

Literature and Science.

THE PRAYER OF SOCRATES.

Ὁ φίλε Πάν τε καὶ ἄλλοι ὄσοι ἐγὼ εἶμι, δούητέ μοι καλῶ γενέσθαι τὰ ἔνδοθεν. ἴξω-θην δ' ὅσ' ἔχω τοῖς ἐντὸς εἶναι μοι φίλια. πλούσιον δὲ νομίζομι τὸν σοφόν. τὸ δὲ χρυσοῦ πλῆθος εἶη μοι ὄσον μῆτε φέρειν μῆτε ἄγειν δύναιτ' ἄλλος ἢ ὁ δαίμων.

—PLATO, *Phaedrus*, § 147.

O BELOVED Pan! and all ye other gods of this place! grant me to become beautiful in the inner man, and that whatever outward things I have may be at peace with those within. May I deem the wise man rich, and may I have such a portion of gold as none but a prudent man can either bear or employ.—*Trans.* H. CARY.

LATIN VERSION.

O AMICE Pan aliique omnes dii, qui locum hunc colitis, date mihi ut pulcher intus efficiar; et quæcumque extrinsecus habeo, illis que intrinsecus sunt, sint amica. Divitem autem sapientem existimem; tantum vero mihi sit auri, quantum nec ferre nec ducere queat alius nisi ver temperans.—*From "Latine et Græce."*

THE AMERICAN ROBIN.

(FROM "BIRD-SAYS," BY OLIVE THORNE MILLER.)

IF every bird has his vocation, as a poetical French writer suggests, that of the American robin must be to inspire cheerfulness and contentment in men. His joyous "Cheer up! Cheer up! Cheery! Be cheery! Be cheery!" poured out in the early morning from the top branch of the highest tree in the neighborhood, is one of the most stimulating sounds of spring. He must be unfeeling indeed who can help deserting his bed and peering through blinds till he discovers the charming philosopher, with head erect and breast glowing in the dawning light, forgetting the cares of life in the ecstasy of song.

Besides admonishing others to cheerfulness, the robin sets the example. Not only is his cheery voice the first in the morning and the last at night—of the day birds—but no rain is wet enough to dampen his spirits. In a drizzly, uncomfortable day, when all other birds go about their necessary tasks of food-hunting in dismal silence, the robin is not a whit less happy than when the sun shines; and his cheery voice rings out to comfort not only the inmates of the damp little home in the maple, but the owners of waterproofs and umbrellas who mope in the house.

The most delightful study of one summer, not long ago, was the daily life, the joys and sorrows, of a family of robins, whose pretty castle in the air rested on a stout fork of a maple-tree branch near my window. Day by day I watched their ways till I learned to know them well.

The seat chosen for observation was under a tree on the lawn, which happened to be the robin's hunting-ground; and here I sat for hours at a time, quietly looking on at his work, and listening to the robin talk around me; the low, confidential chat in the tree

where the little wife was busy, the lively gossip across the street with neighbors in another tree, the warning "Tut! tut!" when a stranger appeared, the war cry when an intruding bird was to be driven away, and the joyous "P-e-e-p! tut, tut, tut;" when he alighted on the fence and surveyed the lawn before him, flapping his wings and jerking his tail with every note.

In truth, the sounds one hears in a robin neighborhood are almost as various as those that salute his ear among people: the laugh, the cry, the scold, the gentle word, the warning, the alarm, and many others.

When I first took my seat I felt like an intruder, which the robin plainly considered me to be. He eyed me with the greatest suspicion, alighting on the ground in a terrible flutter, resolved to bear the ogre, yet on the alert, and ready for instant flight should anything threaten. The moment he touched the ground, he would lower his head and run with breathless haste five or six feet; then stop, raise his head as pert as a daisy, and look at the monster to see if it had moved. After convincing himself that all was safe, he would turn his eyes downward, and in an instant thrust his bill into the soil where the sod was thin, throwing up a little shower of earth, and doing this again and again, so vehemently that sometimes he was taken off his feet by the jerk. Then he would drag out a worm, run a few feet farther in a panic-stricken way, as though "taking his life to his hands," again look on the ground, and again pull out a worm; all the time in an inconsequent manner, as though he had nothing particular on his mind, and merely collected worms by way of passing the time.

So he would go on, never eating a morsel, but gathering worms till he had three or four of the wriggling creatures hanging from his firm little beak. Then he would fly to a low branch, run up a little way, take another short flight, and thus having, as he plainly intended by this zigzag course, completely deceived the observer as to his destination, he would slip quietly to the nest and quickly dispose of his load. In half a minute he was back again, running and watching, and digging as before. And this work he kept up nearly all day. In silence, too, for noisy and talkative as the bird is, he keeps his mouth shut when on the ground. In all my watching of robins for years in several places, I scarcely ever heard one make a sound when on the ground, near a human dwelling.

Once I was looking through blinds, and the bird did not see me. He had, after much labor, secured an unusually large worm, and it lay a few inches away where it fell as he gave it the final "yank." This was an extraordinary case; the robin was too full to hold in, and there bubbled out of his closed bill a soft "Cheery! cheery! be

cheery!" hardly above a whisper and half frightened withal. Then snatching the trophy he flew away, doubtless to show his luck, and tell his tale at home.

The robin has been accused of being quarrelsome; and to be sure he does defend his home with vigor, driving away any bird which ventures to alight on his special maple-trees, sometimes with a loud cry of defiance, and again without a sound, but fairly flinging himself upon the intruder so furiously that not even the king-bird—noted as a tyrant over much larger birds—can withstand him. But jealous as he is of his own, he is equally ready to assist a neighbor in trouble. One day while I was studying him a great uproar arose in the orchard. Robin voices were heard in loud cries, and instantly those near the house took wing for the scene of distress. With my glass I could see many robins flying about one spot, and diving one after another into the grass, where there was a great commotion and cries of some other creature—I thought a hen. The robins were furious, and the fight grew very warm, while every now and then a small object was tossed into the air.

Hurrying down to the scene of the warfare, I found that the creature in the grass was a hen-turkey with one chick. She was wild with rage, shaking and tossing up what looked like another young turkey, and the robins, evidently taking the side of the victim, were delivering sharp pecks and scolding vigorously. Securing with some difficulty the object of her fury, I found it to be a young robin, which had fallen from a nest, and which, no doubt, the usually meek turkey thought threatened danger to her own infant.

The poor little fellow was too badly hurt to live, and although the turkey was removed, some time passed before calmness was restored to the neighborhood. It seemed to me that the chatter in the trees that evening was kept up longer than usual, and I fancied that every little youngster still living in the nest heard the direful tale, and received a solemn warning.

I was surprised to discover, in my close attention to them, that although early to rise, robins are by no means early to bed. Long after every feather was supposed to be at rest for the night, I would sit out and listen to the gossip, the last words, the scraps of song—different in every individual robin, yet all variations on the theme "Be cheery"—and often the sharp "He he he he!" so like a girl's laugh, out of the shadowy depths of the maple.

Once I saw a performance that looked as if the robin wanted to play a joke "with intent to deceive." Hearing a strange bird-note, as usual I hastened to my post. From the depths of a thick chestnut-tree came every moment a long-drawn-out, mournful