

climbing this distance and we passed on. The next nest was in a giant buttonwood, and up so high that it almost made one's head swim to look up to it. The tree itself, from the ground, would have been unclimbable, but growing under it was a water elm about two feet in diameter. The top of this tree just well reached the lower branches of the "syc," and by ascending it I was enabled to get over into the buttonwood, and then on up to the Flicker hole, containing the nest. Enlarging the cavity with the hatchet which I carried up in a strap around my waist, I secured the eggs, which were again five in number.

These are representative climbs, and the collector with a cool head, plenty of determination and hard muscles could secure many sets at the proper season along the Spoon river valley.

Suffice it to say that we secured two more sets on this trip, one of five and one of four. In each case the eggs we put into a mitten to which the fish-cord was attached, and then lowered to the ground. Upon blowing they appeared fresh or nearly so. I presented much the appearance of having been rolled in a flour-barrel. We arrived at home at sundown tired and very hungry, but happy and well satisfied with our afternoon's work.

Long live the pretty *Falco Sparverius!*

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## "GEORGE."

BY H. H. BRIMLEY, RALEIGH, N. C.

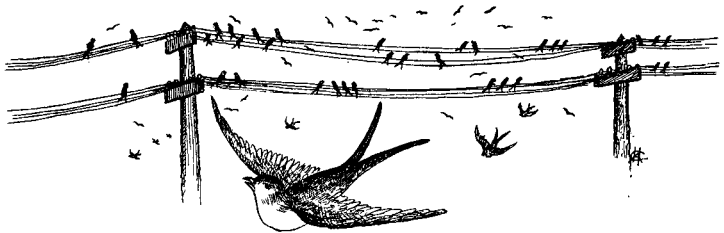
The death of his mother from "lead poisoning" caused George to be left an orphan at an early age. I found the youngster in a hollow tree, and, knowing his unfortunate circumstances, I carried him home and adopted him and he remained with me until he was well grown. I may as well state here that George was a bird—a Barred Owl—and that his mother was shot by myself before I knew of his existence.

When first taken he was a mere mass of long, soft down, dirty white in color, with a pair of large, staring, black eyes. After getting him safely to the ground, the problem arose of getting him home, the distance being several miles. After one or two

bad man to call upon. If I entered the barn in the morning without at once holding out my hand containing food for him to come and pick up as he sailed by, as was his custom, he would make a bee-line for my head and grab for my scalp with his claws as he flew over. As I could duck my head "darned quick" under these circumstances, he would repeat the attempt several times unless I scared him off.

He was not in the least afraid of me on ordinary occasions, but showed great uneasiness and fear at strangers, especially ladies.

One fatal day a trap containing fourteen live roof rats was brought us. Of these the five largest were skinned and their bodies given to George. The remaining nine, varying in size from half-grown to grown, were likewise given to him. The next day he did not seem hungry, having made quite an inroad into his rat-pile, neither was he at all sick. The following morning he lay dead on the floor beneath his usual perch, his body being quite warm, his plumage unruffled and showing no signs of any struggle. His death seemed to have been sudden and painless. I do not think his gorge of rats killed him. Possibly lead poisoning, caused by a diet of "*shot*" birds, laid him low, but I do not think so as he had shown no signs of sickness previously. I only know that he has gone, but his memory and his skin still remain.



trials I got him to perch on my left hand, and with my gun in my right, I carried him as far as I could in this cramped position, he sitting quietly and apparently needing all his powers to keep his balance. After a while I succeeded in persuading him to perch on my shoulder, and thus we finished the trip. He was placed in an empty barn and that was his home for the rest of his life.

For several days he was fed by hand on fresh meat and birds cut up into small pieces, but he soon found a way of feeding himself and would take an English Sparrow and bolt it whole, without removing a feather. With a bird the size of a Robin he would fly onto my hand, pick up the bird with one claw and fly back to his perch to discuss it. Then, standing on the unoccupied claw, he would raise the bird half-way to his mouth, bending his head to meet it, and proceed to pull out all the stiff wing and tail quills and partially pick the body. Still holding it in one-claw he would tear pieces off until the remainder was small enough to pass his gullet, and then down it went, whole, and he called for more.

His usual mode of salutation was by snapping his bill, and his method of signifying that "grub" would be acceptable was a combination of hissing and snapping.

The amount of food that George could consume in a day was a caution. Here are some of his bills of fare: 1—Three Catbirds and a Purple Gallinule. 2—Three Catbirds, a Whip-poor-will, Blue Grosbeak and Red-wing Blackbird. 3—The interior arrangements of three Gray Squirrels. 4—Five Cedar-birds. The birds mentioned were mostly (Catbirds excepted) specimens from which the skin had been removed, consisting of the whole body, with the exception of bones of legs, wings and skull.

A comical looking fellow was George. As he sat on his perch, staring with his great, black eyes at an intruder, he had an indescribable air of wisdom, and looked something like a caricature of an English judge in his wig of office. When exercised about the appearance of any object, he would duck his head, move it up and down and sideways, as if connected with his body by a flexible cord instead of a neck, always with his intensely surprised gaze fixed on whatever had first excited his curiosity.

He was curious and amusing, but, as he got grown, his demands for "grub" became so exorbitant that I began to see that it would not be possible to keep him much longer. He also got to be a