

The Nursery, Volume 17, No. 100, April, 1875 eBook

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Page 1

EDITOR'S PORTFOLIO.

The beautiful picture of The Cataract of Lodore, in our present number, is well illustrated by Southey's famous lines which were written for his little boys and girls, or, as he phrased it, "for the nursery."

We call special attention to the illustration of "The First Corner" on page 117. It is a design by Perkins, exquisitely engraved by John Andrew & Son.

"The Boy who loved his mother" is another picture that is worthy of special notice. The "Drawing-Lesson" by Weir, should attract the attention of all children who want to learn to draw.

Canvassers will find from our terms that we offer them rare inducements for extending the circulation of "The Nursery." It is poor economy, even in the hardest times, for parents to neglect what may largely contribute to the education of their children.

"The Easy Book" and "The Beautiful Book," are now recognized as Standard works for the young, and continue to be in great demand. To these we shall soon add "The Nursery Primer," which will surpass everything of the kind yet got up.

"Next to a baby," writes a subscriber in Charlotte, Mich., "there never was such joy in a household as 'The Nursery.' My little girl will repeat nearly every poem, though she does not know a letter. My boy is just two, and such a yell of delight when he finds a 'bow-wow,' as he calls the dog, all to himself, would astonish a Piute Indian. I don't have to keep any 'cramp drops,' 'baby jumpers' or 'patent food,'(?) for the children. I find they never have an ail or grievance, but 'The Nursery' acts as a specific. I wish every mother in the land would give it to her children on trial. And really it makes old people feel quite sunny."

It will be seen by a notice in our advertising pages, that the Publisher of "The Nursery" is prepared to execute various commissions in the way of purchasing and forwarding books, Maps, Games, Stationery, &c., for parties desiring them.

[Illustration: *The boy who loved his mother.*]

THE BOY WHO LOVED HIS MOTHER

When Felix was a little fellow, hardly two years old, he used to pet his mother, and tell her how much he loved her.

As he grew up, he showed his love by his acts. He minded his mother; he gave her his attention when she talked to him; and, if she told him not to do a thing, he would not do it.

If she said, "Felix, don't do that," he would not fret, and say, "Why not, mother?" Oh, no! He would at once give up what he was doing; for he knew she would not, without some good reason, forbid him to do a thing that pleased him.

Once, when Felix had grown to be six years old, his mother took him with her on a journey in the railroad-cars to New York. It was a fine day in June: the windows of the cars were open.

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"Felix," said his mother, as they took their seats, "you may sit by the window; but you must not put your head or your arms out of it."

Before she could explain to him her reasons for saying this, a friend who had come in drew off her attention, by talking to her; so that she forgot to explain to Felix why she did not wish to have him put his head or arms out of the window.

In the seat just before him, Felix saw a large boy, who kept putting his head out, although the boy's mother kept telling him not to do it. By and by the cars rushed by a post, which stood so near the track that it almost grazed the boy's head. He started back in a great fright, losing his hat as he did so. He had a very narrow escape.

Felix now saw why his mother had given him the caution she had. He took her hand in his, and looked up in her face. She smiled on him; for she knew what was passing in his mind.

"Yes, Felix," said she: "if you had not loved your mother too much to wound her by disobedience, you might have lost your life."

Uncle Charles.

FROWING AWAY ONE.

I know three little girls who are sisters. Of course, they ought to love each other dearly. When they stand up, they are like a flight of three steps: baby is the lowest; Mattie is the middle step; and Susie is the upper step, because she is tallest.

The baby is four years old, I know: so I guess that Mattie is almost six, and Susie a little more than seven.

No two of you little people love each other more dearly than Mattie and baby love each other. Where one is, the other always wants to be. They sit and walk with their arms around each other. It is pleasant to see them.

They both dearly love Susie too; but she is bigger, and doesn't seem to belong quite so much to them as they seem to belong to each other.

One day their mamma was looking at them; and, thinking aloud, she said, "Three little girls! What shall I do with so many? Don't you think I have too many?"

Then baby looked earnestly into her mother's face, and said, "O, mamma! if you *must* frow one away, do frow away Susie."



Never you fear, little people, that Susie will be “frowed” away. Her mamma has not one too many, though she has three little girls.

E.M.S.

HUNTING FOR EASTER-EGGS.

The Easter-egg is a painted or colored egg used for a present at Easter, a day which occurs on Sunday, the second day after Good-Friday.

