



WEDDED.

GOVERN YOUR TEMPER.—First study to acquire a composure of mind and body. Avoid agitation of one or the other, especially before and after meals, and whilst the process of digestion is going on. To this end, govern your temper, endeavour to look at the bright side of things, keep down as much as possible the unruly passions, discard envy, hatred, and malice, and lay your head upon your pillow in charity with all mankind. Let not your wants outrun your means. Whatever difficulties you have to encounter, be not perplexed, but only think what is right to do in the sight of Him who seeth all things, and bear without pining the results. When your meals are solitary, let your thoughts be cheerful; when they are social, which is better, avoid disputes, or serious arguments, or unpleasant topics. "Unquiet meals," says Shakspeare, "make ill digestions;" and the contrary is produced by easy conversation, a pleasant project, welcome news, or a lively companion. I advise wives not to entertain their husbands with domestic grievances about children or servants, nor to ask for money, nor propound unreasonable or provoking questions; and advise husbands to keep the cares and vexations of the world to themselves, but to be communicative of whatever is comfortable, cheerful, and amusing. Self-government is the best step to health and happiness.—Walker.



READING HER OWN PRINTED PHILOSOPHY.



MATERNITY.

HOW TO LOOK OLD AND UGLY.—We are doing a great deal towards making ourselves look old and ugly when we give way to worry and fretfulness.—Ruskin.

BEWARE OF PRIDE.—There is no passion which steals into the heart more imperceptibly and covers itself under more disguises than pride.—Addison.



DISCONTENT.



HAPPY OLD AGE.

MORAL COURAGE.—Have the courage to speak your mind when it is necessary to do so, and to hold your tongue when it is better that you should be silent. Have the courage to speak to a poor friend in a threadbare coat, even in the street, and when a rich one is nigh; the effort is less than many take it to be, and the act is worthy a king. Have the courage to adhere to a first resolution when you cannot change it for a better, and to abandon it at the eleventh hour upon conviction. Have the courage to say you hate the "polka," and prefer an English song to an Italian "piece of music," if such be your taste. Have the courage to wear your old garments till you can pay for new ones. Have the courage to prefer propriety to fashion—one is but the abuse of the other.—W. Jones, F.S.A.



A MISERABLE END.

A "FAIRY" STORY.

By Mrs. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Wild Nature Won by Kindness."

I AM often envied as the possessor of one of the most charming bird pets it is possible to imagine.

My "Fairy" is a tiny whitethroat, a sleek, delicate grey-coloured bird with a pure white breast, of lovely form, swift in flight, and of most engaging disposition.

I met with it in this wise. A plaintive little cheeping sound attracted my attention one morning at breakfast-time, and looking outside the window, I saw a tiny half-fledged bird sitting on the ground, looking pitifully up at me; it pleaded its hungry condition with open beak, and seemed to have no fear at my approach. Of course such a poor little motherless waif must be cared for, so I brought

it in, and it received very readily the provender I offered it.

I never saw such a tiny quaint-looking piece of bird-life; its little throat feathers were beginning to show on either side like a small white cravat; it had about half an inch of tail, and minute quills all over its body gave token of coming feathers. The delightful thing about it was its exceeding tameness; it would sit on your finger and gaze at you with a considering expression; no noise frightened it; it was quite content with life in a basket, or on the table, and therefore it became my constant companion, and has grown to be very dear to me and a wide circle of friends.

Fairy's advent was in July, and for the first

month the early morning feeding was no small care, but love makes all things easy, and at last my small charge could feed itself, and learnt the use of its wings.

Daily baths were taken in my soap dish, which was amply large enough at first, but now Fairy is promoted to the sponge basin, in which she flutters every morning to her heart's content and dries herself afterwards by swift flights about the room. The bath over, the next thing is to search for flies on the window-panes, or on the floor; these are snapped up as great dainties, and in this way Fairy has greatly promoted my comfort all through the heat of August and September (1893) by keeping our rooms free of winged insects.

