

HAT spring is in the air and the Busy Bees feel it is quite evident upon glancing through the Busy Bee letters for the week.

The Busy Bee editor is highly gratified at the interest taken in the bird stories. The contest for a special prize offered to the one who sent in the best story on "The Return of the Birds" brought a deluge of splendid stories, so that it was most difficult to pick the winner.

Soon we will have another special prize contest, but in the meantime, Busy Bees, begin to think about a new king and queen, as a new reign begins the first of May.

Busy Bees are also reminded that letters written in pencil are not acceptable for publication on this page. They must be written in ink and on one side of the paper only.

Nellie Harsh of the Blue side, who sent in one of the neatest letters we have received in a long while, won first prize this week. Honorable mention was awarded Lucile Griffin of the Blue side and Glen Thomas of the Red side.

Little Stories by Little Folk

(Prize Story.)

Trip to the Mountains.

By Nellie Harsh, Aged 11 Years, Lowell, Neb. Blue Side.

Last summer my grandma took me to Boulder with her. Boulder is about thirty miles from Denver, and there are mountains on the west side of it. I am going to tell you of the time when we went up to Royal Arch.

Grandma and I waited for my aunt, cousins and some other girls on the chautauqua grounds. We started about 10 o'clock. We had a nice trip, and saw many pretty flowers and rocks on the way. Some of the ferns were about two feet tall, and there were two springs, from which we got nice cool water.

We ate dinner just a little way from the arch. We roasted venison and had them with our lunch. We also boiled coffee.

When we were about half through, a storm came up. We took our things and got into a cave called the Witches' cave. When we were through eating dinner it had cleared up.

We then went to Royal Arch, which is two rocks bent over, touching each other, forming a large arch. We got on top of some large rocks inside of the arch and looked down. I could see Boulder, and off in the distance I could see Denver. It was a beautiful sight. My cousin took our pictures, and after a while we went home.

This was one of the best times I ever had. I wish all of the Busy Bees could see the beautiful things I did last summer. I saw some birds last summer called mountain bluebirds. I think they were the prettiest birds I ever saw. I have seen robins, meadow larks and turtle doves this spring. It seems good to have the birds back. I would like to have some of the Busy Bee girls write to me.

(Special Prize Story.)

The Return of the Birds.

By Virginia Campbell, 35 North Davis, Helena, Mont. Red Side.

In Montana, like in most other states, the robin is the first bird to return. When we see the first robin we know spring has come. The bluebirds come next, and such beautiful bluebirds that we have in Montana. They are not like the bluejays I remember seeing in Nebraska, but are the most beautiful bluebirds that you can imagine. The little wrens return early in the spring and begin looking around for good places to build their summer homes, as they know Montana is a good place for summer homes. The meadow larks return about the same time as the robins and begin to give concerts right away. The large black and white magpies are here the year around, and they are very noisy. When the weather gets real warm, the wild canaries return. I know all the Busy Bees would like to watch them flit from tree to tree. The sparrows never leave, so we have them always. We have owls, crows, and sometimes we see an eagle when we are up in the mountains. Last summer I saw one. I must not forget to mention the sand cranes, pheasants and plover and woodpeckers. I guess my story is getting long. I do not want to take all the room on the page.

(Honorable Mention.)

A Friend of Birds.

By Glen Thomas, Aged 10 Years, Clark, Neb. Red Side.

There are many signs of spring. Some of the things are the trees and grass yet green, but best of all the birds come back. Some of the birds that I have seen are the meadow lark, black birds, robins and turtle doves. We have a bird chart at school on which we write the name of the first birds we see. My favorite birds are the robins and black birds. There are many black birds that sing in our grove. There are only a few birds that stay here all winter, but I'm glad that some of them stay with us at all. I think the birds are very kind to feed for us, and I wish to reward them by feeding them and hope the other Busy Bees will do the same.

(Honorable Mention.)

Signs of Spring.

By Lucile Griffin, Aged 11 Years, St. Paul, Neb. Blue Side.

I have seen quite a few different kinds of birds this spring. The robin, the woodpecker, the black bird, the meadow lark and the sparrow. This morning before I went to school I was looking out of the window and all at once I heard a noise and I looked out of the window and there were about 1,000 black birds in front of our house in the trees. They stayed there about half an hour and really flew away. Every year there is a little when birds fly out in our neighborhood, but it has not come yet. Busy Bees will do the same. Well, I will have to close for the south. Well, I will have to close so that I can feed our feathered friends.

(Honorable Mention.)

Life in China.

By Emily Nightingale, Ashland, Neb. Aged 11 Years, Red Side.