The term “Easter” is said to be derived from a Saxon word meaning *rising*; and Easter is a festival of the Christian Church to commemorate the resurrection.

In the picture, the children are hunting for Easter-eggs, which the good mother has hidden in different parts of the room. The child who finds the most eggs will have the pleasure of making presents of them to whom he or she may choose.

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Baby has set his eyes on the egg that lies on the floor. If he takes it up, I hope he will not let it fall, and break it. The other children will not be slow to find the painted eggs. There must be a dozen, or more, of them hidden away.

THE BEAUTIFUL SPRING.

"I was here first," said the snowdrop: "look!"
"Not before me!" sang the silver brook.
"Why," cried the grass, "I've been here a week!"
"So have I, dear," sighed a violet meek.

"Well," piped a bluebird, "don't leave me out!
I saw the snow that lay round about."
"Yes," chirped a snowbird, "that may be true;
But I've seen it all the bleak winter through."

"I came betimes," sang the southwind, "I!"
"After me, love!" spake the deep blue sky.
"Who is it cares?" chimed the crickets gay:
"Now you are here, let us hope you'll stay."

Whispered the sun, "Lo! the winter's past:
What does it matter who's first or last?
Sky, brooks, and flowers, and birdies that sing,
All help to make up the beautiful spring."

George Cooper.

OUR CHRISTMAS PLAY.

Our Emily wrote a play for our Christmas entertainment. Emily, Ruth, Mary, and Uncle Peter, all took part in it. The curtain fell amid very great applause from grandma, grandpa, father, and Uncle Charles, Brothers Robert and John, Jane, the housemaid, Aunt Alice, and some six of our cousins. So you see we had a good audience. As it is the only play we have ever seen acted, we may be too partial critics; but readers must judge for themselves.

(EMILY enters with a basket of shoestrings)

Emily.—Shoestrings to sell! Does anybody want shoestrings? Dear me, how cold it is! To-morrow is Christmas, and I must earn money enough to buy a basket of coal. Who wants a nice pair of shoestrings?



Ruth (entering).—This is a cold day, little girl, and you are thinly clad. Now, if my Uncle Peter, were here I know what he would do: he would buy you a shawl.

Emily.—As soon as I get rich, I mean to buy one myself. Can I sell you a pair of shoestrings?

Ruth.—What is the price?

Emily.—Only two cents a pair.

Ruth.—Then you may give me three pairs. Here are six cents. (*Takes out her purse, and pays Emily, but, in putting it back, lets it fall on the ground.*)

Emily.—Thank you; and a merry Christmas to you!

Ruth.—I wish I could make your Christmas a merry one, poor child; but I have done what I could. Good-by. (*Goes out.*)

Emily.—Oh, if more such customers would come along, how glad I should be! Will any one buy a nice pair of shoestrings? (*Sees the purse, and picks it up.*) What is this on the ground? A purse! And it has money in it. One dollar, three dollars—Dear me! That young lady must have dropped it. I must run and give it to her. Where is she? (*Puts down her basket, and goes out.*)



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(Mary enters, and looks at the basket.)

MARY.—A basket on the sidewalk! What does it mean? *(Takes it up.)* It is full of shoestrings. I will take it to my mother, and ask her to find the owner. *(MARY takes up the basket, and is going out, when RUTH enters.)*

RUTH.—Are you the girl I bought shoestrings of?

MARY.—No: I have not sold any. These are not mine.

RUTH.—Have you seen any thing of a purse about here?

MARY.—No: I have seen no purse. *(Goes off-with the basket.)*

RUTH.— Oh! here comes the little girl I was looking for; and she has my purse in her hand. *(Enter EMILY.)* That is my purse, little girl.

EMILY *(giving RUTH the purse)*.—Take it. I was looking for you. But where is my basket of shoestrings?

RUTH.—Why, that little girl yonder has it. See her there, crossing the street.

EMILY.—It is my basket. She has taken what does not belong to her.

RUTH.—Run, and bring her to me. *(EMILY starts to go out.)* Stop! What is your name?

EMILY.—Emily Swift.

RUTH.—Well, Emily Swift, I think you are mistaken in supposing that the little girl meant to steal your basket. Bring her to me. *(EMILY goes out.)* What a pleasant thing it would be to have a purse so full, that one could keep on giving from it, and never find it empty! But here come the children.

(EMILY leads in MARY.)

EMILY.—Here she is. She says she was taking the basket to her mother, so that her mother might find the owner.

