

for a long time he never had a chance of showing what he could do, for we had to leave him in charge of the oxen whenever we went after game.

'At last his opportunity came. We had to travel with a miniature Noah's ark following our waggon, namely, a light cart containing dogs, cats, fowls, goats and pigs. At night the dogs were tethered under the cart to give the alarm if beasts of prey should approach. But the lions seemed clever enough to reason that if they could only capture the watchdog they could carry off the rest of the farmyard in peace—so that was what they did.

'So soon as we found our dog gone, and traced the lion's spoor (as we called his tracks in South Africa), we decided to organize a big hunt. Jons was wildly elated, "Master," he exclaimed, "you must let me help; there is not my equal for a lion hunt. I never miss a shot. I never lose a bullet." And this proved no idle boast, for the excellent reason that Jons was never known to fire one off! At the first alarm he invariably fled, usually leaving his gun behind him. But we did not know that as yet.

'This time, as the lion was not likely to return for a few hours, I sent him, with some of the others, to rest while I watched. He seemed very unwilling to yield to such unsportsmanlike laziness but complied.

'At last I heard a rustle in the grass—it was the lion returning—and I hastened back to give the alarm. The camp was surrounded by a high stockade, with fires blazing round it. We had to take up our position outside it. Jons was sunk in such a sweet sleep I had the greatest difficulty to wake him. When he could no longer even pretend he had not noticed my shoutings and shakings he opened one eye a little way, and said:—

"Oh, master, I am so disappointed I cannot join in the lion hunt! I have such a dreadful headache."

"Nonsense," I answered; "who thinks of headaches when there are lions about? Take your gun like a man, and come along." He followed me, trembling and allowed himself to be posted in the circle with the others ready to shoot. The lion crept towards us and the signal was given—"Fire!" But at the critical moment we heard no shot from Jons's direction; indeed, he

was nowhere to be found. We stumbled over his gun, and when the lion was disposed of we searched for Jons. Finally he was discovered clinging panic-stricken to the back of the women's waggon in the darkest and safest corner of the kraal.'

Of course none of you would be a coward or a skulker like Jons. Let us see! There are many boys and girls who would go off to the mission field to-day with the greatest delight, but God says to them, 'Wait for a while; when the right time comes I will send you.'

Some day, when you are men and women, he will remind you of your promise. Will you be ready to go then, or will you find, like Jons, that 'you have really such a dreadful headache,' or some other hindrance, that the others must go without you?

Would it not be a mean thing then to say, like the slothful man in Proverbs, 'There is a lion in the way; a lion in the streets?'

The Bird's Quarrel.

(Anna C. Young, in 'S.S. Times.')

It all started with such a little matter. Miss Brown Thrush and Miss Blue Bird had both gotten out of their nests in a very bad humor, and nothing had gone right all day; everything and everybody had been wrong except themselves, and now they were sitting opposite each other on a bough of an apple-tree down in the orchard, with their feathers ruffled up, looking very angry indeed.

'It's blue, and any bird could see it's blue, if he only chose to look,' said Miss Thrush, in a shrill tone, as she sat with her face towards the east.

'And I say it's red,—just as red as can be, no matter what any bird says,' responded Miss Blue Bird, who sat facing the west.

'You're a very horrid bird,' cried Miss Thrush angrily, ruffling up her golden-brown jacket so that it nearly hid the pretty dots on her breast.

'And you are quite as horrid,' answered Miss Blue Bird, 'if you only knew it.'

And, sorry to relate, each flew at the other, and, with angry cries, nearly pecked each other's eyes out.

'Children, children, shame on you!' hooted the wise old owl in the pear tree, and all the violets

and snowdrops, hiding, fearfully the grass below, lifted up their heads and nodded.

But Miss Thrush and Miss Blue Bird were so beside themselves with anger, they only pecked harder than ever, and the flowers were glad that a fresh breeze blew the grass over them again. The noisy cries of the two birds attracted the attention of the other birds in the neighborhood, and soon there were hundreds of them in the trees, all talking at once and keeping up such a twittering that the children in the white house near by thought there must be a bird festival. No one seemed anxious to stop the quarrelling until the old owl, feeling his way along in the bright sunshine, flew over and separated the angry birds, and all the other birds with one consent chose him judge to decide the quarrel.

'Now, what is it all about?' he hooted solemnly. 'Miss Blue Bird you may speak first.'

Miss Blue Bird smoothed her feathers, and, speaking in a weak voice because she was short of breath, said:

'We were talking about the sky, and Miss Thrush rudely insisted that its color is blue, while I say it is red; and any bird who looks at it will certainly sustain me in what I say,' and she glanced at Miss Thrush angrily.

'And I say again it is blue, and any bird can see it is as I say,' answered Miss Thrush, looking quite as angry.

And then there was such a twittering of laughter among the birds, and one little violet laughed so hard she nearly shook her head off, while Miss Thrush and Miss Blue Bird, not understanding the joke, looked discomfited.

'Well, well,' laughed Judge Owl, 'you are two very silly birds, I must say. If Miss Thrush will be good enough to turn round she will see that the sky in the west is red; it almost always is at this time of day, so I have heard said; and if Miss Blue Bird will turn round, she will certainly say the sky in the other direction is blue. It simply depends on the way you look at it.'

And Mr. Sun, who was just going to bed, but had waited to hear the outcome of the quarrel, laughed so hard that his red face became redder than ever, and Miss Thrush and Miss Blue Bird were wiser birds when they tucked their heads under their wings, and went to sleep that night.

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All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son, and all letters to the editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'