without such manifestations of its presence; but why these noisy calls are uttered is by no means clear; that they are emitted both when danger is near and when there is no cause for apprehension, I am certain. At this season the bird again becomes vigorous and bold, his flight is now dashing, and his turns into the hedge or among the glades of the copse are quick, bustling, and determined.

The Blackbird being a more stationary species than the Thrush, seldom removes from the garden or the wood in which it has taken up its abode. Great numbers occasionally arrive from the continent about the time of the coming of the Fieldfare. Whether these migrants do or do not leave our island again when the great vernal movement takes place among birds is somewhat uncertain.

To describe the nest and eggs of so common a bird is, in my opinion, so much useless writing; they have been described over and over again, from the time of Gilbert White to the popular 'History of British Birds,' by the Rev. C. A. Johns. Almost in every cottage garden the nest may be seen; and an examination of its greasy lining will be sufficient to distinguish it from the clay-plastered nest of the Thrush, just as its freckled olive eggs differ from those of that species.

Macgillivray, speaking of its food, states that in winter it "consists principally of snails, especially Helix aspersa and H. nemoralis, the shells of which it breaks by raising them in its bill and dashing them against a stone or other hard surface; it also occasionally breaks them by pecking against the spire, where the shell is much thinner. Like many other birds, however, its food is much varied. Thus in the stomach of one I found a great number of seeds and husks of Gramineæ, including wheat and oats; in that of another, coleopterous insects; in that of a third, coleoptera and seeds of various kinds; in that of a fourth, mollusca and fragments of shells; in that of a fifth, seeds, mollusca, and a few grains of gravel. Earthworms, larvæ, berries, and seeds of different kinds have been found in others that I have opened. It also greedily devours slugs, worms, and fruits. When gooseberries are in season you may see them feeding from sunrise to sunset, except when they betake themselves to a pond to wash. In winter they feed on the wild fruit of the hedges, and on slugs and worms in the pastures. The sides of hedges and walls are favourite places of resort at these times, for it there readily procures worms and snails. In hard weather it often eats the berries of the Hawthorn, which it swallows whole, and betakes itself to the cornyards, where it picks up seeds, chiefly on the ground."

On consulting the works of Selby and Yarrell, we learn that the Blackbird is generally distributed over England. Macgillivray states that it is equally abundant in every part of Scotland, even the Hebrides, but that, owing to the absence of sylvan vegetation, it does not breed in those islands; and Thompson says it is a common resident throughout the wooded districts of Ireland. On the continent of Europe it is as abundant as with us, and proceeds as far north as Norway and Sweden, and occasionally to Iceland; southwardly it occurs on the shores of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, and even beyond these waters, for I have seen skins from Persia, Asia Minor, the three provinces of Algeria, and other parts of North Africa; it also forms part of the avifauna of Madeira, the Azores, and the island of Teneriffe, where I found it abundant, and shot specimens; from further south than this I have never seen examples.

The two sexes differ considerably in outward appearance, the entire plumage of the male being coal-black, while his bare eyelid and his bill are of the richest orange, a hue which also pervades the inside of the mouth and throat during the breeding-season; the female, on the other hand, has the general plumage brown, and the throat grey, streaked with dark brown.

The Plate represents a fine adult male and a hen sitting on her nest, with its frequent accompaniment, the Honeysuckle, all of the natural size.