RUTH.—And do you doubt her word?

EMILY.—Doubt her word? Not I! She is too good a little girl to tell a falsehood. Just look in her face, and you will see that she speaks the truth.

RUTH.—Yes, Emily Swift, you are right.

EMILY.—Goodness me! What is that thing coming this way?



MARY.—I am afraid of it. Is it a man?

RUTH.—As I live, it is Uncle Peter!

EMILY.—Who is Uncle Peter?

RUTH.—He is the man, who, every Christmas, buys as many toys as he can carry, and gives them to good children. Here he comes.

(Enter UNCLE PETER, comically dressed, and covered from head to foot with all sorts of toys, he is followed by boys and girls. He dances and sings to music.)

UNCLE PETER'S SONG.

“Christmas comes but once a year, once a year, once a year! So
follow me, my children dear, children dear, children dear: So
follow me, my children dear, on Christmas Eve so joyful!”

(After dancing, he takes EMILY and MARY by the hand, and runs off with them, followed by the rest.)

As this is Emily's first play, and she is only nine years old, I hope the critics will not be too severe upon it. If well performed, it will be found, I think, far more amusing in the acting than in the reading.

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BABY'S PINK THUMBS.

The snow had quite covered the ground,
The wind whistled fiercely and chill,
When a poor little storm-beaten bird
Flew down on the broad window-sill.

Within, there was comfort and wealth;
Gay pictures half covered the wall;
The children were happy at play;
And the fire shone bright over all.

Without, there was famine and frost;
Not a morsel of fruit or of grain;
And the bird gave a piteous chirp,
And tapped with his beak at the pane.

Then baby climbed up on a chair,
Forgetting his trumpets and drums:
He doubled his two little fists,
And pointed with both his pink thumbs.

"See, see!" and he laughed with delight,
"Pretty bird, pretty bird: here he comes!"
When the bird, with a bob of his head,
Made a peck at the baby's pink thumbs.

Then the children called out with great glee,
"He thinks they are cherries, or plums,
Or pieces of apple; and so
He tries to eat baby's pink thumbs."

"Poor birdie!" said mamma: "we know
That God for his creatures will care;
But he gives to his thoughtfuller ones
The pleasure of doing their share.

"We softly will open the sash,
And scatter a handful of crumbs;
And, when birdie wants breakfast again,
He needn't peck baby's pink thumbs.

"He may come day by day, if he will,
To a feast on the broad window-ledge,



And fly, when he's eaten his fill,
To his home in the evergreen hedge."

OLIVE A. WADSWORTH.

ABOUT FLAX, BARLEY, AND RYE.

Arthur had been looking at some pictures in a book; but he did not quite understand what they were: so he called on Uncle Oscar to explain.

Uncle Oscar took him on his knee, and said, "This, Arthur, is a picture of the flax-plant, a very useful plant indeed; for from it we make linen. Your apron is linen: so are the collar and wristbands on my shirt.

"The flax-plant bears delicate blue flowers, which look very pretty when in bloom. Flax is raised very largely in Kentucky, and other States in the Union. Do you know what part of the plant is the stalk? I will point it out to you in the picture.

[Illustration: FLAX.]

"Well, from this stalk the thread, or fibres, are got, out of which linen cloth is made. The flax is pulled a little before the seeds are ripe: it is stripped, and the stalks are soaked in water. The flax is then dried, and broken and beaten till the threads, or fibres, of the bark are fit for spinning. From the seeds, linseed-oil is made.

"Is it not strange, Arthur, that out of the stalk of this little plant should be made the nice white linen of your apron and my handkerchief?"

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Arthur thought it very strange. Then, pointing to another picture, he said, "What's this, Uncle Oscar?"

[Illustration: BARLEY.]

"That, Arthur, is a picture of barley as it grows in the field. It yields a very useful kind of grain. You have eaten it in soup, and also boiled. Stripped of the husk, and rounded and polished in a mill, the grains are pearly white; and then they are known as pearl-barley."

"Here's another picture, Uncle Oscar."

"Did you ever eat rye-bread, Arthur?"

"Why, yes, Uncle Oscar! we had it for breakfast."

Well, here is a picture of rye as it grows in the field. It is one of the best of grain-bearing grasses. It will grow where the weather is very cold. The straw is often worth almost as much as the grain.

[Illustration: RYE.]

