

there were two eggs in it, the next time three, but the next time two large cuckoos flew from the nest, and one egg had been sucked. The empty shell was left on the side of the nest. The bird never came back to lay another egg, so we took what there were and kept them in the house.

The wood-pecker's nest was built in a hollow tree a mile from our house. There were seven pure white eggs in it, and the next time there were young ones. The mother screamed loudly while we looked at them. The next time the nest was empty.

The white throat's nest was built in a thorny bullberry bush, which was very hard to climb. The first time we saw it there were seven young ones, and the birds were very bald.

The blackbird's nest was built at the root of a small bush. It had eight eggs, but we never saw it again till it was empty.

The tom-tit's nest was very near the house, though we could not see anything of it except grass, because it was built in an old buffalo skull that hung on the wall of our wood shed. There was only one small opening that we could not get our hands in, so we could not see the eggs.

This letter is composed by two sisters. For fear of making it too long, we will close with a pen-name.

Alta. (b) ELVES OF THE WOODS.
(12 and 9)

((You must be elves of the woods—regular sprites—to have found out so much about the birds. We hope you will write us again, and tell us more of what you have seen in the big out-of-doors.—C.D.))

HOW THE JAPANESE WORK.

Dear Children—We hear a great deal in these days of the marvellous way in which the people of Japan are picking up the ways of Western civilization, and in some things advancing beyond us, beating us at our own game, so to speak.

I have just been wondering if their patience and carefulness over little things has anything to do with it. The thought came to me when I saw a set of hand-painted buttons that came direct from Osaka, the Japanese city where most of the famous painted satsuma china-ware comes from. My buttons have each a tiny Japanese lady on them, and every feature of her tiny face is perfect, and every detail of her elaborate costume is complete.

The lady who sent me the buttons visited the satsuma works in Osaka, and told me in a letter of a few of the beautiful things she saw there. There was one bowl about six inches in diameter which had no less than 3,200 butterflies painted on the inside of it. Each butterfly was entirely separate from one another, and was artistically formed. A costly vase had a procession of shoguns—great lords—painted on it, and every bit of the face and dress was as perfect as if they had been life-size paintings. My friend, being a good Canadian, chose a little plate with maple leaves upon it, the nearest like the real thing that she will see until she comes home in 1911.

Their embroideries, too, are works of art. Not many Canadian girls and women do their fancy work so well that it is hard to tell the wrong side from the right—but they do in Japan. Some of their finest work in painting and embroidery is seen in the palace of the Mikado—that is what they call their emperor—at Kyoto. There isn't much furniture, in fact, there are only two chairs in the whole palace, and the Emperor's throne is a heap of cushions. But the sliding walls are painted exquisitely. One room had its walls decorated with a cherry tree whose blossoming branches encircled the whole room. The tiger room had wonderful paintings of those savage yet graceful animals, showing them in every attitude. There was a room decorated with geese, one with storks and one with mountain and river scenery.

The silk weaving is done in Kyoto by men with little hand machines. The picture of the pattern to be woven is hung up in front of the workman and he watches it carefully and works very slowly. The big embroidered screens are made in three sections and stand about seven feet high. One screen, which took two years to make, showed

a running stream with a forest in the background, and hounds pursuing a deer in the foreground. A few feet away you couldn't distinguish a stitch, and so natural was the scene that you could almost see the trees waving in the wind and hear the dogs bark.

It seems as if people who are thorough in little things can best do the big things when big things come their way.

COUSIN DOROTHY.

THE BEAUTIFUL TWIN.

'Goody,' cried the Homely Twin, 'I believe it's goin' to.' She dropped the bit of cloth into the saucer of sand, and stood gazing proudly at the little crimson face in the looking-glass. For nearly an hour she had stood there, scouring the tiny gold brown spots, one by one. Wincing? Not the Homely Twin! But, truly, it did hurt—my!

'I believe—I believe it's goin' to!' she breathed in rapture. For all the little freckles swam in the sea of red, faint and pale. They certainly looked as if they were fading out!

'I wonder if it wouldn't do to wait till to-morrow to do the rest,' she murmured doubtfully, feeling of her smarting nose with a pitying little forefinger.

'I shouldn't want to make it bleed—not just exactly before the picnic. I guess I'd better wait.'

There was a sound of light steps coming up the stairs, and the Homely Twin hurried the sand saucer out of sight and sauntered over to the window.

'Barby! Barby! where are you? What you doin' up here?' a voice called.

'Oh, I'm looking out of the window. What you doin'? I know: you're coming upstairs.'

