

DORIS.

By SARAH DOUDNEY.

DORIS, my sweet, do you sit and dream
Of the purple hills and the rippling stream?
Do you think of the old house, lone and grey,
In the flowery vale that is far away?
Gentle and kind are the voices near,
But you long for tones that you never hear.

Doris, my child, it is hard to know
Why those loved best are the first to go;
I watch your face as you faintly sigh
For the dear old friends, and the days gone by.
But the light will shine, and the shadows wane,
And the heart return to its joy again.

There is a blessedness, higher still,
In the lowly mind and the patient will;
But the years will pass, with their silent feet,
Ere you win that blessing, Doris, my sweet.
Your heart is a girl's heart, young and strong,
And the night of weeping shall end in song.



HOW TO HELP THE POOR BIRDS IN THE WINTER.

By THE REV. AUGUSTUS JESSOPP, D.D.

“God made all the creatures, and gave them
our love and our fear,
To give sign we and they are His children,
one family here.”



HOW are your birds doing?
Ours are all dying. It's
piteous! Dolly brought
in six dead blackbirds this morning, and we've
lost almost as many robins this week!" The
voice that read out these words from the open
letter grew tremulous, and stopped. I looked
up, and saw a humid glitter in the eyes that
quickly drooped as I raised my own.

"Yes," she said, "I daresay I am very
foolish. Not one falls to the ground without
. . . . I know all about that. But so
many, so dreadfully many, do fall—so many
more than need fall. It can't be His fault.
It must be ours. And it is so bad for the
poor people to grow callous, and see it all and
never feel a mite of pity.

Ten minutes later we looked out, and there
upon the bare branches of the little lime-tree
that we planted a couple of years ago we
counted thirty-two little fluffy-looking birds

waiting for their breakfast. Their supper was
all gone—every grain of it. What next?

Our winter this year has been a very hard one.
The learned tell us it is going to last perhaps
for weeks longer. We pile up the logs; we
say, "Aha! I am warm; I have seen the
fire." But the poor birds are perishing, and
thousands of households go on emptying
their refuse into the sewers; and wilful waste
brings woeful want, not to the sons of men, it
may be, but surely all too much for the little
feathered fowl that seem to be made to de-
pend upon us, and are given to us to care for
just a little—given to us, as I think, to help us
to watch with gentle eyes, and to cherish with
something like sympathetic regard, the little
creatures that we cannot use for food or sus-
tenance.

"The sparrow hath found her a nest, even
thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and
my God," sings the Hebrew psalmist. I sus-
pect the Israelite was tolerant of the little
birds. When the quails fell round about his
habitations he ate them, it is true; but in the
first place they were quails, which are good to
eat; in the second place they fell, and he had
only to pick them up and put them in the
pot; in the third place, he soon got tired of
them, as if he were ashamed of himself. I
find no indication of the Israelite being hard
upon the birds. On the contrary, I find many
indications which go to show that he was
something more than tolerant of the sparrows
and the swallows. So I think it was with the
Greeks, as you know, you young men and
maidens, fresh from your visit to the Greek
play at Cambridge.

Young Ion stands watching the dawn as it
spreads its glory over Parnassus' crags. The
birds are astir, the air is vocal with their
morning greetings. He will bear with them
up to a certain point, but you must draw the
line somewhere. Therefore he sings:—

"The flocks of the feathered fowl,
When they sully the holy shrines,
I put them to flight with mine arrows."

Only when they are up to mischief, observe
(*αὐ βλάπτουσιν*). As the sun rises higher and
higher the birds come on in ever-growing
numbers, and Ion watches, and sings again:—

"The creatures that fly are astir,
They are leaving their nests on Parnassus;
I give you your warning—light not on the
frieze

Nor intrude on the shrine that is furnished
with gold.

Away! Again with my bow will I reach
thee,

O herald of Zeus, who surpassest
The might of all birds with thy talons!
Lo! another, a swan, towards the altar
Is swooping. Nay! Elsewhither thou
Shalt carry thy foot all gaudy with crimson,
Thy song, that accords with the lyre of
Phœbus,

Shall not win thee escape from my shafts.
Fly away with thy wings!
To the marsh-pools of Delos betake thee!
Blood-dabbled, I trow, if thou heed not,
Shall thy rapture of sweet song be.
Away! away! what new bird now?
Would he fain 'neath the sculptured cornice
there

Set the cradling nest for the brood?
The twang of my bow shall prevent thee.
Avaunt! By the eddying pools of Alphæus
Go beget thee thy little ones.
Or away to the Isthmian glades.
But see that no damage may come
To the shrines and the temple of Phœbus."