I have only to take Fairy on my finger and direct her attention to a fly on the ceiling, when off she darts, like a hawk after its quarry, and the fly disappears like magic.

I was much amused to watch her day after day eyeing a large spider in the corner of the room; she evidently considered very deeply whether she could tackle it; it was large and she was small, and for three days she hesitated, but at last her courage was equal to the enterprise, and the spider was seized, minced up, and eaten. My tiny pet lives on grapes, lettuce, flies, meal-worms, and as great indulgences, cream and sugar; a tin of special bird food supplies other items of diet. Fairy is in and out of her cage all day, and but for fear of accidents she might have the range of the house, so confident am I that she would not wish to stray from her happy home. Still she loves an expedition, and once, having flown after me into the hall I did not see her again for an hour or more; a hunt was needful, and after searching every room she was at last discovered cheerfully investigating the boxes in a lumber room at the very top of the house.

I never knew such a clever fearless little bird. She will put her small body into every corner in search of information, she visits all my friends as they sit at luncheon, pulls their hair, sits on their fingers, and is, of course, universally beloved.

I was curious to note whether Fairy would grow restless when the migrating season began, but her abnormal life indoors so altered her natural instincts that she made herself quite happy throughout the autumn, and we were truly glad that we were not called to bid adieu to such a lovable companion.

Very naturally some readers may ask, "How can I obtain a tame, happy little pet bird such as my whitethroat now is?"

I can only reply, such a thing is not to be bought (or very rarely) for any amount of money, but can be attained by anyone who will bring up a young fledgling from its earliest youth with never-failing love and gentleness. There is no secret about it; it is not a gift bestowed on some and withheld from others as many seem to suppose, judging from the number of times I have been told, "Oh, you have the gift of taming creatures." I always disclaim the assertion and say the simple truth, that just as you seek to win the heart of a child by invariable gentle kindness, so

these innocent dumb brethren of ours yield us their devoted love if they meet with similar treatment at our hands.

We must not begin the task of bringing up a young bird without counting the cost beforehand. It will mean rising every morning between four and five and having little sleep afterwards, for we must imitate the self-denying industry of the mother-bird in providing food for her young ones.

If we look out over the dewy lawns at daybreak in spring and summer, we shall see thrushes, blackbirds, robins, and many other birds all actively engaged in searching for worms and insects to supply the needs of their respective families.

All through the day we must think of the tender creature we have undertaken to rear, giving it about every half hour as much food as it desires and keeping it warmly covered from cold and draughts, lest its limbs should be attacked by cramp.

This ailment seems incurable, and is the cruel fate of most fledglings that are brought away from their parents, because people forget that the warmth of the mother-bird is essential to the life of the callow brood, and I, for one, never promote the rearing of young wild birds unless, as in the case of a motherless waif like my "Fairy," we try to save a little innocent life by doing what we can to imitate its natural bringing up. Absolute tameness can only be attained by unvarying gentle treatment. Never has Fairy heard a harsh word, or as far as I know, has she had a fright of any kind.

A single grip of Mungo's* cruel little jaws would end her life in a moment, but Fairy does not know it, and she sings on fearlessly as he passes her cage. I believe she would act as a much petted little dog used to do when his mistress pretended to scold him severely; he would look about eagerly to see where the wicked animal could be that he might fly at him. I tried to speak seriously to my small bird one day when she was particularly in my way, but she only gave me some hard pecks, and to my great amusement fought me with her tiny claws much as a game-cock would use his spurs.

Although the whitethroat is plentiful in the Southern counties, I do not find that people, as a rule, are at all familiar with its appearance,

* My mongoose.

and I imagine this arises from the shy habits of the bird. It flits quickly out of sight when alarmed, and being of an inconspicuous grey colour it requires a keen eye to distinguish it when hopping noiselessly about in weedy hedgerows, where it is so often found, that it has obtained the provincial name of Nettle Creeper.

