ . Habitat in Senegallia. Mus. Hope.

Familia LOCUSTIDÆ.

MASTAX *vitrea*, W. Fusca, facie fulvescente abdomine medio pallidiori, pedibus fuscis, femoribus posticis pallidius fasciatis, tegminibus et alis hyalinis parùm infumatis. Long. corp. unc. 1. Expans. tegmin. unc.  $1\frac{3}{4}$ . Habitat in insula Java. Mus. Hope.

MASTAX *apicalis*, W. Lutea, capite supra, thoracis et abdominis dorso nigricantibus, hoc fascia pone medium apiceque extremo luteis, pedibus luteis nigro-maculatis, tegminibus et alis hyalinis, ad apicem tenuiter fusco-coloratis. Long. corp. unc.  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Expans. tegmin. unc.  $1\frac{3}{4}$ . Habitat in insula Sumatra, D. Raffles. Mus. Soc. Zool. Lond.

MASTAX *guttata*, W. Nigricans, subtùs paullò pallidior, facie genisque luteis vertice angulato; abdomine ♂ ad apicem valdè clavato, femoribus posticis fulvo oblique bifasciatis, tegminibus fuscis, nitidis, guttis duabus versus apicem hyalinis, postica majori et ad marginem posticum extensa; alis hyalinis margine postico fusco. Long. corp. lin. 7. Expans. tegmin. lin.  $14\frac{1}{2}$ . Habitat in Sumatra, D. Raffles. Mus. Soc. Zool. Lond.; et in ins. Philipp., D. Cuming. Mus. Britann.

Obs. Genus *Mastax*, antennarum articulis paucis capiteque elevato *Proscopiam* approximatur.

OPSOMALA *gladiator*, W. Luteo-fusca, virescenti parùm tincta, capite anticè in rostrum (prothorace ferè duplo longius) producto, antennis gracilibus, rostro brevioribus, prothorace carina mediana ferè oblitterata, tegminibus pallidè fuscis, angustis, alis hyalinis vix incoloratis, abdomine longissimo, pedibus 4 anticis brevissimis, posticis vix abdomine longioribus. Long. corp. unc.  $3\frac{1}{2}$ .



Long. capitis ante oculos, unc.  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Expans. tegmin. unc.  $3\frac{3}{4}$ .  
Habitat in Sierra Leone. Mus. Hope.

*TETRIX laticeps*, W. Fusca, capite lato, oculis valdè prominentibus, facie carina elevata, antennis longioribus 10-articulatis, nigris, articulo ultimo albo, prothorace abdomine multo longiori apice gracili parùm recurvo, dorso (supra thoracem) in folium membranaceum elevato, lateribus inter pedes 4 anticos in spinam utrinque productis, pedibus posticis scabris, supra dentatis tarsis articulo basali et basi articuli ultimi albis. Long. ad apicem prothoracis, lin. 7. Habitat in Brasilia. Mus. Westwood.

*TETRIX ensifer*, W. Fusco-ferruginosa opaca, prothorace supra caput in rostrum compressum (dimidii abdominis longitudine) porrectum apice subbifido; dorso longitudinaliter carinato, parte postica abdomine longiore, supra abdomen oblique carinato, apice acuto, femoribus posticis supra tuberculatis. Long. ad apicem prothoracis, lin. 9. Habitat in insulis Philippinensibus, D. Cuming. Mus. Britann. Variat rostro prothoracico subtùs in spinam, faciem impendentem, producto, dorsoque supra abdomen impressionibus variis ovalibus, magnitudine decrescentibus. Long. lin. 10.

*TETRIX dimidiata*, W. Fusco-ferruginosa opaca, prothorace subcompresso, dorso ferè recto acuto, supra caput parùm porrecto, apice antico deflexo, apice postico dimidium abdominis haud superante, subtruncato, femoribus posticis supra vix tuberculatis. Long. ad apicem abdominis, lin. 9. Habitat cum præcedente, D. Cuming. Mus. Britann.