The beautiful Twin danced into the room, a radiant picture of flying curls and clear little pink and white face. But scorn was in her blue eyes.

'Out o' the window! I hope you're having a good time, Barby Witherspoon, looking at an old red cow and a stone wall!'

'She's a dear red cow, so there!' cried the Homely Twin, quickly. 'I'd rather look at Cream Pot than at—'

'Me! No, you wouldn't, 'cause I've got my new dress on!' the Beautiful Twin laughed. 'Look here, will you, Barby Witherspoon?'

Barby turned slowly. She knew beforehand just how lovely Betty would look in the pale pink muslin dress. She knew how white her forehead and nose and chin would look, and how splendidly her cheeks would match the dress, and how all her soft golden curls would make a beautiful shiny rim—Barby could not remember halo—around her face.

'Isn't it beautiful?' sang Betty, circling slowly round the little room, with her crisp, rosy skirts spread daintily. 'Pink is remark-bly becoming to me, Miss Cecilia says. And you guess what else she said, Barby Witherspoon!'

'That every other color was, too,' Barby answered instantly.

Miss Cecilia was the seamstress, and she admired the Beautiful Twin very much. Sometimes she said things about the Homely Twin, too. 'It's a pity pink ain't more becoming to Barbara, ain't it? I don't know really what color is.' Sometimes she said that, Barby had heard her say it a little while ago.

'Well, she said it, honest, Barby. I can't help it,' cried Betty, with a little toss of her curls. It was the beautiful thing about the Beautiful Twin that Betty meant. But it was the dreadful thing about the Homely Twin Barby was thinking of. Poor Barby!

'And that makes me think—that's what I came upstairs for! Miss Cecilia wants you to come right down and try on your dress, Barby.'

The picnic was the next day but one; and, oh, dear me, the freckles had all come back by that time! Worse still, the scrubbing with the sand had roughened and reddened the poor little nose and cheeks dreadfully. Barby, in her pretty new pink dress, it was exactly like Betty's—gazed at herself in dismay.

'I look a good deal worse,' she groaned. 'Oh, a good deal. Now there's the skin out, and the freckles, too! But I'm goin' to that picnic, yes, I am! You hear me, Barby Witherspoon? Oh, I can't miss it. It makes me ache, I can't go now.'

After all, in the excitement and fun, the freckles would not matter so much. They never

did notice the Homely Twin, much, anyway. It was always the Beautiful Twin. So Barby's sore little heart was comforted, and she buttoned her dress and ran away to wait for the picnic wagons. She was only seven, and at seven you can forget that your nose is scraped and red, even when it smart's! That is, if you're going to a picnic.

But at the very beginning of the picnic something quite dreadful happened to the Beautiful Twin. She got tangled up in some blackberry vines, and the sharp, cruel little teeth tore her frail dress to 'flinders.' That was what Barby thought when she saw it. It hung in shreds, to her excited imagination. Anyway, the pretty skirt was torn nearly off the waist. 'O Betty, O my stars!' she cried in sharp distress.

'I'm all to pieces!' sobbed Betty. 'And I've got to go home, and it will b-break—my—heart!'

Go home?—from the picnic? And it had just begun! Barby shuddered. But there seemed no hope for the poor little Beautiful Twin. It was certainly a dreadful looking dress.

'I think it's mean! I think it's mean!' she burst out fiercely. 'What did it have to be me for? Why wasn't it you? Barby Witherspoon? It would have been a good deal more—more 'propriator, so there! Miss Cecilia said you wasn't anywhere near as becomin' to your dress, not—anywhere—near!'

Sobs interrupted the angry little voice and Betty threw herself down on the ground and hid her face. The twin sisters were all alone. The 'picnic' had gone on ahead, but they could hear the laughter and joy of it distinctly.

By and by Betty lifted her face, when Barby had disappeared; but right there on a new bush hung her new pink dress, whole and fresh! And there was a piece of brown paper pinned to it in plain sight. It had been torn from the luncheon bag.

'Dear Betty,' it said, in the little Homely Twin's uneven writing, 'wear mine. Here it is, and I've gone home with my jacket on over my Peticote. Nobody'll know, and I can just as well as not, I shall run. It isn't so bad for me to miss it, nobody will miss me! don't look for me for I am gone.'

That night, when the 'picnic' got home, it was very late, and Barby was in bed, asleep. Betty crept in beside her, and lay looking at the flushed, homely little face. Once she put out her fingers, and smoothed it gently. Then she got out of bed again, and found a pencil and wrote something on paper, sitting up close to the window in the starlight. When it was written, she pinned it carefully to the breast of Barby's little white nightgown; and then Betty kissed the unconscious little face.

