

## OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

## Winter Birds.

These are the natives and the Polar visitors—the little Northern birds that enjoy cold weather so much that they do not care to immigrate farther southward when Jack Frost sharpens his spears. Some of them have come from the far North and our latitude is very agreeable to them in midwinter. Every one, says an ornithologist, has seen straggling flocks of snow birds, bright dots against the gray of a threatening sky or drifting along like large flakes in the swirl of the storm, their lonesome whistles suggestive of the vast Northern solitudes whence they have wandered. There are other bird emigrants from the far North nearly as abundant as snow-birds, but they are seldom seen by the average observer. They form little groups of visitors for the most part a quiet, serious lot, apparently trained to silence in those vast Northern forests that know no sound but the whisper of winds or the sweep of snow and sleet through the branches of the evergreens.

The most striking in appearance of these birds is the pine grosbeak, a robust, heavy-shouldered fellow about the size of a robin. He is short billed, short-legged, with wings and tail of black, and for the rest of his clothing wears an entire suit of deep, rich crimson, a little rusty in places, as though he had neglected to dust his jacket. Against the dark of the evergreens that he haunts his gorgeous costume stands out in striking contrast. It takes him several years to acquire his full uniform, and a flock of grosbeaks generally contains a large proportion of young males and females, with now and then a ruddy old fellow to give tone to the assemblage. Occasionally a group will be composed entirely of old males, a sort of bachelors club, and they are a showy lot. The females are much plainer, with a dark ash color, tinged with bronze on the crown and upper tail coverts. The seeds from the cones of evergreens are the grosbeaks' chief food supply and their short, strong beaks have little difficulty in tearing the seeds out of their snug quarters. They sometimes vary this diet with birch buds, frozen apples and, later in the season, with the soft buds of the maple.

Their visitations seem to be a matter of chance rather than the result of the severe weather, for often several seasons will lapse without their appearance; then perhaps for several successive winters they will be more or less abundant. The males are said to sing brilliantly during the mating season in their native woods, but the only music they bring South with them is a loud whistle, a single note repeated at intervals, singularly clear, rich and mellow. It is a cheerful sound in the quiet of the winter woods.

The evening grosbeak is a smaller bird of the same family. It is yellowish green, blotched after the fashion of a harlequin with black, white and yellow. It is a resident of the far North-west, and may hardly be termed a regular winter visitor to this State, as the only records of its appearance have been made on one or two occasions after very heavy storms.

Probably the most common of our winter visitors are the crossbills. Of these there are two varieties. They are slightly larger than a bluebird and in color and general habits much resemble the pine grosbeak. The prevailing color of both species is dull crimson, with blackish tail and wings; the rarer species, designated as the white-winged crossbill, show a band of white across the wings when they are extended. The bill, which is the distinctive feature of these birds, is short and strong and curved both up and down so that the points pass each other, forming an ideal pair of clippers that make short work of cones and other rough material.

The crossbills arrive each year in October or early in November and remain sometimes as late as the middle of May; they are quiet birds, doing everything with an air of mystery like strange people in a strange land. When startled into flight or when passing from point to point they utter a peculiar, monotonous "chink," but when they are feeding, absolute silence seems to be the rule. One might sit for an hour beneath an evergreen in whose branches a large flock of crossbills were at work without knowledge of their presence in the vicinity, unless one noticed the dropping scales from the rigid ones.

Another interesting group are the red polls, so called because of a crimson crown, a tinge that also marks the throat with a bright splash of color. Otherwise they have much the size and appearance of the common field sparrow. They appear more fond of the open than the other birds mentioned and seem to prefer the buds and seeds of deciduous trees to the resinous taste of pine or hemlock.

Another beautiful but a very rare visitor is the Bohemian waxwing. It is a large sized cousin of the cherry bird or cedar waxwing, and, except for the size, is a perfect counterpart. It is a sleek, graceful bird, with glossy dark plumage and a high crest that gives it a peculiar appearance of alertness.

