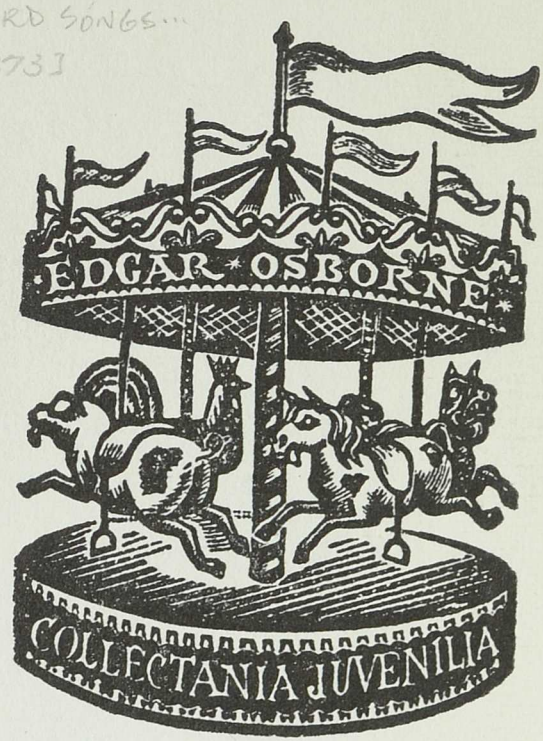
Bird Songs and Bird Pictures with Natural History Notes

(NS)
BIRD SONGS...
[1873]



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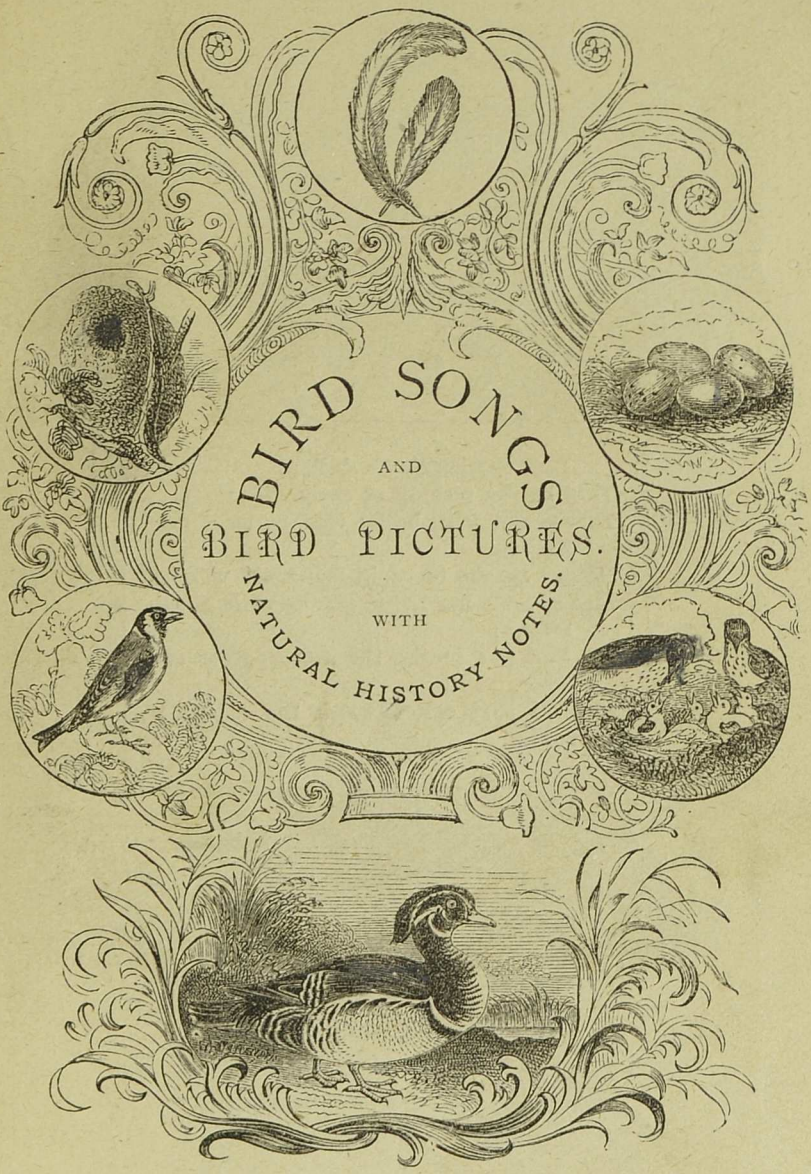
Arthur Percival Hill

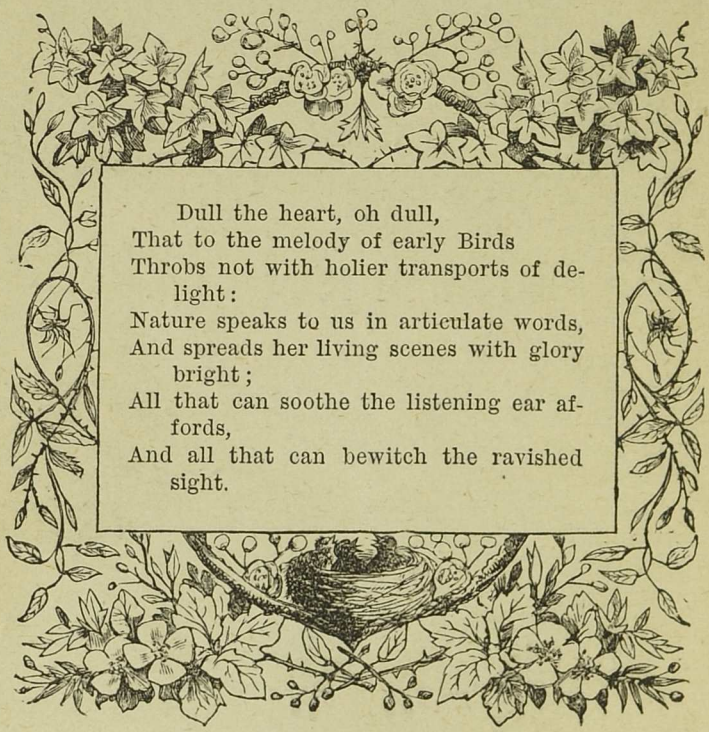
Walkerton

June 1874

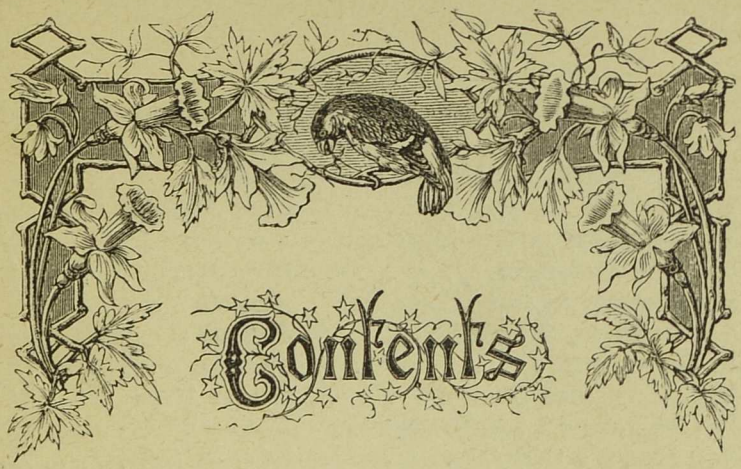
THE BLUE JAY.



London: The Religious Tract Society.



Dull the heart, oh dull,
That to the melody of early Birds
Throbs not with holier transports of delight:
Nature speaks to us in articulate words,
And spreads her living scenes with glory bright;
All that can soothe the listening ear affords,
And all that can bewitch the ravished sight.



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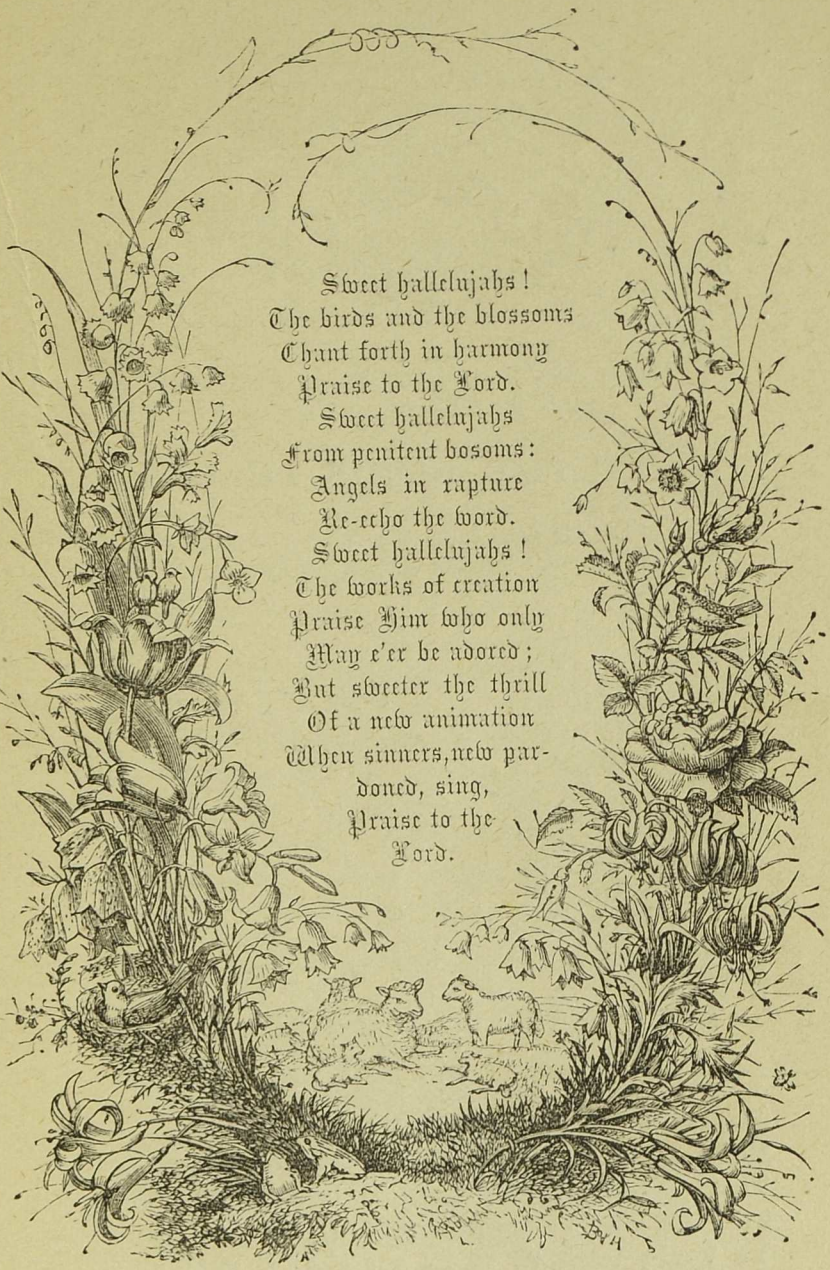
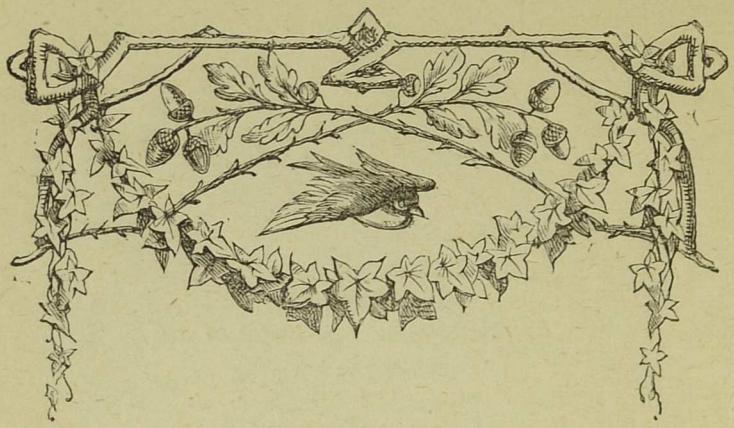
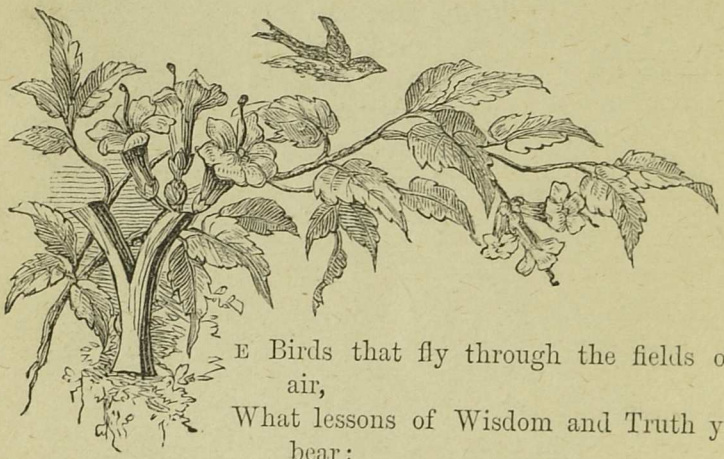


Sweet hallelujahs!
The birds and the blossoms
Chant forth in harmony
Praise to the Lord.
Sweet hallelujahs
From penitent bosoms:
Angels in rapture
Re-echo the word.
Sweet hallelujahs!
The works of creation
Praise Him who only
May e'er be adored;
But sweeter the thrill
Of a new animation
When sinners, new par-
doned, sing,
Praise to the
Lord.



WHAT THE BIRDS TELL US.

"A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter."—*Eccles.* x. 20.



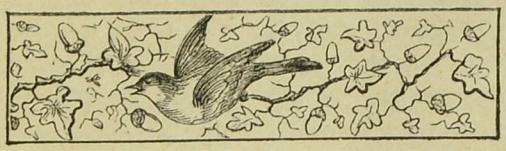
E Birds that fly through the fields of air,
What lessons of Wisdom and Truth ye bear;
Ye would teach our souls from the earth to rise;
Ye would bid us all grovelling scenes despise;
Ye would tell us that all its pursuits are vain,
That pleasure is toil, ambition is pain,
That its bliss is touched with a poisoning leaven;
Ye would teach us to fix our aim in Heaven.

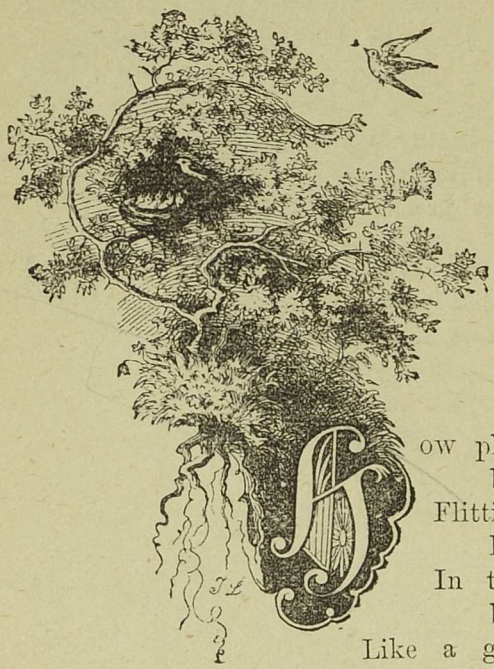
WHAT THE BIRDS TELL US.

Beautiful Birds of lightsome wing,
Bright creatures that come with the voice of Spring;
We see you arrayed in the hues of the morn,
Yet ye dream not of pride, and ye wist not of scorn!
Though rainbow splendour around you glows,
Ye vaunt not the beauty which Nature bestows:
Oh! what a lesson for glory are ye,
How ye preach the grace of Humility!

Swift Birds, that skim o'er the stormy deep,
Who steadily onward your journey keep,
Who neither for rest nor for slumber stay,
But press still forward, by night or day,
As in your unwearying course ye fly
Beneath the clear and unclouded sky;
Oh! may we, without delay, like you,
The path of duty and right pursue.

Sweet Birds, that breathe the spirit of song,
And surround heaven's gate in melodious throng,
Who rise with the earliest beams of day,
Your morning tribute of thanks to pay,
You remind us that we should likewise raise
The voice of devotion and song of praise;
There's something about you that points on high,
Ye beautiful tenants of earth and sky!





BIRDS IN SUMMER.

"The time of the singing of birds is come."

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Flitting about in each leafy tree;
In the leafy trees, so broad and tall,
Like a green and beautiful palace-hall,
With its airy chambers, light and boon,
That open to sun and stars and moon,
That open unto the bright blue sky,
And the frolicsome winds as they wander by.

They have left their nests in the forest bough,
Those homes of delight they need not now;
And the young and the old they wander out,
And traverse the green world round about;
And hark! at the top of this leafy hall,
How one to the other they lovingly call;
"Come up, come up!" they seem to say,
"Where the topmost twigs in the breezes sway!"

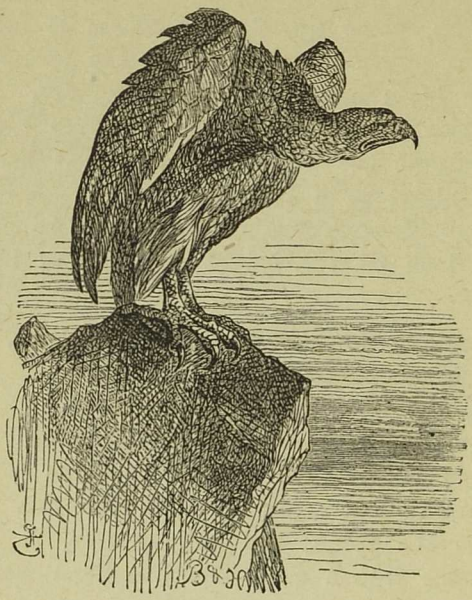
BIRDS IN SUMMER.

"Come up, come up, for the world is fair,
Where the merry leaves dance in the summer air!"
And the birds below give back the cry,
"We come, we come, to the branches high!"
How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Flitting about in a leafy tree;
And away through the air what joy to go,
And to look on the bright green earth below.

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Skimming about on the breezy sea,
Cresting the billows like silvery foam
And then wheeling away to its cliff-built home!
What joy it must be to sail, upborne
By a strong free wing, through the rosy morn,
To meet the young sun face to face,
And pierce like a shaft the boundless space!

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Wherever it listeth, there to flee;
To go, when a joyful fancy calls,
Dashing adown 'mong the waterfalls,
Then wheeling about with its mates at play,
Above and below, and among the spray,
Hither and thither, with screams as wild
As the laughing mirth of a rosy child!

What joy it must be, like a living breeze,
To flutter about 'mong the flowering trees;
Lightly to soar, and to see beneath
The wastes of the blossoming purple heath,
And the yellow furze, like fields of gold,
On mountain tops, on the billowy sea,
On the leafy stems of the forest tree,
How pleasant the life of a bird must be!



The Golden Eagle.

THE EAGLE.

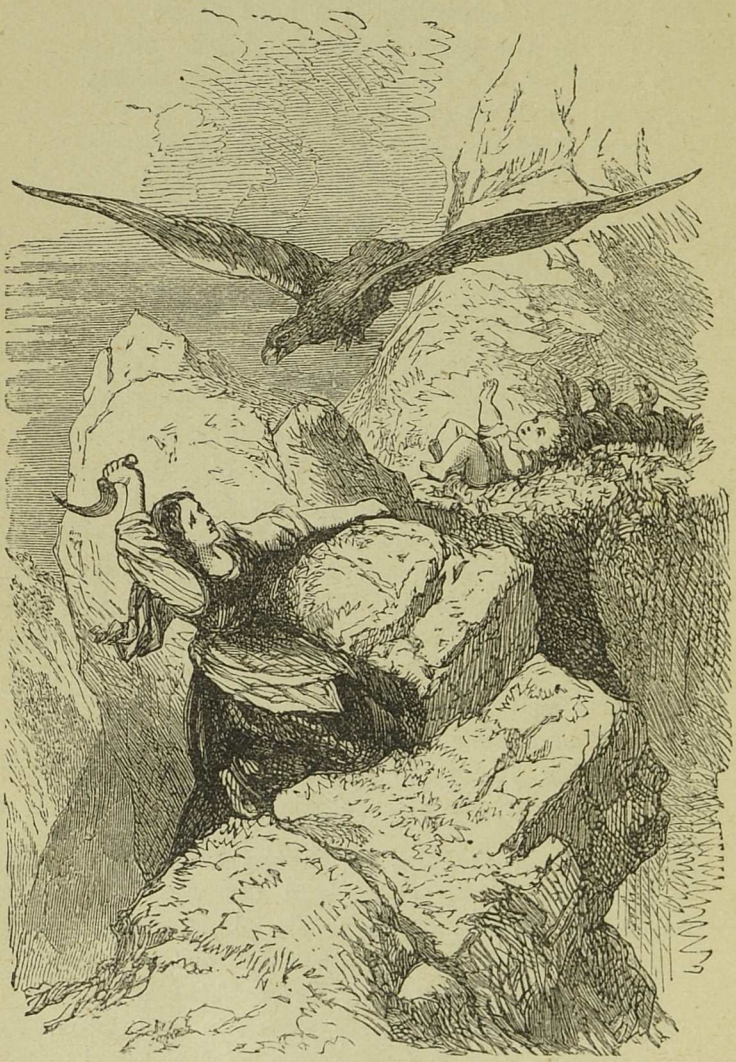
THERE'S a fierce gray bird with a sharpened beak,
With an angry eye and startling shriek,
That nurses her brood where the cliff-flowers blow
On the precipice-top, in perpetual snow—
Where the fountains are mute, or in secresy flow;
That sits where the air is shrill and bleak,
On the splintered point of a shivered peak,
Where the weeds lie close, and the grass sings sharp
To a comfortless tune like a wintry harp.
Bald-headed and stripped, like a vulture torn
In wind and strife, with her feathers worn,
And ruffled, and stained; while scattering bright,
Round her serpent-neck, that is writhing, bare,
Is a crimson collar of gleaming hair!