Young Ion was for letting the birds alone if
they wrought no harm to his temple. I think
he would have blushed to let them starve.
Did he not care for the sacred pigeons?

We of the nineteenth century are very self-
complacent. We get up our societies for the
prevention of cruelty to animals; but it seems
to me that by "animals" we mean only quad-
rupeds, and not many of them. Yet we let
the birds drop dead of hunger under our very
windows, and we slaughter without stint or
mercy any feathered thing that we can reach,

and the rarer it is the more fiercely we pursue it to its extinction. And it's all in the interest of science. Of course it is! Verily, Mistress Science has much to answer for. It's all for science that young prigs on the sly take a slice off a dog's brain and let him run; breed guinea-pigs till they inherit the faculty of feeding on their own toes; give a criminal a touch of an electric machine to see how long he takes to die; or treat everything that flies as no better than a specimen to set up on wire legs in a glass case, or to pin down to a cork, and boast, "We've got him at last!"

I doubt whether we are as kind to the dumb creatures as the ancients were. Why, Catullus, ages before John Skelton was born, was painfully jealous of his sweetheart's sparrow. She fondled him so! He kissed her so! And when he died she was past consoling. Think of an honourable member of the Lower House taking his seat at St. Stephen's with a quail perched on his head! Yet they did such things at Athens. As for the owls, they were sacred, and we read that—

"Socrates or Plato—where's the odds?—
Once taught a jay to supplicate the gods,
And made a Polly-theist of a parrot."

There was a time in merry England when the purest joy of a country life—the purest and most unalloyed joy—came to men from the companionship of birds. "The morning star of song" can never forget them. They are with him in his dreams, they wake him from his morning slumbers, he knows their every note, their symphonies are ravishing. England was the paradise of birds in those days, and they lacked for nothing then, and no man grudged them.

"The fowles smale
That eaten as that nature would encline,
As worm or thing of which I tell no tale;
And foules that liveth by seed sat on the
grene,
And that so many that wonder was to sene."

Where have they all gone? If not all gone, they are all going—starved out in the land of plenty.

I live in an ugly country. It is vain to deny the soft impeachment. The land is rich and fruitful; for a long time back it has been well farmed. That sounds well to the uninitiated; but to those who are not led astray by mere sound it means ugliness. Farmers hate trees and hedges and gorse and copses, and everything that gives shelter to the birds. The trees are growing fewer and fewer every year; the hedges are not allowed to grow more than two feet high; the thickets are improved off the face of the earth; and the feathered fowl have a very, very bad time of it. Even ten years ago there were owls that built in the old pollards centuries old. Now the very pollards are almost gone, cut down from mere wantonness, though they rarely pay the expense of felling them.

Until a certain country parson came to this parish—extending over 3,500 acres—some ten years ago, not a single plantation had been planted in the memory of man. A birdless land seemed to us a dreary place. Would they come back if we tempted them? At any rate we would try. There was always the rectory garden, and there was also some ten or twelve acres of glebe. First and foremost we set apart about a quarter of an acre where we were determined to have a plantation. You can never hope to attract the birds if you do not give them trees to build in. Our plantation, which we call "the Forest," covers, as I have said, a quarter of an acre. That had to be dug. We had it dug two spades deep, and a couple of labourers who were out of work were glad of the job, and got it done in no time. Of course my neighbours protested loudly that it was a wasteful proceeding.

"You'd no call to do that, sir," said one who had never planted a gooseberry-bush in his life; "you ain't no need to do more than make a bit of a hole and put 'em in by the heels."

That remark was not only an ignorant remark—it indicated a condition of crass brutality on the part of the speaker. For, of all the creatures that live, trees are the most endowed with the virtue of gratitude. Treat them kindly, deal by them fairly, be reasonable with them, and just, and they'll reward you with infinite smiles, and radiate joy upon you that will appeal to every sense. If you are mean and cruel to them they'll sulk and frown, and pine and perish. Planting can never be done to any purpose by a niggard.