"Rye grows on poor, light soils, which are altogether unfit for the wheat out of which we make our white bread. Sometimes we mix rye-flour with wheaten-flour, or with corn-meal, and so get a very good kind of bread."

"Can I plant some flax-seed, and barley, and rye?" asked Arthur.

"Yes, my boy," said Uncle Oscar. "You shall have some to plant in your garden next May. I think you will be pleased with the flax-plant, because of its pretty blue-flower."

THE HARE WHO COULDN'T WAIT.

"There goes a hare," said Johnny to Max,
"Come, let us catch him: here are his tracks!"
But, while they were talking so wisely about it,
And Johnny was saying "We'll have him; don't doubt it,"
Behind them the hare, with a jump and a spring,
Ran swift as a swallow could dart on the wing;
And Max and Johnny looked round too late,
While his speed said, "Excuse me, but I can't wait."

THE DRAWING-LESSON.

We give here another outline from Landseer for our little readers to copy. Perhaps they would like to know something about Sir Edwin Landseer. He was born in London, in 1803, and died less than two years ago.

He belonged to a family of artists. His father and elder brother were skilful engravers. His brother Charles earned high rank as a painter. But Edwin was the most famous of them all.

While yet a child, no bigger than some of the young-readers of "The Nursery," he showed a great taste for drawing. He had an especial fondness for drawing animals. His father encouraged him by giving him pictures to copy; and soon his skill in copying became so great that his father took him into the fields, and taught him to draw animals from life.

In this way he soon acquired correct notions of color; and, at the age of fourteen, he began to attract attention by his spirited paintings of dogs, horses, and other animals. He continued to improve until he became one of the most celebrated artists of his day. In 1850, he was knighted by Queen Victoria, that is to say, he received the honorary title of *Sir* Edwin Landseer.

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Mr. Harrison Weir, whose name is well known to our readers, is another English artist, who makes a specialty of the same department of art in which Landseer became so famous. His sketches are remarkable for their truth to nature, and many of them would do no discredit to Landseer himself.

Lay a piece of thin paper over the drawing-lesson, and trace the lines of the picture. After a little practice, try to copy it without-tracing.

[Illustration: From Sir Edwin Landseer's painting. In outline by Mr. Harrison Weir, as a drawing lesson.]

A SMART HORSE.

One morning, when the men went to the stable, our horse, Jenny, was missing from her stall. On looking around, they found her in another room, eating meal out of a chest.

Now, in order to do this thing, she must not only have untied her halter, but have unfastened and opened a door, and raised the lid of the chest; all of which were supposed to have been left safely closed.

We thought that she could not have done it all, but that some careless person had left the chest open, and the door unfastened. So Jenny was led back to her stall and tied up; the lid of the chest was shut down, and the door closed and fastened with a hook.

About an hour afterwards, on entering the stable again, Madam Jenny was found as before, with her nose deep in the meal-chest, munching away with great relish. Then we *knew* she must have unhooked and opened the door, and raised the cover, as well as unhooked her halter.

Do you not think she was pretty smart for a horse? Papa says it was more smart than honest to steal meal in that way. But I suppose horses do not know much about honesty.

I liked Jenny all the better for her smartness, and I have made a great pet of her since. As she is so fond of meal, I take care to give her so much that she will not have to steal it.

She comes to me when I call her; for she knows that I am her friend, and she often gets an apple from my hand. She looks at me so kindly through her great eyes, that I am sure she would thank me if she could speak.

This is a real true story. MARY.

ABOUT SOME INDIANS.

Some boys and girls think Indians are dreadful beings; but my boy, Vaughn, who is now more than three years old, thinks them a very good sort of people. He was born in the Indian country, and is quite used to them and their odd ways.

He often used to stand in the doorway, and say, "How, how?" to them as they passed by; and they would smile, and say, "How, how?" back again. This is the Indian way of saying, "How do you do?"

One day I was at work in the cellar, when I heard strange voices at the front-door: so I went out to see what was the matter. In front of the house I found quite a number of Indian braves, with their squaws and pappooses, all riding on sorry-looking ponies.

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They had drawn up before the house, and were trying to make Vaughn and his mamma understand that they were thirsty. One of the braves had a dog under his blanket; and the little fellow looked very queer as he poked his head out, and watched us. I pointed the band to the town-well, a short distance down the street; and they said, "Ugh!" and rode away in Indian-file.