*TETRIX areolata*, W. Fusco-arenosa rugosa opaca, setis brevibus fuscis induta, prothorace supra caput cucullato, margine antico biemarginato, dorso acute carinato carina subsinuata, parte postica (supra abdomen in areas angulatas, lineis elevatis divisa; lateribus supra basin pedum posticorum puncto pallido marginali) ad apicem abdominis extensa, extremo apice subbifido, femoribus tuberculatis. Long. ad apicem prothoracis, lin. 8. Habitat cum præcedente, D. Cuming. Mus. Britann.

*Obs.* Figures and detailed descriptions of the insects described in this Century are already prepared, and will be published hereafter.

XXXVI.—*The Birds of Ireland (Family Fringillidæ)*. By WM. THOMPSON, Esq., Vice-Pres. Nat. Hist. Society of Belfast.

[Continued from vol. i. p. 195.\*]

THE SKYLARK, *Alauda arvensis*, Linn.,  
Is common throughout Ireland. Judging from works in which this bird is treated of, its song, recommenced in the

\* BOHEMIAN WAX-WING. An example of this bird killed in Ireland, is here erroneously stated to be in the collection of Dr. R. Graves, of Dublin.

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autumn, would seem to be continued further into the winter in this island than elsewhere, a result attributable to the humidity and mildness of the climate. Its song may be heard as frequently in fine bright days during the month of October, and in the bird's most elevated haunts in the mountain pastures about Belfast, as at any other season. One note may be given on this subject: under the date of November 7, 1835, the following appears in my journal—I never heard more skylarks singing at any period of the year than in the early part of this day in the high pastures bounded by the heath in the Belfast mountains. The day was very fine and bright; the ground very wet from continued rain throughout the days and nights of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, early part of the 5th, and occasionally since, up to this morning. The skylark is generally noticed by authors as singing merely upon the wing, but it not very unfrequently does so when upon the ground, and an intelligent observer mentions that he has often seen it perched on whins when pouring forth its song. Montagu remarks, that this bird is “rarely seen on the extended moors at a distance from arable land,” and later British authors repeat the observation. This may be of general application to England, but in Ireland the wild mountain pasture is a favourite abode, and there, as mentioned in the following note, the “most sweet voice” of the skylark may occasionally be heard at a rather late hour mingling with the bleating of the snipe:—June 22, 1840. When at half-past seven o'clock this evening on the highest part of the old road from Belfast to Crumlin (perhaps 850 feet above the sea), larks were busily engaged in singing on every side at the same time that snipes (*Scolopax Gallinago*) were bleating and giving utterance to their other calls. The mingling of their notes, which are so very dissimilar, had a singular but very pleasing effect.

In hard winters our indigenous larks congregate in large flocks, which remain with us unless the weather become extraordinarily severe, when they move more or less southwards: even when the winter is mild in the north of Ireland, these birds, generally in small or moderate flocks, migrate hither from Scotland, and have repeatedly been seen crossing the Channel by my friend Capt. Fayrer, R.N., during the several years that he commanded the government mail-packet which plies between Portpatrick and Donaghadee. Although the autumn of the year 1832 had been very fine and mild, so early as the 17th of October I saw a very large flock of larks, which had doubtless migrated to this country. In the winter of 1837–38, larks remained in flocks to a late period—on the 24th of March I remarked not less than sixty congregated.



An observant friend has on different occasions known several circular holes to be made by pairs of these birds, before fixing upon one for their nest. The skylark occasionally exhibits variety in its plumage, though less frequently than some others of our small birds. The collection of my friend Wm. Sinclair, Esq., of Milltown, near Belfast, contains one of a black colour, which was shot in a wild state among a flock, and a white one is reported to me by a correspondent as in his possession. The stomachs of several larks which I examined, especially in winter, contained seeds and the remains of other vegetable matter, with an occasional insect-larva: they all exhibited fragments of stone.

As a sporting friend was shooting upon his moors in Ayrshire in the month of October, a lark pursued by a merlin (*Falco Æsalon*) came from the distance of about a hundred yards directly towards him and his servant, and alighted near their feet, apparently for safety—when it reached the ground, it is represented to have been so exhausted as to be unable to close its wings. A lark which had its liberty within the green-house of a relative, lived eight years there, and was eventually lost to him, by effecting its escape.

