I do, the hand of protection to be held out to this very interesting species. That it is nearly omnivorous and certainly carnivorous we have abundant proofs; for it will pick a chicken-bone as clean as a parrot would, and will strive for mastery over all birds weaker than itself, and, if successful, will kill and eat them, or at least that most vital part the brain. Young birds fall an easy prey to it; and many are the instances recorded of its depredations among them. If placed in a cage with other small birds, it almost invariably kills them; and sometimes weak individuals of its own species have fallen victims. If shot at and only wounded, it fights and defends itself with the spirit and boldness of an ancient Spartan.

"Its food," says Macgillivray, "consists of insects, pupæ, larvæ, buds and seeds of various kinds, in search of which it sometimes betakes itself to the ground. It is chiefly on trees, however, that it is to be seen; and there it hops and skips with great alacrity, manifesting a constant cheerfulness, standing and hanging in every variety of position, and continually fluttering about in search of food in the crevices of the bark, and among the buds and leaves. Its flight is usually short, being merely from tree to tree, and is performed by a continuous flutter of the wings; but when necessary it can accomplish an extended excursion, and then flies with considerable undulation. It is not particularly shy, but may be easily approached within shot, although it is rather more observant of intruders upon its haunts than the other species of the genus, which are remarkably inattentive to appearances of danger."

The sites chosen for nidification are extremely various, and often very singular; for although the natural places for this purpose are a hole in a tree, a crevice in a rock, or an opening in a wall, it freely enters a deserted room, and has been known to pass through a hole in a cupboard and make its nest on one of the shelves; if a flower-pot be turned topsy-turvy, it is just as likely to select the interior for the situation of its future nest. Such sites, and the story of the pump, have been many times recorded in ornithological works: and I am sure they are all true; for I have myself seen a Tit's nest in the box and close to the piston-rod of a constantly used pump, the female sitting on which allowed the top to be taken off without evincing fear or distrust, that I might have an opportunity of witnessing the fact. This occurred at Preston Hall, in Kent; and the keeper in whose garden the pump was situated told me it was the third time the bird had nested there, and that two broods had been hatched in this remarkable situation. I have also frequently seen the Great Tits build within the deserted nests of the Jay, Magpie, and other large birds.

The sexes of the Great Tit are similarly coloured; but the markings of the female are somewhat less bold, and her tints are not quite so bright. The young, when leaving the nest, although bearing a general resemblance to the adults, have the white of the cheeks strongly tinged with yellow, as is the case with the young of the Coal and Blue Tits, but not of the Marsh-Tit, which belongs to another section of the *Paridæ*—the one to which the generic term *Pœcile* has been given.

The eggs are six or eight in number, very beautifully spotted with red on a white ground, and so nearly resemble those of the Nuthatch as not to be easily distinguished. The nest is sometimes composed of a quantity of compacted moss, feathers, hair, and other materials, but more generally of thickly matted rabbit-hair and wool, intermingled with green moss.

The Plate represents a male and a female, of the natural size, on a branch of a species of poplar, gathered when it was loaded with catkins, in Ravensbury Park, the seat of G. P. Bidder, Esq., at Mitcham.