



THE RAZOR-BILL.

We are standing on the sea-side, and turning our back to the waves we look up to a rocky cliff rising in front of us to the height of five or six hundred feet. Lonely is it? Oh, no, it is a peopled city, or rather it is a vast house tenanted by living creatures to the very attics. Only the tenants are not men and women, but birds.

Yes, the house belongs to birds, at least there they are, and story after story, ledge above ledge, is occupied by a different race, and they keep themselves to themselves, never visiting or interfering with their fellow-lodgers above or below them.

As we look again at the towering cliff, we see a row of black spots on every tier, which we know are the heads of sitting birds. Some are called Guillemots, some Razor-Bills, some by other names, but the strange thing is that not only does each species keep to the same ledge, but that each separate bird knows its own mate. To us they all look alike, but the birds are wiser than we think. The "foolish"

Guillemot (as its name is) is not so very foolish after all, is it?

There is no pretence of nest building, that is left to the denizens of the woods. A slight hollow scooped out is all they want, and sometimes there is not even this, the single egg is laid simply on the shelf of rock, and there the mother tends it.

In due time, if all goes well, the little downy creature appears, and then what is to be done next? Nothing but the

mother's wing protects it on that rocky ledge, if she leaves it for a minute it will be over. It will not be able to fly for many a day yet; and though it could swim if only on the sea, what of that, when the sea lies five or six hundred feet below; so that now we can come back to the question with which we began. How are we to get them down?

We may ask the question, but the seabird does not. She has no need, for all arrangements are made, and there's a carriage ready for the journey, soft and pillow as the most tender nestling could desire. Perhaps in her own language she has a little motherly talk, reassuring and comforting, with her offspring.

Then it mounts on her back, and down, down they go, mother and child, to the surface of the waiting deep below, nor to the surface only. The Razor-Bill, another species, are divers, so that there is yet a deeper depth to which they can descend. Most likely diving as well as swimming comes natural to these infants. They never go back to their birthplace on the rock, the waters are now their home

till another season or two, when they have turned from downy chicks into full-plumaged birds, and have become in their turn parents and protectors.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

BY EMMA C. DOWD.

What shall you do in the year that is new,

Little maid?

Shall you make it a happy New Year to you,

Little maid?

Shall you keep your heart full of sunshine, dear,

Though skies be cloudy and days be drear?

Shall you help the mother, and lighten her care?

Be ready in duties to take your share?

Shall you aim to make little ones happy and glad?

Be cheery and hopeful when others are sad?

Shall you aim to have life hold a little less pain

For those whom sickness or want enchain?
Shall you strive to be gentle, brave and sweet,

And to follow the Master with willing feet,

Little maid?

If this you do in the year that is new,
'Twill be truly a happy New Year to you,
Little maid!

—Our Youth.

THE CHILDREN MAY COME.

Shall I tell you something true about a real little girl? She is a grown lady now, and the dear mamma of some happy boys and girls. When she was quite a little girl—just five, I think it was—one day she leaned on her aunt's knee, and said: "Aunt Margaret, what does it mean to have religion?" And the grown-up aunt told the little child in words she could understand about Jesus's calling even the little children to love him with all their hearts and to keep his beautiful laws. When she had finished, the little girl cried joyfully: "O, I have it already! I have religion already!" Jesus says: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." You see, Jesus wants the little children to come to him; he says that there is no need for them to wait.

Happy is he who speaks little, for words beget accidents, gloom, and interior trouble.