China is one of the oldest nations and has undergone many dramatic changes in the summer of 1901, about ninety missionaries were murdered and their stations burned. It begins to get hot in May and they have about four months of real hot weather. The climate is such that people haven't the physical strength and energy that we have here in the United States. In Shanghai people can have access to as good a market as people in southern California. Oranges are sold for \$5. They live mostly in one room. Their tables are only six inches

Stories of Nebraska History

By A. E. SEELDON.

(By special permission of the author, The Bee will publish chapters from the History of Nebraska, by A. E. Sheldon, from week to week.)

Nebraska's Great Seal

The great seal of a state is an iron or steel instrument which stamps an imprint upon important papers and documents. The imprint is itself often called the great seal of the state, for it is the sign of the state's power and authority.

The first great seal of Nebraska was made when Nebraska was a territory. Its imprint is found only on the old documents.

When Nebraska became a state in 1867 the legislature passed an act providing for the making of a new great seal. The act prescribed the design for the new great seal as follows:

"The eastern part of the circle to be represented by a steamboat ascending the Missouri river; the mechanic arts to be represented by a smith with a hammer and anvil; in the foreground, agriculture to be represented by a settler's cabin, sheaves of wheat, and stalks of growing corn; in the background a train of cars heading toward the Rocky mountains, and on the extreme west,



GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

The Rocky mountains to be plainly in view; around the top of this circle, to be in capital letters, the motto, 'Equality Before the Law,' and the circle to be surrounded with the words, 'Great Seal of the State of Nebraska, March 1, 1867.'"

The great seal was made as ordered and is now kept by the secretary of state in the capitol at Lincoln.

The Baltimore oriole. We are going again when there are more birds.

I have written four or five times, but have been unsuccessful. But I will try and get a prize this time.

The Coming of the Birds.

By Grace L. Moore, Aged 13 Years, Silver Creek, Neb. Blue Side.

It is springtime again and mother earth has awakened from her long winter's nap. She hears the gentle patter of raindrops as they call the little violets from their nap.

Mother earth is happy once again as she listens to the chirp and the merry songs of the little birds as they welcome the springtime. Long ago she went to take a nap, and then all the happy little birds flew away to the sunny south. The south is not their real home, and they are not as happy there as they are here. Their home is in the north, where they live all the spring and summer, raising their families. Nothing but food or cold could persuade the birds to leave their beautiful home in the north. They prove themselves very faithful little neighbors by returning to the same place every year. A few of the birds even return to the same tree they built their nests in the season before. Since they have returned we may watch them and study their habits and see how they get so much enjoyment out of life.

I wonder how many of us Busy Bees know every species of bird by the sight and sound of them.

Almost all bird lovers know them well by their songs, forms and their color. Every kind of bird has a different language and a different song. The catbird and the mockingbird are the only birds that have an excellent musical education.

Some of the birds learn lessons from others. They practice their singing both early and late without having to be told to, and they enjoy their practicing.

Let's all make friends with the birds and listen to their beautiful song. In the early morning when the first faint streaks of light are seen in the sky is the best time to listen to them, for then there is no labor to mar their sweet music. Then out of the distance comes the murmur and singing of a thousand little songsters; then we listen and know that they are singing songs of praise to Him above, who gave them life and cares for them all.

Snookums.

By Caroline Dodge, Aged 5 Years, Fremont, Neb. Blue Side.

I have a kitten named Snookums. He is a very funny kitten. I have some little yellow cotton chickens I got in my Easter basket last year. Kitty likes to play with them. He takes one in his mouth, and when I try to take it away from him, he growls and won't let me, and looks so funny and runs away from me. He must think the chickens are alive the way he plays with them. He likes to sleep on top of the hot water pipes in the basement. He likes to sleep in queer places. When the ironing board is down, he sleeps on it, and sometimes in the washing machine, and all kinds of places where a cat should not sleep. I have no small brothers or sisters, and he makes a nice playmate.

Loses Two Ducks.

By Flossie Holloway, Colon, Neb., Aged 12 Years, Blue Side.

Last winter one day it was awful cold and we had to take care of the chickens and ducks in the chicken house all day. The weather wouldn't let us out so one of our ducks got sick and died. The next day another one got sick, but I was in time and thought I would save it, so I took it in the house. As I thought it might be sold, too, but it lived for about two hours and died, so I had to bury both of the ducks. I hope you will like my letter, as I will write another.

time. I would like to have one of the Busy Bees write a letter to me. This is a true story.

A Disobedient Girl.

By Vera Frances Bradley, Aged 13 Years, 121 1/2 North Street, Omaha, Blue Side.

"I will, I shall go skating," screamed Mabel Langdon, a very stubborn and disobedient child, putting on her overalls in a great hurry. Mrs. Langdon stood on the steps trying to persuade her 8-year-old daughter not to go.

"Now, mind me, Mabel," she said with a firm but gentle tone, "you will break through the ice and get drowned."

