

Queer Australian Birds' Nests.

The discovery of the nests and eggs of the magnificent rifle bird of Paradise in New South Wales was the chief event in the world of Australian naturalists a few years ago. The bird inhabits the dense shrubs, and has been known to science some seventy years. Both eggs and nests are peculiarly handsome. The eggs look for all the world as though an artist had been trying his color brushes on them; they are beautifully streaked with red and violet markings, on a ground color of delicate flesh tint.

The wonderful nests are always decorated with cast-off snake skins, for the purpose of scaring away, by their terrible appearance, nest-robbing reptiles. They are very skillfully hidden where the scrub is most impenetrable. We have never noticed the shy, timid rifle bird of Paradise to alight on the ground; all of its food and nest-building materials are taken from the limbs and hollows of trees.

Another interesting inhabitant of the thick scrubs is the quaint scrub turkey, which collects for its nest a huge mass of dead leaves and sticks on the ground, in which the eggs are carefully laid and covered over, to be hatched by the heat of the decaying vegetable matter. I have seen as many as thirty large, white eggs in one nest.

In the scrub, too, builds the beautiful bower bird, whose habit is to make a little playground for itself of thin sticks and twigs, stuck upright in the ground, and generally covered over at the top.

Inside the bower bird's "bower" is brightly decorated with small shells, bits of colored glass or china when they can be found, colored feathers, berries, flowers, and leaves. Here, in these happy bowers, the birds continually play, especially just before their breeding season. A watch chain, lost by a surveyor, was found in one of these bowers, and sometimes coins have been discovered. —Pearson's Magazine.

The Railroad Train.

Last week I took a long, long ride
Upon the railroad train;
I wore my new brass-buttoned coat,
And had a truly cane.

The engine made a lot of noise,
And whistled, O, so loud!
And all the white and puffy smoke
Went up and made a cloud.

The wheels played funny little tunes,
And went so fast around
That I could hardly see the flowers
That grew upon the ground.

We went by houses, trees and barns,
And churches, now and then,
And children playing out of doors,
And lots and lots of men!

And when the boys and girls saw me
As I was looking out,
They waved their hands, and so did I;
And once I had to shout!

We rode until it was quite dark,
And stars began to peep;
And when we got to Grandma's house,
They said I'd been asleep.

—Harriet J. McLellan, in Kindergarten Review.

JUDGE NOT.

BY ADELAIDE A. PROCTOR.

Judge not; the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from well-run field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.

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Optimism.

BY ESTHER HOOKER TROWBRIDGE.

There's ever a fresher strength to come
With the dawning day,
There's ever a brighter hope to shine
O'er our future way,
And always a vision more perfect, more clear,
Is waiting for us in some coming year.

There's ever a dearer dream to bless
Than has yet come true,
There's ever a richer ship at sea
Than has crossed the blue,
And always a rapture more keen and deep
Is waiting for us ere we fall asleep.

There's ever a sweeter rose to bloom
Than the spring hath brought,
There's ever a grander song to rise
Than our ears have caught;
And always a summer more green, somewhere,
Is waiting for us with its promise rare.

There's ever a fairer scene to view
Than the present one,
There are golden milestones we shall pass
Ere the journey's done,
And always a strength beyond failure's tears—
Here's heart for the yoke, and hope for the years!
—Presbyterian Banner.

Clear boiling water will remove tea stains and many fruit stains. Pour the water through the stain and thus prevent it spreading over the fabric.

Crippled Maggie's Gift to the Lord.

GERTRUDE MANLY JONES.

The minister's eye swept with intense searching the faces of his congregation. He had made an impassioned appeal for help in the support of a little mission church among the mountains—a section where rough men and women knew scarcely anything of God and the religion of Christ. He had hoped to inspire the people with the spirit of giving, to make them feel that it was a sweet, blessed privilege, and—he had failed. A deep sense of desolation crept over him.

"God help me," his lips murmured mutely.

He could not see the bent figure of little crippled Maggie in the rear of the church—a figure that was trembling under the fire of his appeal.

"Lord Jesus," the little one was saying brokenly, "I ain't got nothin' ter give; I want the people in the mountains to hear 'bout my Saviour. O Lord, I ain't got nothin' ter"—

What was it that made the child catch her breath as though a cold hand had taken hold of her heart? "Yes, you have, Maggie," whispered a voice from somewhere; "you've got your crutch, your beautiful crutch that was give ter you and is worth a lot of shinin dollars. You kin give up your best friend, what helps you to git into the park where the birds sing, and takes you to preachin', and makes your life happy."

"Oh, no, Lord!" sobbed the child, choking and shivering. "Yes, yes, I will! He gave up more'n that for me."

Blindly she extended the polished crutch and placed it in the hand of the deacon who was taking up the scanty collection. For a moment the man was puzzled; then, comprehending her meaning, he carried her crutch to the front of the church and laid it on the table in front of the old pulpit. The minister stepped down from the rostrum and held up the crutch with shaking hands. The sublimity of the renunciation unnerved him so that he could not speak for a moment.

"Do you see it, my people," he faltered at last; "little crippled Maggie's crutch—all that she has to make life comfortable? She has given it to the Lord, and you—"

"Does anyone want to contribute to the mission cause the amount of money this crutch would bring and give it back to the child who is helpless without it?" the minister said gravely.

"Fifty dollars," came in husky tones from the banker.

"Seventy five."

"One hundred."

And so the subscribing went on, until papers equivalent to \$600 were lightly piled over the crutch on the table.

"Ah! you have found your hearts—thank God! Let us receive the benediction," almost whispered the minister as he suddenly extended his hands, which were trembling with emotion. Little Maggie, absorbed in the magnitude of her offering and the love that prompted it, comprehended nothing that had taken place. She had no thought for the future, of how she would reach her humble home, or of the days in which she would sit helpless in her chair as she once had done. Christ had demanded her all, and she had given it with the blind faith of an Abraham. She understood better when a woman's arms drew her into close embrace, and soft lips whispered in her ear: "Maggie, dear, your crutch has made \$600 for the mission church among the mountains and has come back to stay with you again. Take it, little one."

Like a flash of light there came the consciousness that in some mysterious way her gift had been accepted of God, and returned to her, and with a cry of joy the child caught the beloved crutch to her lonely heart; then smiling through her tears at the kind faces and reverential eyes, she sobbed out of the sanctuary.—Presbyterian Review.

I have known some people who have had too good an experience for their good. They had a blessed experience twenty years ago, and have not had a blessed experience since.