

Children's Corner

NATURE STUDIES.

Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

BIRDS.

Birds! birds! ye are beautiful things,
With your earth-treading feet and
your cloud-cleaving wings!
Where shall man wander, and where
shall he dwell,
Beautiful birds, that ye come not as
well?

Ye have nests on the mountains, all
rugged and stark,
Ye have nests in the forest, all tan-
gled and dark;
Ye build and ye breed 'neath the cot-
tenger's eaves,
And ye sleep on the sod 'mid the
bonny green leaves.

Ye hide in the heather, ye lurk in the
brake,
Ye dive in the sweet flags that shadow
the lake;
Ye skim where the stream parts the
orchard-docked land;
Ye dance where the foam sways the
desolate strand.

Beautiful creatures of freedom and
light!
Ah, where is the eye that groweth
not bright
As it watches you trimming your
soft, glossy coats,
Swelling your bosoms, and ruffling
your throats?

It is not precisely known which of
the early birds make their appear-
ance first in the spring, as they are
not as regular in their movements as
the later ones. In March, a few of
the vanguard of migratory birds re-
turn to their summer haunts, and
among them in the robin. To many
children this bird is well known,
but for those who do not live in or
near the country we will take it for
our study to-day; so that when visit-
ing the rural districts during their
vacation they may feel somewhat ac-
quainted with him.

Our American robin bears no rela-
tionship whatever with the English
robin red-breast, and really has no
claim to the name, as it belongs to
the thrush family; for, like the flow-
ers, birds also have family names;
that of the robin being "Turdidae."
Thrushes and bluebirds belong to
this family, and are distant cousins of
the robin.

To casual observers the robin might
be confounded with the orchard

oriole; but he is not related to this
bird, although he resembles it more
than he does his own relations. We
will give the points of difference be-
tween the two birds, that our young
naturalists may be more easily know
him. The robin is the larger bird of
the two, and its head alone is black,
the back being of an olive-gray color;
its throat is white, streaked with
black, and a patch under the tail is
white; the eyelids and a spot before
the eye are white also. The wings of
the robin are dark brown, with
light edging on some of the feathers,
and its bill is yellow; these are the
only points of difference between the
robin and the orchard oriole in their
appearance. In manners and habits
they are dissimilar, for the robin
builds a large, clumsy nest, mostly of
mud; and in the vicinity of human
dwellings, for it is a sociable bird.
He spends most of his time on the
lawn, where he hops more than he
flies. People are mistaken in deeming
the robin a thief, and so, a nuisance;
for fruit is a very small portion of
his diet, and he really renders ser-
vice in freeing fruit trees from the
insects and worms that would de-
stroy the fruit. It is said by an
ornithologist that our young robin
will eat sixty-five worms a day,
which would be equal to a small boy
eating seventy pounds of meat. Think
how hard the parent birds labor to
provide daily food for a nestful of
birds. Would any one grudge them
a few cherries to refresh themselves
after their hard work? Any one that
has never heard the cheerful song of
the robin on a bright summer
morning has missed a treat, and
should certainly try to hear it before
it ceases its song when nesting sea-
son is over. Its notes are not as
varied as are those of other birds,
but they are much more cheery.
Robin Turdidae is a model husband
and father, for he spends all his time
in bringing food to his wife and lit-
tle ones, and then entertains them
with a song. He never grumbles nor
complains, but always keeps up his
cheerful flow of spirits. Who does not
love Robin Turdidae?

Birdies in summer,
Happy and snug;
Breakfast a berry,
Dinner a bug.

Birdies in winter;
They must be fed.
Let the sweet children
Scatter the bread.

THE DANDELION.

Little gypsy Dandelion,
Dancing in the sun,
Have you any curls to sell?
"Not a single one!"
Have you any eggs and cheese
To go a-marketing?
"I have neither one of these,
For beggar nor for king."

Little idle Dandelion,
Then I'll mow you down.

What is it you're good for,
With your golden crown?
"Oh, I gild the fields, afar,
In the pleasant spring,
Shining like the morning star,
With the light I bring."
—M. N. Prescott.

TAPPING THE PANE.

A little incident recently appeared
in The Youth's Companion, which,
though little, has a big moral. It
is the story of a little lad at a sea-
side resort, whose mother command-
ed him not to go down to the beach
that afternoon, but to stay on the
lawn, until she should come out,
when they would go for a walk. The
afternoon waned; but the mother never
came out. The little fellow's play-
mates came along and called him to
come and wade, but he shook his
head.

He could see the glistening ocean
from the veranda, and it never seem-
ed more attractive nor the cottage
more utterly dull. Presently he walk-
ed slowly down to the gate and be-
gan to toy with the latch. Then, with
firm-set lips and hands clasped tight
behind him, he as slowly returned to
the veranda.

Again, yielding to temptation, he
went to the gate. This time he opened
it a little, but instead of passing
through, he closed it sharply, and
once more made his way back to the
veranda.