Nowhere perhaps is the skylark more sought for as a cage-bird than in Ireland, and the song given forth “right merrilie” from the little patch of green-sward within its prison seems to imply that the bird bears confinement well. Nevertheless, it is always with regret that we see the lark, whose nature is to pierce the clouds when singing, so circumscribed, and we cannot but wish for its own sake that it had the freedom of “fresh fields and pastures new;” yet we do not, like a class of persons in the world, *think only of the skylark*. To the poor artisan in the town this bird is of great service in enlivening him with its song, associated with which in his mind are doubtless scenes in the country, the love of which is instinctive to the human breast. The lark too is generally treated with affectionate care, and the first walk of its master in the very early morning before the day’s task begins, has for its object the providing of a “fresh sod” for his pet bird\*.

\* The following anecdote, communicated by my venerable friend Dr. McDonnell of Belfast, shows the high value once put upon a skylark:—“A rather poor chandler in Belfast, called Huggart, had a lark remarkable for its song. Mr. Hull, a dancing-master and great bird-fancier, going into his shop one day, said, he came to purchase his bird. ‘Indeed,’ replied the other, ‘I do not think, Mr. Hull, you are likely to get home *that* bird, which delights all my neighbours as well as myself.’ ‘Well, I think I am,’ was the reply: ‘here are five guineas for it.’ The sum was instantly refused, when ten guineas were offered, but also rejected. He was then told, ‘It is now



Late in April in the present year I saw the skylark about Navarino, and at the end of the following month observed it near Smyrna.

THE WOODLARK, *Alauda arborea*, Linn.,

Is one of those unobtrusive species which is little known except to the lover of nature, and by him perhaps valued the more on that account. In flocks it is not at all to be met with, like the skylark. It is so very choice in the place of its abode as to be quite a local species; and in the counties of Down and Antrim frequents districts where the soil is warm, the country well cultivated and wooded, or scenery, which, like its song, is of a sweet, soft character;—cold clay districts, though equally improved and sheltered, cannot, so far as known to me, claim it for a tenant. In its favourite localities here, the Woodlark may be heard singing almost daily, and chiefly in the morning from September to June.

This species is enumerated as one of the birds of Dublin in Ruttý's Natural History of that county, and has a similar place in Smith's 'History of Cork.' In the latter county, Mr. R. Ball informs me that it is not unfrequent, and being much prized for its song, is greatly sought after by bird-catchers. A friend living near Belfast kept woodlarks for a year or more in his aviary in company with other birds, but they never sang.

THE SNOW-BUNTING, *Emberiza nivalis*, Linn. (genus *Plectrophanes*, Meyer.),

Is a regular autumnal migrant to the more northern parts of Ireland. Towards the south it becomes gradually scarcer, and in the extreme portions of that quarter, although the highest mountains in the island are situated there, it can only be called a rare and occasional visitant\*. Its numbers are stated similarly to decrease from the north to the south of England. The island of Achil should perhaps, from its far western position, be particularized as being regularly visited by this bird—a fact communicated by my friend W. R. Wilde,

the fair-day, and the market full of cattle: go and purchase the best cow there, and I shall pay for her:' but Huggart still declined, and kept his lark."

\* In a catalogue of the birds of the south favoured me by Dr. Harvey of Cork, the snow-bunting is noticed merely as having been met with at Dunscombe Wood, near that city. Dr. Burkitt, of Waterford, in a list of the native birds known to him obligingly sent to me since this paper went to press, notices it only as shot in the neighbourhood of that city in January 1832. To Mr. T. F. Neligan of Tralee, it was unknown as a bird of that quarter in 1837, but Mr. Wm. Andrews of Dublin informs me that specimens were obtained near Dingle during the last winter, 1840-41.



