

Birds.

Birds are choirs sent from above to fill the air with their sweet strains of music and to make everything seem joyous and pleasant. Birds may be heard from the first of Spring until the last of October singing continually. The birds of America are very numerous; as you are all very well acquainted with the different species I will not attempt to name them, lest by ignorance I should happen to leave out some of the most noted. But I intend to name a few as they come in my mind. The canary is regarded by competent judges as being the first in singing; the majority of them are at present brought from Germany in small willow cages. Their color is yellow, tipped on the tail, sometimes, with little black spots. They require to be kept very carefully and never to be handled unless they become very tame. The yellow-bird is a bird somewhat similar to the one just mentioned. Its color in spring is dark and by the last of Summer is a very brilliant yellow. Its song is not unlike that of the canary, but is not so sweet and continuous. Some young boys think that they are not doing wrong when they trap these beautiful singers. I neglected to say under the ~~name~~ ^{head of} the canaries that some people think that it is wicked to keep canaries ^{ies} penned up in such small a compass. I argue in a different way - if the birds are ^{caught} wild and put into cages it is just the same as depriving a

man of his liberties; but when they are hatched and brought up in a confined room or cage they ~~do~~ ^{know} not the pleasures of their wild brothers and sisters but are just as happy in their little cage as if they were hopping from tree to tree; but let me inform such boys that they are greatly mistaken on that subject. They would not like to be shut up in a room away from all play and amusement. When they trap these wild birds they are doing the same thing that ^{which} they would be very sorry if the same thing were done to them. If they would only remember the saying of the Bible "Do unto others (referring to man and beast) as you would they should do unto you", how much better would they get along in the world! As time will not admit I will not attempt to describe any other than the two ^{to which} ~~that~~ I have not given more than half ^{the attention} they deserve. What is more beautiful, in the country, in summer than to rise up early, take your seat under the shady boughs of some large tree, and listen to the numerous birds ^{as it were} throwing up their praises to the Almighty ^{as it were} for their protection through the past night. How happy and contented they look as they hop from limb to limb with perfect ease.

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A. Tweed

Extra Composition

June 16th 1863.