

YOUNG CANADA.

THE MINER'S PET.

Some miners were busy in a new cross-cut in a Nevada mine, when an old gray rat came travelling along "prospecting" for food rather than silver ore.

Quick as thought a young man, new in the works, sprang forward to dispatch him. Just as quickly an old miner checked him.

"Neyer kill a rat in the mines; they'll bring us luck. We'll make this little fellow welcome, and fix him a box for a house, and give him our scraps to tempt him to stay."

So the rat was made at home in a way very uncommon above ground—and the superstitious miners are looking for ore very confidently after this "sign."

But the rats are sometimes of real service to these dwellers under ground, and so deserving of their warmest gratitude and kindly care. Before one of those terrible "caving-in" accidents the rats seem to feel the settling of the earth some minutes before men perceive it. They come hurrying out of their holes and scamper over the floor in a very excited way, and thus give warning, which sometimes enables the men to escape. No wonder they make pets of the sleek little fellows, which are really as friendly as kittens, when you come to know the best side of them. Often the men have individual pets among them, who come out at lunch time to be fed as orderly as if they were pampered dogs. They clear up the refuse, and leave nothing to spoil in the hot air of the mines, which owes much of its cleanliness to these useful little scavengers.

If rats can be made of use, I wonder if there is anything that cannot. A man took one out of a trap once, and fastened a little bell, of the sleigh-bell pattern, about his neck, and set him loose. You might hear that little tinkling bell up-stairs and down-stairs in the walls of the house, by night or by day, and it was very apt to frighten anyone not in the secret. It did scare away all the other rats and mice in the building, so the little bell-ringer had all the premises to himself. I am afraid he was lonesome, though, and if he went over to a neighbour's house it was just the same way. None of his friends dared stop long enough to have a chat with him. For all they knew, he might be some new-fashioned patent rat trap.

THE WREN'S REQUIEM.

It was on a morning early in spring, years ago, that we heard an unusual twittering outside our bed-room window, above which is a deep thatch. On looking up, we saw two curious festoons hanging from it, apparently in motion. It was, in fact, two half circles, composed of little wrens, clinging to each other by foot and wing, to the number of twenty or thirty. They clung together thus for the space of about two minutes. They twittered mournfully all the while, so different from their usual joyous song; when suddenly, as if by one consent, they in a moment broke loose and flew away. On descending

shortly afterward we found a dead wren lying just under the window over which these festoons of wrens had been hanging a few minutes before. It looked as if these affectionate little creatures had been singing a dirge over their dead friend below; at least we could think of no other cause for the unusual appearance. From that time the wrens deserted that spot for more than two years. On speaking of this to one who had made natural history his study, he told me that it was called "The Wren's Requiem," and was an established fact, though very rarely seen.

THE CHILD AND THE BIRD.

I watched a child one summer day,
When morning breezes stirred,
Go romping through the fields to catch
A golden-breasted bird,
Whose rich imperial plumage shone
Like rainbow in the sky—
Its wings and neck and breast were bright
With every brilliant dye.

At last it darted in among
The blossoms of a tree,
And through the quivering leaves there rang
A rapturous melody.
And as it sang from twig to twig,
Each time 'twould higher mount,
And sweet and clear the music came
Like gushings from a fount.

It sat at last in queenly joy
Upon the topmost limb,
And clapped its shining wings and sang
Its soul-entrancing hymn.
It sang until each trembling leaf
And bloom and blade of grass
Did quiver with the joyous sound,
As when the breezes pass.

It ceased, and raised its crested head,
And spread its golden plumes,
A moment poised in air above
The sweetly-scented blooms.
Then, quick as thought, it sailed away
In arrowy, even flight,
Until it seemed a fading speck
In morning's amber light.

The child stood gazing at the speck
Grow fainter in the skies,
And tears, ah! bitter tears arose
Into his lustrous eyes,
That bathed in swimming splendour beamed
So wondrous bright and blue,
They shamed the early violets
Besprent with morning dew.

BE AWAKE.

I have heard of a little maiden who said,
"It was so very hard, she always had to go to bed just when she wished to stay up, and to get up just when she wished to go to bed;" and I know many children feel as she did; but if they had old heads on their young shoulders they would know that those who are growing require more sleep than those who are at their full strength; and also that if they do not go up to bed early they will not be ready to get up for the bright morning hours, which are the very best of the whole day.

It is a happy thing to be awake early, and to get into the habit of rising early. Lord Chatham said, "I should have inscribed on the curtains of your bed and on the walls of your chamber, 'If you do not rise early you can make progress in nothing.'" Therefore, that you may be early awake, and may keep awake at your lessons, or at your work, be early in bed. I sometimes wish, when I hear children grumbling about having to go too soon to their pleasant bed, so soft and sweet,

that they knew what it was to be really weary. In the factories, before the law was passed which limited the hours of labour, children often fell asleep over their work, though they knew they would be speedily aroused and punished for doing so. During the battle of the Nile many ship-boys were so weary that they were seen lying asleep on the decks, awakened neither by the noise around them, nor by the fear of their officer's anger, nor by their own danger. They were so weary that they must sleep, whatever came of it. I think if some little people who make ugly faces about going to bed had more to tire them, they would not only be glad to go to bed, but would thank God they had a bed to go to, while the children of poverty have to sleep as they can—oftentimes cold and comfortless.—*Chatterbox.*

POWER OF EXAMPLE.

In a town in Bavaria there is a little tumble-down church building where the Duke, as often as he came that way, used to go in and pray. If, on coming out of the chapel, he happened to meet any of the peasants in the field, he loved to converse with them in a friendly way.

One day he met an old man, with whom he fell into conversation on various things; and, taking a liking to the man, he asked him, in parting, whether he could do anything for him.

The peasant replied: "Noble sir, you cannot do anything better for me than you have done already."

"How so?" asked he. "I do not know that I have done anything for you."

"But I know it," said the man, "for how can I ever forget that you saved my son? He travelled so long in the ways of sin that for a long time he would have nothing to do with the church or prayer, and sank every day deeper in wickedness. Some time ago he was here, and saw you, noble sir, enter the chapel. 'I should like to see what he does there,' said the young man, scornfully, to himself, and he glided in after you. But when he saw you pray so devotedly, he was so deeply impressed that he also began to pray, and from that moment he became a new man. I thank you for it. And this is why I said you can do me no greater favour than you have done me already."—*From the German.*

MR. SPURGEON AND BOB.

The Rev. Mr. Morgan, of New York, was sitting on a bench one day beside Mr. Spurgeon at the latter's orphanage in London. A little fellow not a yard high came up and said, "Mis'r Surg'n may I sit on dis seat?" "Certainly, Bob," said Mr. Spurgeon, lifting him up. He meditated a long time, and then said, "Mis'r Surg'n, s'posing there was an orflin sylum a' a hunnerd orflins in it, an' all the orflins had uncles and aunties to bring 'em cakes an' apples 'cept one orflin dat hadn't no one—oughtn' somebody give dat orflin sixpence?" "I think so, Bob; but why?" "Cause I'm him!" said Bob; and he got his sixpence.