Another day, an old Indian, with a nose like a young elephant's, rode up to the drug-store, and asked, in Indian lingo, for some tobacco. The druggist cut off a large slice of "black navy," and, stepping out on the sidewalk, handed it to the happy old fellow, who, returning his thanks by sundry nods and grunts, opened the folds of his blanket, and drew out the most laughable tobacco-pouch you ever saw. As sure as you live, it was a whole skunk-skin, with jaws, teeth, ears, and all!

Just as he was about to drive away, the lady-teacher and a drove of boys and girls came pouring out of the school-room. The Indian looked a little blank, and, glancing first at the lady and then at the children, remarked admiringly, "Heap squaw! heap pappoose!" (The innocent old wild gentleman had taken them all for one family).

A chief with his two squaws and two papposes were coaxed into a picture-car, one day, to be photographed. They seemed afraid of the three-legged animal with the round glass eye; but, at last, one of the squaws was induced to take her seat, baby in arms. The baby bawled lustily, till I quieted him by jingling a bunch of keys, while the artist got the focus.

Then I glanced through the camera, and the sight was so pretty and queer, that I induced the chief to take a peep; and when he saw the very minute copy of his spouse and child, standing on their heads, he nearly shook himself to pieces with silent laughter.

VAUGHN'S PAPA.

THE FIRST-COMER.

The drift by the gateway is dingy and low;
And half of yon hillside is free from the snow:
Among the dead rushes the brook's flowing now.
And here's Pussy Willow again on the bough!

"Hi, ho, Pussy Willow! Say, why are you here?"
"I've brought you a message: 'The Summer is near!
All through the long winter, uneasy I've slept:
To hear the wild March wind, half listening, I kept.



"Loud blew his shrill whistle, and up and awake,
My brown cloak from off me I've ventured to shake;
Thrice happy in being the first one to say,
'Rejoice, for the Summer is now on her way!'

"The moss-hidden Mayflowers will blossom ere long,
And gay robin redbreast be trilling a song:
But, always before them, I'm sure to be here:
'Tis first Pussy Willow says, 'Summer is near!'"

MARIAN DOUGLAS

WIDE AWAKE.

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“Jump up Johnny,” said his mother. “It is seven o’clock, and breakfast will be ready soon. The sun was up half-an-hour ago. The birds are singing, and the sky is bright.” John sprang out of bed at once, and was soon washed. Then he put on his clothes, and brushed his hair.

He went down stairs looking as neat as a new pin.

As he was going to school that day, he saw a poor woman with a baby in her arms. She sat on a door-step, and was pale and hungry. John put his hand into his pocket, took some money out, and gave it to her. She thanked him.

John then went to school, where he said his lesson; when school was done, he played at ball till dinner-time.

A.B.C.

THE FIRST ATTEMPT.

Alfred has drawn a great many straight lines and houses and dogs and cats; but this is the first time he has tried to draw a man. The profile suits him very well. There are nose and mouth and eyes, that cannot be mistaken. The hair, too, and the hat, are brought out with a strong hand. All that is wanting now is the color; and this Alfred is putting on. His paints are mixed on a broken plate, and he will soon give his man a bright red cheek.

THE CATARACT OF LODORE.

DESCRIBED IN RHYMES FOR THE NURSERY BY ROBERT SOUTHEY.[A]

“How does the Water
Come down at Lodore?”
My little boy asked me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he tasked me
To tell him in rhyme.

Anon at the word,
There first came one daughter,
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the Water



Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before:
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store.

From its sources which well
In the tarn on the fell,
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills,
Through moss, and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For a while, till it sleeps
In its own little lake;
And thence at departing,
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds,
And away it proceeds
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood-shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-scurry.
Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Now smoking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

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The cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging,
As if a war waging
Its caverns and rocks among;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting,
Around and around,
With endless rebound:
Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in,
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,
And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,



And moaning and groaning,
And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,
And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying,
And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering,
Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,
And this way the water comes down at Lodore.

FOOTNOTES:

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[Footnote A: Robert Southey, an English poet, wrote these lines, not for *our* “Nursery,” but for all nurseries where children are gathered and taught. The Cataract of Lodore is near Keswick, Cumberland County, England. Robert Southey died in the year 1813.]

BOILING MAPLE-SUGAR.

Most of the sugar we use is made from the sugar-cane, which grows in warm countries. But in France they make a good deal of sugar from beets; and in North America, where the sugar-maple-tree grows, some very nice sugar is made from its sap.

