



THE OVERTURNED NEST.

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"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father."—*St. Matt* x. 29.

"There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow."—*Hamlet*, v. 2.

ALAS for the ravages of wind and storm, which also bring havoc and destruction to birds' nests. Here is one thus sadly overturned. One can almost see in the pathetic aspect of the parent-bird how sorrowfully it looks upon the cruel destruction of its tender brood. Such a scene would touch any heart, and would almost bring tears of sympathy to the eyes of the beholder. The parent-bird sees before it the tender little group in every attitude of helplessness and death. How sad and mournful would be its twittering to its mate, as it thus tells of the calamity which has befallen the little nestlings!

"Susan, Jim, and I."

WE meant to be very kind;
But if ever we find
Another soft, gray-green, moss-coated, feather-lined nest in a hedge,
We have taken a pledge—
Susan, Jimmy, and I—with remorseful tears, at this very minute,
That if there are eggs or little birds in it,
Robin or wren, thrush, chaffinch or linnet,
We'll leave them there
To their mother's care.

There were three of us and three of them;
Kate—that is I—Susan and Jim.
Our mother was busy making a pie,

And theirs, we think, was up in the sky,
But for all Susan, Jimmy, or I can tell,
She may have been getting their dinner as well.
They were left to themselves (and so were we)
In a nest in the hedge by the willow-tree,
And when we caught sight of three red little fluff-tufted,
hazel-eyed, open-mouthed, pink-throated heads, we all
shouted for glee.

The way we really did wrong was this:
We took them in for mother to kiss,
And she told us to put them back;
While on the weeping-willow their mother was crying
"Alack!"

We really heard
Both what mother told us to do and the voice of the
mother-bird.

But we three—that is, Susan and I and Jim—
Though we knew better than either of them;
And in spite of our mother's command and the poor bird's
cry,

We determined to bring up the three little nestlings our-
selves, on the sly.

We each took one,
It did seem such excellent fun!
Susan fed hers on milk and bread;
Jim got wriggling worms for his instead.

I gave mine meat,
For, you know, I thought; "Poor darling pet! why
shouldn't it have roast beef to eat?"
But, oh dear! oh dear! oh dear! How we cried,
When in spite of milk and bread and worms and roast beef,
the little birds died!

It's a terrible thing to have heart-ache.
I thought mine would break
As I heard the mother-bird's moan,
And looked at the gray-green, moss-coated, feather-lined
nest she had taken such pains to make,
—And her three little children dead and cold as a stone.

Mother said, and it's sadly true,
"There are some wrong things one can never undo."
And nothing we could do or say
Would bring life back to the birds that day.
The bitterest tears that we could weep
Wouldn't wake them out of their stiff, cold sleep.

But then
We—Susan and Jim and I—mean never to be so selfish
and wilful and cruel again.
And we three have buried that other three
In a soft, green, moss-covered, flower-lined grave at the
foot of the willow-tree,
And all the leaves which its branches shed
We think are tears, because they are dead.

—*Aims and Objects of the Toronto Humane Society.*

THE ROCK AT THE BOTTOM.

A LITTLE lad fell into a well. It was not very deep, and the boy was not hurt, but he was thoroughly frightened. His mother saw the accident, and in a moment was at the mouth of the well. The boy, looking up, was overjoyed to see her. But he could not help his fear, and so called out, "Mother, I am not hurt, but I shall drown in the water."

"No," said the mother, "you will not drown; the water is only a few feet deep. Stand up straight, and I will soon bring you up safely."

"But, mother, I shall sink in the mud."

"No, you will not sink," answered the mother again. "There is a rock at the bottom, and you cannot sink."

The boy stood upright, as his mother directed, and in a little while she brought him up all safe and sound. When they talked it over afterward the boy said "I was so glad, mother, when you said there was a rock at the bottom."

Perhaps most of my readers are now thinking of what the Saviour said about the wise man and the foolish man. Each was building a house. The wise man dug down deep for a foundation of solid rock, and on it he built his house. The foolish man thought it too much trouble to dig so deep, and built his house on the sand. After awhile a great storm came. It rained hard, and the winds blew, and the floods came, and beat upon the two houses. The wise man's house stood firm in all the storm and floods, because it was founded on a rock. The foolish man's house went down with a great crash, because it was founded on the sand. Jesus said that people who heard his words and did what he said were like the wise man, and people who heard his words and did not obey them were like the foolish man.

The rock on which we build is Jesus. And how comfortable and assuring it is when trouble of any kind comes to know that Jesus is our sure support.

HOW A MAN BECOMES A DRUNKARD.

A DRUNKARD becomes so after years of tipping and steady drinking, commencing with an occasional glass of wine or beer at dinner or at lunch or an occasional cocktail at a bar with a friend and for friendship sake; finding that it does him no injury and, on the contrary, that he feels an apparent benefit, he continues the practice, accustoming the stomach to its effect until there is a craving, and in satisfying that craving the habit becomes fixed, and gradually the whole system becomes alcoholized. At that period the victim is no longer a free agent, and though he may conceal the fact from the world and even from himself, and his general health may not appear to suffer, the end will not be far distant—either he will be carried off by some disease that had he been a sober man his system would have thrown off, or he will live disgracing himself and family and causing misery and sorrow to those he is bound by all the laws of God and man to honour and protect, to say nothing of the danger that he constantly runs of dying suddenly covered with his sins.