

enough not to try to compel him to be a different boy from what he was. Mr. Stebbins encouraged Roger to try to learn arithmetic, because he would need it when he got out in the world and was trying to earn his living. If he did not, he told him, people would take advantage of his carelessness and ignorance.

So Roger went at his books with new zeal, and out of school he was always trying to find something rare for his new friend. The year before he had heard a hermit thrush far up on the mountain-side, and so one Saturday he and his friend climbed to the same place. Great was their joy when they heard those liquid sweet and tender notes, never to be confused with those of any other bird. Of course it took days of watching on Mr. Stebbins' part when Roger was in school, but at last he saw the dainty singer and secured him for his collection. He told Roger that he owed this good fortune to him, and as a reward would show him how to stuff birds. So Roger spent many happy hours learning how to skin the birds and to prepare them to stuff. It was very careful work not to break the skin or tear the plumage. When he could do this tolerably he was shown how to stuff and mount them in as life-like a position as possible.

One day his father told him that one of the ducks in the barnyard had been accidentally killed, and asked him if he would like to try to stuff it.

'Oh, may I?' exclaimed Roger. 'I'll go out and look at it right off!'

'Better wait till morning,' said his father. 'I hung it up on the post in the back shed, the one near the oak tree, and I reckon it will be safe.'

As Roger had a lesson to learn, and his nightly chores to do, he thought his father's suggestion wise, although it did seem a long time to wait.

In the morning he overslept and had to hurry off to school without a single look at his duck, so that it was late in the afternoon before he found a minute to spare. When he went out into the back cow-shed, there was the duck sure enough, but his bright eyes spied something more. On the branch of the oak-tree were two little wrens, and they were chattering and balancing themselves and hopping about in the liveliest fashion. Then one flew to the duck a moment and was off

in a second. In another second back flew the lively bird and brought a whisp of straw. The mate understood the situation and after a chirp which seemed to say, 'Yes, I think it will make a nice home,' she took the straw and went to work.

Back and forth the busy little creatures flew, bringing twigs and hairs, bits of feather and ravels of thread. Roger watched them in silence and then turned thoughtfully away. He wanted that duck to stuff badly, and yet he could not bear the thought of breaking up that little home. He talked the matter over with his mother, and finally agreed that it would be cruel to tear out the nest, and besides he would have the finest possible chance to see how a baby wren was fed and brought up and trained to fly. Mr. Stebbins, too, thought the same, and besides told him a duck was too big for him to manage in stuffing. He said this nest was the queerest one he ever saw, and made a rough pencil sketch of it for Roger to keep.

Roger is still at school, for he is studying hard to become an educated naturalist, as his kind friend urged him to become. He watches birds and bees and flowers just the same, and is keeping records of what he sees to use when he gets older. He has learned to draw, and makes neat sketches of his birds before stuffing, so that in his 'business career,' as he fondly calls it himself, he can show every one all about them. His birds, squirrels and so forth, go to museums, not to ladies' hats.

Bud Blankets.

(Helen Stirling in 'The Westminster'.)

Little Doris is not yet six years old. She is the only little girl in her home. She loves her mother dearly, and was delighted when she was told one day last week that she might go shopping with her mamma.

Mamma had no nurse to care for Doris, so the little girl knew quite well where her pretty frock and little red coat lay hidden away from the dust.

She buttoned her own boots and helped mamma in so many ways, that they were ready to start quite early. She ran with her little red coat that mamma might put it on, and was very much surprised and pleased when mamma said, 'I've

been thinking Doris that you may go without your little coat to-day; the day is so warm and bright.'

'Just wear my frock, mamma? and my bonnet? and my gloves?'

'Yes, dear, the days for the little red coat have passed for this year.'

Now, what do you suppose little Doris did with her pretty red coat? She just dropped it on the floor, and forgot all about it, and as mamma had left the room there it lay. Poor little red coat!

Mamma and Doris lived up town, and had to walk down a street called Maple avenue on which there were a great many trees.

As they turned down this avenue Doris began to hop about like a little sparrow.

'Oh, mamma,' she cried, 'look at those nasty little brown fings on the sidewalk; they will soil my pretty shoes.'

'Why, no, dear,' said mamma; 'these little brown things are blankets, and quite clean.'

'Blankets, mamma, really blankets?'

'Yes, dear, bud blankets. Look above you; see these little green leaves just unfolding. A day or two ago they were all fast asleep snugly tucked in between these little brown blankets. Yesterday the sun shone so warmly and the birds sang so sweetly that the little buds began to stir, and tossed open the blankets. See,' said mamma, as she caught a branch in her hand, 'here are some leaves just awaking. The blankets are about them still, but tossed open; here are some just falling off, and here are some little buds without any wraps, and here are some lazy little buds still fast asleep.'

'Kind old Mother Nature, who tucked them in so snugly, is now calling to them and to the flowers to waken. She has all her shopping done and has quite ready all material for the pretty gowns for her little folk and her big folk too—green for the leaves, pink, blue, crimson, and gold for the flowers, while we have not enough for one little maid.'

'Where does she get the colors, mamma, and how does she make their frocks?'

'That I must tell you some other time, dear, for here we are at the great store where I must buy your frock.'

'Don't forget that leaves are like little girls sometimes. Where did you leave your little red coat, Doris?'