

"Have you not heard,
My poor, bad boy, of the fiery pit,
And how, drop by drop, this merciful
bird

Carries the water that quenches it?
He brings the cool dew in his little bill,
And lets it fall on the souls in sin;
You can see the mark on his red breast
still

Of fires that scorch as he drops it in."

His Autumnal lay has been well described as sweet, melancholy sadness, for through all the merry and bright trill there is a distinctly sad and melancholy strain. The bird seems to lament the passing of the fine, bright, and sunny days, and to be filled with concern for the hard times that may come upon him in the dull, dark, dreary days of Winter. And this sadness seems all the more poignant when the song is poured forth so late in the evening that the little singer is barely discerned through the grey, misty Autumn haze. He sings early and late—early to rise and late to retire is the keynote of his movements, and he will

frequently be observed coolly taking a bath so late in the evening that many other species are already retiring for the night.

The nest is placed in a great variety of situations. Any old hat, pot, or kettle lying under a hedge is often selected as the nesting site, but it is also built in holes, under ivy, in the bottom of hedges, and on weed-grown ditches. It is a large and rather slovenly made affair of dead leaves, moss, and grass, lined with fine roots, hair, and feathers. From five to seven eggs are laid, and these are of a ruddy white, freckled with light red. The sexes are very similar, the female being a little paler in all her colours, and the red not spreading so far round the eyes and beak. It is a great mistake to suppose the female is a "plain brown body," as a would-be critic once tried to convince us. But the young, prior to their first moult, are very plainly coloured, brown birds, with spotted breasts, showing their near relationship to the Thrush family—indeed, they are frequently mistaken for young Thrushes.

PRIZE STORY

The Editor offers most humble apologies to the readers of the Children's Page for unintentionally omitting the Prize Story Competition this month.

For May our competition will be a story of "What We Have To Be Grate-

ful For in Canada." Now here is a very big subject. Do your best. Send in your stories between April 20th and May 1st (make it the earliest date you can), and let us have stories from every-

ESSAY ON GOOD ROADS

Roads are places where vehicles may travel. They should be the shortest distance possible between two points to be connected. But in hilly country straightness must often be sacrificed, to avoid labor and expense and to secure best results.

Country roads are usually left in care of men, many of whom are ignorant of how road work ought to be done, many of the roads are therefore sadly neglected, though in some localities where materials are readily obtainable, well

constructed roads are to be found.

Good roads are a necessity. Not only can a vehicle travel much faster on a good road than on a poor one, but the wear and tear caused on the vehicles make a poor road more expensive than a good one.

A road to be durable must be constructed of the best materials, and carefully laid. The thickness and material to be given to a road will depend upon the traffic, gravel laid to the thickness of six inches will make a good road, and