

YOUNG CANADA.

BACK AGAIN.

The chill snows lingered, the spring was late,
It seemed a weariful while to wait
For warmth, and fragrance, and song, and flowers,
And balmy airs and delicious showers.

But we bided our time, and with patient eyes
We watched the slow-renting skies,
Till at last one April morning we woke
To find we were free of the winter's yoke,

And a rush of wings through the rushing rain
Told us the birds were back again.
A joyous tumult we heard aloft—
Clear, rippling music and flutterings soft.

So light of heart and so light of wing,
All hope of summer, delight of spring,
They seemed to utter with voices sweet,
Upborne on their airy pinions fleet.

Dainty, delicate, lovely things!
Would that my thoughts, like you, had wings
To match your grace, your charm, your cheer,
Your fine melodious atmosphere!

Precious and beautiful gifts of God,
Scattered through heaven and earth abroad!
Who, ungrateful, would do you wrong,
Check your flight and your golden song?

O friendly spirits! O sweet, sweet birds!
Would I could put my welcome in words
Fit for such singers as you to hear,
Sky-born minstrels and poets dear!

—Celia Thaxter, in *St. Nicholas* for April.

LEARN TO GRAFT.

Every farmer's boy should learn to graft. Few occupations give more pleasure or a greater reward. To convert a wild and thorny tree into one bearing large and delicious fruit is a wonderful and fascinating process. Grafting need not be confined to fruit trees. Ornamental trees and shrubs which are nearly related to each other may be grafted. Several kinds of roses may be grown on the same bush, and differently colored lilacs may be mixed on the same stock. Grafting is an easy art to acquire. Simply making the cions live is but a part of the operation on fruit trees, however. One must plan for the future top of the tree. He must graft such limbs as should make permanent factors in the top he is building; and while he should avoid grafting too many limbs, he should likewise avoid grafting too few. In either extreme too much cutting for the good of the tree will have to be done. If too few limbs are grafted, it will be necessary to cut too many branches off entirely during the process of grafting. If too many limbs are grafted, it will be necessary to cut many of them out in a few years to prevent crowding. It must be remembered that a grafted branch will occupy more room than a natural branch; for the cions branch and bush out from the point of their insertion. How many limbs and which ones to graft must be learned by experience and judgment.

The kind of grafting most likely to be practised on the farm is that known as cleft-grafting. The process is a simple one. Saw off the limb to be grafted where it is an inch or less in diameter; trim the edges of the "stub" smooth, and split it with a large knife, or a cleaver made for the purpose. The cleft should not be more than four inches deep at the most. A wedge is now inserted in the centre of the cleft, and a cion is set on each side of the stub. The cions are made of twigs of last year's growth. They should be cut before the trees show any sign of starting in the Spring. When the cion is prepared ready for setting it should contain about three buds. The lower end is cut wedge shaped by slicing off each side of the cion. On one side of this wedge-shaped portion, and midway between its top and bottom, should be left one of the buds.

When the cion is set this bud will be deep down in the side of the cleft in the stub, and will be covered with wax; but, being nearer the source

of nourishment it will be the most apt of any buds to grow, and it will readily push through the wax. The cion is set into the cleft by exercising great care that the inner surface of the bark on the cion exactly matches the inner surface of the bark on the stub. A line between the bark and the wood may be observed. This line on the cion, in other words, should match this line on the stub. Wax the whole over carefully and thoroughly. Do not leave any crack exposed. Wax which is pretty hard, and which must be worked and applied with the hands, is commonly best. We have given several good recipes for grafting wax. We would recommend that grafting be not confined to the orchard. Experiment. Try pears and apples on wild crabs and thorns. One must not look for success on trees much different from the cions, but there is room for experimenting, and more light is needed.—*American Cultivator*.

THE ROBIN AND THE CHICKEN.

A plump little robin flew down from a tree,
To hunt for a worm, which he happened to see;
A frisky young chicken came scampering by,
And gazed at the robin with wondering eye.

Said the chick, "What a queer-looking chicken is that!
Its wings are so long and its body so fat!"
While the robin remarked, loud enough to be heard:
"Dear me! an exceedingly strange-looking bird!"



