



THE BIRDS' CONCERT.

(By W. C. McClelland in 'The Young Evangelist'.)

The crow made the announcement,
And the owl with his 'tu-whoo,'
That the birds should come
At the pheasant's drum,
And the woodpecker's 'tat-tattoo,'
His echoing, loud tattoo.

From the four winds of heaven,
As the summoning notes rang clear,
They flew to a wood
Where a great oak stood,
And a tit-mouse whistled, 'Here, here!'
Whistled and shouted, 'Here!'

The blue bird sang full soft and low,
And trembled with delight,
Till one bird shouted,
'Whip-poor-will!'
And another called 'Bob White,'
'T was the partridge called 'Bob White.'

The robin sang with all his might,
But the jay-bird shrieked his jeers;
Said the sea-mew,
'This will not do,'
But the red bird said, 'Three cheers, three
cheers!'
But the red bird said, 'Three cheers!'

The thrush sang a hymn so tenderly
That it thrilled the listening skies;
Hear the judges now
From every bough;
'Give the bonny brown thrush the prize,
Give the bonny brown thrush the prize!'

THE SNAKE THAT CAME TO LIFE.

Mother entered the room just in time to hear Jack say to Dolly: 'Look out, a great big black bear may rush from behind the door!'

'Jack,' said mother, 'never let me hear you say such a thing again to your sister in the first place, it is not true; and in the second, it's very unmanly to frighten a little girl. You put me in mind of something that happened years and years ago when I was your age, and went to school way off in a little country town.'

Dolly and Jack left off their play immediately, for mother was a famous story teller.

'In this town,' began mother, 'there lived two boys named Durant, who were little terrors, and always in some kind of mischief. They didn't really mean to be naughty, but they were; and they gave everybody lots of trouble. Well, one Spring a new boy moved to town. His name was William Snade, and he at once became a special object of derision to the Durant boys; for he had beautiful yellow curls, which his mother refused to have cut off, though he was quite a big boy. The Durants had their heads shaved; of course Willie himself hated those curls.'

'Most of us school children used to tease him, but nobody was so bad as the Durants, and they were awful. They called him Millie instead of Willie, and said he was a coward, and altogether were so hateful that Willie's life was anything but pleasant. He did look like a little girl and wasn't much of a fighter, for he never answered back; but he had a deal of pluck, as you will see before I finish my story.'

'One day the Durant boys told the rest of us that they had a fine joke to play on Miss Millie. They said they were going to kill a

snake, and put it on a stump somewhere and then tell Willie it was a very poisonous beast, and dare him to kill it.

'So that afternoon all we naughty little children gathered together for a snake hunt through the woods, and finally we found a copperhead, which the boys killed. Now, a copperhead, you know, is perhaps one of the most poisonous snakes, and the bite is almost always fatal.

'This snake the boys coiled up on a stump; they stuck his head up in a most lifelike attitude, and then we all went home and forgot all about it.

'The next day at noon the boys proposed a walk through the woods, and to Willie's delight asked him to come along. We soon reached the place where the snake was, and suddenly Ned Durant called out: "Good gracious, there's a big snake coiled up on that stump!"

'Willie jumped as if he had been shot, and said, "Where?" rather faintly.

"Right in front of you," answered Ned. "I dare you to kill him. Here's a stick."

'Willie hesitated, and somebody cried "Coward!"

"I'm not a coward!" exclaimed Willie, his face turning scarlet with wrath. "Here, give me the old stick. I'll kill him. He's only a harmless thing, anyway, even though he is big." Willie didn't know much about snakes, and probably couldn't have told an anaconda from a garter snake, or he never would have made such a foolish remark.

'He approached the enemy with a brave step and brought the stick down hard. In an instant something very strange happened.

'The stump seemed covered with a writhing mass, and quick as lightning a long neck lifted itself and struck at Willie with its forked tongue. He screamed and turned to run. Ned

Durant was the first to get his wits back, for the rest of us stood and gaped at the unusual spectacle of seeing a dead snake apparently come to life. "Quick!" cried Ned, seizing Willie by the arm, "run for your life to the doctor. You've been bitten by a copperhead, and it's deadly poison." Another boy grabbed Willie's other arm, and they reached the doctor in a few minutes. Fortunately the doctor was in; and he worked over Willie for hours; the boy did not whimper through all the pain.

'I think that the Durant boys never played a practical joke again as long as they lived, for they were thoroughly frightened; and after it was all over, they couldn't be nice enough to Willie Snade, for they were always thinking that they might not have had the chance to "make up."

'What really happened was this. The dead snake's mate had come to look for him, as they are often known to do, and had so coiled itself upon the stump that we, thinking only of the dead snake we had left there, hadn't noticed the live one.

'So,' concluded mother, smiling, 'let us remember not to taunt others; for others may be braver than we ourselves, are, when the critical moment comes.'—Washington 'Star.'

A MOTHER-MADE MAN.

At a large public meeting one of the most distinguished of America's public men was introduced as a 'self-made man.' Instead of appearing gratified at the tribute, it seemed to throw him for a minute into a 'brown study.' Afterwards he was asked the reason for the way in which he received the announcement.

'Well,' said the great man, 'it set me to thinking that I was not really a self-made man.'

'Why,' they replied, 'did you not begin to work in a store when you were ten?'

'Yes,' said he, 'but it was because my mother thought I ought early to have the educating touch of business.'

'But then,' they urged, 'you were always such a great reader, devouring books when a boy.'

'Yes,' he replied, 'but it was because my mother led me to do it, and at her knee she had me give an account of the book after I had read it. I don't know about being a self-made man.'

'But then,' they urged, 'your integrity was your own.'

'Well, I don't know about that. One day a barrel of apples had come to me to sell out by the peck, and, after the manner of some store-keepers, I put the imperfect ones at the bottom and the best ones at the top. My mother called me and asked me what I was doing. I told her and she said: "Tom, if you do that you will be a cheat." I think my mother had something to do with making me anything I am of any character or usefulness.'—Selected.

SOMEBODY FORGETS.

A little boy, living in the most poverty-stricken section of a great city, found his way into the mission school and became a Christian. One day, not long after, some one tried to shake the child's faith by asking him some puzzling questions.

'If God really loves you, why doesn't He take better care of you? Why doesn't He tell somebody to send a pair of shoes or else coal enough so that you can keep warm this winter?'

The boy thought a moment, and then said, as the tears rushed to his eyes: 'I guess He does tell somebody, and somebody forgets.'

The saddest thing about the answer is its truth. God is not unmindful of His little ones. He calls us to supply the things that are needed. He tells us that every act of kindness or helpfulness done to the least or lowest of His creatures He will count as done to Him.

But not all of His purposes are carried out; often because we choose our own pleasure rather than His will; often because somebody forgets.—Cottager and Artizan.