"Well, Stuart is going. I don't see why I can't go," said Mabel.

"Stuart is older than you are, and besides, he has been there before," said Mrs. Langdon.

"Just because Stuart is older, he gets to go everywhere," retorted Mabel.

At this remark Mrs. Langdon left the room and went into another room to get something. Taking this as an opportunity, Mabel slipped out. When she arrived at the lake she didn't know how to get on, so she went further over and joined the boys.

When she had watched the boys for a few minutes, she decided she would get on. She found it was fun, so she went far out into the middle, where the ice was not so solid. Before anyone could reach her, she fell in.

Stuart saw her and threw a strap to her. The other boys joined, and they pulled her on dry land.

Mabel was sick all that winter with pneumonia, and she was very sorry that she disobeyed her mother. She was taught a lesson, and never after that did she do a thing her mother told her not to.

Robins Get Berries.

By Greely Grottscheschen, Aged 11 Years, Schuyler, Neb. Red Side.

I will stop to write a story to the page. I will write about robins. One time last week I was sitting at the window. We have a hickberry tree south of our house. I was looking out of the window when I said, "See there are a pair of robins." Pretty soon there came another and another and another. Soon the whole tree was full of them. They would come and get hickberries from the tree. Some were smart. They would go on the ground and pick them up as the other ones knocked them down. After a while they all flew away. Then the snow fell and it fell faster and faster till it came down pretty thick. Then the robins were all gone. The next day was Sunday. We went to our neighbor's. There they were flying around. Soon after they came back again and sat in our orchard, singing merrily. They are here yet. I hope all you juniors will like and be kind to birds.

Our Meadow Lark.

By Laura Newhall, Aged 13 Years, Unadilla, Neb. Red Side.

I thought I would write and tell you of our meadow lark.

One winter day, when it was storming, my sisters and I did not get to go to school, and as we were doing up our morning's chores my father saw a meadow lark, and then my sister Louise saw it around the cow barn. It was so cold that it could not fly, and our big dog wanted to get it, but she would not let him. Then Louise took the bird to the house. It flew about the house. It was not afraid of us. When the bird was warm we thought that we had better let him out, and now every morning the meadow lark comes to our place after its breakfast. It is very tame. We must all be kind to the birds.

Had the Measles.

By Marcelle Wenger, Aged 13 Years, Columbus, Neb. Blue Side.

My two sisters and I had the measles. I will tell you about it. For two days I stayed out of school because I was sick.

Building Notes

By BAYOLL NE TRELE.

Old Daddy Woodpecker

Won't have enough to do When he arrives in Omaha And finds a hole bored thro' A hollow trunk of cottonwood With real chips inside - A house prepared and ready The precious eggs to hide. I'm afraid he'll take to loafin'. Or, that hein' against his rule, Perhaps he'll try to get a job At-well, say teachin' school.

When brisk little Jenny Wren

And her beloved spouse Arrive some April morning and Start to hun a house, I can almost hear that thrifty wife Elucidate, Du tell! When who spies, suspended from a tree, That house of a coonskin shell, And the fact that'll surely make her Take possession then and there Is, tho' pussy cats can climb a tree They can't navigate the air. Says Mrs. Purple Martin When she comes to settle down And take a summer residence In our mid-western town;

I do not care for the rustic type

Of apartment house--dear, no! They may suit those Ribbes, the Bluebirds, and Woodpeckers, very well though. But as far as the Martins are concerned, They may take in their signs; For a house to suit our cultured taste Must be cut on tailored lines.

Mr. and Mrs. Bluebird

Like all birds of good sense Had come to the town of Omaha To select a residence. Their honeymoon was not yet over-- Was yet in its last quarter-- And as they lingered in the park To stretch it out some, "partner" And when those bird houses they espied About them, here and there, They were completely mystified. A most dumfounded pair. Then suddenly Mr. Bluebird Exclaimed, "Why, yes, dear me! Don't you remember we ran across One day, an Omaha Bee?-- And that did truly inform us-- Said this about minded grooves-- That Omaha had this season A marvelous building boom."

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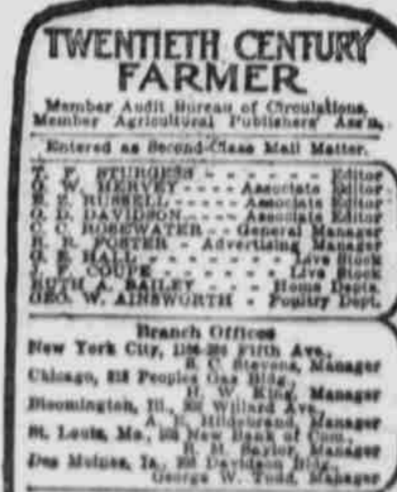
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