Like the crest of a warrior thinned in the fight,
And shorn, and bristling, see her! where
She sits in the glow of the sun-bright air,
With wing half-poised, and talons bleeding,
And kindling eye, as if her prey
Had suddenly been snatched away
While she was tearing it, and feeding!

A bird that is first to worship the sun
When he gallops in flame, till the cloud-tides run
In billows of fire, as his course is done:
Above where the fountain is gushing in light;
Above where the torrent is forth in its might,
Like an imprisoned blaze that is bursting from night!
Above where the silvery flashing is seen—
The striping of waters, that skip o'er the green,
And soft spongy moss, where the fairies have been,
Bending lovely and bright in the young Morning's eye,
Like ribbons of flame, or the bow of the sky:
Above that dark torrent, above the bright stream—
The gay ruddy fount with the changeable gleam,
Where the lustre of heaven eternally plays—
The voice may be heard
Of the Thunderer's bird,*
While her young are laid out in the rich red blaze,
And their winglets are fledged in his hottest rays.

Proud bird of the cliff where the barren yew springs,
Where the sunshine stays, and the wind-harp sings,
Where the heralds of battle sit pluming their wings!
A scream!—she's awake!—over hill-top and flood
A crimson light runs, like the gushing of blood:
Over valley and rock, over mountain and wood,
That bird is abroad in the van of her brood!

* In the ancient heathen mythology, the Eagle was sacred to Jove, or Jupiter, who was called "The Thunderer."



ON THE GOLDEN EAGLE'S ROCK.

THE EAGLE AND THE CHILD.

'Twas the Golden Eagle's Rock,
Craggy and wild and lone,
Where he sat in state, with his royal mate,
On his undisputed throne.

High on the dizzy steep
Did their blood-stained eyrie lie,
Where the white bones told who had robbed the fold
When the shepherd was not by.

Well might the spoilers gloat
At ease in their fortress gray,
For never had man, since the world began,
Clambered its height half-way!

And the Golden Eagle stood
Eyeing the noon-day sun,
Till the clamouring cry of his nestlings nigh,
Charged him with work undone;

And his mighty wings are spread,
And he sweepeth down chasms wide;
And his fierce eyes gleam by the mountain stream,
And he scours the hill's green side.

Then o'er a shady glen
Doth the bold marauder sail,
Where villagers gay hold a festal day
Down in their verdant vale,

THE EAGLE AND THE CHILD.

Apart from a joyous group
  A mother her darling bears;
With happy smiles at his baby wiles,
  His innocent mirth she shares.

Then she sits on the velvet sward,
  Shaded by trees at noon,
And rocks him to rest on her loving breast,
  Singing a low sweet tune.

Now on the soft green turf
  She watches her baby lie,
While over its head is a watcher dread,
  In that dark spot in the sky.

She kisses its cherub cheek,
  And leaves it awhile; ah, woe!
For broader above, o'er her gentle dove,
  That terrible spot doth grow!

Hushed was the peasants' mirth,
  And the stoutest they stood aghast;
And the wail of despair, it rent the air,
  As the Eagle o'er them past.

He has stolen the pretty child,
  All in its rosy sleep;
And bears it in might, with ponderous flight,
  Straight towards his castle-keep!

Whose is that up-turned face,
  White as the mountain snow?
Horror is there, and blank despair,
  Speechless and tearless woe,

Pale are those bloodless lips;
  But lo! in that mother's eye
There flasheth the light of Love's great might,
  Stronger than agony.

She darts from the wailing throng,
  Her coming is like the wind ;
The weeping loud of the noisy crowd
  Dieth away behind.

She rusheth o'er field and fell,
  Her footsteps at hindrance mock ;
She startles the snake in the rustling brake,
  And reacheth the Eagle's Rock !

Mother ! go home and weep !
  What canst thou further do ?
Over thy head, immense and dread,
  Frowneth the mountain blue.

Sorrow hath made her mad !—
  She scaleth the rough rock's side,
Now passing the edge of a shelving ledge,
  And now on a platform wide.

Onward and upward still,
  Scarce doth she pause for breath ;
Woman, beware ! thou scarce hast there
  "A step between thee and death !"

Scrambling up fearful crags,
  Still doth she higher go ;
Close let her cling ! the loose stones ring,
  Clattering to depths below.

First of the breathless crowds,
  Flocking in haste beneath,
A son of the wave, high-souled and brave,
  Dasheth across the heath.

He follows her upward flight,
  Yes, till his eyes grow dim ;
In the fierce storm-blast he has topped the mast,
  But *this* is no place for him !

So he must softly creep
  Down from the heights above;
His heart is true, but he never knew
  The might of a mother's love.

Higher she mounts! she climbs
  Where the wild goat fears to stand;
Death follows behind, fleet, fleet as the wind;
  Still she eludes his hand!

She reacheth the fearful wall
  Under the great rock's brow,
Where the ivy has clung, and has swayed and swung,
  From earliest time till now.

Clambering the net-work old
  Which its twining stems have wrought,
She wrestles in prayer with her Maker there;
  Doth she "fear God for nought"?

Niagara's awful flood
  Is spanned by a radiant bow;
And so joy springs, on her sunny wings,
  From the blackest tide of woe!

And the cry of that mother's heart
  Is heard, and her face is blest;
For, with rapture wild, she hath snatched her child
  Unharmed from the Eagles' nest!

Flapping their dusky wings,
  Fiercely the spoilers came;
And she heard their screams, and she saw the gleams
  That shot from their eyes of flame.

Like spirits of evil foul,
  They circled around her head;
Then yelling aloud, amazed and cowed,
  Down the steep rock they fled.

Close to her throbbing heart
  She bindeth her weeping child;
She wipeth its tears, and she quells its fears,
  Up in that region wild;

And she blesses the Mighty Hand
  That carried her there, and knows
That aid shall be lent through the dread descent,
  To that perilous journey's close.

Hush! down the rifted rock
  She beareth her burden sweet;
No might of her own maketh fast each stone
  Firmly beneath her feet.

She trusts, and her bleeding hands
  Safely the ivy grasp,
For a spirit of love from her God above
  Is strengthening it in her clasp.

Lower she comes, and sees
  Beneath her a mountain lamb,
That cautious and slow, to the vale below,
  Follows its careful dam;

And she tracketh, with thankful heart,
  The path of her gentle guide,
Whose feet will be found on the surest ground,
  Down the steep mountain's side.

Hark! from the plain beneath,
  Voices are rising loud;
The shout and the cheer, they have reached her ear,
  And she seeth the breathless crowd.

Louder, and louder still,
  Swelleth the welcome strain:
Oh, loving heart! thou hast done thy part;
  Return to thy home again.

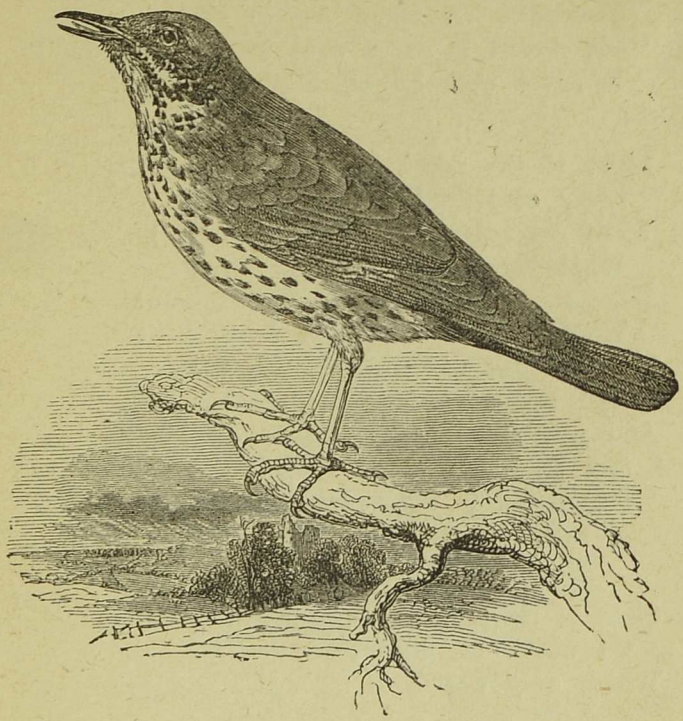
She reacheth the mountain's foot;
  Hurrah! for her task is o'er;
The deed she hath done hath a tribute won
  Of praises for evermore.

And a lesson she taught to all,
  Of energy, faith, and love:
Hast thou the right? Stand up and fight,
  Looking to God above!

Shame on ye! timid souls,
  Feeble for aught but ill;
Shall sin and shall woe waste this world below,
  And will ye lie sluggish still?

Wrest from their grasp the prey;
  Crush them, though cowards mock;
And if the heart quail and the courage fail,
  Think of the EAGLE'S ROCK!

There are two species of Eagles found in Great Britain—the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and the Sea Eagle (*Haliaetus albicilla*). The former is occasionally found in the mountainous districts of Ireland and Scotland, where it builds its rude nest on some inaccessible ledge or shelf of rock. It is a fierce and indomitable bird, and possesses great powers of endurance. When the ground is covered with snow it will remain for days without food, and bears the severity of the cold and the wintry winds, clinging to the pinnacle of the rock as though part of the rock itself. The Sea Eagle, sometimes called the White-tailed Eagle, is generally found on the sea-coast, but often takes long inland journeys in search of food.



The Song Thrush.

THE DRESSMAKER'S THRUSH.

OH, 'tis the brightest morning
Out in the laughing street,
That ever the round earth flashed into,
The joy of May to meet!
Floods of more gleaming sunshine
Never the eye saw rolled
Over pavement, and chimney, and cold gray spire,
That turns in the light to gold;—

And yet, as she wearily stitches,
  She hears her caged Thrush sing:
"Oh, would it never were May, green May!
  It never were bright, bright Spring!"

Light of the new-born verdure!
  Glory of jocund May!
What gladness is out in leafy lanes!
  What joy in the fields to-day!
What sunbursts are in the woodlands!
  What blossoms the orchards throng!
The meadows are snowed with daisy stars,
  And the winds are thrilled with song;—
And yet, as ever she stitches,
  She hears her caged Thrush sing:
"Oh, would it never were May, green May!
  It never were bright, bright Spring!"

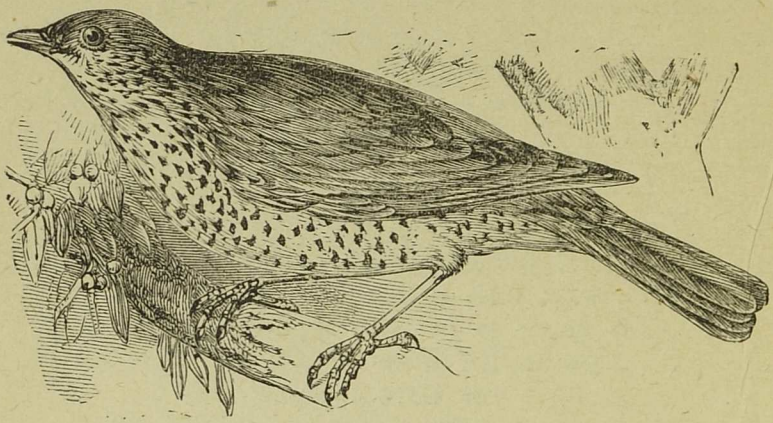
Close is the court and darkened
  On which her bare room looks,
Whose only wealth is its wall's one print,
  And its mantel's few old books;
Her spare cold bed in the corner,
  Her single worn, worn chair,
And the grate that looks so rusty and dull
  As never a fire was there;—
And there, as she stitches and stitches,
  She hears her caged Thrush sing:
"Oh, would it never were May, green May!
  It never were bright, bright Spring!"

Out is the gleaming sunshine,
  Out is the golden air;
In, scarce a gleam of the bright May sun
  Can, dulled and dim, reach there.

In darkness close and foul to be breathed,
  That blanches her cheek to white,
Her rounded features sharpen and thin,
  And dulls her once keen sight;—
And there, as she stitches and stitches,
  She and her caged Thrush sing:
"Oh, would it never were May, green May
  It never were bright, bright Spring!"

Days that are clouded and dull—
  Winter, though Winter bring
Cold, keen frost to her fireless room—
  Are dearer to her than Spring;
For then on her weary sewing,
  Less often her worst thoughts come
Of the pleasant lanes and the country air,
  And the field-paths trod by some;—
And so, as she wearily stitches,
  She and her caged Thrush sing:
"Oh, would it never were May, green May!
  It never were bright, bright Spring!"

The Song Thrush (*Turdus musicus*) is a well-known and general favourite. His song is by many considered one of the finest of all the melodies of the grove. He begins to sing as early as February, and is known by the names of the Thrush, Throstle, Mavis, and Gray-bird. The nest of the Thrush is composed of roots and mosses, with an inner layer of mud or dirt, so strongly kneaded that when dry it will hold water almost as well as an earthenware basin. Sometimes the bird uses strange materials for its nest. Mr. Wood mentions an instance where a Thrush carried off a lace cap that was hanging on a clothes-line, and worked it into the sides of the nest.



The Missel Thrush.

THE BARD OF SPRING.

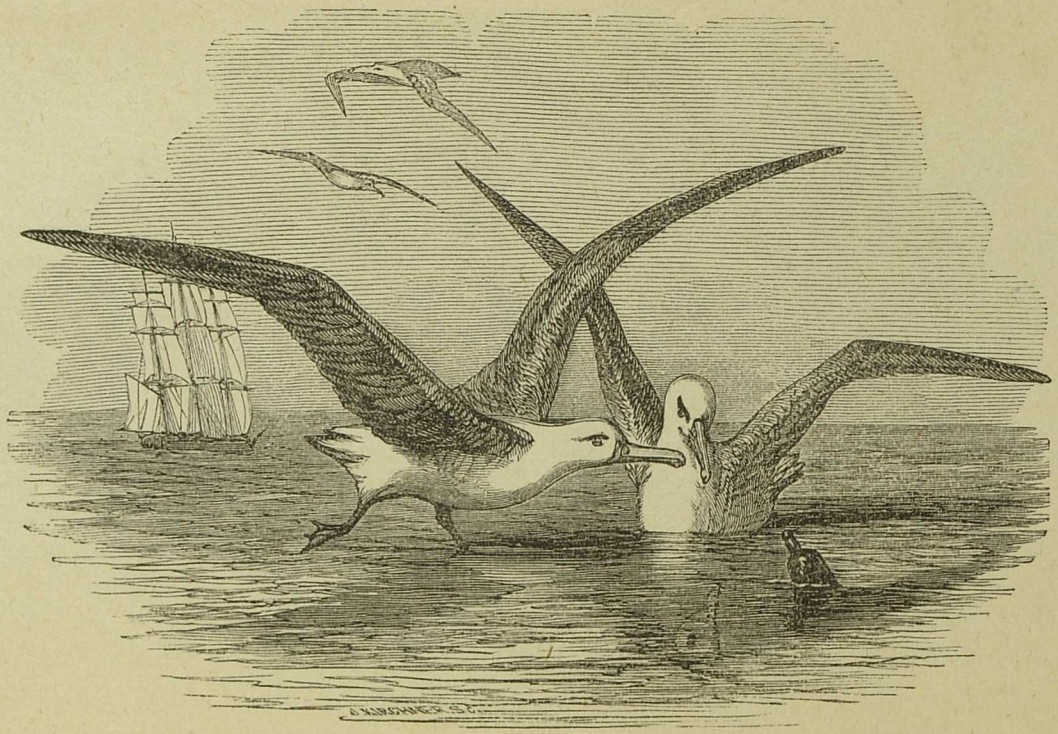
LOUD sings the Thrush from the mistletoe bough,
The first of the Bards of Spring;
And a glad refrain to a heart in pain
Is the song he loves to sing.
"Dark clouds, ye may frown,
And the storm may come down,
But the Spring will be here by-and-by!"

The snowdrops awake from the sleep of death,
As they hear his mellifluous strain;
In robes of white like the angels dight,
They whisper, "We live again;
For though the winds blow,
And fast falls the snow,
The Spring will be here by-and-by!"

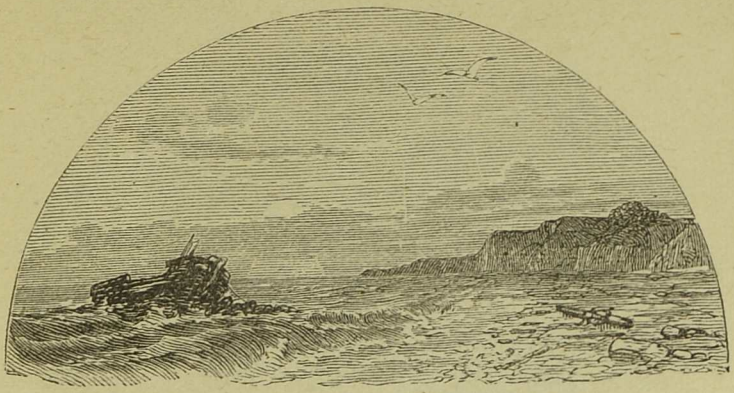
And, ravished by sounds of his rapturous voice
In the flash of the warm sunbeam,
With a laugh that makes the woods rejoice
Away breaks the meadow stream :
"Oh, oh !" sings the Thrush,
As the waters rush,
"The Spring will be here by-and-by !"

He lulls with a song the tempest high,
Which buffets the budding tree ;
And the rage of the March wind dies away,
Till it dimples with kisses the sea.
"Oh, oh !" sings the bird,
"My songs have been heard ;
So content I can live, love, and die."

The Missel Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) is the largest and boldest of the Thrush family, and is one of the earliest song-birds of the year. Its song is rich, clear, and ringing, and is often heard during the stormiest period of the year : in some parts of England it is called the Storm-Cock from this circumstance. It derives its name from its fondness for the mistletoe berries ; but it is also very partial to raspberries and cherries, and various insects. It is interesting to observe a Thrush collecting grubs and worms on lawns, particularly after showers have moistened the earth. "Watch an old Thrush pounce down on a lawn moistened with dew or rain. At first he stands motionless, apparently thinking of nothing at all ; his eye vacant, or with an unmeaning gaze. Suddenly he cocks his eye on one side, makes a glancing sort of dart with his head and neck, gives, perhaps, one or two hops, and then stops, again listening attentively, and his eye glistening with animation. His beak almost touches the ground—he draws back his head, as if to make a determined peck. Again he pauses, listens, hops, perhaps once or twice, scarcely changing his position, and pecks smartly on the sod ; then is once more motionless as a stuffed bird. But he knows well what he is about ; for, after another moment's pause, after having ascertained that all is right, he pecks away with might and main, and soon draws out a worm, which his fine sense of hearing had informed him was not far off, and which his hops and previous peckings had attracted to the surface."



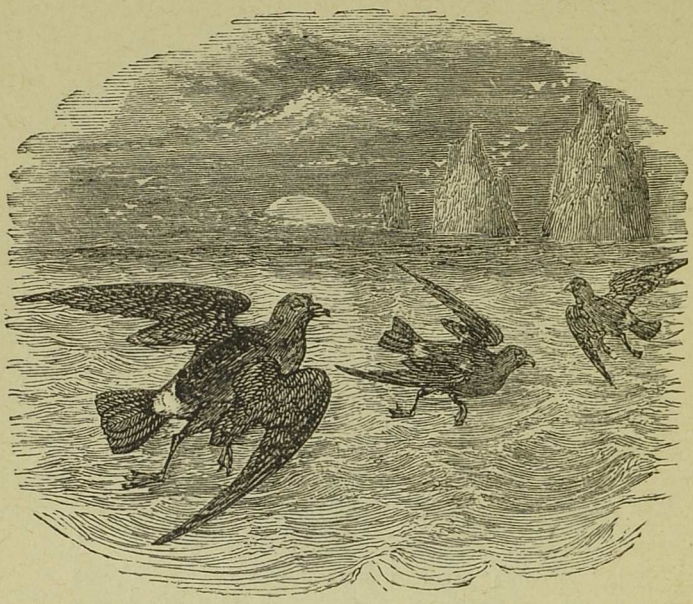
THE WANDERING ALBATROSS.



