



### Chickadee.

ALL the earth is wrapped in snow,  
O'er the hills the cold winds blow,  
Through the valley down below  
Whirls the blast.

All the mountain brooks are still,  
Not a ripple from the hill,  
For each tiny, murmuring rill  
Is frozen fast.

Come with me  
To the tree

Where the apples used to hang!  
Follow me  
To the tree

Where the birds of summer sang!  
There's a happy fellow there,  
For the cold he does not care,  
And he always calls to me,  
"Chickadee, chickadee!"

### ROBIN REDBREAST.

BY FRANCIS FORBES, ESQ.

ROBIN REDBREAST is one of the most popular fellows in the air. Everybody likes him—except in strawberry and cherry time, and then he puts so hard a strain on people's regard that they throw sod, if not stones, at him. Robin does love strawberries and cherries, and—like the greedy epicure that he is—he always feasts on the reddest, ripest, most luscious berries and cherries that are on cherry-tree and strawberry-vine. But when the season for these sweet fruits is past, people return to their old loves. Robin recovers his popularity, and is made welcome as ever when he comes, Lazarus-like, as he does in winter, to pick up the crumbs which fall from our tables.

I scarcely know why it is that Robin retains the special good-will of so many people. You know that even egg-hunting, bird-killing boys will spare him, while they rob or kill birds of all other species. There is nothing in Robin's character which entitles him to this impunity. Many other birds might set up a better claim to good treatment on the score of character. He is

an unscial fellow with his kind, and quite as quarrelsome and selfish as his worst enemies could desire. Just try him with a few crumbs next winter, if he should visit you, and if a brother or sister Robin should dare to hop up and try to get a brother beggar's share, you will see him fly into a terrible passion, and drive the intruder off. Robin is a jealous, selfish fellow. His redeeming quality is that he loves to eat the worms and insects which destroy our trees, and in the winter when other birds forsake us he sticks to our homes and cheers us with his voice.

Yes, people love the Robin. I suppose this is mainly because an old legend states that when a wicked uncle hired some ruffians to carry his little orphan nephew and niece away and kill them, that he might seize the riches to which they were heirs, and that when these ruffians quarrelled, and finally left the poor babes to wander in the forest until they starved and died folded in each other's arms, the robins came and covered their dear little dead bodies with leaves. For this loving deed, the story of which has been poured into the eager ears of millions of children for many generations, we all love the Robin.

Every time we see him we think of the poor babes in the wood, and that thought awakens a kindly feeling for him whose ancestors are storied to have done that loving deed.

Thus you see how far-reaching in its influence is a deed of love. Possibly the robins never did the loving act with which they are credited. But no matter. It is theirs by reputation, and we love them, and spare them, and feed them from our windows in the winter season. We thus practically say, "Blessed are they who do loving deeds!" I trust you all say these words, but I am very desirous to have you do such deeds. You love Jesus because he did the most loving act that ever has been done on earth, when he died the just for the unjust.

### HERO JACK.

BEDFORD school bore a bad name. A new teacher, one of the real kind, came, and the tone of the school improved. Jack Peterson had just come from Excelsior school, where the code of honour was high. The bully of Bedford was Joe Brandy, who nagged every new boy into a fight, if possible.

Jack was a puzzle to the Bedford boys. He was different some way, perfect in lessons, walked with head up in manly fashion, honourable and faithful. Yet he was best in base-ball, and a capital fellow on the playground. Joe tried to pick a quarrel in vain; Jack paid no attention, until one day Joe struck him across the face, saying: "Now, take that! fight it out, or be a coward!"

Jack's face flushed; then with folded arms and head erect, he walked away without a word.

"Coward! coward!" shouted Joe, and the boys echoed "Coward!"

"We'll show him," said the leader, "that no boy that bears that name can play on our ground."

One day a terrible thing happened. A mad dog dashed into the playground, and was almost upon Joe Brandy before the boy saw him. Quick as a flash Jack snatched up a baseball bat, and springing in front of the raging beast, with its open jaws and frothing mouth, dealt it a stunning blow, giving a policeman in hot pursuit a chance to shoot.

"I do declare, boy, that was a plucky thing to do!" said the officer.

With a shout, "Three cheers for Hero Jack!" the boys lifted him on their shoulders and bore him around the playground in triumph.

"But, little readers, when did he most truly earn the name of 'Hero Jack?'"

You do not need to devise in the morning how to create your own light; it is prepared and ready for you. The sun was made before you were, and it keeps its course, and so constantly will God's own light shine to you without your contrivance or care for anything but to seek, receive, and be guided by it.—John Howe.