Esq. Early in the month of October, snow-buntings make their appearance in the north of Ireland, and occasionally remain until the end of March. Their haunts in mild weather are chiefly the mountain-tops, whence one night's severe frost has been known to drive them to the nearest roads for food. Occasionally in the lower grounds and even on the sea-shore they may be met with when there is neither frost nor snow: to the last they are obliged to resort when the weather sets in very severe. During the great snow-storm of March 1827, flocks appeared in the outskirts of the town of Belfast; and such numbers were killed on the sea-shore in its vicinity, that they were purchased by Mr. Sinclair as the cheapest food he could procure for his trained peregrine falcons. Although of regular passage to the Belfast range of mountains, snow-buntings are much more numerous in other and less frequented mountainous districts in the county of Antrim, as about Newtown-Crommelin and Clough. At the former of these places, where the Rev. G. M. Black was several years resident, he always observed them during the winter in very large flocks, and in which not more than one in twenty were adult individuals. From the other locality, examples have been brought to me by Mr. James Garret, who also supplied the following note under date of January 4, 1834:—"When shooting today about two miles from Clough, I met with an immense flock of snow-buntings, out of which I killed thirty at one discharge as they flew past me. Their call resembled the chirping of the grey-linnet, and the number of wings made a considerable noise, as the flock consisting of several hundreds swept by: some were nearly white, and others of a dark brown colour." In any of the flocks which have come under my own observation, the adult males bore only a small proportion to the females and immature birds, but, except in very small flocks, were always present throughout the winter\*. This species, under the name of Cherry-chirper!, is mentioned in Rutt's 'Natural History of Dublin' as "found on our strand in December 1747 and kept in a cage until December 1748, and fed with oats, hemp-seed and cuttlings."—Vol. i. p. 317.

Wilson, Audubon, and Dr. Richardson give most interesting notes upon this bird from their personal observation in North America, and the last author had the gratification of meeting with it in its breeding-haunt in that continent. Mr.

\* In some of the latest works on British ornithology, the adult birds are stated to appear in Great Britain only late in the winter, or when the weather is very severe. On the 23rd of October I once received a fine adult male bird, which was shot on the Belfast mountains.



Selby too gratifies us with the result of his observations on the species in the north of England. The snow-bunting is truly a most attractive bird, not only from its pleasing form and finely-varied plumage, but as one of the very few species met with in the depth of winter on the mountain-top, where, as it flits overhead uttering its pleasingly wild chirp, it brings before the mind the far-distant region within the arctic circle, whence it may have come.

In ascending in the month of July above the perpetual snow-line in the Alps of Switzerland, to the height of 11,000 feet, the greatest elevation I have reached, the snow-finch (*Fringilla nivalis*), a bird which at a little distance, in size, marking, and note, reminded me of the snow-bunting, was almost ever-present; and its little voice, with occasionally that of the Alpine Accentor (*Accentor alpinus*), seemed, in one sense, strangely out of unison with the stern grandeur of the scenery, where rarely any other sound broke upon the ear than the rent of the glacier or the distant fall of the avalanche.

THE COMMON BUNTING, *Emberiza Miliaria*, Linn., Is found throughout the island, and is permanently resident. On reading the opinion expressed by Sir Wm. Jardine some years ago (in his edition of White's 'Selborne'), that there is a migration of buntings to Great Britain in winter, I thought it might be likewise applicable to Ireland; but on subsequent consideration, did not see good reason to believe that there is any increase to the numbers of these birds bred in the country. The change from the summer to the winter haunts of the bunting might lead to such a supposition, as about the time that our winter birds of passage are arriving, flocks of buntings make their appearance in localities—often hedges along road-sides—which frequenting through the winter, they leave on the genial approach of spring: so late as the end of March they occasionally remain congregated. Their song may be heard in the north throughout the greater part of the year, including occasionally the months of November and December.

My observation is quite in accordance with that of White, who in his 'History of Selborne' remarks of the bunting, that—"in our woodland enclosed districts it is a rare bird." It is rather an inhabitant of simply arable than of the rich and wooded parts of the country, and where some little portion of wildness still exists, such as is implied in the common name it bears in the north of Ireland of *Briar-Bunting*. The ditch-bank run wild with "briars" or brambles has more charms for this bird than the "neat trim-hedge," and within the shelter



of such humble underwood it nestles. In severe frost and snow, buntings not only betake themselves to the roads for subsistence, but at such times may be seen in the less-frequented streets and stable-yards of the town of Belfast. The plumage of this species is very liable to be varied with white or cream-colour, and when with the latter, some examples which I have seen were of a very rich and handsome appearance. On opening some of these birds killed in winter, I have generally found them filled with grain;—the species is sometimes called the *Corn-Bunting*.