THE ALBATROSS.

BIRD of the stormy wave! Bird of the sea!
Wide is thy sweep, and thy course is free:
Cleaving the blue air, and brushing the foam,
Air is thy field of sport, ocean thy home.
Bird of the sea! I could envy thy wing;
O'er the blue waters I mark thy glad spring;
I see thy strong pinions as onward they glide,
Dashed by the foam of the white-crested tide.
Bird of the wave! thou art but for a day;
Ocean and earth must alike pass away;
Why should I see thee with envious eye,
When my sweep is more wide, and my course is more high?
Yet if my thoughts on earth's pleasures are bent,
If my desires in this low world are pent;
Poor little bird! I may envy thee still,
For the end of thy being 'tis thine to fulfil.

The Albatross (*Diomedea exulans*) is possessed of wonderful powers of wing, sailing along for days together without requiring rest, and, perhaps, sleeping on the wing. Its flight is so easy that it seldom flaps its wings, but remains poised upon its extended pinions. It is principally found in the southern seas, where, like the Petrel, it follows ships for the sake of food. It is often angled for by sailors with a hook in a piece of meat, and caught like a fish.



THE STORMY PETREL.

A THOUSAND miles from land are we,
Tossing about on the roaring sea;
From billow to bounding billow cast,
Like fleecy snow on the stormy blast:
The sails are scattered abroad like weeds,
The strong masts shake like quivering reeds,
The mighty cables, and iron chains,
The hull, which all earthly strength disdains,
They strain and they crack, and hearts like stone
Their natural hard proud strength disown.

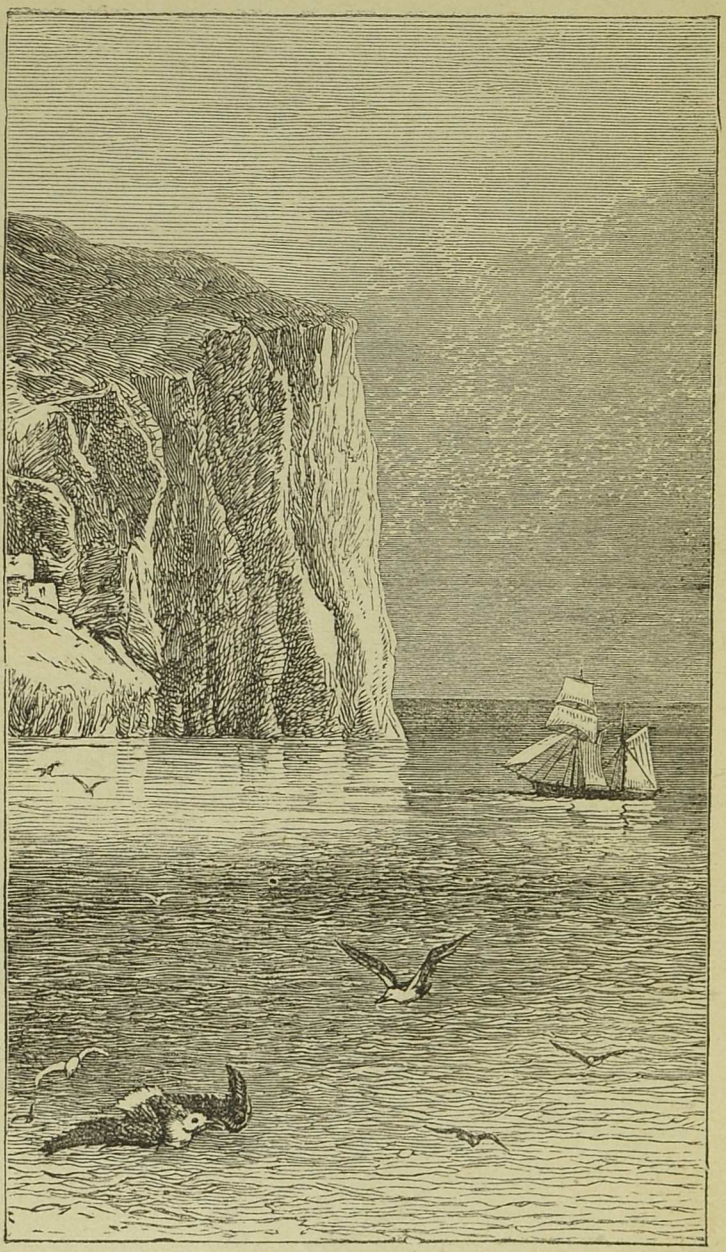
Up and down!—up and down!
From the base of the wave to the billow's crown,
And amidst the flashing and feathery foam,
The Stormy Petrel finds a home—

THE STORMY PETREL.

A home, if such a place may be,
For her who lives on the wide, wide sea,
On the craggy ice, in the frozen air,
And only seeketh her rocky lair
To warm her young, and to teach them to spring
At once o'er the waves on their stormy wing!

O'er the deep!—o'er the deep!
Where the whale, and the shark, and sword-fish sleep.
Outflying the blast and the driving rain,
The Petrel telleth her tale—in vain;
For the mariner curseth the warning bird
Which bringeth him news of the storm unheard!
Ah! thus does the prophet of good or ill,
Meet hate from the creatures he serveth still:
Yet *he* ne'er falters: so, Petrel, spring
Once more o'er the waves on thy stormy wing!

The Stormy Petrel (*Thalassidroma pelagica*), the smallest web-footed bird known, is chiefly found on the northern parts of our coast: it is very abundant in the Orkneys and Hebrides, where it breeds in holes in the ground, or in the clefts of the rocks. Its whole length is not quite six inches; the stretch of the wings is fully fifteen. Roving over the greater part of the Atlantic, it feeds on small fish and the marine insects which are found about the extensive masses of seaweed that float on the surface of the ocean. It will keep in company with a ship for many days, playing about the vessel, skimming gracefully along the surface as though literally walking on the water, appearing to run up and down the billows, aided by its outstretched wings. It is on this account they have been called Petrels, or "little Peters," in allusion to that remarkable incident in the life of the apostle, who, at the command of the Saviour, walked on the waves to go to meet the Lord. The sailors also call them "Mother Carey's chickens," and believe that their coming portends a storm.



A PLEA FOR THE SEA-BIRDS.

STAY now thine hand!
Proclaim not man's dominion
Over God's works by strewing rocks and sand
With sea-birds' blood-stained plumes and broken pinion.

Oh, stay thine hand!
Spend not thy days of leisure
In scattering death along the peaceful strand
For very wantonness, or pride, or pleasure.

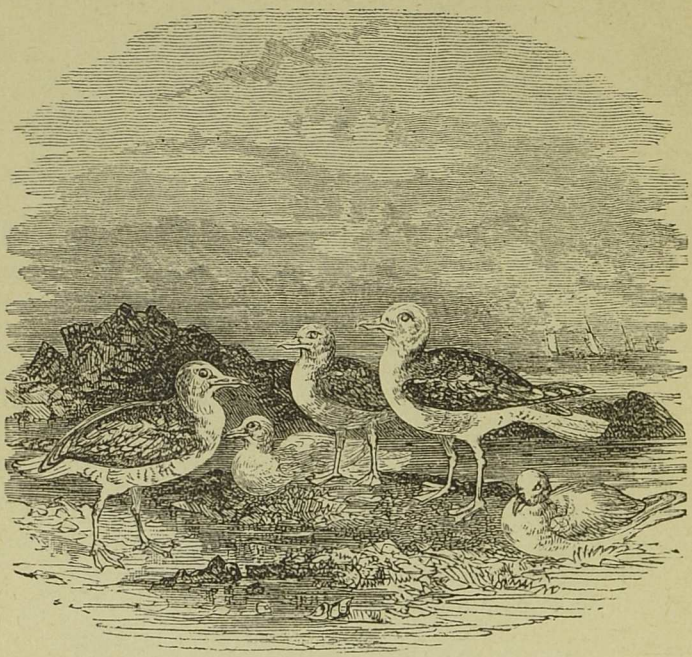
For *bird's sake*, spare!
Leave it in happy motion
To wheel its easy circles through the air,
Or rest and rock upon the shining ocean.

For *man's sake*, spare!
Leave him this "thing of beauty,"
To glance and glide before him everywhere,
And throw a gleam on after days of duty.

For *God's sake*, spare!
He notes each sea-bird falling,
And in Creation's groans marks its sad share,
Its dying cry—for retribution calling.

Oh, stay thine hand!
Cease from this useless slaughter;
For though kind Nature from the rocks and sand
Washes the stains each day with briny water,

Yet on thine hand,
Raised against God's fair creature,
Beware lest there be found a crimson brand
Indelible by any force of Nature.



Black-backed Gulls.

SEA-BIRDS.

My way is on the bright blue sea,
My sleep upon its rocking tide;
And many an eye has followed me
Where billows clasp the worn sea-side.

My plumage bears the crimson blush,
When ocean by the sun is kissed;
When fades the evening's purple flush,
My dark wing cleaves the silver mist.

Full many a fathom down beneath
The bright arch of the splendid deep,
My ear has heard the sea-shell breathe
O'er living myriads in their sleep.

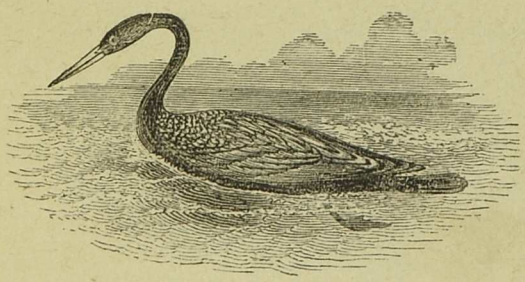
They rested by the coral throne,
  And by the pearly diadem,
Where the pale sea-grape had o'ergrown
  The glorious dwellings made for them.

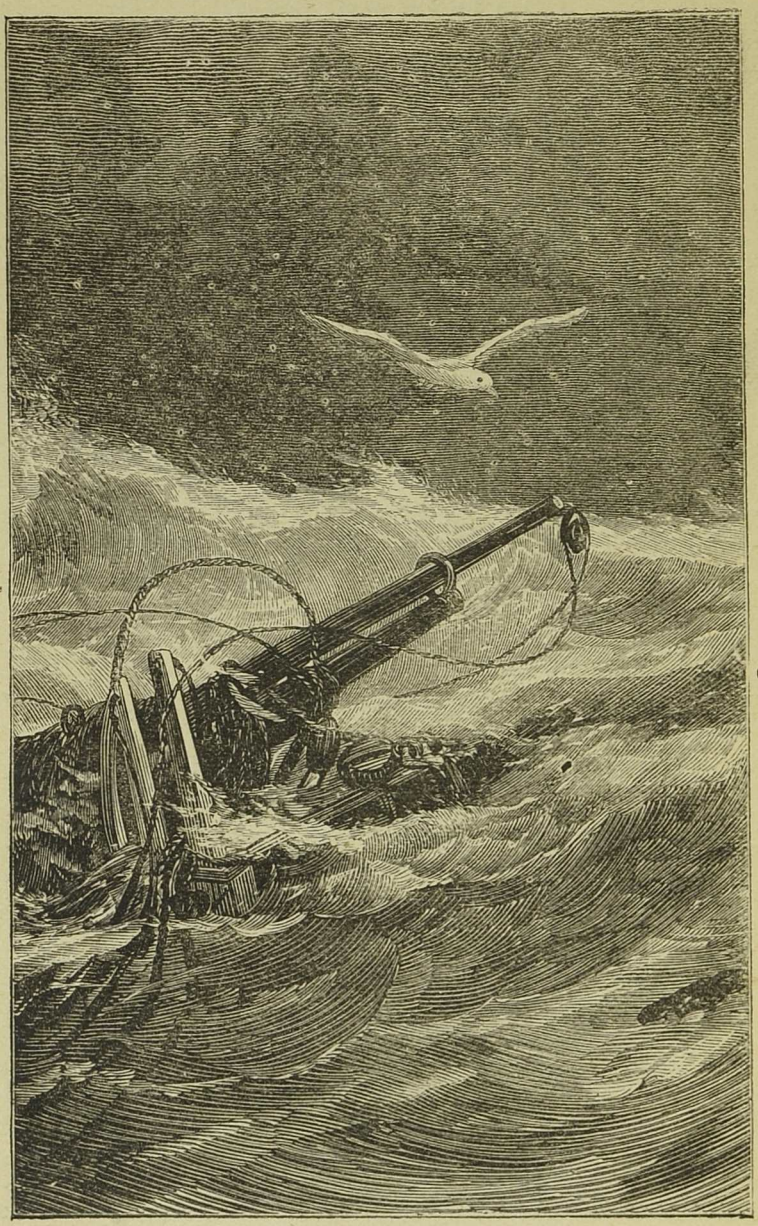
At night upon my storm-drenched wing,
  I poised above a helmless bark,
And soon I saw the shattered thing
  Had passed away and left no mark.

And when the wind and storm had done,
  A ship, that had rode out the gale,
Sunk down—without a signal gun,
  And none was left to tell the tale.

I saw the pomp of day depart—
  The cloud resign its golden crown,
When to the ocean's beating heart
  The sailor's wasted corse went down.

Peace be to those whose graves are made
  Beneath the bright and silver sea!
Peace that their relics there were laid
  With no vain pride and pageantry.





THE SEAGULL.

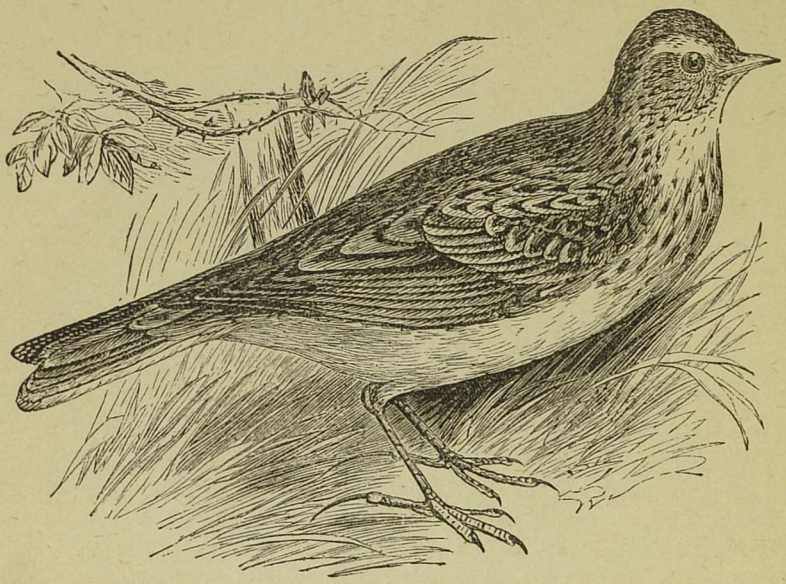
N the summer breeze,
O'er the azure seas,
Or where the breakers foam,
The scream is heard
Of this ocean bird,
That loves the wild waves to roam.

In a path of light
On the waters bright,
'Neath the stars that gem the sky,
Its piercing note
Is heard to float,
Like an orphan's wailing cry.

And when the wave
Awes the heart of the brave,
As it rolls o'er the stricken mast;
'Midst thrilling cries,
And prayers and sighs,
Is heard the bird in the blast.

Though winds may blow,
And waters flow,
Its heart knows not a fear;
For let the deep
Its revels keep—
It soars to a higher sphere.

And so may we,
Like this bird of the sea,
When our souls are tempest driven,
From waves of strife
Of the sea of life
Ascend to a stormless heaven.



THE SKYLARK.

BIRD of the wilderness
Blithesome and cumberless;
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
Oh to abide in the desert with thee!

Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

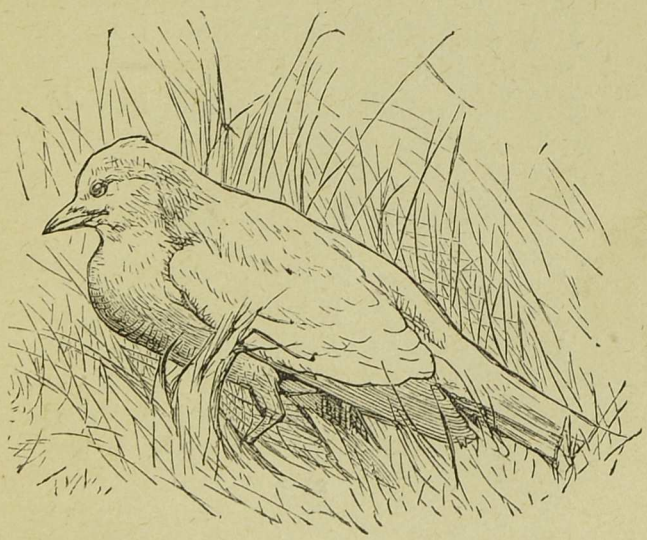
O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,

THE SKYLARK.

Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!

Then when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
Oh to abide in the desert with thee!

The Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) is the best known of the Lark family. It is a native of our land, and begins its song early in Spring and continues its musical effort for nearly eight months. Skylarks invariably rest upon the ground, owing to the peculiar construction of their hind claws, which are very long and straight. They also build their nests on the ground, which exposes them to many dangers. The strong attachment of the parent birds for their young is well-known; they will scarcely leave the nest to avoid the mower's scythe, and after the young are hatched, their watchfulness and care seem to increase. Instances are recorded of the Skylark moving its eggs, and even its young, under the fear of danger.



THE SKYLARK'S PREACHING.

NOT o'er a breezy English hill,
The little Lark was singing;
Not o'er its moorlands lone and still,
Or golden corn upspringing,
But far away across the sea,
Upon a wild Australian lea.

Not rising up, heaven's heights to win,
Scarce seen but only heard;
No! shut by cruel cage-bars in,
A weary, captive bird,
Weary, yet loud and clear and strong
He poured his happy English song.

How came he there? A widow old,
With bent and aged head,
Had followed those who sought for gold
To seek her daily bread.
Her Skylark and her Bible blest,
The only treasures she possest.

Across the seas, in cottage rude
She lived with toil and pain,
And the Skylark cheered her solitude
With his own familiar strain.
Lone was she? nay, for crowds drew near
Of hard, rough men, that strain to hear.

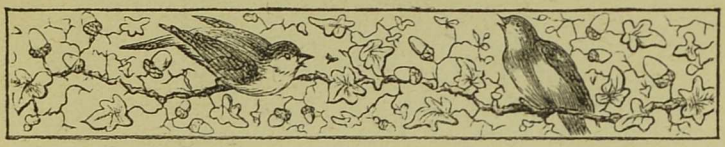
They offered goods, they offered gold,
  The widow's heart was true;
"I will not sell him though I'm old,
  And poor and needy too,
But you may come on Sabbath days,
'Twill do you good, that song of praise."

Alas! they had no house of prayer,
  The exiles' lot was dark;
So, week by week, they gathered there
  To listen to the Lark.
He sang of England's daisied sod,
Of home, of childhood, and of God.

And holier, gentler thoughts awoke
  In hearts long seared and dry,
And the Skylark's Sabbath preaching spoke
  Like a message from on high.
And better men, the week along,
Were the diggers for that Lord's-day song.

Oh, if God thus to the fowls of the air
  Hath given a work to do,
Oh, little Lark! how shall *we* dare
  To be to *ours* untrue?
Unconscious, thou wert faithful; so,
Conscious, may we *as* faithful grow!

To wait for some great thing no need;
  God owns the small, the weak;
And our daily life, if lived indeed,
  For God and heaven may speak.
And He can make our common ways
Breathe forth like thee a song of praise.

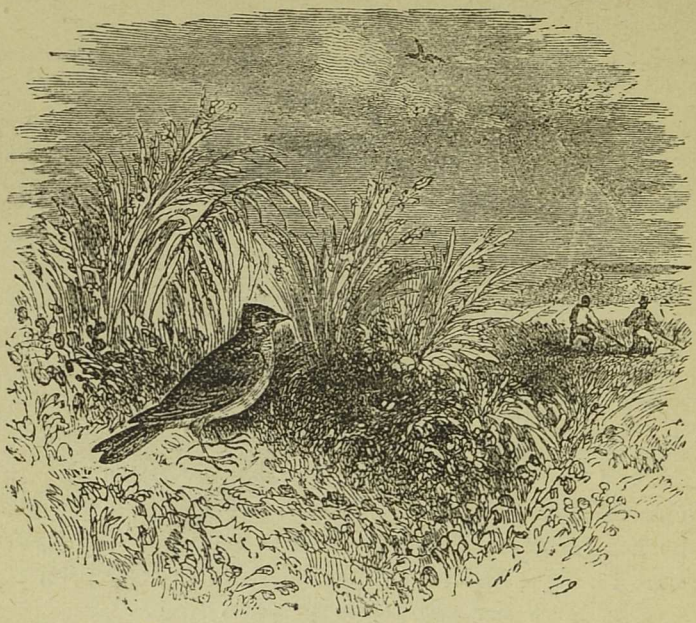


THE SKYLARK'S SONG.