'It's so,' she whispered. 'What folks call us isn't right. This is.'

In the night the moon rose, and its tender light stole in and made the crooked words on the bit of paper on the Homely Twin's nightgown clear and easy to read.

'You are the Butiful Twin,' it said. —ANNIE HAMILTON DONNELL in the 'Congregationalist'.

THE LILAC.

The scent of lilac in the air
Hath made him drag his steps and
pause;
Whence comes this scent within the
square,
Where endless city traffic roars?
A push-cart stands beside the curb,
With fragrant blossoms laden
high;
Speak low, not stare, lest we disturb
His sudden reverie!
He sees us not, nor heeds the din
Of changing car and scuffling throng;
His eyes see fairer sights within,
And memory hears the robin's song
As once it thrilled against the day,
And shook his slumber in a room,
Where drifted with the breath of
May,

The lilac's sweet perfume,
The heart of boyhood in him stirs;
The wonder of the morning skies,
Of sunset gold behind the firs,
Is kindled in his dreaming eyes;

How far off is this world place,
As turning from our sight away,
He crushes to his hungry face
A purple blue spray.

WALTER DEAN BURNETT in *Amateur*

BOYHOOD TOWN.

Kind God, look down on Boyhood Town
and keep it green for ever,
The long main street, with shade trees
sweet, the wharf and the dreaming
river!

Oh, lead us there, when bowed with care,
to hear its childhood story,
Its song and speech of love that teach
the light of love and glory!
Ah, lead us down to Boyhood Town
when we are old and weary,
To taste and know the golden glow of
spirits fresh and cheery!

Look down, we pray, on all that play
in childhood's bloomy valley;
Keep sweet the street where little feet
of youth and gladness rally;
Keep fair the place with pristine grace
that in our grey December
We may be led with blithesome tread
to love's undying ember!
Kind God, look down on Boyhood Town
and keep its soft lights gleaming,
In gardens fair that blossom there along
loved paths of dreaming!

Look down, look down on Boyhood Town
—for we are fain to follow,
The homeward way some well-a-day
when all the world grows hollow!
Guard thou, and keep its yards that lope
along the old main highway;
Its lane that winds where meadows end
in Bloom-o'-Childhood byway!
With all its gleams, its joyful dreams,
keep it, dear God, for ever,
Its shade trees sweet that line the street,
the wharf and dreaming river!
—Baltimore Sun.

HOW THE MOSQUITO CAME TO BUZZ.

(From 'T. P.'s Weekly'.)

While on the subject of folk-lore I should like to quote from Mr. H. n. e. u. r. s. 'Folk-lore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian, and Jewish' (Duckworth & Co.), the following tale explaining how the mosquito came to buzz and how the swallow came to have a forked tail. Satan bribed the serpent with the promise of the sweetest food in the world to smuggle him into the Garden of Eden hid in the hollow of his fangs. Hence the Fall. After the Fall, when an angel was assigning to every creature its special habit and food, Satan demanded his promised pay, the sweetest food in the world, which, said he, is the flesh of man. Here Adam naturally protested, as no one, he urged, has ever eaten the flesh of man, no one can be sure that it is the sweetest food. Then it was arranged that the mosquito should circle the world for a year, sampling the blood of every creature to discover what really was the most luscious food. As the mosquito at the end of the year was on its way to report to the court it was intercepted by that friend of man, the swallow. 'Well, asked the swallow, 'which blood did you find the sweetest?' 'Man's,' replied the mosquito, emphatically. 'Whose?' shouted the swallow. 'I'm sorry I'm so deaf this morning, but I really cannot hear you.' Hereupon the mosquito opened its mouth to its utmost capacity to shout out 'Man's', when the swallow, with incredible swiftness, darted in its bill and plucked out the mischievous creature's tongue. The two then walked together to the court, where all creatures were assembled to hear the final decision. But the mosquito, when challenged to make his report, could only buzz his tongue being torn out. Then the swallow complained to the court that the mosquito, before he had had the misfortune to lose his voice, had told him that of all the blood he had tasted he had found that of the frog to be the most delicious. Upon this the court pronounced its irrevocable sentence that henceforth frogs should be the food of the serpent. The serpent, in its fury at the diplomatic intervention of the swallow, darted forward to destroy it, but succeeded only in biting some feathers out of its tail.

SUCCESS.

Before God's footstool to confess
A poor soul knelt and bowed his head,
"I failed," he wailed. The Master
said,
"Thou didst thy best; that is success."
—HENRY COYLE.