THE REED OR BLACK-HEADED BUNTING, *Emberiza Schœniculus*, Linn.,

Is a resident species distributed over the island, which from the prevailing humidity is peculiarly well suited to it. The reed-bunting is one of those birds which is nowhere numerous, and owing to the places of its abode—among the shrubby underwood and herbage in moist places and at the edge of waters—is not very commonly or popularly known. It is particularly interesting from being an inhabitant of localities in which comparatively few other birds are to be seen:—it has often been highly pleasing to me to observe a few of these birds gathering in to roost for the night upon the exposed roots of alders or willows that overhung the gently-flowing stream, and in a vicinity unsuitable to any of their congeners. Like them, however, reed-buntings will betake themselves during the snow-storm to the public roads for food.

In different parts of Ireland, the reed-bunting still has the undue reputation of being a sweet songster of the night, and is believed to be the veritable “Irish Nightingale,” a name bestowed on the mysterious bird, be that what it may, which sings through the summer night, but which, in strict justice, may be claimed by the sedge-warbler. Montagu, with his usual acuteness, long since accounted for this error, and in the following words:—“It is somewhat extraordinary that the manners and habits of so common a bird should remain so long in obscurity; even modern authors tell us it is a song-bird, that it sings after sunset; and describe its nest to be suspended over the water, fastened between three or four reeds. There can be no doubt, however, that the nest as well as the song of the sedge-warbler have been taken and confounded for those of this bird; for, as they both frequent the same places in the breeding-season, that elegant little warbler is pouring forth its varied notes concealed in the thickest part of a bush; while this is conspicuously



perched above, whose tune is not deserving the name of song; consisting only of two notes, the first repeated three or four times, the last single and more sharp\*." Reed-Sparrow and Black-cap are the names commonly bestowed on this bird in the north of Ireland.

#### YELLOW BUNTING, *Emberiza Citrinella*, Linn.

This handsome bird, differing from the last-noticed species in being a constant resident about the farm and the precincts of the rural dwelling, is very well known in Ireland, over which it is diffused in suitable localities. Its monotonous, and to my ear, mournful song, is heard in mild weather throughout much the greater part of the year. The nest, from being placed in an open hedge or rather bare grassy ditch-bank, is often easily discovered; but a person who from practical observation is well versed in the sites chosen by birds for their nests, remarks, that he has more frequently found that of the yellow bunting in whins than elsewhere. In a friend's garden near Belfast, a pair of these birds built their nest at the edge of a gravel-walk, and brought out four young, three of which were soon destroyed. In consequence of this, the nest containing the fourth was for greater safety placed in a bank a few feet distant, and the single young one was so well provided by its parents with food as quickly to grow to an extraordinary size. A similar fact in the case of the redbreast is mentioned in one of the preceding papers of this series; but in that instance the young one died, it was presumed, from over-feeding. The stomachs of such of these birds as have come under my observation in winter, generally contained grain. Yellow Yorlin is the common name bestowed on this species in the north of Ireland.

#### THE CHAFFINCH, *Fringilla Cœlebs*, Linn.,

Is a common resident species throughout the cultivated and wooded parts of Ireland. It frequents the squares and gardens of the town, where occasionally its song is heard. The beauty of the nest of this bird, with lichens and moss intermingled in its formation, has often been commented on, and truly it is a very picturesque object; but the lichen is in many localities of necessity left out, and the moss becomes externally the component material. Particular notes of several nests are before me, all of which, except one that was built in a whin, were placed on the branches of trees: one other only is worthy of special notice. This came under the observation of my friend at Cromac, who reports it to have

\* Ornithological Dictionary.



been built against the stem of the common pine, and resting on one of the branches, to which it was bound with a piece of fine whip-cord, both ends of which were firmly interwoven in the material of the nest: the cord was taken but once round the branch.