Early in spring, while the weather is yet cold, and before the trees have begun to show many signs of life, it is the time for tapping the maples.

The sun, which has already begun to make his power felt by melting the snow, and leaving great green patches here and there on the cleared lands, has kissed the rugged trunks of the trees, and has set the sweet sap mounting through every vein and tissue.

Now is the time to set the troughs in order, and to bore the holes for the little spouts through which the juice must run. These must be made a foot from the ground, on the sunny side of the tree; and very soon the drip, drip, of the oozing sap will be heard, as it trickles over the spout into the rough bowls placed to catch it at the foot of every maple.

As each trough fills, the juice is poured, first into a large barrel, and from thence, when all is ready, into the great iron pot, or caldron, slung over the wood-fire on three poles.

In the picture, you may see three brothers, with their two sisters, engaged in collecting the sap, and boiling it till it can be cooled as sugar. If you will look sharp, you can see little bowls placed at the root of some of the trees, and the sap flowing into them.

A syrup is made from the sap, which is very delicate, and is much used for buckwheat-cakes. A large quantity of maple-sugar is made every year in the northern part of the United States, and in Canada. But it cannot be made so as to compete with the sugar of the sugar-cane in cheapness.

UNCLE CHARLES.

THE STOLEN BIRD’S-NEST.

Once there were two little sparrows who built for themselves a nest on a small tree by the wayside. The mother-bird laid four little eggs in it; and there she sat, while her mate chirped merrily on a tree near by, till, one fine day in May, four little sparrows were hatched.

How glad the parent-birds were! and how they flew round to get food for their little ones! They were willing almost to starve themselves, so that their children might not suffer from want.

Oh, what hungry children they were! How they would stretch out their necks, and open their bills for food, as father and mother drew near to feed them! And what queer little noises they would make, as if they were saying, "Feed *me* first! Oh, give *me* that nice little worm! No, *I* am the hungriest, give it to *me*! Me first! Me first!"

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But the parent-birds seemed to know which of the children had not had a full share; for they would always give it to those who needed it most.

But one day, one sad day, a man came by with his cart, and, seeing the nest, took it with all the little birdies, and placed it on some straw in his cart.

The parent-birds, wild with grief, flew round and round, but it was of no use. Then they followed the cart, and continued to feed their young as well as they could, though the cart was in motion.

But a little girl, whose name was Laura, and who was taking a walk with her mother, saw the man remove the nest, and at once made up her mind to try and get it away from him.

So she went up, and asked him if he would let her have the nest, if she paid him for it. The man seemed a little ashamed when he saw Laura and her mother; and he replied, "Well, little girl, it didn't cost me any thing, and so you may have it for nothing."

"Oh, I thank you ever so much!" cried Laura. So she took the nest, with the birdies in it; and then she and her mother found a safe place in the notch of a tree, hidden from the road, and there they placed it.

Then they walked away, and stood at a distance, and watched till they saw the parent-birds fly down from a high branch to their own nest, and again begin to feed their little ones. How they twittered and chirped with joy! The feeling that she had made the birds happy made Laura happy too.

Every day, for a week, she came to see how the little family were getting on. On the eighth day the nest was empty. They had all flown away.

EMILY CARTER

THE FIRST BLUE-BIRD.

Gold-Locks thought just now,
Out on the apple-bough
Had fallen a bit of the sky.
"Blue it is; oh, blue!
And large as my hand," she cried.
Ah, what a wonder-eyed
Dear happy heart are you,
With all the world so new,
So bright, because untried!



Out I hurried to see
What the bit of sky might be,
When a tender piping note,
Soft as a flute, I heard;
And there upon a bough,
Wintry and bare till now,
In a sky-colored coat,
Trying his little throat,
Was perched the first blue-bird.

CLARA DOTY BATES.

THE LITTLE BIRD.

Words by LORD LYTTON.

Music by T. CRAMPTON.

[Music]

1.

The lit-tle bird fares well in Spring,
For all she wants she finds enough,
And ev'ry casual common thing
She makes her own without rebuff.

2.

First wool and hair from sheep and cow;
Then twig and straw to bind them fast,
From thicket and from thatch, and now,
A little nest is built at last.



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3.

From out that little nest shall rise,
When woods are warm, a living song,
A music mix't with light that flies
Thro' flutt'ring shades the leaves among.

4.

O little bird, take everything
And build thy nest without rebuff,
And when thy nest is builded, sing!
For who can praise thy song enough?

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