

Birds on Our Street

Feathered Choristers Who Salute the Coming Day with Notes of Joy— Busy Hustlers Into Whose Lives the Noise of a Great City Brings No Terror—Omaha Has a Great Variety of Them in Its Many Shade Trees.

BY EMILY WOOD.

UR street is a quiet byway, shaded by young elms and maples. Here and there a great cottonwood stands marking the site of some farm house of early days. A car line crosses the street; the transfer point of three lines is nearby. The hum of the trolley and the noise of traffic upon pavements are audible all day and far into the night, yet our trees shelter more than thirty varieties of birds. We are kindly folk on our street and the wild creatures have grown used to us. They are molested by cats, of course, but a bird seems to look upon a cat as we do upon a dog. It is a constant menace, threatening both the just and the unjust, and not to be averted by taking thought. No man moves because his neighbor has died of appendicitis; why should a bird move because his neighbor has died of a cat?

more seriously for his song is an imposing effect. Apparitions are against him, however. Nature has destined him for comic opera though his soul longeth to produce Wagnerian strains. Summer warblers, or "wild canaries," as the children call them, devote themselves to the lettuce beds across the way. Five or six may be seen there assimilating apples.

The red-eyed vireo, Wilson Flagg's "preacher bird," delivers his staccato mandates from the chickadee cherry trees and the warbling vireo rolls out his rich notes, dropping the last one "as if it were red hot." All the vireos are dull green in color and not upon the pretext that it is best for little birds to be heard and not seen. They are very hard to distinguish from one another, but this year gives us a chance to learn them. They are due this week and the foliage is so thin that they can scarcely escape the watchful eye. Their songs are very characteristic and so unlike that once associated with the personality of their owners they will always betray them to the bird student.

The rose parakeet, then burst about the maples a while and then disappear to return at the same time next day. Sometimes a Nashville warbler comes too. He is identified by the distinctly yellow underparts, blackish-gray head and olive back. His somnolent spreads a whole morning upon a maple tree working about the branches and missing very few twigs in its search. For a day or two the red start madams with his varied notes so hard for the amateur to place. He can not puzzle one long, though, for the orange patches upon his black wings and tail and his incessant movement make him very conspicuous.

The yellow billed cuckoo comes occasionally. His hoarse "koo-koo" foreboding rain, they say, bears the association of thick woods and breathless July afternoons. He sings about so quietly that one rarely sees the yellow lower mandible and white "thumb mark" on his tail which identify him. It may be possible to add many species to the list of birds seen on our street or your street. This year the leaves have been killed and the birds must hunt in trees almost at bare as they usually are in March. Whether the list is long or short matters little, however. What count are the rest and refreshment which come into our busy lives as we watch our neighbors over head. We are working men and women on our street, but we stop a minute or so in the morning to hear the brown thrasher pour out his glorious love song. His is the voice of the May. All the rapture and unrest of the spring thrill through his enchanting song. It is the revelation of youth, and joy, and love. At night, while barn swallows dart and whirr about the sky, the wood thrush sounds his trill upon the hill. It is the voice of the vello, vibrant with the deep meanings of life. The ecstasy of the morning is forgotten as the quiet tones fall like a benediction through the gathering dusk.

The night comes—the birds are silent, but there is still one audible. A tiny owl drifts silently across the trees or sits upon a cottonwood limb at the corner, turning fascinated eyes upon the trolley car as it rushes by a sort of owl eclipse. May 2, 1910. EMILY WOOD.

Birds to be seen on an Omaha street before the last week of April: Bluebird, robin, chickadee, nuthatch, shrike, cardinal, junco, field sparrow, chipping sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, goldfinch, meadow lark, red-winged blackbird, cowbird, crow, jay, flicker, downy, hairy and red-headed woodpecker, screech owl, saw-whet owl, later arrivals: Wood thrush, olive backed thrush, vireo, thrasher, red start Maryland yellow throat, myrtle warbler, yellow warbler, Tennessee warbler, Nashville warbler, warbling vireo, red-eyed vireo, barn swallow, purple martin, dickcissel, indigo bird, rose-breasted grosbeak, oriole, king bird, cuckoo, mourning dove. Total number, forty-four.

Letters from Busy Bees

Baby Dorothea

By Eunice Wright. Aged 11 Years, 522 North Logan Street, Fremont, Neb. Red Side. She was asleep now and mamma was admiring her as she lay in her cradle of blue. Her full name was Evelyn Dorothea Baird, but Dorothea was the prettiest, mamma and papa thought, and so she was called that. She was just a month old yesterday. If ever there were proud parents, I think Dorothea's parents were the proudest. Then mamma went out of the room and Dorothea awoke and looked around. Yes, she was sure she had seen that picture, and that one, too. She had tried in vain to get them with her chubby little hand, but could not do it. Why, what was that blue thing? Staring at her in the face? She had only seen the picture, and papa's and mamma's bed. Now she forgot mamma and turned her attention to the blue thing. She pulled at her little white apron and pulled until she got it off, but could not get the pretty blue thing. Just then mamma came in. "Why, Dorothea!" she exclaimed, "you've pulled the covers all off of your cradle! Papa, come here. Look at the darling." For baby was "one broad smile" of satisfaction over the discovery of that pretty blue thing.