The next sapient remark that was made to my disparagement was, "You're a-putting 'em in too small, master! You'll never see them little 'uns grow as tall as you are if you live to ninety." Ignorance again; and this time ignorance the result of a stupid want of observation. My critics wanted me to put in trees five or six feet high at the least. That is a delusion. If you want to train up a child in the way it should go, you must begin in the nursery. If you want to see trees grow tall and straight, and at a speed that will startle you, you must put them where you mean them to remain before they are two feet high. Never mind what the nurserymen tell you. If I were a nurseryman, I should strongly advise my customers to provide themselves with "good established plants," such as I wanted to get rid of; and if they were six feet high and ten years old I should be delighted to see them go from me. But they would not grow for the next five years an inch per annum. Nevertheless, there are exceptions to this. You may plant yews almost at any age, and the ilex will bear transplanting without being checked when it is even six or seven feet high. A sycamore, too, you may play all sorts of tricks with; but the lordly oak or the conifers resent being moved when they are of opinion that they have come to years of discretion.

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What did we plant in our forest? We planted larch by the hundred, a dozen or two of oaks, a few sycamores, and the rest were Scotch firs, spruce firs, and silvers—not a fancy tree among them; and we planted them a yard apart. The whole expense from first to last, including the cost of the trees, did not amount to £3.

"But you lost the rent of the land!" Well, that was a very serious consideration. It would have actually amounted to 6s. a year. Think of that! But we did not lose even that. To begin with, the first year we planted potatoes between the trees, and we got a large crop, and the young trees were all the better for the loosening of the soil about their roots in the autumn; and two years later the thinning process began, and it has gone on every year since, and we have had abundance of the very best faggots for kindling; and next, we got stakes for the garden; and then we found ourselves with ornamental fencing stuff; and now at last we are cutting down larches of twenty feet high, and still the thinning process goes on year by year. And as to the profit, we calculate that we have made at least five times as much out of our trees as the rent would have brought us during the ten years they have been standing there. So you see that, as we never thought of planting for profit, all we have made that can be estimated in terms of £ s. d. must be set down as clear gain.

Meanwhile we had been covering the house with creepers, and we had been planting our little garden with evergreens—Portugal laurels, mahonia, aucuba, holly, and the like—none of them costing more than a few pence; and under the beeches in the corner yonder, where

folks told us nothing would grow, there has sprung up a dense jungle, which we call "the Wilderness," teeming with life—millions of tiny creeping things that live their little day only to serve as food for their betters. Then there are the thick privet hedges and an old stump or two heavy with ivy, and across the road another little patch of young firs and larches—which we call "the Park"—and a hedge that is never cut, but allowed to grow all wild and scraggy. Last, not least, a pistol-shot off there's the lake!—say forty feet long by twenty feet wide, and of unknown depth, where there are two feeble willows up to their middle in water, and a host of aquatic plants struggling for existence—rushes and ranunculus and other trumpery. And here the warblers may be seen and heard; and this last season a pair of moorhens came and hatched their brood, though how they managed it I cannot explain. My neighbours call our lake a pit; but it's only their vulgar way of putting it.

Lastly, in this domain no cats are allowed. We keep them out with wire-netting; and if by chance one of those noxious animals does intrude, that cat has a bad quarter of an hour, and the dogs rejoice in her flight, which is always precipitate, and usually ignominious.

Thus it has come to pass that in our little pleasance, which altogether may be about as large as Berkeley Square, there has gradually grown up a refuge and home for the little birds. The nests are many, the visitors more. We have our reward. In the summer they rob us audaciously. The sparrows, I admit, are really too bad: they have been known to grub up a whole row of peas just beginning to show themselves above the ground. Once a flight of jays, from miles off, came and attacked the broad-beans—most spitefully, most wantonly. Magpies have been known to spoil a cherry-tree. As for the gooseberries, they are only grown for the thrushes, and the havoc among the strawberries is dreadful. And yet we have enough and to spare for ourselves, though the gardener insists on netting some few currant-bushes for the look of the thing. It is rather hard when the finches nip off the early primroses and the precious spring flowers, and I call it right down wicked when the thrushes bite me viciously for delivering them from the nets that are meant to protect some of the strawberry-beds; but when they take their stand in the gloaming in the tops of the beeches, and lift up their voices towards heaven as the sun goes down, or when some astonishing little wren actually wakes me in the morning with his carol, or cock-robin comes and perches upon a stake within a yard of me, and sings his defiance at me and all mankind, I forgive them all—I forgive them everything, and I only lament that they are so few. Two years ago, for one whole day a nightingale came to visit us, and sang for hours and hours in one of our young saplings within twenty yards of the library window. Alas! It was a joy too great to last. Next morning he had gone, and he has never come back. We live in hope, but we must be patient.