The foregoing are all aliens, whose appearance is more or less doubtful and uncertain, continues our authority, a writer in the New York Sun. For continual companions we have the native inhabitants that all the year round add life and cheerfulness to woods and fields and orchards. First is the crow, the honest hearty, shrewd old philosopher. What would a winter landscape in the country amount to without his sable form moving across it, alone or with an irregular detachment of companions, walking gravely about some spring run or swamp or in and out among the rustling "shocks" of a cornfield, or perched on the topmost branch of a tree taking a general inventory of all visible objects and reporting his discoveries with that rough "caw, caw?" What if he does at certain seasons steal a little corn or an occasional egg or chicken? He takes no more than suffices to keep him strong, and as "an honest fox must live," why not an honest crow?

Frequent callers in the orchard and the trees about the house are the woodpeckers, the nuthatches and chickadees. The hairy woodpecker is the brick chimp fellow with the loud, brassy chirp and the wide awake manner of "soulfling" about the trees. His strong, busy bill makes short work of liberating insects and grubs. When he dies he utters his note at each beat of his wings, as though the jerk of the motion jolted a chirp from his chest. The downy woodpecker, similar in color, but reduced one half in size, is quieter and more domestic. He is the little chap that seeks out a decayed limb and therein digs himself a comfortable apartment for winter quarters, where he passes the night and a goodly portion of many stormy days. The red-headed and yellow-bellied woodpeckers also remain North during the winter, but they are more exclusive and distant in their habits and manners.

The nuthatches, with their white fronts, reddish-brown vest and blue coats, with black trimmings, are very quiet little fellows. They run woodpecker like up and down tree trunks, uttering their peculiar little squeak or grunt, a sound which, when they wish to summon a companion, is prolonged into a loud and rather cheerful call.

But the busiest of the busy are the chickadees, rightly known as black-capped tomcats. They are fearless of man or beast, too much occupied to notice whether they are head up or head down, pecking here and prying there, chattering and twittering to themselves, uttering at times their plaintive whistles as though they said, "Oa, dear," and then reassuring themselves and every one within hearing with their cheerful, comforting "Chick-chick-chick chickadee-dee-dee."

A half day's walk through the fields and along the hedges and bushworks will often discover many of the shy birds who keep well away from the doorways. As you pass a bunch of hawthorn trees you may see a flock of the quiet, exclusive, drab-coated cedar birds busily picking at the red fruit. Perhaps you will startle a great Northern shrike from the same clump of trees and mark his gray and black coloring as he flies heavily, just above the ground, and alights upon a distant fence post. In the distance you see a flock of small birds around a large elm. As you approach the air seems filled with fine twittering and warbling, and you recognize a band of Canada sparrows holding a vocal contest. Every bird in the flock sings his best without pausing for a moment in the important work of food getting. Their song is so faint and insect-like that it is only audible at a short distance. They are slender, graceful birds, a great contrast to their sparrow cousins, the robust billingsgate slinging villians who hustle each other on the city pavements.

In some fields where the weeds left standing in the autumn still reach above the snow you can across two varieties of small birds dining together in the greatest harmony. The little fellows clinging to the weeds are yellow birds or goldfinches, males and females clad alike in sober colors. The larger birds on the ground are shore larks. Their backs and crowns are light brown with a decidedly pinkish tinge, breast lighter and throat yellow, with black markings somewhat resembling a necktie. They are restless birds, straggling about the country in scattering flocks at all seasons, uttering a peculiar, unvarying whistle while at rest or on the wing. Naturalists affirm that a few years ago they were simply winter and autumn visitors, but they are now known to breed here and seem to be on the way to become naturalized.

Perhaps in your walk you pass through a swamp of cedar or hemlock and a harsh, impudent voice tells you that a blue jay is on your trail and will scoff and swear at you until you leave the woods in disgust. Then he will praise his own conduct with soft, bell-like notes that would really sound very clear and mellow if they were not so conceited.

All these birds, both residents and visitors, have a fairly comfortable time and pick up a good living. A sleet storm is about the only calamity to be dreaded, for the frozen rain covers everything with an impenetrable armor, so that the birds, like Tantalus, can often see the things they seek, but are unable to overcome the difficulties in the way. On such occasions, however, a harsh, impudent voice is generally endured with little discomfort, for the bountiful days of autumn that the birds have acquired so generous a coat of fat that only long starving has any bad effect.