The sharp clicking note this bird makes when excited we constantly hear in furze bushes and hedges, which is a proof that the whitethroat exists in some numbers in Middlesex, and now that my "Fairy" has begun to sing, I find it is a strain with which I am quite familiar. My curiosity has often been excited by hearing low soft warbles from unseen singers on the common or in the woods; I vainly tried to see what bird it could be, but it always seemed to remain out of sight. My small pet has solved the mystery by performing for my private benefit the sweet music of her wild brethren out of doors.

I am constantly reminded of the lines in Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner."

"A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune."

As I sit at my writing, the delicate soft warbling goes on hour after hour, and is a source of real pleasure to me, it is so manifestly the outcome of a perfectly happy little spirit telling out its inward joy in its own sweet fashion.

Captivity has no terrors for Fairy; she loves her cage, and will hardly leave it except when she occasionally takes a swift flight to and fro, and then alights on my note paper to give a peck at my pen. She delights in sitting on the fender, fluffing up her feathers to revel in the warmth which, in winter, is her substitute for sunshine, and before long she returns to her own little home, and may be seen gracefully sipping the sweet juice of a grape before recommencing her song.

I often wonder how long this, my latest pet, may be spared to me! A bird's life is such a tender thing, a moment's carelessness may rob one of a cherished pet, and the greatest care will not always guard such a tiny swift flying bird from injury.

May the sorrowful day be far distant that shall see me bereft of my little ray of home sunshine, my Fairy whitethroat.

LITTLE MOTHER'S HOUSE: HOW SHE KEPT IT.

By L. H. YATES.

PART I.

CONTRASTS.

THE maid-of-all-work at Rosebank Cottage had just ushered in a visitor, and closed upon her the door of the only parlour or drawing-room that the modest dwelling boasted.

It was a brilliant, sunny day, and the blinds were drawn, although the windows being open the air came pleasantly in; in the subdued light thus obtained the room was looking its best, only if one judged it by the look on this visitor's face as she took note of all about her it was but a sorry best.

So much depends upon individual point of view, "measuring ourselves by ourselves," we rarely if ever attain right judgment. I daresay if you or I, reader, had gone into that room instead of this lady (whose dress betokened that it was her chief care in life) we should have thought it a very pleasant place this warm summer's morning.

But this visitor's quick eye noted that there

were places worn almost threadbare—not quite, in the carpet—the chairs were a little sunk in the seats as though they knew well what it was to be sat upon; there were darns—very fine and neat, but still darns—in some of the coverings, and the furniture generally proclaimed that it was there for use, not for show.

What did she not see?

She did not note that the soft, harmonious colouring of the room, the disposition of its inexpensive but good furniture, and its freedom from the crowd of ornamental objects gave it the reposeful air which is of itself rest to a weary mind; neither did she value the exquisite cleanliness and neatness everywhere, nor see how the very ferns flourished as if they knew they were tended by some one who noted their every leaf.

There is not much time, however, for noting either virtues or defects, for the door soon opens to admit the mistress of the place, and whether it is that her surroundings so exactly

suit her, or that she suits them, we feel that we are now looking at a completed picture.

"How are you, Mary? Do you remember me?" asks her visitor rising up.

She is tall and somewhat stately, and looks down physically as well as socially upon the smaller figure. But the little woman has taken her visitor's hand in both her own, and her face is brimming over with welcome.

"How good of you to find me out, Lydia! Remember you? Why, of course, though you certainly have changed, and indeed it must be ten years since we met, so it is no wonder!"

"Twelve years," says Lydia sententiously. "But you have altered very little comparatively, Mary. How do you keep so young? You are over thirty-five as much as I am, but I am looking for grey hairs already. I should have expected that with all your family you would have been worried into an old woman by now."

Mary smiles more radiantly still.