It is quite undeniable, and evident to the meanest capacity, that in a few years we have succeeded in luring the birds of the air to come and take up their abode with us. Anybody may easily do that; all that they ask for is shelter, some privacy, and that modicum of animal food which is sure to be forthcoming in liberal measure wherever there is a young plantation growing up and something in the shape of thickets and shrubberies. The Temple Gardens would swarm with all kinds of strange birds in five years if they had only some broad belts of evergreen shrubs, and here and there a jungle of herbaceous plants. As it is, they tell me that that noble expense is given over to sparrows, dingy, dirty, and disreputable.

But it is base and despicable to lure the feathered songsters to take refuge with you in

the summer, when they are all hard at work for you, gobbling up the grubs and keeping down the blight and burrowing for the wire-worms, and then to leave them to starve when they have perforce no work to do, and are, sorely against their wills, swelling the ranks of the unemployed. I do not mean to pretend that there are not tramps and idlers among them. I am afraid that the sparrows are really a lazy, pilfering lot; moreover, they are poachers and burglars—they think nothing of turning out the swallows from their nests and taking forcible possession; and they are slovenly and untidy, and they live in the most squalid houses. But you cannot hope to get rid of the *residuum* in any large community; and if we all got no more and no less than we deserve, some of us would be in evil case, I ween!

It comes to this, that you positively must keep your birds alive in the winter, during such days and weeks as they cannot get work to do. All through December the birds have been dying in some districts by thousands. It is heartrending to hear of their poor little corpses being picked up—mere ragged tufts of tumbled feathers, with the breastbone sharp as a knife, and the crop utterly empty. Little Billy Barlow told us that he picked up seven dead robins "all of a heap like" at the foot of one of Farmer Goodman's big wheatstacks; and Billy had a theory on the subject. His view was that the robins could always get enough to eat if they tried—"They're a artful bird is a robin," he remarked, with some severity in his tone. "But folks say, and I don't disbelieve 'em, that when the snow lasts, as this do, and all the sand and grit is covered ever so deep, they robins can't get at the little stones!" I objected that robins do not eat stones, large or small. But Billy is a theoretical naturalist and a philosopher, and he was by no means abashed. "No!" he answered, with a look which said, "You don't know everything, for all you're the parson"—"No, but they puts the little stones in their gizzards and they grind their wittles with 'em! And if they can't get the stones, their wittles kind o' chokes 'em!" I hope that boy will not take to vivisection one day in his thirst for knowledge!

Yes, you must feed your birds, and the doing your plain duty by them will not hurt you. You must feed them, and you must give them many meals a day. And this is how you must do it.

When the frost is severe, and the ground is hard, and the snow is deep, you must provide yourself with a vessel of some capacity,

and you must cut up a big loaf into blocks, and you must sprinkle it with barleymeal, as Mr. Johnnie Thrush recommended in one of the newspapers; and you must pour boiling water upon it, and stir it all up till it assumes the consistency of a pudding, and you must add a handful of hempseed. Then you must have a space of two or three yards square swept of the snow, and you must spoon out the delicious mixture, and then you will see what you will see. Moreover, it being after your breakfast, you must gather up all the scraps from all the plates—sometimes a blessed bone, for the dogs don't want *all* the bones; sometimes a slice of bacon, which, if you left it in the dish, would only go to the swill tub and tempt the pig to cannibalism; sometimes a bit of gristle or fat, or a most exquisite morsel of butter which has been left. Then you may cautiously look out of the window and watch. Before many hours you will see a hundred birds all down at once, and the queer ways of the creatures you will find infinitely diverting. The insolence of those starlings, and their voracity, will amuse you; the slyness of the blackbirds, the tender modesty and timidity of the thrushes, the joy of the hedge-sparrows; and the tricks they all play one another—each bird having a way of its own—and the fighting and the secretiveness, and the jealousy and the spite, baffle all description. After a day or two you will find it advisable to have two feeding-grounds at least, lest the starlings get all and the rest get nothing. Sometimes there will be a scoundrel of a jackdaw who will pounce down, before you know where you are, and fly away with the bone or the bacon. And sometimes—but this is a great secret—you will see Mrs. Moorhen or Miss Moorhen, whose home is the lake, or some hiding-place not very far off, make her appearance just to see what there is, and, if possible, to get a taste of the good things provided. All this has to be repeated about luncheon-time, and once again just as the sun is setting. This last meal is a very important one, for starlings go to bed early and get up late; and when they have gone to bed and before they get up in the morning, then is the time for the thrushes and the blackbirds, who sit up late and rise early.