Dorothea's Tea Party

By Mildred Ketter. Aged 11 Years, 111 East Second Street, Grand Island, Neb. Blue Side. Dorothea came home from school one day looking very happy and said to her mother, "Oh, mamma! I have a tea party! Almost all the girls have had one except me and I'd like to have one. I'd like to play games and have a lunch and I would just be lots of fun. Can't I please?" Mrs. Gray looked at her daughter and said: "I suppose you can; it wouldn't bother much." Dorothea was so happy, she ran to her mother and kissed her and said: "I'm so glad you said yes, mamma, now I'll go and write the invitations," and off she ran. Next day at school she delivered the invitations. The girls were all very happy and promised they would come.

A Race in Fairyland

By Helen Verrell. Queen Bee, Aged 11 Years, The Strawn, No. 18, Omaha, Neb. Blue Side. The fairies were getting ready for a race. Rose, the queen fairy, Thistle-down, the imp of the underground country, the blue and a baby grasshopper were all to be in the race. The fairy queen, Rose, rode on a turtle, the imp rode on a snail, the June bug rode on a very large bee and the baby grasshopper rode on his father's back. When the moon was up they all met in Bloomers' square, Fairyland, and started. The rabbits stood upon the hill with eyes as big as nickels. The fairies were to give a prize of being able to understand all things. One, two, three, ready, go! called out a hare, and away they went. First the turtle, then the snail, then the grasshopper, and then the bee getting ahead. It was a very exciting race. The snail was on his good behavior and went very fast for a snail. Now they were within one-third of a mile from the base. The turtle was very behind all the rest, when it gave a last effort and reached base a second before the snail. Then all cheered and all went to the queen's palace and each racer got a prize, in order to remember that night.



REPRODUCED BY THE COURTESY OF LIFE THE GLORIOUS FOURTH

THE MAN IN LOWER TEN The Great Mystery Story TO TEN by MARY ROBERTS RINEHART Author of "The Circular Staircase"

(Copyright, 1910, by Bobbs-Merrill Co.) CHAPTER XXII. AT THE BOARDING HOUSE. I had not been home for thirty-six hours since the morning of the preceding day. Johnson was not in sight, and I let myself in quietly with my latch key. It was almost midnight, and I had hardly settled down in the library when the bell rang. I was surprised to find Hotchkiss, much out of breath, in the vestibule. "Why, come in, Mr. Hotchkiss," I said. "I thought you were going home to go to bed." "So I was, as I was," he dropped into his usual hoarse, grating rasp and mopped his face. "And here it is almost midnight, and I'm wider awake than ever. I've seen Sullivan, Mr. Blakeley." "You have?" "You have," he said impressively. "You were following Bronson at 10 o'clock. Was that when it happened?" "Something of the sort. When I left you at the door of the restaurant, I turned and almost ran into a plain clothes man from the central office. I knew him pretty well; once or twice he has taken me with him on interesting bits of work. He knows my hobby." "You know him, too, probably. It was the man Arnold, the detective whom the state's attorney has had watching Bronson." Johnson being otherwise occupied, I had asked for Arnold myself. "Well, he stopped me at once; said he'd been on the follow's tracks since early morning and had no time for luncheon. It seems he isn't eating much these days. I at once jotted down the fact, because it argued that he was being bothered by the man with the notes." "It might point to other things," I suggested. "Indigestion, you know." Hotchkiss ignored me. "Well, Arnold had some reason for thinking that Bronson would try to give him the slip that night. He was a trail him; said that once he got to be asked me to stay around the private entrance there while he ran across the street and get something to eat. It was a fair presumption that, as he had gone there with a lady, they would dine together, and Arnold would have plenty of time to get back." "What about your own dinner?" I asked curiously. "Sir," he answered pompously, "I have given you a wrong estimate of Wilson Budd Hotchkiss if you think that a question of dinner would ever obtrude itself on him at such a time as this." He was a trail him; said that once he got to be asked me to stay around the private entrance there while he ran across the street and get something to eat. It was a fair presumption that, as he had gone there with a lady, they would dine together, and Arnold would have plenty of time to get back. "What about your own dinner?" I asked curiously. "Sir," he answered pompously, "I have given you a wrong estimate of Wilson Budd Hotchkiss if you think that a question of dinner would ever obtrude itself on him at such a time as this."