How sweet is the song of the Lark as she springs
To welcome the morning with joy on her wings!
As higher she rises, more sweetly she sings,
And she sings when *we* hear her no more.
When storms and dark clouds veil the sun from our sight,
She has mounted above them; she shines in his light;
There far from the scenes that disturb and affright,
She loves her gay music to pour.

It is thus with the Christian; he sees from afar
The Dayspring appearing, the bright Morning Star;
He quits this dark valley of sorrow and care
For the land whence the radiance is given:
He sings on his way from this cloud-covered spot,
The swifter his progress the sweeter his note;
When *we* hear it no longer the song ceases not—
It blends with the chorus of heaven.

Nothing can be more pleasing than to see the Skylark warbling on the wing; raising its note as it soars, until it seems lost in the immense height above us; the note continuing, the bird itself unseen: to see it then descending with a swell as it comes from the clouds, yet sinking by degrees as it approaches its nest,—the spot where all its affections are centred—the spot which has prompted all this joy. "Pretty bird!" says an old writer, "singing most sweetly and never ceasing his pleasant ditty while he hovereth aloft, as if he were there gazing into the glory of the sun; but is suddenly silenced when he falleth to the earth. So is the frame of the soul most delectable and divine while it keepeth in the view of God by contemplation; but, alas! we make there too short a stay, and down again we fal and lay by our music."



UP WITH THE LARK.

ONE morning awake, in the still daybreak,
I saw the first sun rays beaming;
The hallowed light woke thoughts of delight
Far better than idle dreaming.
And I saw from its nest, with throbbing breast,
A bird to the blue sky soaring;
And it seemed each note from its quivering throat
Was the song of Love's outpouring.
But Conscience said, as I lay on my bed,
"Why wilt thou take no warning?
What! seest thou not what joys are for thee
When up with the Lark in the morning?"

"Why let the sun's best work be done
In the fields 'mong the fresh young flowers?
What! seest thou not how precious may be
The joys of these wasted hours?

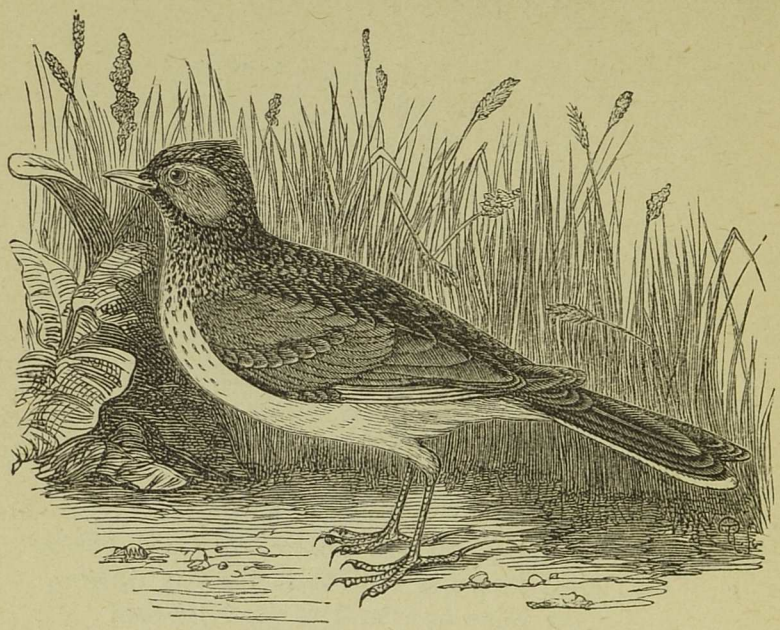
For as the Spring will fragrance bring,
  And tints to the roses fair,
So strength to the weak and health to the cheek
  Are brought by the morning air."
This Conscience said, as I lay on my bed,
  "Wherefore God should be adorning
So early the earth, if it is not worth
  The first love-thoughts of the morning?"

Then up with the Lark, if its song has stirred
  A single reproach in your bosom;
Be up with the sun, when its light hath begun
  To bless the bird and the blossom;
For whilst so simple a thing as a song
  Seems to make e'en the dewdrops gleam brighter,
What! canst thou not bless some heart in distress,
  And make thine own burdens grow lighter?
For happy thou'lt be, if with gratitude free,
  The habits of indolence scorning,
Thy prayers shall arise to the glorious skies,
  Like the Lark to Heaven's gate in the morning.

There are three or four species of Larks, of which the chief is the Skylark—that bird whose joyous carol charms our ears and gladdens our hearts; the loved herald of the morn; sung by our great poet as such—

"Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins to rise . . . . ."

On quivering wing the bird rises, almost perpendicularly, and by successive springs, mounting high and yet higher, singing as he goes, till he is lost from our sight; yet so powerful his voice, that its wild ecstatic strain, filling the air with its glad melody, is heard distinctly when the strained eye can follow its course no longer. Poised aloft, he continues to pour forth his thrilling music in rapturous gushes; till again descending he gradually suppresses his song, and abruptly closes it on reaching the ground. There is, perhaps, no sound in all Nature's chorus so expressive of joy as this song.



THE CAGED SKYLARK.

'Twas to a crowded London court
Where seldom bird has sung,
I saw a little Skylark brought,
And 'neath a window hung.

Poor bird! thought I, poor trembling bird!
From pleasant fields to come,
Where only cheerful sounds are heard,
To such a darkened home.

Thick woods and Nature's fairest flowers
They welcome were at dawn,
And blithely passed thy noontide hours,
Nestled in waving corn.

Too plainly shows that drooping wing
The past is not forgot;—
How can thy gaolers bid thee sing
With such a prisoner's lot?

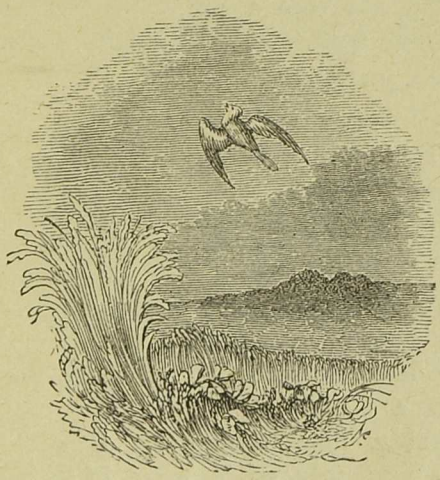
Just then the sun upon the wall
  Glimmered in fitful rays,—
The Skylark from his dungeon small
  Trilled out a song of praise,—

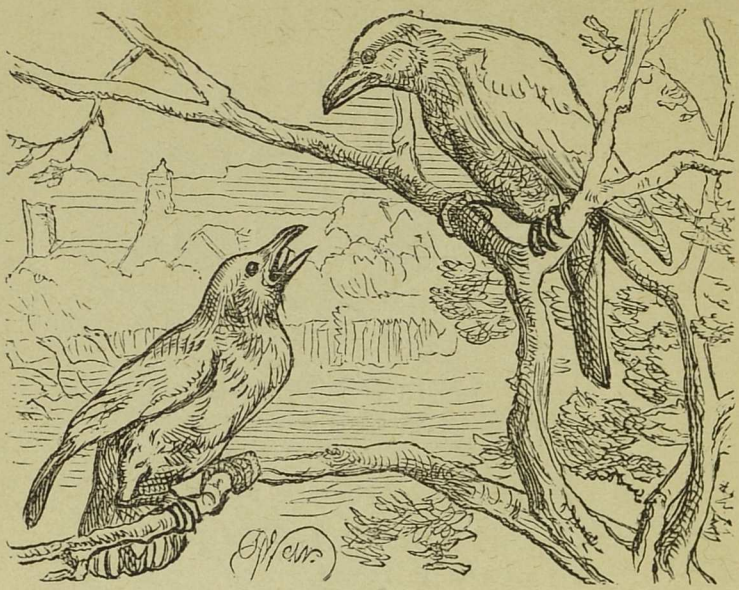
A song so full, and true, and sweet
  That a poor crippled boy,
Held captive in that narrow street,
  Clapped his thin hands for joy.

Oh bird, that with so little here,
  For one small blessing given,
In gratitude, full, free, and clear,
  Could send such thanks to heaven !

Teach me, when earthly troubles press,
  'Tis weakness to repine,
Since e'en in sorrow I can bless
  A darker lot than mine.

So in each good which glads my day
  A wearier heart may share,
And like the sun, which caused thy lay,
  Shine on reflected there.





WHAT CAME OF DISOBEDIENCE.

A PAIR of steady Rooks
Chose the safest of all nooks,
In the hollow of a tree, to build their home;
And while they kept within,
They did not care a pin
For any roving sportsman who might come.

Their family of five
Were all happy and alive,
And Mrs. Rook was careful as could be
To never let them out
Till she looked all round about
And saw that they might wander far and free.

She had talked to every one
Of the dangers of a gun,
And fondly begged that none of them would stir
To take a distant flight,
At morning, noon, or night,
Before they prudently asked leave of her.

But one fine sunny day,
Toward the end of May,
Young Tommy Rook began to scorn her power,
And said that he would fly
Into the field close by,
And walk among the daisies for an hour.

"Stop, stop!" she cried, alarmed,
"I see a man that's armed,
And he will shoot you, sure as you are seen;
Wait till he goes, and then,
Secure from guns, and men,
We all will have a ramble on the green."

But Master Tommy Rook,
With a very saucy look,
Perched on a twig, and plumed his jetty breast;
Still talking all the while,
In a very pompous style,
Of doing just what he might like the best.

"I don't care one bit," said he,
"For any gun you see;
I am tired of the cautions you bestow;
I mean to have my way,
Whatever you may say,
And shall not ask when I may stay or go."

"But, my son," the mother cried,
"I only wish to guide,
Till you are wise, and fit to go alone;
I have seen much more of life,
Of danger, woe, and strife,
Than you, my child, can possibly have known.

"Just wait ten minutes here,
Till that man disappear,
I am sure he means to do some evil thing;

I fear you may be shot,
If you leave this sheltered spot,
So, pray, come back, and keep beside my wing."

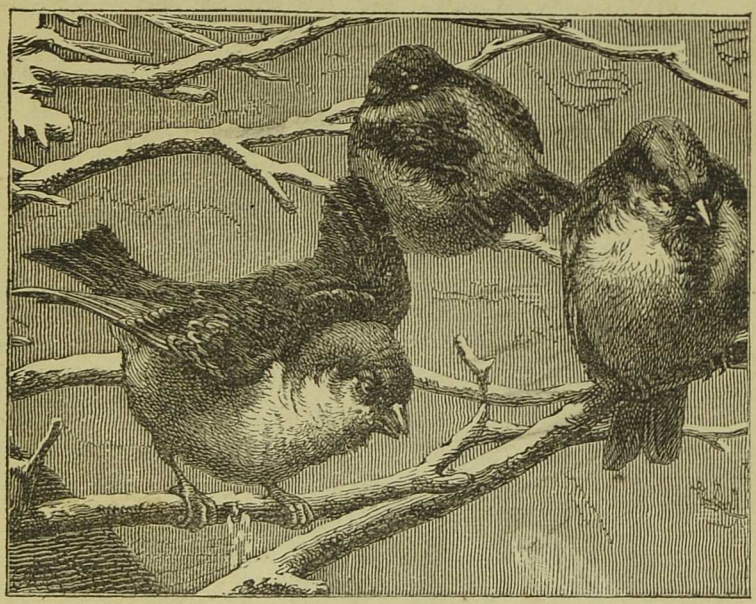
But Master Tommy Rook,
Gave another saucy look,
And chattered out, "Don't care! don't care! don't care!"
And off he flew with glee,
From his brothers in the tree,
And lighted on the field so green and fair.

He hopped about and found
All pleasant things around;
He strutted through the daisies—but, alas!
A loud shot—Bang!—was heard,
And the wounded silly bird
Rolled over, faint and dying, on the grass.

"There! there! I told you so,"
Cried his mother in her woe,
"I warned you with a parent's thoughtful truth;
And you see that I was right,
When I tried to stop your flight,
And said you needed me to guide your youth."

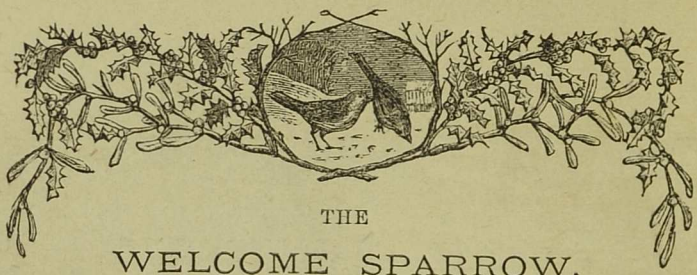
Poor Master Tommy Rook
Gave a melancholy look,
And cried, just as he drew his latest breath,
"Forgive me, mother dear,
And let my brothers hear
That disobedience caused my cruel death."

Now when his lot was told,
The Rooks, both young and old,
All said he should have done as he was bid;
That he well deserved his fate;
And I, who now relate
His hapless story, really think he did.



THE SPARROW'S TEXT.

A SPARROW lighted chirping on a spray
Close to my window, as I knelt in prayer,
Bowed by a heavy load of anxious care.
The morn was bitter, but the bird was gay,
And seemed by cheery look and chirp to say,—
"What though the snow conceals my wonted fare,
Nor I have barn or storehouse anywhere,
Yet I trust Heaven ev'n on a Winter's day."
That little bird came like a winged text
Fluttering from out God's Word to soothe my breast
What though my life with wintry cares be vext,
On a kind Father's watchful love I rest;
He meets *this moment's need*, I leave the *next*,
And always trusting shall be always blest!



THE

WELCOME SPARROW.

GLAD to see you, little bird,
'Twas your pretty chirp I heard:
What did you intend to say?—
"Give me something this cold day?"

That I will, and plenty too;
All these crumbs I saved for you,
Don't be frightened—here's a treat:
I will wait and see you eat.

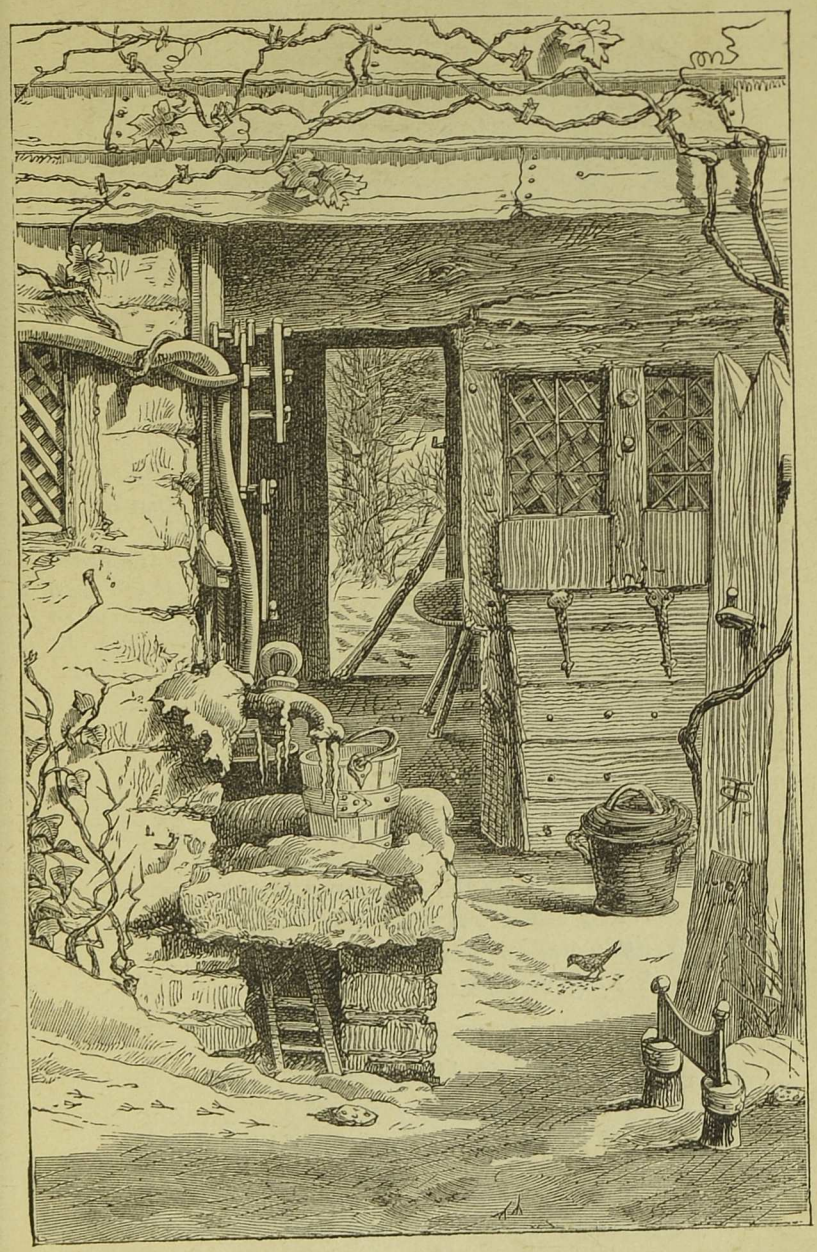
Frost and snow have made you bold;
I'll not hurt you, though I'm told
There are many reasons why
Every Sparrow ought to die.

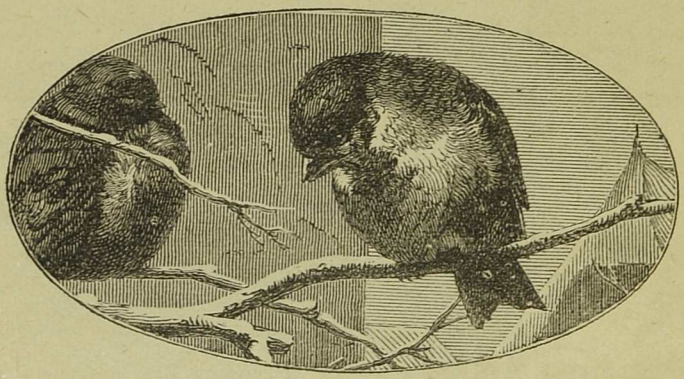
Thomas says you steal his wheat,
John complains his plums you eat,
Choose the ripest for your share,
Never asking whose they are.

Shocking tales I hear of you:
Chirp, and tell me are they true?
Robbing all the Summer long:
Don't you think it very wrong?

Yet you seem an honest bird;
Don't be vexed at what I've heard:
Now, no grapes and plums you eat;
Now, you cannot steal the wheat;

So I will not try to know
What you did so long ago:
There's your breakfast, eat away;
Come and see me every day.





THE CANARY AND THE SPARROW.

A lady, living in Chelsea, used sometimes to hang a favourite Canary in a tree close to her window. One morning a Sparrow was seen to perch upon the top and twitter to the bird within. After a few moments he flew away, but shortly returned and dropped a worm into the cage. This was repeated day after day at the same time for several months. The two friends at length became so intimate that the Canary often received the food into his own bill from that of the Sparrow.

I DOTE on every little bird
That twitters in the sun:
I love them all, from having heard
The simple tale of one!

In cage that 'neath the eaves was hung
When morn put forth her smiles,
A little yellow warbler sung
A song of distant isles!

One morn, when loud his melody,
There came on idle wing
A Sparrow, and from sympathy
Thus seemed to say or sing:

"Fair captive! why this joyous lay,
When sad should be thy heart?

THE CANARY AND THE SPARROW.

Art thinking of a happier day,
  Forgetful what thou art?

"Perchance, while high thy music floats
  Where ne'er thy wings may flee,
Thy spirit rises with thy notes—
  For they at least are free!

"Thy song goes forth among the trees,
  And up to Heaven's high dome,
And haply bears thee o'er the seas
  To thine own island home!

"Poor bird! couldst thou come forth with me,
  I'd lead thee to the grove,
Where all that's known of slavery
  Is servitude to love!

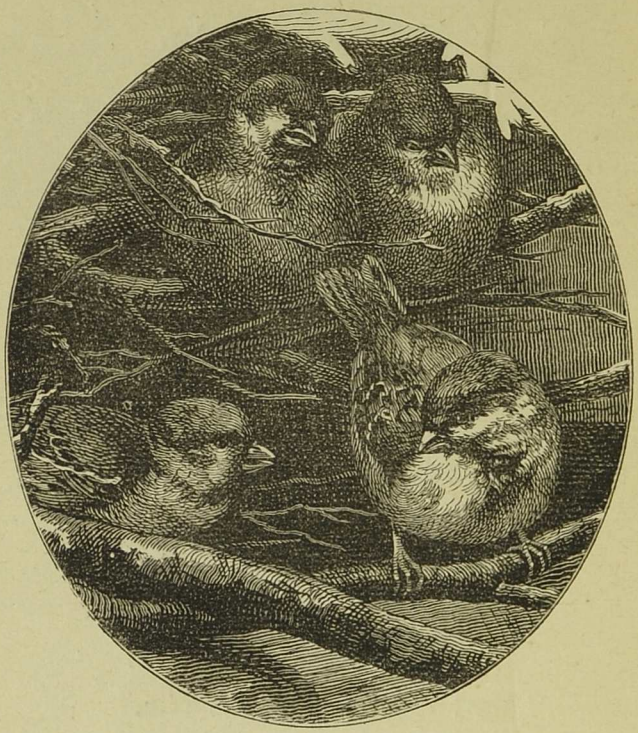
"How sweet to join our airy chase,
  Or cower within thy nest,
Yet only bound to that one place
  Because thou lovedst it best!

