

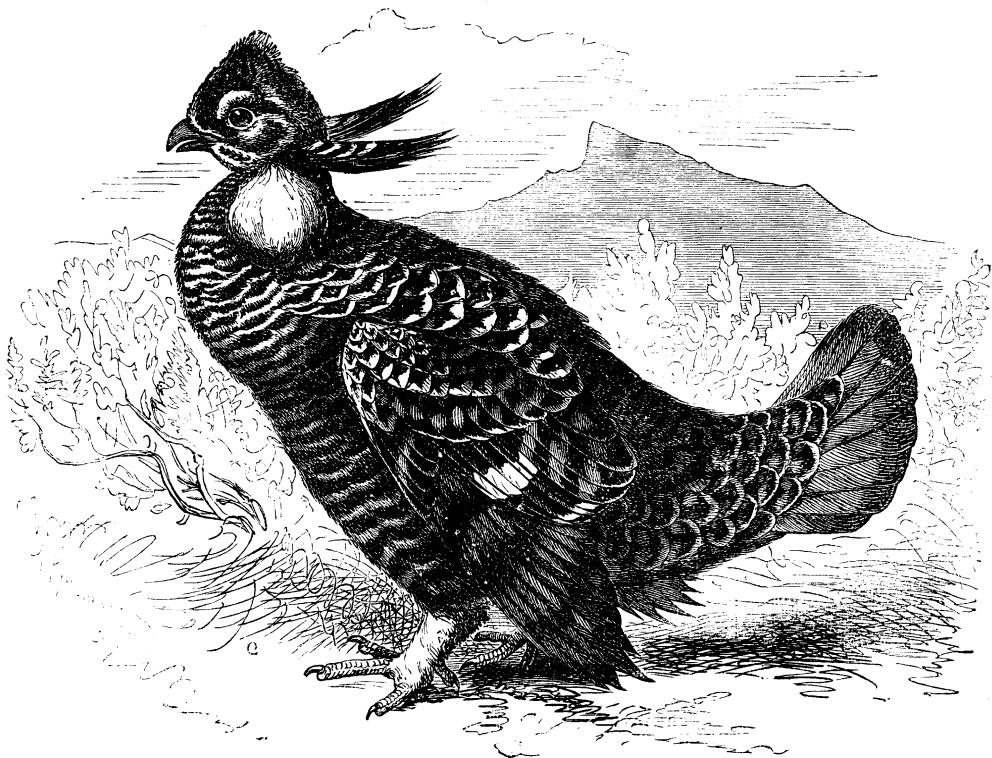
The Museum.

IN our last number of the Museum we gave an illustration, from the second volume of Mr. Darwin's "Descent of Man," of the influence, as he supposes, of sexual selection on the conformation of birds. He attributes the power of song in the male birds to their desire to please and attract the females. He says few more careful observers ever lived than Montagu, and he maintained that the "males of song-birds and of many others do not in general search for the female, but, on the contrary, their business in the spring is to perch on some conspicuous spot, breathing out their full and amorous notes, which, by instinct, the female knows, and repairs to the spot to choose her mate." Mr. Jenner Weir says that this is certainly the case with the night-

ingale. Bechstein, who kept birds during his whole life, asserts that "the female canary always chooses the best singer, and that in a state of nature the female finch selects that male out of a hundred whose notes please her most." In some birds the vocal organs differ greatly in the two sexes. In the *Tetrao cupido* (of which we copy Mr. Darwin's illustration) the male has two bare, orange-colored sacs, one on each side of the neck; and these are largely inflated when the male, during the breeding-season, makes a curious hollow sound, audible at a great distance. Audubon proved that the sound was intimately connected with this ap-

paratus, which reminds us of the air-sacs on each side of the mouth of certain male frogs, for he found that the sound was much diminished when one of the sacs of a tame bird

was pricked, and when both were pricked it was altogether stopped. The female has a somewhat similar, though smaller, naked space of skin on the neck; but this is not capable of inflation. The male of another kind of grouse (*Tetrao urophasianus*), while courting the female, has his bare yellow œsophagus inflated to a prodigious size, fully half as large as the body; and he then utters various grating, deep, hollow tones. With his neck-feathers erect, his wings lowered and buzzing on the ground, and his long pointed tail spread out like a fan, he displays a variety of grotesque attitudes. The œsophagus of the female is not in any way remarkable.



Tetrao Cupido—Male.