How hot and lonely and stupid it
was there, and what a merry time
the other children were having on
the cool, moist sand at the edge of
the frothing wavelets! He bore it as
long as he could, and then, running
swiftly down the gravel path, opened
the gate and scampered off to join
his playmates.

It was tea-time when he returned,
and his mother met him with uplifted
finger and reproving look.

"Ah, Rodney, Rodney," she said,
"you have disobeyed me! You have
been at the beach in spite of what I
told you!"

Rodney's flaming cheeks and down-
cast eyes and silent tongues consti-
tuted a sufficient confession, and his
mother went on:

"Now I want to tell you, Rodney,
that I was watching you all the
time. I saw you go to the gate
twice and come back, and then go
through it the third time."

Rodney suddenly found his tongue,
and, looking up at his mother with
a world of meaning in his big brown
eyes, said:

"You were watching me the whole
time?"

"Yes," answered the mother, won-
dering what was in the little mind.
"And you saw me go down to the
gate and come back again?" he con-
tinued.

"I did," was her response, still
more perplexed.
"Then, mother," he asked bravely,
although the little lips trembled,
"why didn't you tap the window
and help a fellow?"

Even so. The infinite pathos of it!
"The baby conscience struggling for
the right, and only needing the quiet
tap of the mother's finger upon the
window pane to nerve it for victory!"
How many are the opportunities that
come to all, to parents, to older
brothers and sisters, to friends, by a
little sign, a tap of the finger, a ques-
tioning look, a delicate caution, to
help steady those who are in tempta-
tion; and how often that opportunity
is spent in simply keeping watch for
a chance to reprimand when the
temptation has proven too much and
the tempted has succumbed! The
trouble is, we speak at the wrong
time; we speak to criticize, when we
might have spoken to aid.

STORY OF A PIN.

Some time ago, at a certain school,
the subject of a composition given to
the pupils was: "What becomes of
all the pins?" It is a puzzle, and
very curious to know besides who in-
vented the first pin. You might as
well want to know who ate the first
oyster. I think the man who did it
must have had a good deal of
courage, or must have been very hun-
gry, for I have never been able to
eat a raw oyster.

But the man who invented the pin,
as well as the man who invented the
lucifer match, must have been very
ingenious, and did not know what a
benefactor he proved to be to at
least one-half of humanity—the wo-
men. There are probably billions of
pins manufactured every year. They
rarely break, like their cousins, that
is, all but a small part; the rest are
lost—where? Nobody can tell.

Nearly eighty years ago or more
a pin was lost, found, and thereby
played an important part in the life
of one man. And it was the ordi-
nary, common pin, such as you and
I use every day to pin a garment when
the button comes off, and you are
too lazy to sew it on, or are in too
great a hurry to do it.

In one of the provinces of France
lived a poor young man whose last
name was Lafitte. Probably his par-
ents had deprived themselves of many
necessaries of life to give him an
education. He was active, full of
energy, but there was no field for
him to work in the little town where
he dwelt, and therefore he was un-
happy and restless. He thought if he
could go to Paris he might find
something to do; but how? He knew
no one in the big city, and he might
starve.

A friend of the family knew a bank-
er there, and offered to give him a
letter of introduction, and the young
man accepted. It was easy to pack
up the few clothes he had; he may
have had to walk the whole way, for
there were no railroads in his early
life; but he started, and arrived one
evening in the big city of Paris.

The next morning he arose, brushed
his clothes, which were a little worn,
and, taking his letter, went to the
banker's. In those days many of the
bankers had their offices in the house
wherein they lived, though in a dif-
ferent part. After passing the grated
iron gate, one entered a large court,
where on one side were the offices,
on the other the dwelling houses.

Young Lafitte's heart was beating
fast as he crossed the threshold of
the banker's office, for he was shy
and timid. He handed in the letter;
the banker read it, and when he had
finished it he told Lafitte he was
sorry, but that he had all the clerks
he needed; he had no place for him.
Poor Lafitte! He went away dis-
heartened. He had come so full of
hopes. Surely the banker would not
refuse anything to his friend; and,
behold, he was now thrown on the
pavement of Paris, almost penniless
and without a friend.

As he crossed the court and was
looking down he saw a common pin.
He stooped down, picked it up and
put it in his coat. The banker hap-
pened to be at his window, and he
noticed the action of young Lafitte,
and he thought to himself: The young
man who picks up a pin must have
been brought up with ideas of econ-
omy; he would make a good clerk. So,
calling one of the men, he told him
to go after Lafitte, and ask him to
come back to his office.

You may imagine the astonishment
and joy of Lafitte when the banker
told him he would take him into his
office.
And Lafitte proved a most effi-
cient man. From the lowest place he
rose to be a partner, then had a
banking house of his own, and be-
came one of the richest men in
France.

He died when he was a little girl. I
remember going through the street
where he lived. His house was all
draped with black velvet and silver
trimmings, and there was a great
concourse of people to attend his fun-
eral.

There is in Paris a street called
after him.

A FERN THAT WALKS.

