

the Lesser Gulls have hoods of brown, and the Terns caps of glossy black, presenting a striking contrast to their coral-red feet; the Divers doff their brown dress for a chequered one of black and white; the Sparrow acquires a black bill, the Chaffinch and the Hawfinch blue ones; and the whole are now decked for their summer duties, after the performance of which they again resume the garb of winter, and retain it until the following spring.

Of the myriads of created beings which adorn our globe, birds must necessarily rank highly in the estimation of man, and be to him at all times objects of the greatest interest, inasmuch as they not only contribute in a hundred ways to his delight, but many of them to his sustenance. The buoyant Eagle, soaring in aerial evolutions towards the sun, elicits his admiration; and the rapid stoop of the Falcon excites his wonder. The Owl, which with noiseless flight crosses his path during its nocturnal prowlings, induces his surprise at the readiness with which it discerns the agile mouse and other small quadrupeds among the grass. If the fields attract him to roam in the daytime, the Lark and the Corn-Bunting are his companions; and he hears the voice of the Yaffle, proclaiming the approach of rain. If in the woods he is induced to stroll, the coo of the Pigeon strikes his ear, or the tapping of the Woodpecker arrests his attention, the songs of the Thrush, the Ouzel, the Blackcap, and other sylvan birds, with the Nightingale at their head, afford food to his mind and sweet music to his ear; the Crows, the Rooks, and the Daws attract his notice; and he does not fail to observe the difference in their cries, actions, and economies. In the neighbourhood of streams the bright meteor-like flash of the Kingfisher, the heavy flutter of the Moorhen, and the skimming flight of the Summer Snipe induce him to note how differently birds pass through the air, and to contrast the comparatively slow movements of the latter with the sweeping flight of the Swift, which nearly outstrips the wind. On the shores of the ocean a flood of new objects meet his gaze—the fairy-like Tern, the more robust Gulls, with Cormorants and many other aquatic species. In the marsh he hears the Snipe drum, the Bittern boom, and the plain-coloured Reed Warblers pour forth a succession of querulous sounds when intruded upon. While enjoying the invigorating air of the downs, though now deprived of the pleasure of seeing the stately Bustard, perchance his attention is arrested by the trippings of the Dotterel; the Stone-Plover may rise at his feet, and wing its way over the hill to a place of security; or the Wheatear and the Furze-Chat may attract his notice, the former by the whiteness of its rump, and the latter by being perched on the very top of a furze bush; and if it be autumn, the heavy, flapping flight of the Pewit will show him that its structure is not so well adapted for passing through the air as that of the sharp-winged Golden Plover.

In studying the denizens of our inland waters other opportunities for drawing a comparison will present themselves; he will not fail to remark the wondrous principle of adaptation which enables the frightened Grebe after its plunge to progress with the aid of its wings as rapidly beneath the surface as the Coot with