If you are wise enough to be stirring at seven o'clock in the morning—and in the country nobody thinks any the worse of you for doing that—you will see sometimes eight or ten blackbirds in the twilight, half an hour before sunrise, pecking about under your bedroom window, and evidently expecting their

breakfast. Very soon they get it, and if they don't feel very righteous for their early rising, and regard the starlings as mere sluggards who get more than their due, I am very much mistaken.

But you really must not be content with the general meals; you must cut thick rounds of bread and *put them in the bacon-dish* and leave them there to sop up the gravy, and you must pretend that you cannot possibly finish that bit of plum-cake—oh, to see the way in which those birds will pick out the plums!—and you must set up three wands some six feet high, and tie them together at the top, and you must hang up a cocoanut cut in half, for the tits; and you must, now and then, take a big bone and fasten it in a bush or a tree where the dogs can't get at it; and you must manage to find a handful or two of offal wheat, or you must go craftily into the stable where there are some bruised oats in the mangers; and, in fact, you must go to the length of begging or borrowing, and almost doing the other thing. But you are a very heartless and wicked man, woman, or child, if you let your little birds die of starvation, even though it cost you in the course of a hard winter as much as 5s. or 6s. of extraordinary expenditure.

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Gentle reader—and I write for gentle readers—do not set me down as a frivolous trifler because I give some crumbs to the starving birds. Do not join with the Rev. Placid Bland, who is reported to have whispered in his dulcet tones the other day, "If that man had a parish like mine he would have found something better to do than chop up bread for the jackdaws!" Well, well! It's better not to brag of all we *have* to do. Better do what we can, and when we have done all, say, "We are unprofitable servants!" We of the inferior clergy have not our tens of thousands to overwhelm us—I have not one thousand; but it takes a week to visit them from house to house, and it takes more than forty-two miles of walking before I can call upon them all. If I know every man, woman, and child among them, and call them all by their Christian names, it's no more than I ought to be able to do. If I do *not humbly* try to help them in their hour of need, God pardon me—I think He will; I think He would send me His gifts of grief and shame if He found me sitting idle and caring only for the birds. But I remember Him who fed those thousands in the wilderness, and, when they had all eaten and were filled, said tenderly, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

SERVIETTES, AND HOW TO FOLD THEM.

SERVIETTES are very frequently embroidered with crests, monograms, or initials. When this is the case, they should only be folded in such ways as will allow the embroidery to be seen. I have seen them worked (with ingrain cottons) in red, blue, buff, and white. White is perhaps the best, as it looks well with anything, and lasts as long as the serviette. To

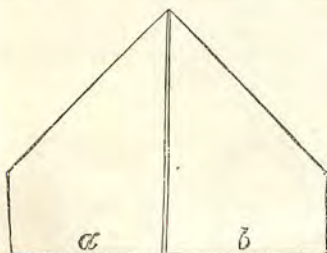


FIG. 1.

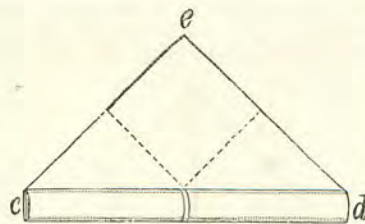


FIG. 2.

fold well, the serviettes must have a little starch in them. Some people like a variety of patterns on the table at the same time; but it is in much better taste to have all the table-napkins folded alike. The following are some of the favourite patterns. I begin with the most simple:—

The Collegiate (Fig. 3).—Fold the serviette in three parts longways; then turn down the

two ends to form Fig. 1; then roll up *a* and *b* from underneath to form Fig. 2; then turn the corners *c d* to *e* at the dotted lines; then turn the serviette over, and you will have Fig. 3. The bread is put under *f*.

The Neapolitan (Fig. 4) is folded thus:—Fold the napkin in three; then turn the top fold back on itself; turn the serviette over, placing it so that the four thicknesses are from you, and the two thicknesses near you; then fold as in Figs. 1 and 2, and turn over to find Fig. 4.

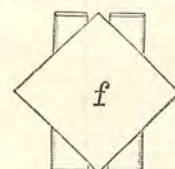


FIG. 3.

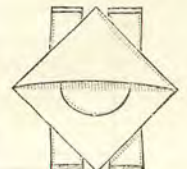


FIG. 4.