Most ferns are confirmed travelers.
New fern leaves grow out from the
underground roots some distance
away from the old plant. The aver-
age observer scarcely notices this,
but there is a native fern that steps
off at so lively a pace that its odd
habit has long furnished one of the
unending entertainments of the
woods. The walking fern often car-
pets ledges and tops of rounded rocks.
The slender, tufted leaf reaches out

singularly unfernlike in appearance.
They squirm about and "walk" by
taking root there and growing. In
time, clusters of new leaf fronds
spring from these rooted tips. By and
by some of these, too, bite the earth
and, taking root, start still other
colonies, which in turn will continue
the progress again and again. Natu-
rally, with the lapse of time, the
connection between the older tufts
and the younger becomes broken, yet
one sometimes finds series of three or
four linked together, representing as
many steps in the pretty ramble.

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION IN RUSSIA.

(From The New York Sun.)

A correspondent sends us from
Odessa a report of the laying of the
foundation stone of a new Roman
Catholic Church in that Russian
town, in the hope, as he says, "that
it will serve to dissipate some erro-
neous views regarding religious toler-
ance in Russia." The Baron Edward
Ropp, the Roman Catholic Bishop for
the Diocese of Tiraspol, who presided
over the ceremony, we will explain,
is of an old Lithuanian noble family.
He was educated at the University of
St. Petersburg and afterward at the
Catholic Theological Seminary there.
As the report we quote indicates, he
speaks Russian, Polish, German Let-
tish, French, Italian, Turkish, and,
we may add, to some extent, Eng-
lish. He is, moreover, a thorough
Russian and believes unreservedly in
the destiny of Russia. He stands
high with all classes of Russian so-
ciety, and his noble birth gives him
an influence in quarters not ordinarily
regarded as favorably disposed to-
ward Roman Catholic ecclesiastics.

A Bishop in Russia is a very high
dignitary, and the Catholic Bishop
ranks with his brethren of the Rus-
sian Church in the eyes of official
Russia. The land given by the city
of Odessa for the new church our
correspondent describes as a very
valuable plot. The fact that the
town, about five years ago, also gave
to the English Church authorities an-
other valuable piece of land, on condi-
tion that they erect a church within
a reasonable time, demonstrates a de-
gree of religious liberality and toleration
in Russia which will surprise
people unacquainted with the actual
situation in that empire.

The worst of having indicted a
wrong upon the innocent is that you
can never by any means retrieve it.
You can repent, and it is probable
that your repentance ensures your
forgiveness at a higher tribunal than
that of earth's judgment, but the re-
sults of wrong cannot be wiped out
or done away with in this life; they
continue to exist, and alas! often
multiply. Even the harsh and unjust
wrong cannot be recalled, and how-
ever much we may regret having ut-
tered it, somehow, it is never for-
gotten.

The London St. James' Gazette re-
calls the interesting fact that Pope
Leo XIII. was in London as Arch-
bishop Pecci, in 1846, and was pre-
sent in the House of Commons and
heard O'Connell speak. The only
speech of note delivered by O'Connell
in 1846 in the House of Commons was
his speech on the Irish Land Question.
The speech, whether supplied to the
newspapers, as Lord Beaconsfield, in
his life of Lord George Bentinck, sug-
gests, or not, appears in Hansard,
and, however much the voice of other
physical attributes of O'Connell, who
was then rapidly failing, may have
appeared to have decayed, this speech,
says The Dublin Freeman's Journal,
in the selection of evidence, and in its
arrangement of facts, and its presen-
tation of the whole case against the
land system of Ireland, may be read
even to-day as the completest and
most convincing speech of the time on
the question. It is interesting to
think that the future Pope may have
listened to the greatest Catholic of
his age pleading the cause of a race
devoted to Faith and Fatherland, and
denouncing their sufferings under a
system from which he may now, in
his own renowned Pontificate, live to
see them released.

CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES AND WILD ANIMALS—A TRADITION.

(From The London Tablet.)

The daily papers announced last
week that "Father Glader, a Roman
Catholic missionary," had been killed
and partly eaten by a tiger "near
Somewhere, in Bengal." No Catholic
priest of the name is to be found in
the current "Catholic Directory" for
India, published in Madras, and we
do not recognize the name of the
place; nevertheless, the sad story may
be true, in spite of some confusion of
proper names. If so, it will destroy a
pet tradition which has long been
held on the foreign missions, viz.,
that Catholic missionaries are never
known to be attacked, or at least
killed, by wild animals or snakes.
Certainly, if the Bengal case be true,
it will be the first of its kind on re-
cord. We shall wait anxiously to
see what confirmation reaches us of
the report.

Let us be men with men, and al-
ways children before God; for in His
eyes we are but children. Old age
itself, in presence of eternity, it but
the first moment of a morning.
Even in those who enjoy friendship
it is limited; our poor weak senses
separate us in many ways from those
we love best, and it is only in Heav-
en that our embrace will be ever-
lasting.

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