Their living enemies are fewer at this season than in the summer, for, save an occasional red-shoulder or goshawk, the hawks have disappeared. The screech-owls are on hand, but they are looking for mice more than birds, and the only really terrible foe is the great horned owl, who, in spite of his reputation as a night prowler, sometimes hunts by day. When he hunts, he is light or dark, there is no escape from the swiftness of his broad wings and the clutch of his talons.

Another foe, but fortunately more often a legend than a reality, is the great snowy owl, the white, silent spectre of the grim Northern wastes, who, like the Arctic robbers of old, comes at long intervals, unexpectedly, slays, destroys and disappears.

## CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Though a man have comparatively little culture, slender abilities, and but small wealth, yet, if his character be of sterling worth, he will always command an influence whether it be in the workshop, the counting house, the mart, or the senate.

## Improving Opportunities.

Few people live up to all the privileges that they might enjoy. To illustrate, one well written, business-like letter might open up a line of business that would be far reaching in its effects, yet that letter is never written. A determination to investigate some new idea in ascertaining the cost of production or increasing the value of a product might mean the difference between success and failure, but the step is never taken. A resolution to change methods of doing business, to cut off expenses that are useless, to adopt habits of thrift and enterprise, might change the whole condition of a man's life, but the resolution is never put into execution. When such things are so apparent it is no wonder that there are so many failures. Eternal vigilance is the price of success. Many may know this to be true, but only a few realize it. It will do no harm for even the most successful to stop and take an inventory of his methods once in a while and see wherein improvements can be made.

## "I'm My Own Master."

"No, sir, I come and go as I please," said a young man on the street corner, speaking boastfully to a companion. "I am my own master."

We watched him a few minutes from our vantage point at the window, and decided that his mastership was very much divided. He was smoking a cigarette, and when he and his friend compared notes on the subject he confessed that he "couldn't get along with less than half a dozen a day;" he was servant to a bad habit. He complained of the trouble of making his allowance answer his wants; wished he could find some easy way of raising funds, and told of his skill in "dodging" some one who was trying to collect bills. We knew that he was in the bondage of debt. His companion was urging him to some project or place to which he was evidently disinclined. He offered various weak objections until the other grew impatient and twitted him with being "goody goody and afraid of any fun." Then he blurted a little and yielded: he was the slave of other people's opinions.

Whatever other authority he had broken away from, he did not control himself. The voices of appetite, vanity, or cowardly fear, spoke and he obeyed. His reason, conscience and manliness, were dominated by his low passions; he boasted of liberty, but he was not his own master.

## The Gospel of Saving.

In the Christmas number of the Saturday Evening Post Russell Sage presents some of the best advice that has ever been given to young men regarding the handling of their money. In the course of the article he says:

"No matter how fast a man may make money, he owes it to society as well as to himself to be economical. 'Any young man who will live up to the following set of rules will get more genuine happiness out of life than his neighbor who violates them:'

"Out of every dollar earned, save 25¢. Save 75¢ if you can, but never less than 25¢.

"Get up at regular hours every morning, and work until the things that are before you are finished. Don't drop what you have in hand because it is 5 o'clock.

"Be honest; always have the courage to tell the truth.

"Don't depend on others. Even if you have a rich father, strike out for yourself.

"Cultivate independence at the very outset.

"Learn the value of money. Realize that it stands, when honestly made, as the monument to your value as a citizen.

"Be jealous of your civic rights. Take a wholesome interest in public affairs, but do not let politics or anything else interfere with the rigid administration of your private duties. The state is made up of individuals.

"Be clean and decent. Don't do anything that you would be ashamed to discuss with your mother.

"Don't gamble.

"Be circumspect in your amusements.

"In connection with amusements, I have never been able to understand why the young men of to-day deem the theatre an absolute essential in seeking diversion. An evening with a good book is, or ought to be, more satisfying to the young man of brains than an evening in a hall where a lot of make-believe characters are strutting up and down the stage, like children at a masquerade. When the human race reaches its highest mental development there will probably be no theatres."