Chaffinches feed chiefly on seeds and grain through the winter, as testified by my opening many specimens. Early in the month of May, when a choice of food was before them, I have on different occasions remarked these birds suddenly dart from the branches of trees after flies in the manner of the spotted flycatcher. During the winter and early spring, a flock consisting of both sexes was observed by a young friend regularly to frequent a merchant's yard situated on one of the quays of Belfast for the purpose of feeding on flaxseed, of which there was always some scattered about the place. Chaffinches sometimes congregate in large flocks before winter actually sets in: at the end of October I have thus remarked them, and occasionally in company with green-linnets. There has been much written from actual observation both on the Continent and in Great Britain, and from Linnæus to the present time, on the subject of the separation of the sexes of chaffinches in the winter. Montagu, writing from Devonshire, says, the sexes do not separate with us, and Mr. Knapp makes a similar remark with reference to Gloucestershire. In Hampshire, White frequently observed large flocks of females about Selborne. In Northumberland, Mr. Selby has noticed the females as keeping apart from the males, and Sir Wm. Jardine remarks respecting the south of Scotland, that young males are intermixed with the females. In the north of Ireland I have seen very large flocks in which there were no males, and once during frost in the month of December, killed nine out of a flock, all of which proved to be females. Again, I have observed flocks of moderate size consisting of a fair proportion of both sexes, and which I have always believed to be our indigenous birds. The others, from never having met with flocks of male birds, I am disposed to believe have migrated to this island from more northern latitudes and there left their mates behind them:—in the north of Europe, associations consisting of males only have been observed during winter.

In July 1840, Mr. R. Davis, jun., of Clonmel, forwarded to Belfast, for my inspection, a bird shot in that neighbourhood, which he remarked had been sent him as a white chaffinch. It had frequently been seen in company with this species, along with some of which it had been shot in the preceding month of May. This individual was singu-



larly and beautifully marked: it is thus described in my notes:—"This bird is of the full adult size of the chaffinch in every measurement. The prevailing colour of its plumage is pure white, but the head is tinted with yellow; the entire back is of the richest canary-yellow; wing- and tail-coverts are likewise delicately tinted with canary-yellow. A few blackish-gray and cinnamon-brown feathers appear as follows: one or two on the head, some on the back, and some very few on the wings and tail, but altogether they are inconspicuous; these are the ordinary chaffinch feathers. The primaries and the long tail-feathers, together with their shafts, are pure white. The plumage altogether partakes as much of that of the canary as of the chaffinch."

The description of this species and its propensities, as observed by the author of the 'Journal of a Naturalist,' is admirable.

THE MOUNTAIN FINCH, *Fringilla montifringilla*, Linn.,

Is a species, which, from personal observation, and notes collected from various quarters, I could not have announced as a regular winter visitant to Ireland. The Rev. G. M. Black, however, informs me, that for several winters successively he has remarked a few at least of these birds on the mountains about Newtown-Crommelin, but in mid-winter only; they were occasionally in company with chaffinches. Almost every winter for many years past I have been aware of their occurrence in the north in very limited numbers, and have learned from correspondents in all quarters of the island that they are everywhere of occasional, but generally unfrequent occurrence, and have been met with in the most southern parts. On the 18th of October I once received a mountain finch which was shot in the neighbourhood of Belfast, and in November the species has been seen here associating with green-linnets and chaffinches, when for some time before and after the weather had been mild. Such birds had evidently come hither in the ordinary course of migration; but that others have been compelled to visit this island by severity of weather, I in one instance had interesting circumstantial evidence. This was a day or two before the very great snow-storm in the beginning of January 1827, when one of these birds, which was secured and sent to me, alighted on the Chieftain steam-packet when on the passage from Liverpool to Belfast. This had most probably been the forerunner of the many which, during the deep snow immediately following, were seen about the last-named place. The snow-storm as usual had commenced earlier in



an easterly direction than in Ireland, which to birds flying before it westerly would be the last place of resort in its latitude in the eastern hemisphere. In like manner, mountain finches may have crossed the Irish Sea in the very severe weather early in the present year (1841), as Mr. R. Davis, writing to me from Clonmel, states, that a flock of them were seen near that town, and several shot on the 5th of February\*—he had not known them as visitants to that neighbourhood before. I have seen specimens of this bird which were shot during frost in the spacious yard of the Royal Society House, Dublin; and by T. W. Warren, Esq., of that city, have been assured, that at the most inclement period of the severe winter of 1837–38, some of these birds took shelter in the houses in the town of Dundalk. A pair of mountain finches kept in a very large cage with other species in a greenhouse attached to the dwelling of a relative near Belfast, screamed so constantly throughout moonlight nights as to disturb the family, and consequently they had to be expelled the place.