"Alas! alas! the wish is vain,
  Thy prison-bars are strong;
But I will come to thee again—
  Adieu, sweet bird of song!"

Away it flew, but day by day
  Returned with gathered food;
And through long months, the watchers say,
  Went on this work of good.

I felt my holiest thoughts ascend,
  Such Heaven-taught love to trace,
And deemed, perchance, this captive's friend,
  The Howard of its race! *

* John Howard, the philanthropist, was distinguished for the interest he took in prisoners.



HOUSE SPARROWS.

"Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."
Matt. x. 31.

LITTLE Sparrows, blithe and glad,
Check mankind for being sad:
"Chirrup" seems to say "Cheer up,"
Unto hearts disposed to droop.

Sparrows chirping round the cot
Seem contented with their lot;
Happy in their lowly place,
Envious not of higher race.

HOUSE SPARROWS.

Daily wants and new supplies
Cause them no anxieties:
God, whose care to them extends,
Fitting food and shelter sends.

Shall He care for birds, and yet
Us His children e'er forget?
Ought we ever to be sad
When He makes the Sparrows glad?

If His glory be our aim,
We may leave our wants with Him;
He that gave His Son for us
Will not leave us comfortless.

Trials may our lot divide;
"Chirrup" says, God will provide:
He that warms the Sparrow's nest
Makes for us a better rest.

Let us ne'er indulge the thought,
We of God may be forgot:
If we look to Him in prayer,
He will make our wants His care.

The House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is known in every part of England. So rarely is this bird seen far from the haunts of man, that the sight of one bespeaks a habitation near. Its nest is usually placed under the eaves of houses, or in the holes of old walls. If a thatch, tile, or hole, be not at hand, the Sparrow will make a tree serve the purpose; but, in this case, as a roofing seems always required, a dome of straw is formed, and an entrance made at the side large enough to admit the bird; and the nest is always perched on high beyond the reach of enemies. All sorts of materials are used to form the nest; feathers, wool, cotton, or any stray substance at hand. One food of Sparrows is the house-fly, which were it not for them would multiply to an intolerable extent. They are also incessant in the destruction of the cabbage-butterflies, and are very useful scavengers in clearing away small offal of various sorts.

ON YONDER LOFTY TERRACE-WALL,
WHERE STRUTS A PEACOCK, GRAND AND TALL.

THE

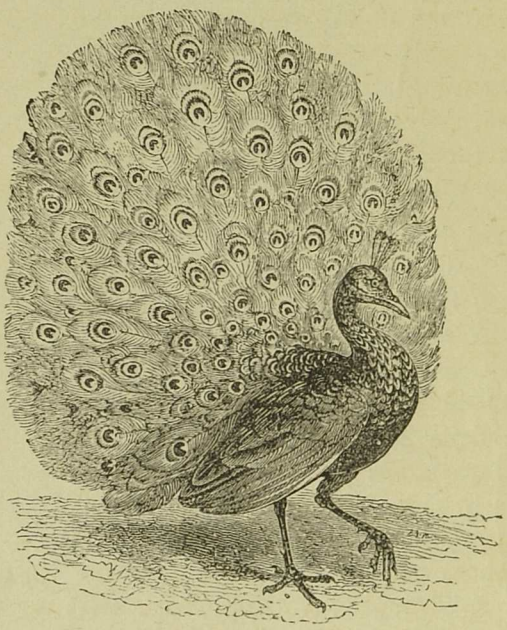
PEACOCK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

THE western sky 's aglow with light,
The westering sun shines full and bright
On yonder lofty terrace-wall,
Where struts a Peacock, grand and tall.
Proudly the bird his tail displays,
To catch the sunbeams' parting rays.
See ! with what mingled scorn and grace,
As sultan of the feathered race,
He marches with majestic pace !
Regarding with complacent eye
The glory of the burnished sky ;
As though for him, and him alone,
The splendour of the heavens shone.

Hard by, within a neighbouring dell,
Where lingers many a fairy-spell,
And blossoms many a sweet bluebell,
Where modest cowslips bloom and blush,
Where warbles many a mellow Thrush,
Where, trickling through th' enamelled grass,
A little streamlet, clear as glass,
Accompanies with babbling tongue
Each cadence of the liquid song—
There, 'midst the branches of a thorn,
Whose pendent boughs salute the lawn,
A Nightingale, with plumage neat
And modest mien, has ta'en his seat.

The Peacock spies the lonely bird,
And thus accosts with scornful word :—
"Why sit you there, poor silly thing,
With silent throat and russet wing,
While yon sweet Mavis pours his song,
The woodlands and the dells along ?

Your dingy hue and aspect mean
Make you unpleasant to be seen;
While moping there, you ugly bird!
Your voice is never to be heard.
Nature herself, in blank despair,
Turns from a bird nor sweet nor fair,
And, opening wide her bounteous hand,
Replete with gems from fairy-land,
She scatters them with careless grace
Amidst the jewelled Peacock race:



See how these gorgeous hues combine
To make my plumage all divine!
Mark well the rare and lustrous sheen,
The purple eyes, the lids of green,
Which, spangled o'er my royal tail,
Make e'en the stars themselves grow pale."

He spoke—and with disdainful stride
Swept grandly o'er the terrace wide.

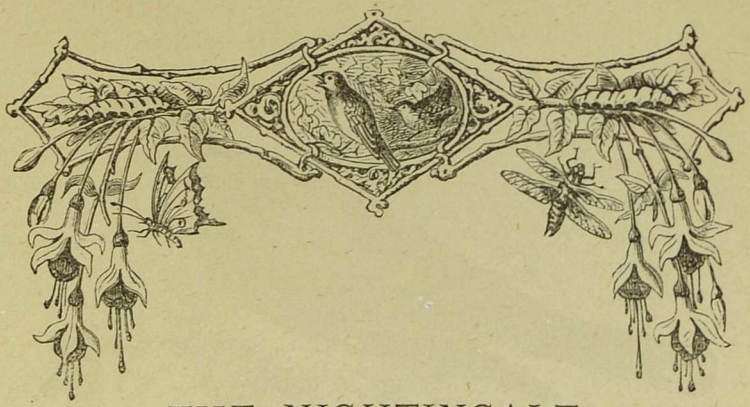
The Nightingale in russet suit
Thus brief replies :—"I am not mute,
Sir Peacock ; but the Throstle gay
Pours forth his melody by day,
Whilst I more frequently delight
In eventide and moon-lit night :
'Tis true, my feathers do not shine,
Nor are they beautiful as thine;
In stature I am small and mean
Compared with thee ; no gorgeous green,
No royal purple decks my breast—
In splendour I am never drest ;
But those you please with feathers gay,
You frighten by your voice away ;
Whilst I, though poor and meanly clad,
Charm with my song each village lad ;
Nay, e'en the coney and the deer
Will list my melody to hear."

He ceased—then bursting into song,
Produced a note so full and long,
So sweetly clear, so softly sad,
That village maid and village lad
Steal through the neighbouring thicket near
With stealthy step and listening ear ;
The Mavis ceased his dulcet strain,
As though all rivalry were vain ;
The timid doe, the tender fawn,
Browse fearless 'neath the vocal thorn,
Whilst still pours forth that liquid strain,
O'er wooded dell and flowery plain.

The Peacock now with rage opprest,
And envy rankling in his breast,

Eyes with disdain the listening crowd,
Erects his head, and screams aloud:
The welkin vibrates with the sound,
The startled coney hies to ground,
Bounds from the lawn the timid doe,
As from the onslaught of a foe;
Belinda shrieks and homeward flies,
To 'scape these harsh and horrid cries;
Lubin, with many a muttered curse
(Which only made the matter worse),
A stone picks from the river's bed,
And hurls it at the Peacock's head.

When Beauty, Vanity, and Pride
Are, as they often are, allied,
The light which shines in Beauty's eye
Is dimmed and marred by Vanity.
My friends, despise not, mock not those
Who humbly dress in sober clothes,
Lest, haply, you should have a fall,
Like yonder Peacock, from the wall.



THE NIGHTINGALE.

SWEET chantress! from every blossoming tree
There is wafted a song of rejoicing and glee;
Midst the mirth and the music I listen for thee,
But thy melody charms not my ear.
When the sun shall descend, and the blossoms all close,
When darkness and stillness shall usher repose,
Oh then, while the night breeze refreshingly blows,
Thy song from afar I shall hear.

Sweet chantress! a beautiful emblem thou art
Of the pure and devoted and tranquillised heart,
When, from earthly turmoil and intrusion apart,
It holds converse with regions above;
Beneath that blue concave, so peaceful and bright,
Sweet symphonies break on the silence of night;
While angels bend down with approving delight,
Taking part in the anthems they love.

Old Izaak Walton thus speaks of the Nightingale: "He that at midnight, when the very labourer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have often done, the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of its voice, might well be lifted above the earth, and say, 'Lord, what music hast thou provided for the saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth?'"

THE NIGHTINGALE'S FAREWELL.

To a clearer sky I am hasting forth,
For the wind breathes out from the chilly north;
The Summer her loose flowing robe hath bound,
And is gathering fast her jewels around.

Her farewell tones are abroad in the land,
Out-calling to follow her feathery band;
I shall pass with her o'er the deep's blue waves,
Where the mermaids dwell in the coral caves.

I shall light with her on the cedar boughs,
Where the morn is fragrant with Sharon's rose,
And the ivory brows of the maidens there
Peer out from the folds of their raven hair.

And I go where the fountains toss their spray
In the golden light of an orient day,
Where the gleam of the starry cross is high
In the deep still blue of the midnight sky.

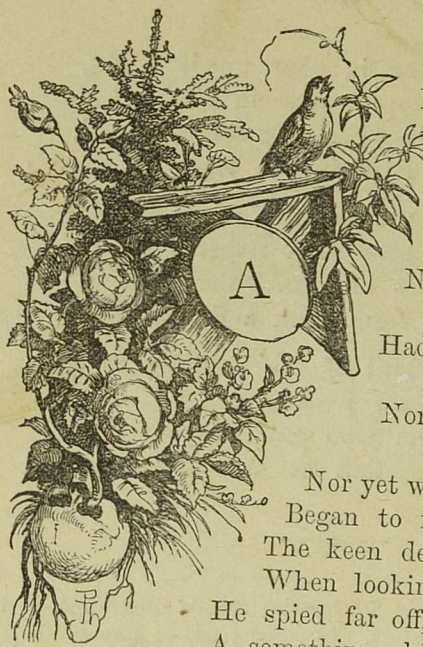
THE NIGHTINGALE'S FAREWELL.

Grim Winter will soon in your woods alight,
And the loosened tempest arise in might;
Dim shadows will sit where the sunlight fell,
And the flowers lie dead in the lonely dell.

For me, I shall sing where the sward is seen
Outspread with the hues of a richer green;
Where the rivers pass in a mightier flow,
And the sun shines forth with a deeper glow.

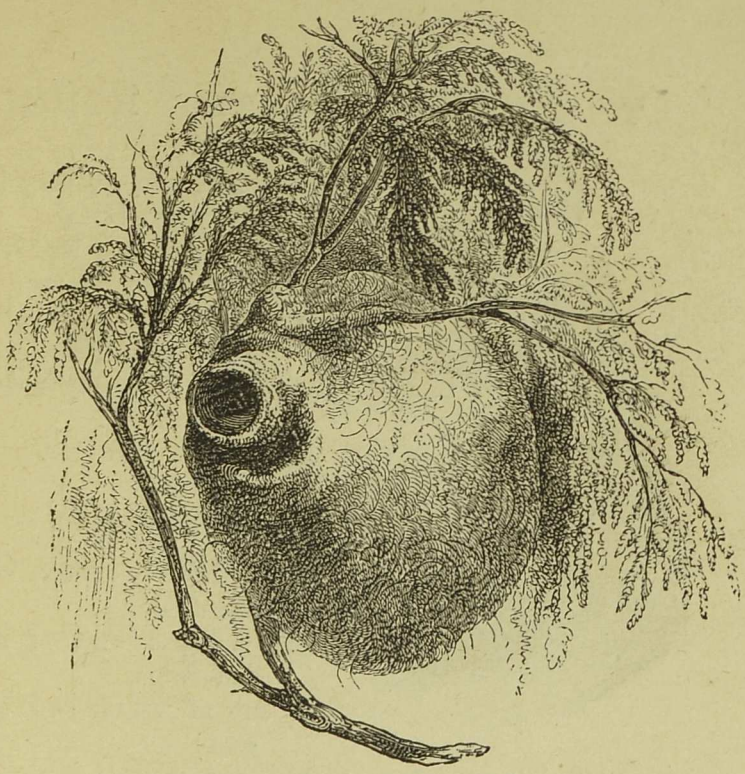
And we, too, thou bird of the thrilling song,
To a sunnier clime are passing on;
By the grace of Him who guideth your flight,
We'll gain the shore that no Winter can blight.

The Nightingale (*Luscinia Philomela*) stands unrivalled at the head of our feathered songsters. In some parts of England it is to be heard in almost every hedgerow, filling the air, particularly at night, when most of our other warblers are silent, with its rich melody. Its song continues from the middle of April till towards the end of June; its favourite haunts are woods, plantations, and hedgerows. The time when the Nightingales sing loudest and most constantly is during the week or two after their arrival, for they are then engaged in attracting their mates, and sing in fierce rivalry of each other. It is deeply attached to its mate, and if he should be captured soon pines away and dies. The nest, made of grass and leaves, is always placed upon or very near the ground, and is usually hidden beneath heavy foliage. The eggs, four or five in number, are of a peculiar smooth olive-brown, that distinguishes them at once from the eggs of any other bird. The migration of Nightingales, like all other regular migrations, is from north to south in Autumn, and back again in Spring. As a general rule it is not met with north of the River Trent, nor in the western counties.



THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOWWORM.

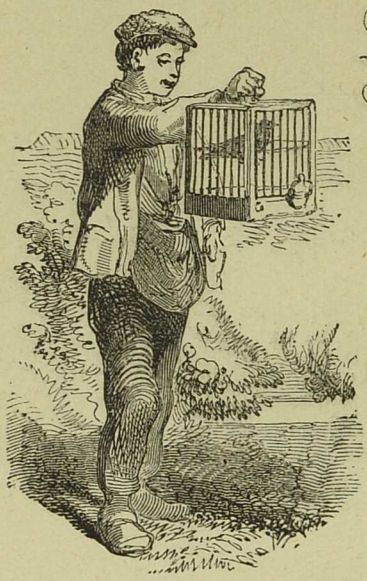
A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long
Had cheered the village with his song,
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite;
When looking eagerly around,
He spied far off, upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the Glowworm by his spark;
So stooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.
The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus, right eloquent:
"Did you admire my lamp," quoth he,
"As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong
As much as I to spoil your song;
For 'twas the self-same Power divine
Taught you to sing and me to shine;
That you with music, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night."
The songster heard his short oration,
And, warbling out his approbation,
Released him, as my story tells,
And found a supper somewhere else.



THE BIRD'S NEST.

It wins my admiration
To view the structure of that little work,
A Bird's Nest. Mark it well within, without;
No tool had he that wrought, no knife to cut,
No nail to fix, no bodkin to insert,
No glue to join: his little beak was all:
And yet how neatly finished! What nice hand,
With every implement and means of art,
And twenty years' apprenticeship to boot,
Could make me such another? Vainly, then,
We boast of excellence, whose noblest skill
Instinctive genius foils.

THE CHILD AND THE ROBIN.



DEAR mother, pray look up and see
This pretty bird James caught for me;
Its wings are brown, its breast is red,
And large black eyes adorn its head.
It does not move, but lies so still,
I almost fear it must be ill.

"See! here is orange, cake, and figs,
And a warm nest of moss and twigs,
A cup of water and some seed;
What more, dear mother, can it need?
Why should my little bird lie still,
All ruffled up—can it be ill?"

"Your little bird," the mother said,
"All lowly hangs its pretty head,
The while its panting heart beats high,
Because it longs for liberty;
And treat it kindly as you may,
You cannot make your prisoner gay.

"God made the little birds to fly
In freedom 'neath the sun-lit sky;
God gave them joyful notes to raise
In songs of thankfulness and praise;

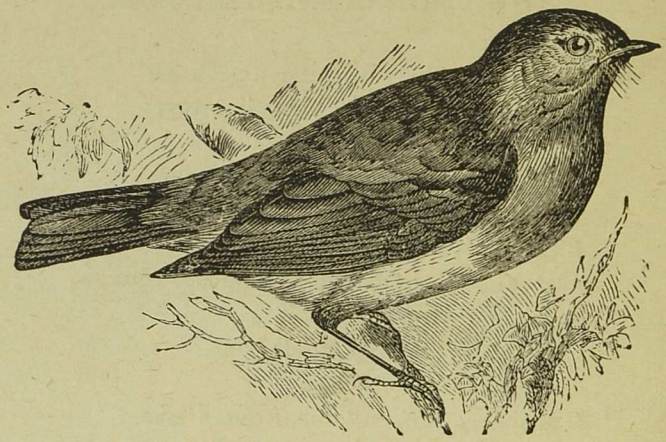
But little birds will pine and die
When they have lost their liberty."

"Mother, will you permission give
For me to try and make it live?
I think my little bird is strong
And healthy, though it seems so young.
Indeed, I really love it so,
I could not bear to let it go."

"My child, the Saviour from above
Regards each living thing with love,
And if you wish to be His child,
You must be tender, gentle, mild:
Prove that you are so; let me see
That you can let your captive free."

"I would not vex my God on high,
So take my bird and let it fly,
There in the sunlight, so that we
May see it perch on yonder tree.
One kiss—now, little bird, be gay,
For you are going to fly away!"

The little bird spread wide its wings,
And soon a song of joy it sings,
The while it flies from tree to tree,
Rejoicing in its liberty:
And smiles chase Lily's tears away,
Because she sees her bird is gay,
And knows that God, who lives above,
A kindly action will approve.



POOR ROBIN'S CRUMBS.

ONE dark Winter morning,
My faith cold as stone,
In my little chamber
I sat and sighed alone.
On my table near me
Scanty food was spread,
And I questioned sadly
For to-morrow's bread.

On the garden pathway
Snow lay thick and white,
For a heavy mantle
Had fallen in the night.
In my aching bosom
Deeper chill was there;
For my trust in heaven
Was shrouded in despair.

So I nursed my sorrow,
Faithlessly and drear;
Not a thought of comfort
Came my soul to cheer,

Till I rose up, startled
  From my dream of ill,
As a soft low cadence
  Broke the silence still.

For a little Robin
  On the garden wall
Sang his Maker's praises,
  Thanking God for all;
While the brilliant glances
  Of his dark-bright eyes
Seemed to mock the dimness
  Of the Winter skies.

All around he cast them
  On the ground beneath,
On the roof above him,
  With its snowy wreath;
Then, to my own casement,
  Where I took my stand,
With a breakfast for him
  Held within my hand.

Then I oped the window,
  And away he flew,
While upon the pathway
  All the crumbs I threw.
Timid little fellow!
  Would he spurn the good
Thus in kindness sent him,—
  Plenteousness of food?

Back again he fluttered,
  Hopped and peeped around,
Then he grew emboldened,
  Flew upon the ground,—
Ate his breakfast gladly,
  Sang his thanks once more,
Perched upon the trellis
  Of my cottage door.

Trustful little Robin!
  My cold heart grew warm;
For I knew our Father,
  Who had sent the storm,
Sent, too, what was needed
  For the life He made,
And before my window
  On my knees I prayed,—

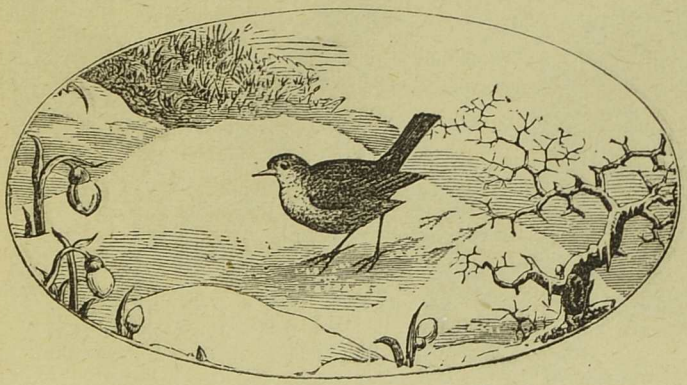
Prayed for strength and patience,
  Hope, and faith sublime;
Prayed that Robin's thankfulness
  In spirit might be mine;
Prayed I might no longer
  Doubt His watchful love,
Who His meanest creatures
  Watcheth from above.