at me with the air of a man whose mental attitude is unassailable. "Well listen to him," I said. "Then I told him at length of my encounter with Bronson in the restaurant, of the bargain proposed by Mrs. Conway, and finally of McKnight's new theory. But, although he was impressed, he was far from convincing. He said that my theory was a "very vivid piece of imagination." He said drily: "but while it fits the evidence as far as it goes, it doesn't go far enough. How about the stains in lower seven, the dirt, and the wallet? Haven't we even got motive in that telegram from Bronson?" "I admitted, "but that bit of chain-"

CHAPTER XXIII. A NIGHT AT THE LAURELS. I slept most of the way to Cresson, to the disgust of the little detective. Finally he struck up an acquaintance with a kindly thin man in overalls, followed by a young school, armed with a roll of dance music and surreptitious bundles that looked like boxes of candy. From scraps of conversation I gleaned that there had been mysterious occurrences at the convent in the theft of what the reverend father called vaguely "a quantity of bread" as you hold the notes to the other door—I think you're the convent dog that don't raise any disturbance? Pardon a personal question, but do you ever walk in your sleep?" The priest looked bewildered. "I'll tell you what to do," Hotchkiss said cheerfully, leaning forward to "hook around a little yourself before you call in the police. Somnambulism is a queer thing. It's a question whether we are most ourselves sleeping or waking. Ever think of that? Live a saintly life all day, prayers and matins and all that, and the subconscious wanders like a quantity of bread at night to steal undermilk. Subliminal theft, so to speak. Better examine the roof."

was led unwillingly into the weather, Hotchkiss and I scolded behind the black. The liverman stood in the doorway and called directions to us. "You can't miss it," he finished. "Got the name over the gate, anyhow. The Laurels." The servants are still there; leastways, we don't bring them down. He even took a scrip into the rain as Hotchkiss picked up the line. "If you're going to settle the estate," he bawled, "don't forget us, Peck & Peck. A half bushel of name and a bushel of service." Hotchkiss could not drive. Born a clerk, he guided the roan much as he would drive a bad pen. And the roan splashed through mud and water, and from around that in an occasional drawn shade came narrow strips of light that merely emphasized our gloom. When Hotchkiss's umbrella turned inside out, I stopped. "I don't know where you are going," I snarled, "and I don't care. But I'm going to get under cover inside of ten seconds, while I wait to Cresson." I ducked into the next shelter, which happened to be the yawning entrance to a livery stable, and shook myself, dog fashion. Hotchkiss wiped his collar with his handkerchief. It emerged gleaming and unwhitened. "I'll do as well as any place," he said, raising his voice above the rattle of the rain. "Got to make a beginning." I sat down on the usual chair without a back, just inside the door, and stared out at the darkening street. The whole affair had an air of unreality. Now that I was there, I doubted the necessity, or the value of the journey. I was wet and uncomfortable. Around me, with Cresson as a center, stretched an irregular circumference of mountains, with possibly a ten-mile radius, and in it I was to find a residence of a woman whose first name I did not know, and a man who, so far, had been a mystery to me. Hotchkiss had penetrated the streaming interior of the cave, and now his voice, punctuated by the occasional thud of horses' hoofs, came to me. "Something light will do," he was saying. "A runabout, perhaps." He came straggling up the hill, followed by a thin man in overalls. Mr. Peck said he began—"This is Mr. Peck of Peck & Peck—was the place we are looking for is about seven miles from the town. It's clearing, isn't it?" "It is not," I returned savagely. "And I don't want a runabout. Mr. Peck, what you require is a horse-drawn delivery suit, I suppose they aren't a machine to be had?" Mr. Peck gazed at me in silence; machine to him meant other things than motors. "Automobile," I supplemented. His face cleared. "None but private affairs. I can give you a good buggy with a rubber apron. Make it the doctor's horse in it." I am still uncertain as to whether the raw-boned roan we took out that night over the mountains was the doctor's horse or not. If it was, the doctor may be a good doctor, but he doesn't know anything about a horse. And furthermore, I hope he didn't need the beast that miserable evening. While they harnessed the horse, Hotchkiss told me what he had learned. "Six Curtises in the town and vicinity." "Sort of family name around here. One of them is telegraph operator at the station. Person we are looking for is—was a worthy widow with a brother named Sullivan? Both supposed to have been killed on the Flier." "Her brother," I repeated stupidly. "You see," Hotchkiss went on, "three people, in one party, took the train here last night. Miss West, Mr. Curtis and Sullivan. The two women had the dressing room. Sullivan had lower seven. What we want to find out is just who those people were, where they came from, if Bronson knew them, and how Miss West became entangled with them. She may have married Sullivan, for one thing." I fell into gloom after that. The roan

(To Be Continued.)