#### THE HOUSE SPARROW, *Fringilla domestica*, Linn.,

Is common in Ireland. This bird is in some places much persecuted by individuals, who, knowing only the injury committed on the grain-crops and in the garden, are yet ignorant of the great benefit it confers by the destruction of caterpillars, &c. A notable illustration of a sparrow-destroying order which was given forth in our juvenile days may here be mentioned. An old soldier, who had been in the Peninsular War, was selected from the farm-labourers as being of course the best shot. With plenary instructions to destroy all sparrows, he spent day after day in going about the corn-fields for the purpose of shooting them. Although reports of the gun were frequently heard, there appeared no testimony to convict him of the shedding of blood. We spent one day with him, and whenever he saw that two or three sparrows had alighted together on the standing corn sufficiently near to him, and this was by no means seldom, he fired at them. Often as he did so, we can attest that not a bird fell, though how much of the grain was thereby sacrificed we cannot take upon ourselves to say, for *it* could not be missed. The shooter would not believe that this was owing to his want of skill, and more

\* When lately at Freshwater Bay, in the Isle of Wight, I saw several stuffed specimens of the mountain finch on sale at the "Museum," as it is called. I learned that they had been shot in the vicinity during the frost and excessive cold above noticed, when many of them made their appearance, a circumstance of such rare occurrence that their species was unknown.



than once trampled down the grain to look after the *fallen* birds, which were then rejoicing afar off at their escape. When the wages of this sportsman and the value of ammunition he expended, together with the grain destroyed by him, are considered, there can be little doubt that the amount of damage which the sparrows could have done (and nevertheless did in this case do) must be trivial in comparison. Doubtless there have been similar cases. Many well-attested accounts have been published of the destruction of crops by insects in consequence of small birds, and sparrows in particular, being destroyed for their pilfering propensities; and when lately in France I was made acquainted with a recent instance of this kind. In the fine rich district of Burgundy lying to the south of Auxerre, and chiefly covered with vineyards, small birds had been some time before destroyed in great numbers. An extraordinary increase of caterpillars, &c. soon became apparent, and occasioned such immense damage to the crops, that a law was passed prohibitory of the future destruction of the birds.

The boldness and impudence of sparrows in obtruding themselves everywhere are somewhat redeemed by the comicality of their manners. Every one must have remarked instances of this. I was once much amused by observing a sparrow literally "dancing attendance" on a pet squirrel, during his breakfasting on bread in the wheel of his cage; the sparrow hopping about all the while and eagerly picking up the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.

The freedom from all fear on the part of sparrows is particularly manifest in their feeding close to animals of all kinds in zoological gardens. They make themselves quite at home too in the company of the most gorgeous-plumaged birds: I recollect them regularly breaking through the meshes of a net (merely large enough to admit their bodies) covering over an aviary in which a friend kept a number of golden pheasants, that they might feed along with them. Under date of June 27th is a note in my journal to the effect that the cock-sparrow has quite gained on my affections of late by the assiduity with which he feeds his progeny. I have observed several of them on the highway attended by their young, generally three in number, and which, with quivering wings, besought and followed them for food, and never in vain. The parents too, by their fine erect carriage—which even cock-sparrows can assume—evidently showed much pride in their progeny.

The sparrow, though not an early rising bird, is awake betimes, and as a colony will keep chattering for perhaps an



hour about their roosting-place before retiring for the night, so in the morning do they make known their "whereabouts" by the same means, some time before they show themselves to the day:—I once noted on the 11th of June, and likewise a few mornings previously, that on awakening at ten minutes past three o'clock, a colony of these birds frequenting the ivy which covered a town-house were heard loudly chattering, and that for half an hour afterwards none stirred out.