Then I rose refreshèd:
  Gently at the door
Footsteps were approaching,
  And I crossed the floor.
Standing at the threshold
  Was a stranger form,
And kind loving accents
  Gave me greeting warm.

Never had I seen her
  This dark day before;
Angel's more than woman's,
  Was the smile she wore.
Oh! the light it kindled
  In my darkened breast!
All at once my longings
  Were with plenty blest.

Work, and help, and comfort,
  These she gave to me;
With dear words of blessing,
  Bade my sorrows flee.

When at length she left me,
  Swift my needle flew:
No more sad and dreary,
  I had work to do!



And outside the window
  Robin's blithesome voice
Bade me in God's mercy
  Evermore rejoice:
He had found his breakfast,
  I my needs supplied,
Both by us unlooked for,
  In this Winter-tide.

Christian, then, right gladly
  Loud thanksgivings raise,
Dreading not to-morrow's wants,
  Contented with to-day's;
For, most unexpected,
  Help in trouble comes
From our Father's window,
  Like poor Robin's crumbs.

THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

WHAT do the Robins whisper about
From their homes in the elms and birches?
I've tried to study the riddle out,
But still in my mind is many a doubt,
In spite of deep researches.

While in the world is silence deep,
In the twilight of early dawning,
They begin to chirp and twitter and peep,
As if they were talking in their sleep,
At three o'clock in the morning.

Perhaps the little ones stir, and complain
That it's time to be up and doing;
And the mother-bird sings a drowsy strain
To coax them back to their dreams again,
Though distant cocks are crowing.

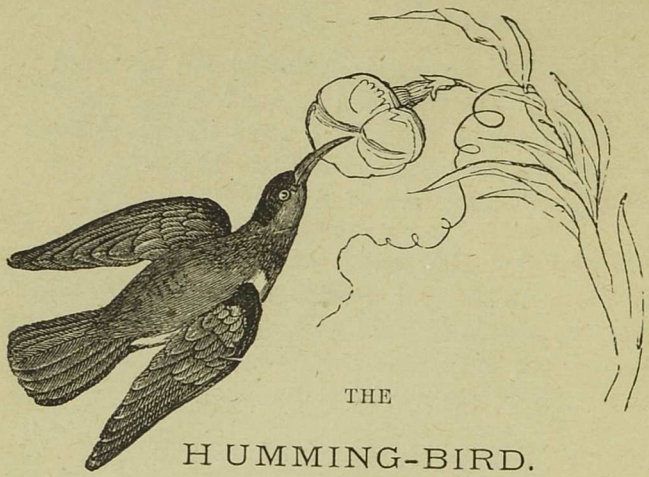
Or do they tell secrets that should not be heard
  By mortals listening and prying?
Perhaps we might learn from some whispered word
The best way to bring up a little bird—
  Or the wonderful art of flying.

It may be that they speak of one Autumn day
  When, with many a feathered roamer,
Under the clouds so cold and gray,
Over the hill they take their way,
  In search of the vanished Summer.

It may be they gossip from nest to nest,
  Hidden and leaf-enfolded;
For do we not often hear it confessed,
When a long-kept secret at last is guessed,
  That "a little bird has told it"?

Perhaps—but the question is wrapped in doubt;
  They give me no hint or warning:
Listen, and tell me if you find out
What do the Robins whisper about
  At three o'clock in the morning?

The song of the Robin is sweet and plaintive; but not very powerful. It is said that when the bird perches high, and sings cheerfully, it is an unerring promise of fine weather. The sprightly manner, full dark eye, and sidelong turn of the head in this bird give it an air of sagacity and inquisitiveness, which, together with its confidence, has gained it friends. The nest is frequently placed on a bank, in a hole of a wall, or by the roots of trees, and in concealed places. If the nest is not hidden by the foliage the birds contrive an artificial covering of dry leaves; and when the female leaves her eggs, she sometimes covers them in the same manner; so that the strewing of leaves, mentioned in the old ballad of "The Babes in the Wood," is true to the habits of the Robin.



THE

HUMMING-BIRD.

THE Humming-bird!—the Humming-bird,
So fairy-like and bright;
It lives among the sunny flowers,
A creature of delight!

In the radiant islands of the East,
Where fragrant spices grow,
A thousand thousand Humming-birds
Are glancing to and fro.

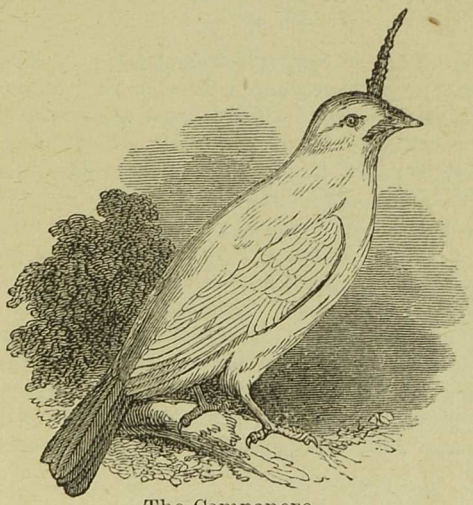
Like living fires they flit about,
Scarce larger than a bee,
Among the dusk palmetto leaves,
And through the fan-palm tree.

And in the wild and verdant woods,
Where stately moras tower—
Where hangs from branching tree to tree
The scarlet passion-flower—

Where, on the mighty river banks,
La Plate or Amazon,
The cayman, like a fallen tree,
Lies basking in the sun—

There builds her nest the Humming-bird
  Within the ancient wood,
Her nest of silky cotton down,
  And rears her tiny brood.

She hangs it to a slender twig,
  Where waves it light and free,
As the Campanero* tolls his song,
  And rocks the mighty tree.



The Campanero.

All crimson is her shining breast,
  Like to the red, red rose;
Her wing the changeful green and blue
  That the neck of the Peacock shows.

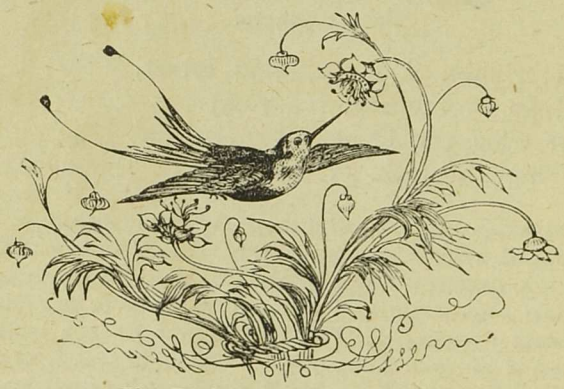
* "In the extensive wilds of Demerara," says Waterton, "the Campanero (Bell Bird, *Arapunga alba*) never fails to attract the attention of the passenger; at a distance of nearly three miles you may hear this snow-white bird tolling every four or five minutes, like the distant convent-bell. It is generally to be seen resting on the dried top of an aged mora-tree. No sound or song from any of the winged inhabitants of the forest causes such astonishment as the toll of the Campanero." The singular-looking horn on the head of the bird is only erect while the creature is excited and during his cry; when the bird is at rest it hangs loosely at the side of the face.

THE HUMMING-BIRD.

Thou happy, happy Humming-bird,
No Winter round thee lowrs,
Thou never saw'st a leafless tree,
Nor land without sweet flowers!

A reign of Summer joyfulness
To thee for life is given:
Thy food, the honey in the flower,
Thy drink, the dew from heaven.

The Humming-birds are only found in America and the adjacent islands, gathering most thickly about the equator. More than three hundred species of these little winged gems are known! As a rule their legs are remarkably weak, and their wings proportionately strong—which shows that they are intended to pass more of their time in the air than on foot. "Of all animated beings," says Buffon, "the Humming-bird is the most elegant in form and most splendid in colouring. Precious stones and metals artificially polished can never be compared to this jewel of Nature, who has placed it in the order of birds at the bottom of the scale of magnitude; while all the gifts, which are only shared among others—nimbleness, rapidity, sprightliness, grace, and rich decoration—have been profusely bestowed upon this little favourite. The emerald, the ruby, the topaz, sparkle in its plumage, which is never soiled by the dust of the ground, for its whole life being aerial, it rarely lights on the turf."



The Racket-tail Humming-bird.

THE CONCERT IN THE WOOD.

How sweet a chorus has begun
In yonder fresh green wood,
Where giant trees with tangled roots
For centuries have stood!
So full of joy and musical
Those voices of the glade,
The whole wild throng is full of song
Hid in their forest shade.

The Nightingale, that minstrel bird,
Trills forth a tender lay;
The Thrush, with clear and clarion note,
Sings through the livelong day;
The Cuckoo, calling to his mate,
Woos her with loving tone;
While from the meadows far away
Soars the bold Lark alone.

From lofty trees, whose branches sway,
Comes the Wood-Pigeon's note,
While on each breath of air that blows
Sweet voices seem to float.
So full of joy, so musical,
These Children of the Spring!
Methinks if such do praise the Lord,
I too should ever sing.

THE FAITHFUL GOLDFINCH.

THE greenhouse is my Summer seat;
My shrubs displaced from that retreat
Enjoyed the open air:
Two Goldfinches, whose sprightly song
Had been their mutual solace long,
Lived happy prisoners there.

They sang as blithe as Finches sing,
That flutter loose on golden wing,
And frolic where they list;
Strangers to liberty, 'tis true,
But that delight they never knew,
And therefore never missed.

But Nature works in every breast,
With force not easily suppresst,
And Dick felt some desires
That, after many an effort vain,
Instructed him at length to gain
A pass between his wires.

The open windows seemed t' invite
The freeman to a farewell flight;
But Tom was still confined;
But Dick, although his way was clear,
Was much too generous and sincere
To leave his friend behind.

So, settling on his cage, by play,
And chirp, and kiss, he seemed to say,
You must not live alone ;
Nor would he quit that chosen stand
Till I with slow and cautious hand
Returned him to his own.

Oh ye, who never taste the joys
Of friendship,—satisfied with noise
Of party, ball, and rout !—
Blush, when I tell you how a bird
A prison with a friend preferred
To liberty without.

The brilliant colours and elegant form of this beautiful bird (*Fringilla carduelis*), make it universally noticed and prized. During the Summer and Autumn the Goldfinch is serviceable to man in consuming multitudes of insects and the seeds of some of the worst weeds : and, as if relying on this piece of service, fearlessly trusts to his protection by nesting in some fruit or other tree near his dwelling.

MY GOLDFINCH.

BIRD of mine with glossy feathers,
And with spotted wings outspread,
Little eyes that twinkle keenly
In your bright and dainty head;
Safely perch upon my finger,
Free from danger or alarm;
For I love you, little birdie,
And I would not do you harm.

You were happy all the Spring-time,
In among the laurels green,
Singing on the trailing cedar,
Hopping on the meadow green

MY GOLDFINCH.

Shaking down laburnum blossoms
  Or the cherry's wreaths of white,
As you lit and poised a moment,
  Resting for a further flight.

Then through all the Summer mornings,
  Coming ere I was awake,
On the elm-bough by my window
  You were sure your perch to make;
How you sang with head uplifted!
  How your throat swelled, little bird!
Oh! I think that morning singing
  Was the sweetest I have heard.

So I love you, little birdie!
  It was very wise of you,
Now the frost is on the meadow,
  And the berries are so few,
To come here and ask for shelter,
  And a place to sleep and dine;
Cage and seed, and warmth and tending,
  You shall have them, bird of mine.

Sometimes as I watch you singing,
  Hear you chaunt with all your might,
I have wished I knew the secret
  Of your ever-fresh delight.
Are you thanking God, who gives you
  Every little crumb and seed,
From whose open hand of plenty
  All His happy creatures feed?

Then I ought to love Him better;
  Praise Him more than you can do.
In my eyes can see Him nearer
  Though you fly up in the blue;

Better blessings does He give me,
More than you can understand;
Loves me as a tender Father,
Guides me gently with His hand.

When you were not fledged, my birdie,
Only able just to cry,
Needing food you could not gather,
And with wings untaught to fly,
You were fed, and watched, and folded
Underneath your mother's breast:
I am young and needing shelter,
And this dear home is my nest;

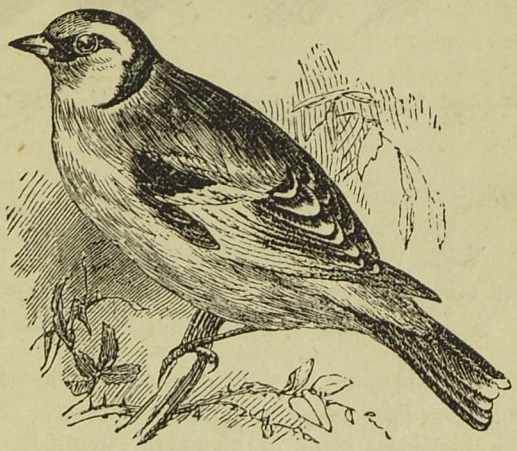
It is full of love and blessing,
Coming freshly day by day,
I should thank my God who gives it
Every time I kneel to pray:
For the safety of its shelter,
All the love to which I cling,
All its peace, and joy, and comfort
Are the covert of His wing.

You are well content to trust Him,
He who fills the earth with flowers;
He who ripens with His sunshine
All the seed in Autumn hours;
He will feed you, little birdie,
And will much more care for me—
When I am a child no longer,
Still He will my Father be.

Not a little Sparrow falleth
To the ground but in His sight;
Well I know He watcheth o'er me,
Through the daytime and the night.

And He turns for those who love Him
  All that happens into good;
Not the best of all His servants
  Half God's love hath understood.

You can only sing and thank Him;
  There are many other ways
In which I, though often sinning
  And forgetting, still may praise.
He will help me to be gentle,
  Patient, thoughtful, fearing wrong,
And each time I try will count it
  As a little note of song.



The Goldfinch.

THE MYSTERIOUS CUCKOO.

BROWN, black, gay, gloomy, well-known, stranger bird!
With voice sepulchral, yet seraphic too;
Of all the rare, familiar notes I've heard,
None charms, or teases me, like your "*Cuckoo!*"

"Cuckoo!" "Cuckoo!" "Cuckoo!"—you say, or sing;
For once explain your monologue, I pray:
Is it the birthday song of cheerful Spring?
Or funeral dirge o'er Winter's dying day?

Mysterious one! Say—do you come from far?
Or were you born next field, a year ago?
Do you speak English, French, or Malabar?
Scotch, Welsh, or Irish? when you call "Cuckoo!"

THE MYSTERIOUS CUCKOO.

Is it a *noun?* Dame Nature's name for Spring?
An *adjective*—of ugliness? or grace?
A *pronoun*—substituting some queer thing?
Or new *conjunction*—in appropriate place?

Is it an *interjection*—of surprise?
At Nature's wonders, everywhere in view?
Does earth, or air, or sea, or do the skies
Most interest you, when you say, "Cuckoo"?

Or utter you a *verb?* which bids folks do,
Or be, or suffer, some mysterious thing?
Then, tell its voice, mood, tense, and person true,
And let us learn our lessons in the Spring.

Is it a *preposition* you employ?
What case it governs? name, or give some clue:
Is it an *adverb?* tell us to our joy,
To what verb we may join this said "Cuckoo!"

But—truce with grammar:—tell me: I insist!
What is your *character?* I want to know:
Say, shall I call you earth's chief egotist,
Or modesty's meet emblem here below?

Your *offspring!* too? Oh! people say sad things,
But people sometimes say what is not true:
Are you, indeed, the basest bird that sings?
A wretch that hates its young, and cries "Cuckoo!"

Mayhap, you fondly place your little folk
At *boarding school*, to be discreetly trained,
E'en from the moment when they leave the yolk,
Till perfect Cuckoo-hood they have attained?

Do you indulge a *gadding* parent's crimes?
Or does imperfect health distress you so—
That, *travelling*, you must vary scenes and climes,
Though, sobbing for your young, you sigh "Cuckoo!"

Can it be *craft?* that taxes other folks
  To lodge and feed your little ones for nought?
Or *patience?* meekly braving saddest strokes,
  And placidly submitting as it ought?

You stole, and ate, the Wagtail's eggs! you know!
  Were yours deposited for breakfast too?
Was it e'en *penitence* that bade you so
  Compensate theft by leaving young "Cuckoo"?

Or was it *magnanimity* inspired
  Your breast with purpose of unwonted grace?
And delicately left its own admired
  For half a dozen of inferior race?

Are you *without a home?* or do you find
  All lands, alike, fit "habitats" for you?
Is it from *joy*, or *grief*, you are inclined,
  Whithersoe'er you fly, to say "Cuckoo"?

Where is your next appointment? Will you go
  East, West, North, South? Tell me, may I go too?
Where Spring will be, you have the knack to know;—
  Tell me your secret, and I'll sing "Cuckoo!"

Your tours through many lands this world to see,
  Might fit a travelling tutor for his arts;
Pray tell what your accomplishments may be,
  Your "various learning gained in foreign parts!"

'Mong us, great travellers are sometimes wise,—
  They're always knowing—is it so with you?
You've seen strange things (careering through the skies),
  Have you learned nothing yet but that "Cuckoo"?

I fear you're but a superficial thing,
  Peeping at all lands, well considering none;
Attracted by the novelties of Spring—
  Before its charms have ripened, lost, or gone.

THE MYSTERIOUS CUCKOO.

What makes you in such haste to quit our land?
  Why can't you stay? at least the Summer through,
You leave ere best fruits grow, or flowers expand,
  And though you've not seen half, call out "Cuckoo!"

Have you done something wrong? and must you roam?—
  From place to place, evading Cuckoo law?
Do you not *dare* to call one house your home?
  For ever dreading feathered-sheriff's claw.

If "mum's the word!" be silent, silly bird,
  And don't, when travelling, make such ado,
Lest when your well-known voice, by foes, be heard,
  The officer should trace your track, Cuckoo!

Yet, in sage seriousness, I would not blame
  Your present song—whate'er I speak in play:
It has its meaning, its intended aim,
  And dear, oh, very dear, is your loved lay.

Talk as we will, and analyse, and pause,
  And wonder what's the use of things like you,
There *is* a charm, by glorious Nature's laws,
  In your yet uninterpreted "Cuckoo!"

As soon as the Winter is well over, and "April showers prepare the way for May flowers," we hear the note of the Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*). Singular as is its cry, so equally singular is its strange unnatural habit of leaving to other birds the care of its young. It builds no nest, but deposits its egg in the nest of some smaller bird, chiefly in that of the Hedge-Sparrow. The young Cuckoo has been seen to turn out the lawful progeny of its foster-parents, and the latter to feed the intruder, apparently regardless of the fate of their own young. Sometimes two Cuckoo's eggs have been laid in the same nest; but soon after hatching the stronger bird has turned out the weaker.

THE DARLING OF THE SPRING.

BLITHE new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying on the grass,
Thy loud note smites my ear!
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near!

I hear thee babbling to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers;
And unto me thou bring'st a tale
Of visionary hours.

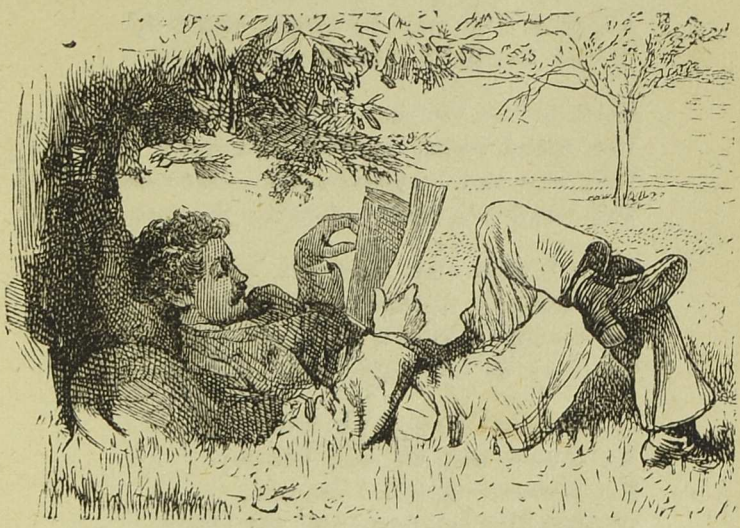
THE DARLING OF THE SPRING.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
  Even yet thou art to me
No bird; but an invisible thing,
  A voice, a mystery.

The same who in my schoolboy days
  I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
  In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
  Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
  Still longed for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet;
  Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
  That golden time again.



THE CUCKOO'S CRY.

COME now to the meadow green,
And look upon the changing scene,
As early lights and shadows pass
Over the rich and flowery grass!

See buttercups, with eyes so bold,
Arrayed in hues of shining gold;
Soft grasses trembling to the sight,
And daisy flowers all silver bright.

Now lift from earth to heaven your eyes,
And gaze upon the sunny skies;
Ah, well they may be bright and fair,
If God has built His dwelling there.

Hark to the Cuckoo's thrilling shout:
The sound seems everywhere about;
This way and that—now there—now here,
The wandering sound deceives the ear.