## The Value of Perfect Work.

The tragedy of to-day is of the man who has the best intentions and the best character and a fair equipment for his work, but who has not a thorough equipment and who cannot do the thing he starts to do in the best possible way. Society is crowded with

half-equipped workers, with men who are honest and earnest and not incapable, but who are not up to the level of the very best work. It is amazing, in view of the immense number of those who are seeking for positions, how few persons there are competent to fill a position of any particular position. To fill a position of any importance requires often most diligent searching in many directions.

There is a host of thoroughly well equipped people, but there seems to be, at the moment when they are needed, few perfectly equipped persons. When one has a place of work to be done it is easy to get it fairly well done, but it is extremely difficult to get it thoroughly well done. This is true of all grades of labor. The really competent men who go out for daily work in any community can generally be counted on the fingers of one hand. The rest are partly competent and partially trustworthy. They will come if it suits them, or if the weather is propitious, or if they have nothing else to do, and when they do come they work with a fair degree of skill and industry; but the man who goes despite the weather, and who works with the utmost productiveness is a very rare person in any locality.

If a leading position is vacant it is astonishing how few persons thoroughly equipped for it can be found at the moment. In spite of the ambitious desire to rise higher, and in spite of the superior processes of education which are offered the fortunate few, it remains that society is filled with incapable or only partially trained people, and that when the thoroughly trained man perfectly fitted to do a specific thing in a superior way, is needed, a candle must be lighted and a long search begun. The great lesson to be read to the young men of to-day is the need of some kind of absolute competency, some kind of ultimate superiority.

## Self-Control.

All young people who have ambition enough to advance themselves in life desire to command others, to be captains in civil or military life. To their inexperienced view the commander has an easy time. He has only to direct work to be done, and some one else is obliged to labor. It is related that an Irish laborer wrote to a friend at home that America was a great country; that he was helping a bricklayer, and that all he had to do was to carry bricks to the fourth story of a building and the man at the top did all of the work.

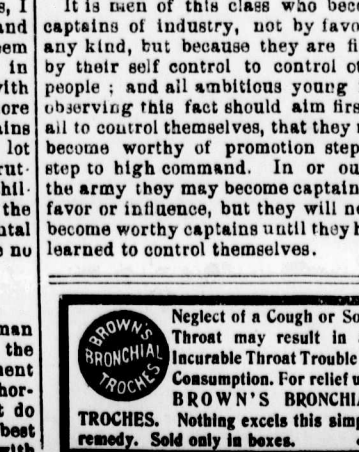
We laugh at the Irishman who took such an absurd view of the real conditions, and yet the majority of young people have about the same idea of the relations existing between the captains of industry and those who serve them. They want to be captains, but they do not take the first steps towards reaching high rank. The captain needs early knows more than those whom he directs. He can read plans, he can make a drawing, he can handle men and if necessary he can do the work they are expected to do.

But above all things else he has learned to control himself before undertaking to control others. Technical ability is not of as much importance to the captains of industry as this ability to control one's self and others. The man who is to be a successful foreman, manager or employer must be able to control and guide men, and he cannot do this until he has first learned to control and guide himself. To become a captain, civil or military, the first step is self-discipline. One must learn to obey, to do disagreeable things with a murmur, to recognize authority, before he is prepared to enforce discipline in others or to assume any kind of power.

The young man of ambition should therefore give special attention to himself before he assumes to direct other people. He must obtain full control over himself, his emotions and his passions if he is to successfully deal with the emotions and passions of other people. It is for this reason that captains, civil and military, so often rise from the ranks instead of being trained in schools for commanding positions. The school bred officer has a great advantage over his illiterate fellow if he possesses self-control as well as learning, but the man who has risen from the ranks by reason of his self control has the advantage in competition with one who has nothing to entitle him to command except technical knowledge. Self control is, in fact, the prime factor in the composition of the leaders of men. The man who can make personal sacrifices from a sense of duty, who can set aside a promised holiday because he has important work on hand, who can control his temper when aggravated—this is the man to be set in command of others, for he can appreciate their weaknesses and temptations and deal with them both firmly and sympathetically.