Loud complaints have been reported to me from the proprietor of the nearest fields of grain to Belfast on one side of the town and a mile distant from it, which are attacked when ripening by hosts of town sparrows that go there early in the morning, and after satisfying their appetites at his expense, return and spend the day in town. In our own garden, these birds were for a number of years very destructive to growing peas, almost living upon and amongst them (perching on the pea-rods), and with their strong bills breaking through the pods to get at the peas, which alone they eat, and just when they were in perfection for the table. I have several times seen sparrows in chase of the large white garden-butterfly (*Pontia brassicæ*), whose caterpillars are so destructive, and once remarked an individual fly against the stem of a dandelion and weigh it to the ground that it might feed upon the seeds.

These birds sometimes prove very annoying, especially in lofty houses, by choosing the spout for their nestling-place, where the base of their domicile stops the course of the rain. From a country-house whence their nests were always torn for this reason, they resorted to the adjacent trees, to erect there, their large and untidy, though domed nests, and preferred for this purpose the branches of the Balm of Gilead and Spruce Firs, which naturally offered a firmer and more compact basement than those of the deciduous trees: when the latter were resorted to, the Larch-Fir was generally chosen. At this place they were much persecuted, and I have more than once known nearly fifty to be killed at a single shot. It need hardly be remarked, that they frequently build in rookeries, as well as occupy the nest of the house marten. This is generally noticed by authors as a very dishonest proceeding; and though it is not my desire to be the apologist of any of the manifold errors of the sparrow, still justice has not been done to the bird; for the "pendent bed" of the marten is generally tenantless when taken possession of, and the sparrow may have no anticipation of the rightful owner coming across the seas to claim his property. In like manner, the sparrow occasionally takes



possession of the burrow of the sand marten before the vernal return of this species to the place of its birth; and certainly the intruder, perched at the entrance of its neighbour's burrow, peers about and chatters with as much confidence as if the domicile were its own by "right of descent." But few writers on natural history would seem to have observed the sparrow in such situations, but I have frequently done so, and when the sand-bank was in the close vicinity of trees and houses.

On account of the propensities heretofore alluded to or illustrated, the sparrows are perhaps the most amusing of our small common birds; but all bounds of propriety seem to be exceeded, when, so out of character with the scene, they, all begrimed, squat and chatter, and take up their abode on the stupendous cathedral of St. Paul's in London, under the canopy of which the ashes only of the mightiest among ourselves find a domicile.

Examples of this bird partly and altogether white sometimes occur; and a friend informs me that he once saw three white individuals in one nest. In his 'Catalogue of the Birds, &c., of Donegal,' Mr. J. V. Stewart remarks—"I have had a milk-white sparrow in confinement for two years; it was taken from the nest, is very sprightly and a female. At its moults there has been no change in the colour of its plumage: it has got the eyes of all albinos\*." Mr. R. Davis, jun., of Clonmel, mentions in a letter, that in February 1841 he "got a singularly deformed female sparrow, in which the upper mandible is slightly twisted to one side, the lower one nearly two inches long and turned down like that of a curlew: the bird was seen to feed by laying the side of its head to the ground."

In his 'Familiar History of Birds,' the Bishop of Norwich treats very pleasantly of the sparrow, as in the 'Journal of a Naturalist' does Mr. Knapp in his usual graphic manner. Bewick too waxes warm and eloquent in its defence against the sweeping denunciation of Buffon†.

THE GROSBEEK OR HAWFINCH, *Fringilla Coccothraustes*,  
Linn. (genus *Coccothraustes*, Briss.),

Is an occasional winter visitant to Ireland. A fine example in the collection of my friend, Wm. Sinclair, Esq., of Milltown, near Belfast, was shot some years ago in the neighbourhood of Hillsborough, county of Down. The Rev. G.

\* Mag. Nat. Hist., vol. v. p. 583.

† *Fringilla montana* appears in Templeton's 'Catalogue of Irish Vertebrate Animals' as "a doubtful native." To my ornithological friends and myself it is quite unknown.





Wood-Mason, James. 1891. "Phylum Appendiculata. Branch Arthropoda. Class Crustacea." *The Annals and magazine of natural history; zoology, botany, and geology* 8, 269–286.

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