Oh not with such uncertain sound
The Gospel's trumpet shouts around;
No sounds unknown are in God's word,
To cheat us like this mocking bird.

If from God's word we turn away,
We cannot and we dare not say
His promises deceived our ear,
Or that His language was not clear.

THE DOVE.

LISTEN to that gentle Dove,
Far in the depths of yonder grove :
It seems to tell a piteous tale,
In that low supplicating wail ;
Perchance of one with cruel breast
Who came to rob it of its nest,
Then bore away his feathered prize,
Regardless of the mother's cries :
Fresh recollections of its woes
Awake, in each new strain that flows,
And for compassion make appeal,
To all who have a heart to feel.
The Nightingale, with louder songs,
Bewails his capture and his wrongs,
And tells his sorrows far and wide,
Till every echo has replied.

God's children, like this patient Dove,
Yield to the chastening hand of Love ;
While deep within their suffering breast
All murmurs are, by grace, represt :
No angry words their griefs disclose,
In gentle prayers they pour their woes,
And by the Spirit's soft control,
Restrain the anguish of their soul ;
For pity they prefer no claim,
But ask for help in Jesus' name ;
And for their dear Redeemer's sake,
God hears the contrite prayers they make.

THE RAVEN.

A Raven, while with glossy breast
Her new-laid eggs she fondly prest,
And, on her wicker-work high mounted,
Her chickens prematurely counted,
(A fault philosophers might blame,
If quite exemptèd from the same,)
Enjoyed at ease the genial day.
'Twas April, as the bumpkins say,
The legislature called it May.*
When suddenly a wind as high
As ever swept a Winter sky,

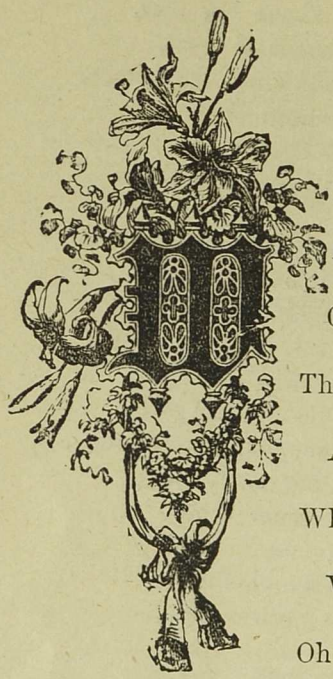
* In 1752 it was ordered by Act of Parliament that eleven days should be left out of the calendar, so that the last eleven days of April were made into the first eleven days of May. The country people for a long time resisted the change, and dated their affairs from the old style.

Shook the young leaves about her ears,
And filled her with a thousand fears,
Lest the rude blast should snap the bough,
And spread her golden hopes below.
But just at eve the blowing weather
And all her fears were hushed together :

And now, quoth poor unthinking Ralph,
'Tis over, and the brood is safe—
(For Ravens, though, as birds of omen,
They teach both conjurors and old women
To tell us what is to befall,
Can't prophesy themselves at all.)
The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,
Who long had marked her airy lodge,
And destined all the treasure there
A gift to his expecting fair,
Climbed like a squirrel to his dray,
And bore the worthless prize away.

'Tis Providence alone secures,
In every change, both mine and yours :
Safety consists not in escape
From dangers of a frightful shape ;
An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man that's strangled by a hair.
Fate steals along with silent tread,
Found oftenest in what least we dread,
Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
But in the sunshine strikes the blow.

The Raven (*Corvus corax*) is a bird of almost world-wide distribution. It is found from Iceland to Japan, through all Asia and Northern Africa, and on the American continent. In many parts of the country the Raven is nicknamed "Ralph," and is supposed to have the gift of foretelling bad news.



THE BLUE-BIRD.

WHEN Winter's cold tempests and snows are no more,
Green meadows and brown furrowed fields reappearing,
The fishermen hauling their shad to the shore,
And cloud-cleaving geese to the lakes are a-steering;
When first the lone butterfly flits on the wing,
When red glow the maples, so fresh and so pleasing,
Oh then comes the Blue-bird, the herald of Spring!
And hails with his warblings the charms of the season.

Then loud-piping frogs make the marshes to ring;
Then warm glows the sunshine, and fine is the weather;
The blue woodland flowers just beginning to spring,
And spicewood and sassafras budding together:
Oh then to your gardens, ye housewives repair,
Your walks border up, sow and plant at your leisure:
The Blue-bird will chant from his box such an air,
That all your hard toils will seem truly a pleasure!

He flits through the orchard, he visits each tree,
The red-flowering peach, and the apple's sweet blossoms;
He snaps up destroyers wherever they be,
And seizes the caitiffs that lurk in their bosoms;

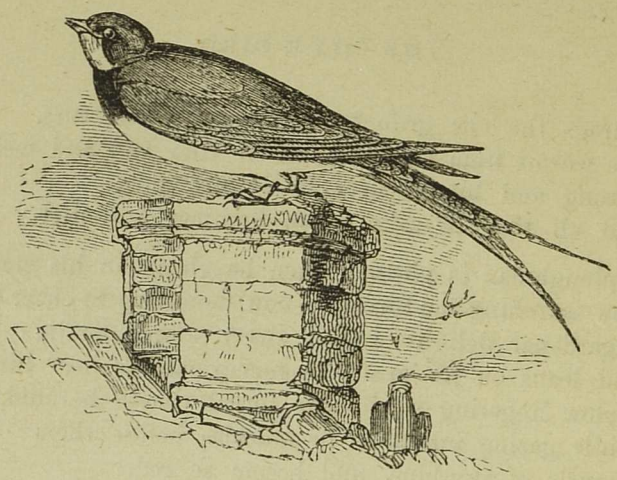
He drags the vile grub from the corn it devours,
  The worms from the webs, where they riot and welter;
His song and his services freely are ours,
  And all that he asks is—in Summer a shelter.

The ploughman is pleased when he gleans in his train,
  Now searching the furrows—now mounting to cheer him;
The gardener delights in his sweet simple strain,
  And leans on his spade to survey and to hear him;
The slow lingering schoolboys forget they'll be chid,
  While gazing intent as he warbles before them
In mantle of sky-blue, and bosom so red,
  That each little loiterer seems to adore him.

When all the gay scenes of the Summer are o'er,
  And Autumn slow enters so silent and sallow,
And millions of warblers that charmed us before
  Have fled in the train of the sun-seeking Swallow,
The Blue-bird, forsaken, yet true to his home,
  Still lingers and looks for a milder to-morrow,
Till forced by the horrors of Winter to roam,
  He sings his adieu in a low note of sorrow.

While Spring's lovely season, serene, dewy, warm,
  The green face of earth, and the pure blue of heaven,
Or love's native music have influence to charm,
  Or sympathy's glow to our feelings are given,
Still dear to each bosom the Blue-bird shall be;
  His voice, like the thrillings of hope, is a treasure;
For, through bleakest storms, if a calm he but see,
  He comes to remind us of sunshine and pleasure.

The Blue-Bird (*Sialia Sialis*) of North America greatly resembles our Robin-Redbreast, both in form and in character; and had it the brown-olive of our little favourite instead of its own sky-blue, could scarcely be distinguished from it. It makes its appearance early in Spring, and everywhere meets with a hearty welcome.

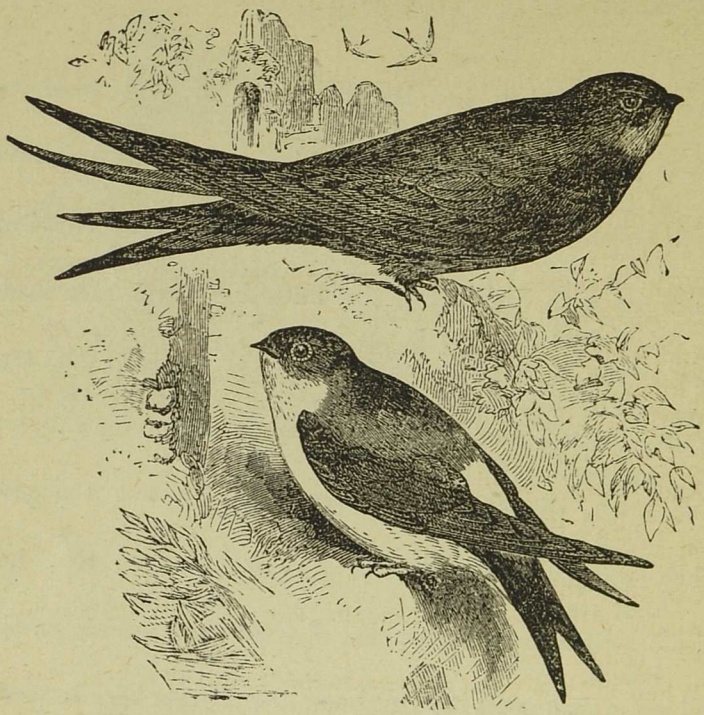


THE SWALLOW.

SWALLOW! bonnie bird, I'll sing a welcome now to thee,
Who comest with exultant wings across the billowy sea:
But wherefore dost thou come to us from brighter lands than ours?
Say, is it love that makes thee fly back to thy native bowers?
Thou comest from a sunny clime, where the soft zephyr's sigh
Wafts odours of the orange-flowers, beneath a cloudless sky;
Where, like a brilliant shower of pearls, down many a grotto's side,
With music sweet as minstrel's song the crystal waters glide.
Who bade thee leave the sunny south, or taught thee there to know
No longer round thy own home-nest the Winter blasts would blow?
Could no new ties thou there hadst formed prevail on thee to stay?
Who gave thy heart its yearnings for the land so far away?

Sweet bird! thou heardst the voice of God wherever thou didst roam,
'Twas He sustained within thy heart the deathless love of home;
And underneath the frowning skies, above the bubbling wave,
With strength He nerved thy fluttering wings—He made thee bold and brave.
And seeing thou hast safely passed the perils of the sea,
I know the faith that made thee strong sufficient is for me—
With steadfast soul to keep the sense of Heaven's directing hand,
And learn, though earth is very fair, 'tis not the promised land.
Then welcome, bonnie bird, I will not love thee less that thou
Again wilt leave us when the flowers shall perish on the bough.
Where'er thou goest thy true home thou'lt ever keep in view:
So teach me, Lord, to hear Thy voice, and, like Thy bird, be true.

In Britain there are several species of Swallows. The Chimney Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), which may be distinguished by its deep forked tail and by reddish plumage on its forehead and under its chin. It arrives about the middle of April, and disappears in September. The Window Swallow, or House Martin (*Chelidon urbica*), has its tail less forked than the preceding, no red spot on the head or chin, and the under part of the body a bright white. Its nest of clay is generally built under the eaves of a house, and has a small hole on one side for entrance. The Sand Martin (*Cotile riparia*) is the smallest of our Swallows, and frequents the deep sandy banks of rivers, in the sides of which it makes its nest. The Swift (*Cypselus apus*) arrives later and departs sooner than any of the tribe. It builds in steeples and towers, under bridges, and sometimes under the tiles of farm-houses. The Purple Swallow (*Progne purpurea*) is a native of North America, but has been caught in this country.



The Swift. The Sand Martin.

THE SWALLOW'S GUIDE.

TELL me, pretty Swallow, tell
Now thou art come back to dwell
In our fields and gardens gay,
Where thou'st been so long away?

Now that gladsome June is come,
Now thou seek'st thy Summer home;
But oh, whither dost thou go
When our hills are white with snow?

Far beyond our keenest view,
Far beyond the ocean blue,
Say, who bade thee forward spring
On a swift untiring wing?

THE SWALLOW'S GUIDE.

Say what Guide so wise and sure,
Made thy feeble strength endure,
Till the far-off land was gained
And thy distant home attained?

Say who taught thee when to flee
Winter's breath, too cold for thee?
Say who brought thee back to sing
Of the sweet return of Spring?

Ah! a lesson we should learn,
In thy lot our own discern;
Like thee, passengers below,
We to distant regions go.

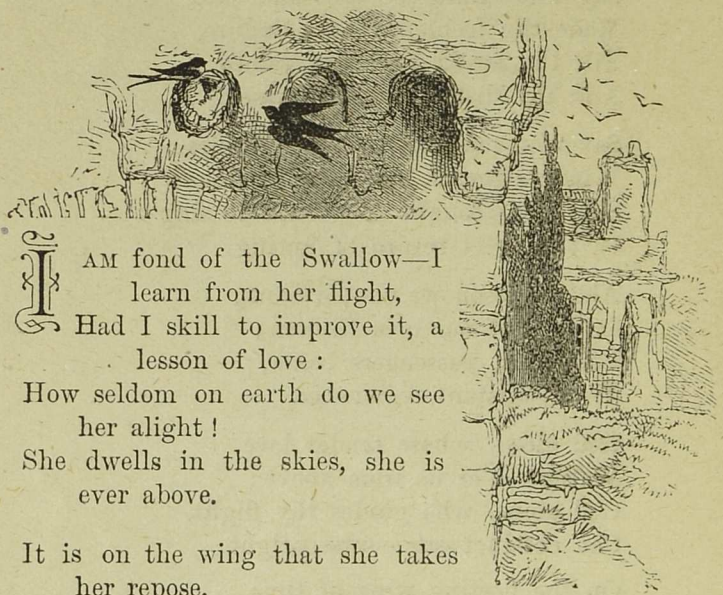
God alone, whose tender love
Watches o'er us from above;
God alone, who guides thy flight,
Can conduct our course aright.

On the fleeting wing of time,
I, too, seek a happier clime,
And, upheld by Love divine,
Go where joys unclouded shine.

Far beyond the distant flood,
Purchase of my Saviour's blood,
I the glorious land shall see,
The blessed home prepared for me.

The migration of birds is one of the most wonderful instincts of Nature. "Two circumstances," observes Derham, "are remarkable: that these untaught, unthinking creatures should know the proper times for their passage, when to come, and when to go; as also that some should come when others go. No doubt the temperature of the air as to heat and cold, and their natural propensity to breed their young, are the great incentives to these creatures to change their habitations. The second is, that they should know which way to steer their course. What instinct is it that can induce a poor bird to venture over vast tracts of land and sea?"

THE SWALLOW'S FLIGHT.



I AM fond of the Swallow—I learn from her flight,
Had I skill to improve it, a lesson of love:
How seldom on earth do we see her alight!
She dwells in the skies, she is ever above.

It is on the wing that she takes her repose,
Suspended and poised in the regions of air;
'Tis not in our fields that her sustenance grows,
It is winged like herself—'tis ethereal fare.

She comes in the Spring, all the Summer she stays,
And, dreading the cold, still follows the sun—
So, true to our love, we should covet his rays,
And the place where he shines not immediately shun.

Our light should be love, and our nourishment prayer;
It is dangerous food that we find upon earth;
The fruit of this world is beset with a snare,
In itself it is hurtful, as vile in its birth.

Let us leave it ourselves ('tis a mortal abode),
To bask every moment in infinite Love;
Let us fly the dark Winter, and follow the road
That leads to the Dayspring appearing above.

HAIL, SWALLOW, HAIL!

WELCOME, welcome, feathered stranger!
Now the sun bids Nature smile;
Safe arrived, and free from danger,
Welcome to our blooming isle.
Still twitter on my lonely roof,
And hail me at the dawn of day,
Each morn the recollected proof
Of time that ever fleets away.

Fond of sunshine, fond of shade,
Fond of skies serene and clear,
E'en transient storms thy joys invade
In fairest seasons of the year.
What makes thee seek a milder clime?
What bids thee shun the wintry gale?
How know'st thou thy departing time?
Hail, wondrous bird! hail, Swallow, hail!

Sure something more to thee is given
Than myriads of the feathered race;
Some gift divine, some spark from heaven,
That guides thy flight from place to place.
Still freely come, still freely go,
And blessings on thy vigorous wing;
May thy fast flight meet no rude foe,
Delightful Messenger of Spring.

"The Swallow is one of my favourite birds, and a rival of the Nightingale; for he glads my sense of seeing as much as any other does my sense of hearing. He is the joyous prophet of the year—the harbinger of the best season: he lives a life of enjoyment amongst the loveliest forms of nature. Winter is unknown to him; and he leaves the green meadows of England in Autumn, for the myrtle and orange groves of Italy, and for the palms of Africa. The instinct which teaches him always when and where to move, may be regarded as flowing from a Divine Source, and speaks the awful and intelligible language of a present Deity."—*Sir Humphrey Davy.*

THE HEN AND HER BROOD.

SEE the Chickens round the gate
For their morning portion wait;
Fill the basket from the store,
Let us open wide the door:
Throw out crumbs, and scatter seed,
Let the hungry Chickens feed.

Call them—now how fast they run,
Gladly, quickly every one;

Eager, busy, Hen and Chick,
Every little morsel pick!
See the Hen with callow brood,
To her young how kind and good

With what care their steps she leads—
Them, and not herself, she feeds ;
Picking here, and picking there,
Where the nicest morsels are.

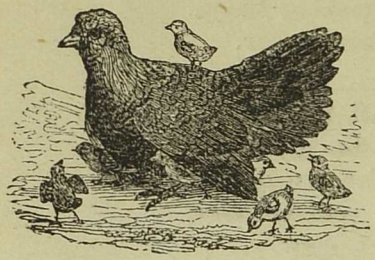
As she calls, they flock around,
Bustling all along the ground.
When their daily labours cease,
And at night they rest in peace,
All the little tiny things
Nestle close beneath her wings ;
There she keeps them safe and warm,
Free from fear, and free from harm.

Now, young reader, pray attend :
Your Almighty Father, Friend,
Though unseen by mortal eye,
Watches o'er you from on high.
Though no creature can express
God's kind care and tenderness,
Yet are you by day and night
In your Heavenly Parent's sight.

As the Hen her Chickens leads,
Shelters, cherishes, and feeds,
So by Him your feet are led,
Over you His wings are spread :
All the children of His care
In His gentle pity share.

May you by His grace be taught
Here to love Him as you ought,
Then to Him in heaven raise
Songs of everlasting praise.

THE CHICKEN'S MISTAKE.



A LITTLE Chick one day
Asked leave to go
on the water,
Where she saw a Duck with
her brood at play,
Swimming and splashing
about her.

Indeed, she began to peep and cry,
When her mother wouldn't let her:
"If the Ducks can swim there, why can't I?
Are they any bigger or better?"

Then the old Hen said, "Listen to me,
And hush your foolish talking;
Just look at your feet, and you will see
They were only made for walking."

But Chickey wistfully eyed the brook,
And didn't half believe her,
For she seemed to say by a knowing look,
Such stories couldn't deceive her.

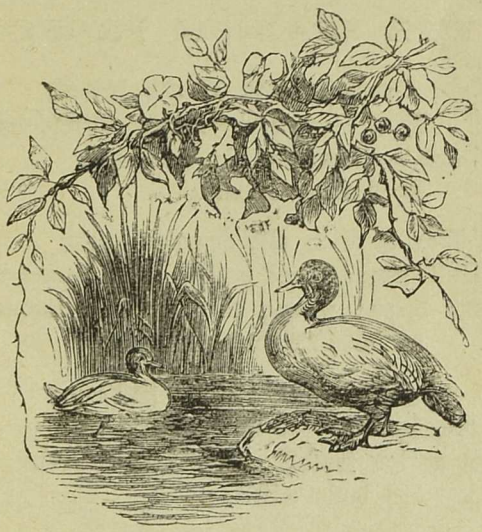
And as her mother was scratching the ground,
She muttered, lower and lower,
"I know I can go there and not be drowned,
And so I think I'll show her."

Then she made a plunge where the stream was deep,
And saw too late her blunder;
For indeed she had hardly time to peep,
When her foolish head went under.

And now I hope her fate will show
  The child my story reading,
That those who are older sometimes know
  What you will do well in heeding:

That each content in his place should dwell,
  And envy not his brother,
And any part that is acted well
  Is just as good as another.

For we all have our proper sphere below,
  And this is a truth worth knowing:
You will come to grief if you try to go
  Where you never were made for going.



Gray Parrots.

THE SPANISH PARROT.

THE deep affections of the breast,
That Heaven to living things imparts,
Are not exclusively possessed
By human hearts.

A Parrot, from the Spanish Main,
Full young, and early caged, came o'er,
With bright wings, to the bleak domain
Of Mulla's shore.

To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies, and sun,
He bade adieu.

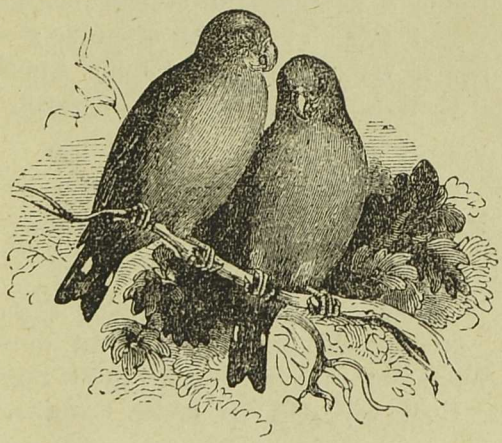
He changed for these the smoke of turf,
A heathery land, and misty sky,
And turned on rocks and raging surf
His golden eye.