PLAYFUL SQUIRRELS.

"Can you sing?" robin asked, and the chicken said,
"No."
But asked in its turn if the robin could crow.
So the bird fought a tree, and the chicken a wall.
And each thought the other knew nothing at all.

REINDEER HUNTING.

One sport that amuses the Eskimo boys very much would probably be called in our language "reindeer hunting." Having found a lough and gentle slope on a side-hill, they place along the bottom of the hill a number of reindeer antlers, or, as we sometimes incorrectly call them, deer-horns (for you boys must not forget that the antlers of a deer are not horn at all, but bone). These antlers of the reindeer are stuck upright in the snow, singly or in groups, in such a manner that a sled, when well guided, can be run between them without knocking any of them down, the number of open spaces between the groups being equal to, at least, the number of sleds. The quantity of reindeer antlers they can thus arrange will of course, depend upon their fathers' success the autumn before in reindeer hunting; but there are nearly always enough antlers to give two or three and sometimes five or six, to each fearless young coaster.

The boys with their sleds, numbering from four to six in a fair-sized village, gather on the top of the hill, each boy having with him two or three

spears, or a bow with as many arrows. They start together, each boy's object being to knock down as many antlers as possible and not be the first to reach the bottom of the hill. You can see that, in such a case, the slower they go when they are passing the antlers the better. They must knock over the antlers with their spears or arrows only, as those thrown down by the sledge or with the bow or spear in the hand do not count. They begin to shoot their arrows and throw their spears as soon as they can get within effective shooting distance; and, even after they have passed between the rows of antlers, the more active boys will turn around on their flying sleds and hurl back a spear or arrow with sufficient force to bring down an antler.

When all have reached the bottom of the hill, they return to the rows of antlers, where each boy picks out those he has rightfully captured, and places them in a pile by themselves. Then those accidentally knocked over by the sledges are again put up and the boys return for another dash down the hill, until all the antlers have been "speared." Sometimes there is but one antler left, and when there are five or six contesting sleds the race becomes very exciting, for then speed counts in reaching the antler first. When all are down, the boys count their winnings, and the victor is, of course, the one who has obtained the greatest number of antlers.—*From "The Children of the Cold."*

THE ZEBRA OF SOUTH AFRICA.

The best-known and the handsomest of these horse-like animals is the common zebra (*equus zebra*, Linn.), rather smaller than the wild horse, which name it bears among the Dutch colonists at the Cape of Good Hope; it is a mountain species, inhabiting South Africa, and the bands exist on all parts of the body and limbs, even to the hoofs. The zebras are very wild, living together in herds, going with great rapidity from place to place, as impelled by hunger or fear; they seek the most secluded spots, grazing on the steep hill-sides, posting a sentinel at whose warning of danger they scamper off with pricked ears and whisking tails to inaccessible retreats in the mountains; the senses of sight, smell, and hearing are remarkably acute, and their speed is very great; when attacked by man or beast, they form a compact body, with their heads in the centre and their heels towards the enemy, bravely defending themselves against the large carnivora by their showers of kicks. They have been so domesticated as to be used as beasts of burden, but, having been subdued by cruel usage, show little of the spirit of the wild state. The flesh is eaten by the natives and hunters in South Africa, and is said to be exceedingly good, though coarse, as in all the horse family.

I CAN LET IT ALONE.

I can do something that you can," said a boy to his companion. "I can chew tobacco."

"And I can do something you can't," was the quick reply. "I can let tobacco alone."

Now this is the kind of a boy we love to see. The boy who has had the backbone to refuse when asked to do a foolish or wicked thing is the one of whom we are proud. It is an easy matter to sail with the wind or float with the tide, and it is easy enough to form bad habits; so that none can boast over the power to do that. It is the one who can let them alone that is worthy of praise. And the best time to let tobacco alone is before the appetite has been formed. There is nothing inviting about it then.

Do not use it, boys. It is filthy, poisonous, disgusting stuff at its best.

Be men enough to let it alone. Hold up your head and say that you are its master, and never intend to become its slave.