

wrought out the result of all lies. The wall, getting a little slant from the untrue brick, had got more and more untrue as it got higher, and at last in the night had toppled over again. Just so with ever so little an untruth in your character; it grows more and more untrue, if you permit it to remain, till it brings sorrow and ruin. Tell, act, and live the exact truth always.—*Selected.*

CHEAP OR DEAR.

"Oh, mamma, Isa Weed has such a lovely new spring hat, all trimmed with wings—six blackbirds' wings, with red spots on them. Somebody in the country shot the birds for her last summer. She made the hat herself, and it only cost three dollars altogether—wasn't it cheap?"

"Not very," answered mamma, gravely. "I should say it cost a good deal—more than I should care to give for a piece of finery."

Marjory looked surprised. "Why, mamma! It is much prettier than Neta Blackthorn's, which came to twice as much—the wings cost next to nothing, you see."

"Are you sure?" asked Mrs. Rosebaum. "I fancy they cost a good deal."

"Now, mamma, what do you mean?"

"I will tell you a story to illustrate my meaning."

"Oh, do, please!" said Marjory.

"Here it is: Mr. and Mrs. Starling arrived one morning, toward the latter end of April, coming from the South, where they spent their winters. They had married the year before and looked forward to passing a long and happy life together, for divorces are quite unknown in the Starling family. They had come back to the place where their ancestors had lived for several generations, and intended to set up housekeeping near the homes of their parents. After much consideration, they pitched upon a proper location and set upon building their nest. It was placed in a willow bush on the edge of a small swamp, and carefully constructed of small sticks, roots, and dried grass, lined with softer materials. Here Mrs. Starling laid six pale-colored eggs, and assumed her seat upon them to wait patiently for their hatching. Mr. Starling was constant in supplying his wife with food, and brought her every delicacy of the season, besides watching over her safety and cheering her with his song.

"In process of time the eggs were hatched, and then how happy were the parents, and how busy; for it was no light

labor to supply their little gaping mouths with food. From early dawn to late twilight Mr. and Mrs. Starling were on the wing, returning to the nest every ten minutes with a worm or other insect."

"They must do a great deal of good in that way," remarked Marjory.

"Almost all birds do. Well, nothing disturbed the happiness of our friends for a time. The young birds grew and prospered. They were not yet able to fly, but they shook their little wings, peeped over the edge of the nest and talked of what they would do when they got out in the world."

"They are really getting on very well," said the father-bird, regarding his children with great satisfaction from the bough where he was sitting. "They will soon be able to fly."

"In a week or ten days, perhaps," replied the mother, who was perched on the edge of the nest arranging her feathers. "It is not best to be in too much of a hurry to get the little things out."

"Peep weep!" said all the young starlings at once. Now "peep-weep" in the starling language means 'I am hungry.'

"You greedy little things," said the father, "you can't be hungry already."

"They are growing so fast, you see," remarked his mate, for starling mothers are like other mothers—they always find excuses for their children. "But sit still, my dear, and rest—I saw a fine nest of caterpillars not far off and I will go and bring something to stop these little mouths."

"She flew off accordingly, and was just returning with her bill full of worms when pop went a gun close by, and with a pitiful cry the poor mother starling fell to the earth, wounded to death. As she did so, two men appeared on the edge of the swamp. The younger was springing forward to pick up the fallen bird when the other checked him.

"Wait a minute and we will have the other," said he. "They always stay by each other."

"So it proved. With a cry of rage and grief the father-bird sprang to the help of his wife and was brought down in his turn."

"He is only wounded," said the younger man. "Poor little fellow, it was almost too bad to shoot him for trying to help his mate."

"Yes; the woman who wants the wings won't care about that," replied the other man. "Pick him up and twist his wings off. That will finish him."

"Oh, mamma!" exclaimed Marjory, throwing down her work. "Could any one be so wicked as that?"

"It is often done by those who shoot for the sake of wings," replied Mrs. Rosebaum. "For two long days the little starlings pined and mourned for their parents. They could see their mother lying on the ground, and wondered why she did not come to their call, for, of course, they knew nothing about death. One, the strongest of them, got upon the edge of the nest and made a brave effort to fly, that he might bring food for the rest, but his wings were not fully fledged, and he was weak for want of food. He fell into the water and was drowned. The others perished one by one, and the pretty home in the willows was left desolate—all that a young lady might have a hat trimmed with bird's wings. Now, do you think that hat was cheap or dear?"

"I think it was horribly dear," answered Marjory. "I would not have it for anything. But, mamma, are all feathers got in such cruel ways?"

"Not ostrich feathers. They are not taken—at least from the tame ostriches—till the bird is ready to shed them."

"Mamma," said Marjory, wiping her eyes, "do you think the ladies who wear wings know what they cost?"

"They might know, if they do not. Enough has been said and written upon the subject."—*Lucy Ellen Guernsey, in Parish Visitor.*

STINGY DAVY.

DAVY was a very pretty little boy. He had light, curly hair, dark-blue eyes, and rosy cheeks. But he was very stingy. He did not like to share anything with his little brothers and sisters. One day he went into the kitchen, where his mother was at work, and saw on the table a saucer of jelly.

"Can I have that jelly?" asked Davy.

"Mrs. White sent it to me," said Davy's mother. "She had company for dinner and made this jelly very nice. But I don't care for it, so you may have it if you won't be stingy with it."

Davy took the saucer of jelly and went out into the yard; but he did not call his little brothers and sisters to help him eat it.

"If I divide with them, there won't be a spoonful apiece," he thought. "It is better for one to have enough than for each to have just the least little bit."

So he ran to the barn and climbed up to the loft, where he was sure no one would ever think of looking for him.