But, petted, in our climate cold
He lived and chatted many a day;
Until with age, from green and gold,
His wings grew gray.

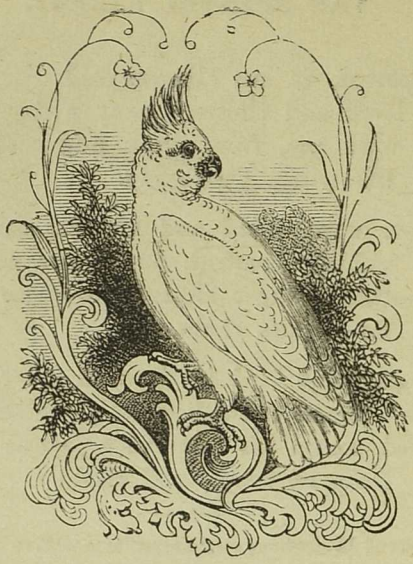
At last, when blind and seeming dumb,
He scolded, laughed, and spoke no more,
A Spanish stranger chanced to come
To Mulla's shore.

He hailed the bird in Spanish speech,
The bird in Spanish speech replied,
Flapped round his cage with joyous screech,
Dropped down, and died!

The Gray Parrot (*Psittacus erythacus*) is a native of Africa, where it is found in the woods congregated in flocks, passing from bough to bough, or hanging suspended in playful frolic by beak or feet. It is incapable of a sustained flight, seldom attempting more than a short flit from tree to tree. The Gray Parrot is the species most commonly found in English aviaries, where it is remarkable for its aptness in acquiring words and tunes. The Love-Bird (*Psittacula pullaria*) is a native of Guinea, and scarcely exceeds a Sparrow in size. It is very interesting to see them dress each other's plumage, caress and fondle each other, and by various actions indicate their mutual attachment.



Love-Birds.



PRETTY COCKATOO.

THERE is a bird with plumage rare,
In gilded cage exposed to view,
Procured with cost, preserved with care—
We mean the *pretty Cockatoo.*

He is a foreign bird of fame,
And talks as Parrots often do;
For if we ask him what's his name
He'll say, "'Tis *pretty Cockatoo.*"

Yet in these words repeated o'er,
Does all this scholar's wisdom lie;
For to a thousand questions more
He only gives the same reply.

If asked who made his gilded cage,
Or who his master's portrait drew,
Who was in Greece the wisest sage?
He'll say, "'Twas *pretty Cockatoo.*"

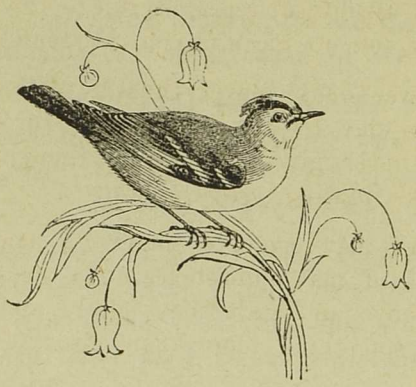
Thus many children sent to school,
  Perform the same unmeaning rounds;
Learn all by oft-repeated rule,
  Yet see no meaning in the sounds.

But we should never thus by rote
  Run day by day our lessons through,
And never give the sense a thought,
  Like prating *pretty Cockatoo.*

A bird may come to sound its name,
  A bird may almost learn to spell;
But boys and girls may surely aim
  At something more than birds can tell.

The wreath which winds round Wisdom's bough
  Is free to all, though cropped by few:
And we may pluck a leaf e'en now,
  And shame the *senseless Cockatoo.*

The Cockatoo is a native of the Eastern Archipelago and Australia. The species most frequently brought to England is the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua Galerita*), very common in Van Diemen's Land, where it may be found in flocks of a thousand in number. Its nesting-place is always in a decaying tree, and by means of its very powerful beak, it tears away the wood until it has augered the hole to its liking. It is often a great pest to the agriculturist, devouring the ripened maize, or disinterring the newly-sown seeds with hearty good-will.



THE GOLDEN-CRESTED WREN.

BLITHELY twitting—
Gaily flitting—
Through the budding glen,
Golden-crested—
Sunny-breasted—
Goes the tiny Wren.

Peeping, musing,
Picking, choosing,
Nook is found at last;
Moss and feather
Twined together,
Home is shaped at last.

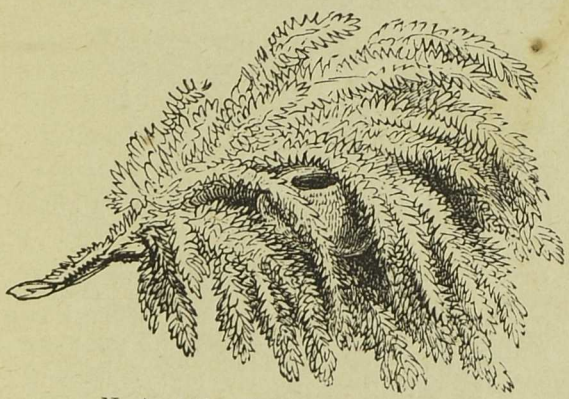
Brisk as ever—
Quick and clever—
Brimming with delight;
Twelve wee beauties
Bring new duties,
Work from morn till night.

THE GOLDEN-CRESTED WREN.

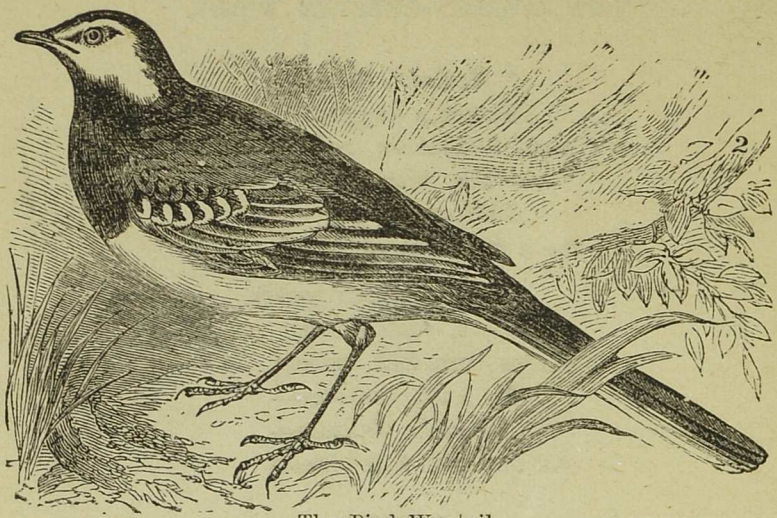
"Mother's fagging,
Father's lagging,"
Says a Sparrow rude;
"Fie, what story!
All our glory
Is a well-nursed brood.

"Wing grows weary,
Love, still cheery,
Keeps unruffled breast;
No such treasure—
No such pleasure—
As our well-filled nest!"

The Golden-crested Wren (*Regulus cristatus*), the smallest of British birds, is commonly seen hopping and flitting merrily among the branches in copses and orchards. This "shadow of a bird," as Gilbert White calls it, is a hardy little creature, and braves the severest frosts of winter. Its nest is exquisitely woven of grass, feathers, and other soft substances, and generally contains from six to ten eggs, which are hardly bigger than peas. Compared to the bulk of the diminutive architects, the nest is of large dimensions, being seven inches in circumference, while the bird itself is but three inches and three-quarters in length.



Nest of the Golden-crested Wren.



The Pied Wagtail.

SOLILOQUY OF A WATER-WAGTAIL.

"HEAR your sovereign's proclamation,
All good subjects young and old:
I'm the Lord of the Creation;
I—a Water-Wagtail bold!
All around, and all you see,
All the world was made for ME!

"Yonder sun so proudly shining,
Rises—when I leave my nest;
And, behind the hills declining,
Sets—when I retire to rest:
Morn and evening, thus you see,
Day and night were made for ME!

"Vernal gales to love invite me;
Summer sheds for me her beams;
Autumn's jovial scenes delight me;
Winter paves with ice my streams:
All the year is mine, you see;
Seasons change, like moons, for ME!

"On the heads of giant mountains,
Or beneath the shady trees;
By the banks of warbling fountains,
I enjoy myself at ease:
Hills and valleys, thus you see,
Groves and rivers made for ME!

"Boundless are my vast dominions;
I can hop, or wade, or fly;
When I please, my towering pinions
Trace my empire through the sky:
Air and elements, you see,
Heaven and earth were made for ME!

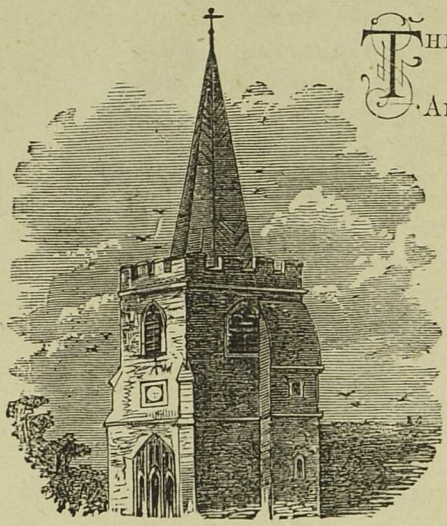
"Birds and insects, beasts and fishes,
All their humble distance keep;
Man, subservient to my wishes,
Sows the harvest which I reap:
Mighty man himself, you see,
All that breathe were made for ME!

"'Twas for my accommodation
Nature rose when I was born;
Should I die—the whole creation
Back to nothing would return:
Sun, moon, stars, the world, you see,
Sprung—exist, will fall with ME!"

Here the pretty prattler, ending,
Spread his wings to soar away;
But a cruel Hawk, descending,
Pounced him up—a helpless prey.
—Couldst thou not, poor Wagtail! see
That the Hawk was made for THEE?

The Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla Yarrellii*) is the most common of the nine species of the Wagtail family found in England. They derive their name from their well-known habit of jerking their tails while running on the ground or on settling after a flight. It remains in England throughout the year, generally retiring to the southern counties in Winter.

THE JACKDAW.



THERE is a bird who, by
his coat,
And by the hoarseness
of his note,
Might be supposed a
Crow ;
A great frequenter of
the church,
Where, bishop-like, he
finds a perch
And dormitory too.

Above the steeple
shines a plate,
That turns and turn
to indicate
From what point blows the weather.
Look up, your brain begins to swim,
'Tis in the clouds—that pleases him :
He chooses it the rather.

Fond of the speculative height,
Thither he wings his airy flight,
And thence securely sees
The bustle and the raree-show
That occupy mankind below,
Secure and at his ease.
You think, no doubt, he sits and muses
Of future broken bones and bruises,
If he should chance to fall.—

No ; not a single thought like that
Employs his philosophic pate,
  Or troubles it at all.

He sees that this great round-about,
The world, with all its motley rout—
  Church, army, physic, law—
Its custom and its businesses,
Is no concern at all of his,
  And says—what says he ?—Caw !

Thrice happy bird ! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men ;
  And, sick of having seen them,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine
  And such a head between them.

The Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*), the smallest of the British Crows, has an extraordinary attachment to man and his habitations. It may be distinguished from the Crow and Rook by a gray patch upon the crown of the head and back of the neck. It generally builds in towers and rocks: churches in the country are often favoured with their presence. The Jackdaw has a singular habit of accompanying the Rook in its evening flight to the rookery. It is a very mischievous bird, and many extraordinary tales are told of its exploits. Some time ago numerous Jackdaws inhabited the college buildings at Cambridge. In forming their nests they discovered that the thin wooden labels in front of the plants in the Botanic Gardens were just suited for their purpose and near at hand. Accordingly they helped themselves freely, usually in the early morning before the gardeners came to work. A bird would grasp the label edgewise in its beak, and pull it first to one side and then to the other, till it succeeded in drawing it out. The number of labels thus yearly removed, much to the disgust of the gardeners, was very considerable. On one occasion a chimney in the professor's house having been stopped up, the Jackdaws built in the upper part of it, and the manservant actually took upwards of two hundred of the said deal labels from the chimney-shaft.

BIRDS AND MEN.

Oh! little birds, God taught you songs
In many a changeful note to raise;
We hear you in the bush and cliff,
The meadow, and the dusty ways.
He taught us, too, and we can sing
A sweeter nobler psalm of praise.

Oh! little birds, God shaped your wings
To cleave at will the sunny air,
And soaring up o'er field and wood
To glide in freedom everywhere.
And He has shaped for us our wings—
The winging waft of faith and prayer.

Oh! little birds, God gave you hearts
Of quiet joy o'erflowing pain;
You live contented through the days
Of Summer sun or Winter rain.
And He can give us godliness
Mixed with content—our greatest gain.

Oh! little birds, God showed you how
To choose the tree that suits you best,
To weave the twig, and straw, and grass,
To bind the clay into your nest.
And He has shown us how to build
A house in heaven, where we may rest.

Oh! little birds, God grants you gifts
Exhaustless through the changing year,
And in the fields you find your food
Sometimes afar and sometimes near.
And He will give us all we want—
His children never need to fear.

THE LINNET.

UPON yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover.
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

While thus before my eyes he gleams,
A brother of the leaves he seems;
When, in a moment, forth he teems
His little song in gushes,
As if it pleased him to disdain
The voiceless form he chose to feign,
While he was dancing with the train
Of leaves among the bushes.

The Common Linnet (*Fringilla cannabina*) is sometimes called the Greater Redpole, Brown Linnet, Gray Linnet, and various other names according to its change of plumage at different seasons of the year. It is a gay and active bird, of a social disposition, and is found in great numbers on uncultivated commons and fields of furze. It is easily tamed, and has a sweet and agreeable song.

THE

LINNET AND THE HEMP-FIELD.

LINNET, observing the husbandman's hand,
How it scattered the hemp-seed about on the land,
Asked the little birds round him if they were aware
For what fatal purpose he planted them there.
"Do you know," exclaimed he, "half the ills of our race
To the mischievous growth of the hemp-seed I trace?

"For instance, the strings made in rope-makers' walks
Are all manufactured with flax from its stalks;
And the twine which the bird-catcher weaves for his snare,
So destructive and fatal to fowls of the air;
Oh how many young birds have entangled their wings,
And been caught in the web of those treacherous strings!

"If you follow, my comrades, the course I advise,
You'll escape the dark plots which these fowlers devise;
Go and gather the seeds up before they can shoot,
Allow them no time in the soil to take root;
You'll defeat, by this means, the contrivance of man,
Who the weak feathered race by his arts would trepan.

The birds disbelieving the truths which they heard,
Neglected the hints of the cautious old bird;
On their future condition bestowing no care,
As they carelessly sported about in the air;
The hemp-plant, the meanwhile, more rapidly grew,
Disclosing unheeded its blossoms of blue.

The old Linnet perceiving his counsels were vain,
To the city repaired for his safety again;
When, on skimming along by the side of the street,
Just the same flock of Linnets he happened to meet,
In cages confined on the bird-catcher's head,
Their feathers erect and all ruffled with dread.

"Unfortunate wretches," he said, with a sigh,
"Poor captives, shut out from the free open sky;
Had you shown more precaution and listened to me,
On the heath-flowered mountains you still had been free.
Now sigh in your bondage with useless regret--
Bear the punishment due to your former neglect."

Like the Linnet, I warn you, my readers, beware,
Be suspicious, wherever you tread, of a snare;
Your enemy walks on the earth "to and fro,"
The seeds of destruction around him to sow;
Go and gather them up ere the evils arise,
Nor "the day of small things," like the Linnets, despise.

ROCK-A-BYE, BIRDIE

ROCK-A-BYE, BIRDIE!

ON a cradle in the tree-top,
Sleeps a tiny bird.
Sweeter sound than mother's chirping
Never yet was heard.

See the green leaves spread like curtains
Round the little bed,
While the mother's wings outstretching,
Shield the callow head.

Chirping to her slumbering nestling
Of the joys of Spring,
While the cradle rocks securely
On the boughs that swing.

So the birdie, softly sleeping,
Dreams of future days;
Dreams of flights on wings unwearied,
'Neath the noon-tide rays.

Sleep and rest then, little nestling,
Through this Summer day:
Growing strength brings growing trial,
Slumber while you may.

MY FIRST BIRD'S NEST.

I HAD a home, a pleasant home, when I was very young,
And as I roamed the woods about with glee of heart I sung;
Born in the busy, gloomy town, I sighed for smiling fields,
And all those beauteous wonders the dawn of Nature yields;
And now my dreams seemed realised I revelled in the joy
That filled my overflowing heart—I was a happy boy.

How sweet and pure the air seemed as I woke at early morn;
The liquid notes of untaught singers on the breeze were borne.
And balmy gales and azure skies seemed teeming with a throng
Of happy spirits like myself, all fragrance and all song:
The soothing sound of rustling trees, the hum of insect wings,
A sum of tranquil feeling, made up of nameless things.

One day—ah! many a year has gone since that remembered hour—
I wandered in a maze of thought through garden, plot, and bower;

Until a seedling-tree I marked, scarcely so tall as I,
That sprung from out the heather's bloom, and I had passed it by,
But that from out the sweeping boughs where many a wild flower blew,
And mingled with its spreading leaves, a little songster flew.

I thought that I had heard a tale how, on a shaded bough,
Birds built their little mansions, and had I found one now?
With trembling hands I lifted up the foliage as it lay
Upon the springing herbage that strewed the moorland way.
And there, upon some sheltered twigs, the treasure lay confest,
Oh! joy of joys, how lovely! my first discovered nest.

Wondrous I thought it, even then, although I little knew
That God's own hand had formed the thing that opened to my view—
Had taught those little tiny claws and bill and breast to form
And place a home so delicate, safe sheltered from the storm.
But still I thought, and think so now, that I had never seen
A structure half so beautiful, formed too of things so mean.

The lichen green, the fibrous root, that underfoot we tread,
The withered stems, the growing moss, the living and the dead.
And then that tender net-worked couch, so exquisitely laced,
On which four little spotted eggs of red and white were placed.
Since then I've seen a thousand nests, but none I thought so sweet
As that pretty little mansion that nestled at my feet.

THE LIVING BIRD SET FREE.

A BIRD with eager flight
Soared through the open sky,
Rejoicing in the gladsome light
And new-found liberty.

The breeze the boughs that stirred,
The cool and pleasant green,
How sweet they seemed! for the free bird
A prisoner had been.

Still on the wings and breast
Drops of red blood there were,
And glorious was the truth exprest
By the free prisoner!

THE LIVING BIRD SET FREE.

Well might the people gaze
  Into the open sky,
Well with the bird their hearts upraise
  In thankful melody.

And one among the throng,
  Received, and cleansed, and blest,—
What wonder if his grateful song
  Rose high above the rest!

Let sinners saved with him
  Pour grateful praises forth;—
The blood of Jesus can redeem
  From sin, and fear, and wrath.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest: and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field."—*Leviticus* xiv. 1-7.

THE BIRDS' APPEAL.

ALL day we flit across your view,
Brown, black, or crimson-breasted,
Yellow or blue, or speckled hue,
Purple or golden-crested.

We do our best to please your *eye*,
With colours brightly blending;
With fairy motion gliding by,
Or angel-like ascending.

All day we strive to charm your *ear*
With concert of sweet singing;
And even when the stars appear
We keep the copses ringing.

At times we waken in your *heart*
A thrill of soft emotion,
And into world-worn spirits dart
An impulse of devotion.

Faithful we stay the Winter through,
Although the snow-storms bluster,
And trusting *you*, since *we* are true,
Around your homes we cluster.

Or if we fly the north wind's sway
  Soon as the Spring is blooming,
Back o'er the sea we wing our way—
  We know our time of coming.

We warble forth our music sweet,
  We twitter, chirp, and chatter,
Or one poor note all day repeat—
  It is our *best*, no matter!

Or if we cease our songs—to do
  The duties life imposes—
Insects from flowers we clear for you,
  The canker from the roses.

We guard the growth of tree and wood,
  Or soon their grace would wither;
Seeking our food on leaf and bud,
  Still flitting hither, thither.

Oh, spare our useful happy life—
  The voice and form which charm you;
And wage not an unnatural strife
  With birds that cannot harm you.

The dainty colours of our coat
  Stain not with bloody rifle,
Nor the sweet note from merry throat
  In dusty darkness stifle!

Our Maker, be it ne'er forgot,
  Appoints the birds man's teachers;
Oh, silence not, with murderous shot,
  God's careless tuneful creatures!

HUMILITY.

THE bird that soars on highest wing,
Builds on the ground her lowly nest;
And she that doth most sweetly sing,
Sings in the shade when all things rest;
In Lark and Nightingale we see
What honour hath Humility.

When Mary chose "the better part,"
She meekly sat at Jesus' feet;
And Lydia's gently-opened heart
Was made for God's own temple meet;
Fairest and best adorned is she
Whose clothing is Humility.

The saint that wears Heaven's brightest crown,
In deepest adoration bends;
The weight of glory bows him down,
Then most when most his soul ascends;
Nearest the Throne itself must be
The footstool of Humility.

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