

## THE BOY AND THE BIRD.

BY EREN E. REXFORD.

"Go, weed in the garden till half after ten," Rob's mother said sharply. "I'll not speak again."

"Dear me!" said Rob, sighing. "I wish I could be the robin that's singing up there in the tree. Birds never weed gardens - they never bring wood. They do as I'd like to, and would if I could. They've nothing to trouble them, only to sing. And rock in the branches when they're not on the wing."

"See here, little boy," said the Robin to Rob.

"Though you think I am idle I'm planning a job. Four nestlings to care for - such great-hungry things! There isn't much rest for a father bird's wings. The cats try to catch us - the boys are as bad. Birds have work, wants and worries like others my lad. Be content as God made us, as bird, boy or man, And do what needs doing the best way we can."

## Window Garden.

## THE LAURUSTINUS.

One of the most highly-prized plants for use in the sitting-room is the laurustinus. It will stand the dry, dusty atmosphere of the living-room quite as well as the ivy, which is saying a great deal. It is a neat shrub, growing in symmetrical shape without much attention in the way of pruning. It has dark green leaves of a thick, leathery texture, which can be easily washed clean. These leaves, which are about two or two-and-a-half inches in length, are shaped very much like those of the *Ficus elastica*, but are rather more pointed, and are not as glossy.

They do not drop off the plant for years, consequently a large specimen will be well covered with foliage. It is not a rapid grower, but a small plant is very attractive. It blooms in winter and early spring, and bears fine clusters of small, pure white flowers, which are very attractive, contrasting well with the dark foliage. These flowers last for some time. As the plant branches readily, there will be plenty of clusters of flowers, for every branch will produce them. It is not what most persons would call a "showy plant," but it is a beautiful one, which is better. Show is not beauty, always. On account of its sturdy character, and its winter-blooming qualities, it should be in all parlor collections. It grows well in a rich soil composed of turfy loam, garden mould and sand. It does not require a great deal of water, and does well in a window facing the west. At least, mine does, though it might like a southern exposure better. As it has always been kept at a western window, and does so well there, I conclude that it does not need a great deal of sunshine. In the summer I put it out on a north porch and

all the care it gets is a daily watering. After bringing it in, in the fall, I syringe it at least once a week. I have never seen any insects on my plant, and I think it is not subject to attacks from them.

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## Miscellaneous.

## PARASOL ANTS.

A traveller, in Trinidad, writes to a London paper of the odd sights to be witnessed in that far-away spot. The red and yellow "cashews," a delicious fruit, is plentiful there. After feasting on these awhile, he and his companion encountered, he says, "What seemed a broad band of moving leaves right across the path, and, on looking more closely, I saw we had met with one of those enormous swarms of the 'parasol ants' which are destructive to plantations in the tropics. They were crossing from one side of the wood to the other, and were travelling in a column of more than a foot and a half in width; and, as each insect carried in its mouth a piece of leaf, which entirely covered the body they presented a singular appearance, like a Lilliputian grove in motion; and although we watched them for some time, still they came, their numbers seeming to be inexhaustible. Nothing can turn them from their course; and, although they may be destroyed by the thousands, enough will swarm upon the intruder to make him repent interfering with them. On the mainland of South America I have known a fruit tree stripped in a single night by a swarm of these ants."

## WHAT MAKES SOUND MUSICAL.

The only condition necessary to the production of a musical sound is, that the air pulses should succeed each other in the same interval of time. No matter what its origin may be, if this condition be fulfilled the sound becomes musical. If a watch, for example, could be caused to tick with sufficient rapidity—say one hundred times a second—the ticks would lose their individuality, and blend to a musical tone. And if the strokes of a pigeon's wings could be accomplished at the same rate, the progress of the bird through the air would be accompanied by music. In the humming-bird the necessary rapidity is attained; and, when we pass on from birds to insects, where the vibrations are more rapid, we have a musical note as the ordinary accompaniment of the insect's flight. The puffs of a locomotive at starting follow each other slowly at first, but they soon increase so rapidly as to be almost incapable of being counted. If this increase could continue until the puffs numbered fifty or sixty a second, the approach of the engine would be heralded by an organ-peal of tremendous power.

## A JERSEY GRANGER'S TRIALS.

"Did you get any diploma at the fair?" asked Deacon Dewgood of Farmer Furrows.

"N-n-no not yet," he replied with a faint effort to look cheerful, "I'm in a sort of a bad fix."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Wal, I had some fine oats on exhibition and the jockeys took 'em for horses feed; my old woman had a crazy quilt there and the darned rascals used it for a horse-blanket. Sal had some of her best fruit there, but the judges ate it all up. Of course I kicked up a row, and they said they'd give me a diploma to hush the matter up."

## SHOULD DRUNKARDS MARRY?

Waldeck, a German town, has given public notice that no license to marry will hereafter be granted to any individual who is addicted to drunkenness; or, if having been so, he must exhibit full proofs that he is no longer a slave to this vice. The same government has also directed that in every report made by the ecclesiastical, municipal and police authorities upon petition for license to marry, the report shall distinctly state whether either of the parties desirous of entering into matrimonial connection is addicted to intemperance or otherwise.

## A YOUNG ARTIST IN TAFFY.

"Gran'ma," said a boy of nine years, "how old are you?" "About sixty-six," replied his grandmother. "You'll die soon, won't you gran'ma?"

"Yes, dear, I expect to." "And when I die, gran'ma, can I be buried side of you?" "Yes dear," said she, as her heart warmed toward the little one, whom she folded closer in her arms. "Gran'ma," softly whispered the little rascal, "gimme ten cents."

## MAKING CHRISTIANITY AN "ADDENDUM."

May the Lord give such an insight into what is really good, that I may not rest contented with making Christianity a mere addendum to my pursuits, or with tacking it as a fringe to my garments!—George Eliot.

## DISOBEDIENCE AND SIN.

You can no more separate the idea of disobedience from the idea of sin, than you can separate the idea of lightning from the idea of a thunder-cloud.—Rev. Samuel W. Duffield.

## HAPPINESS AND OCCUPATION.

We all desire either some especial happiness in life, or some absorbing pursuit, and if we cannot attain the first, we do what we can to make the second our own.

LILIES AS VEGETABLES.—Lily bulbs are among the popular vegetables of Japan, all kinds are eaten—even those for which we have to pay a dollar apiece.