It is men of this class who become captains of industry, not by favor of any kind, but because they are fitted by their self control to control other people; and all ambitious young folk observing this fact should aim first of all to control themselves, that they may become worthy of promotion step by step to high command. In or out of the army they may become captains by favor or influence, but they will never become worthy captains until they have learned to control themselves.

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## CONVERTS FORM A LEAGUE.

An organization composed of men and women of New York City and vicinity who have been converted from Protestantism to the Catholic faith has been formed. The organization was effected when twenty-two recent converts met a few evenings since at the Church of the Paulist Fathers. The Rev. George Doherty, superior general of the Paulist Fathers, acted as moderator of the meeting. The organization will be called the Catholic Converts League of America. Dr. Benjamin F. DeCosta, formerly rector of the Church of St. John the Evangelist, New York City, was elected president of the league. George D. Mackay, a member of the New York Stock Exchange, was elected vice president; Miss Annie Barritt of Bridgeport, Conn., a young woman of wealth and position, was chosen secretary, and S. Coates, member of the firm of thread manufacturers bearing his name, was chosen treasurer. A report of its initial meeting was given in our last issue.

## RENEWED VIGOR.

Brought About Through the Use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills.

MRS. PETER BEAMER TELLS HOW THESE PILLS RELEASED HER FROM YEARS OF NEURALGIC PAINS AFTER DOCTORS AND OTHER MEDICINES HAD FAILED.

Among the best known and most respected residents of the township of Gainsboro, Lincoln county, Ont., are Mr. and Mrs. Peter Beamer. For a long time Mrs. Beamer was the victim of a complication of diseases, which made her life one of almost constant misery, and from which she nearly despair of obtaining relief. To a reporter who recently interviewed her, Mrs. Beamer gave the following particulars of her illness, and ultimate cure:

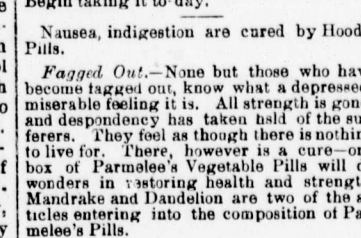
"For some nine years I was troubled with a pain in the back, and neuralgia, which caused me unspeakable misery. The pain in my back was so bad that whether sitting or lying down, I suffered more or less torture. My appetite left me, and I suffered from headaches accompanied by attacks of dizziness that left me at times too weak to walk. My nervous system was badly shattered, so that the slightest noise would startle me, and my sleep at night was broken by sheer exhaustion. I was under the care of three different doctors at various times, but did not succeed in getting more than the merest temporary relief. I also used several advertised medicines, but with no better results. I was finally urged to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and got half a dozen boxes. In the course of a few weeks I noted considerable improvement, and as a consequence, I gladly continued the use of the pills for several months, with the result that every symptom of the malady left me, and I was able to do my household work without the least trouble. As several years have passed since I have used the pills, I feel safe in saying that the cure is permanent, and the result also verifies the claim that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure when other medicine fails." The reporter can only add that Mrs. Beamer's present condition indicates a state of perfect health, and speaks louder than mere words can do, the benefit these pills have been to her.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have restored more weak and ailing women and girls to robust health than any other medicine ever discovered, which in part accounts for their popularity throughout the world. These pills are sold by all dealers or may be had by mail at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brookville, Ont.

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Nausea, indigestion are cured by Hood's Pills. Fagged Out.—None but those who have been so long with a depressed and miserable feeling it is. All strength is gone, and despondency has taken hold of the sufferers. They feel as though there is nothing to live for. There, however, is a cure—one box of Parmenter's Vegetable Pills will do wonders in restoring health and strength. Mandrake and Dandelion are two of the articles entering into the composition of Parmenter's Pills.

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A block of stock amounting to \$30,000, placed on the market has been taken up. The Directors have, however, induced the promoters to offer a further lot of \$20,000 at par. Those who could not get the number of shares required, and others who wish shares in the Company, may secure the same by applying promptly either personally or by written application, at the office of Hellmuth & Ivey, corner Dundas and Richmond streets, London, Ontario.

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