

CATBIRD, BROWN THRASHER AND WREN



Brown Thrasher—Above, Bright Reddish Brown; Below, White; Breast and Flanks Spotted With Brown.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

According to a new bulletin issued by the department of agriculture, entitled "Some Common Birds Useful to the Farmer" (farmers' bulletin No. 630), the wren, brown thrasher and catbird are three very useful neighbors to the grower of crops or fruits.

The diminutive house wren frequents barns and gardens, and particularly old orchards in which the trees are partially decayed. He makes his nest in a hollow where perhaps a woodpecker had a domicile the year before, but he is a pugnacious character, and if he happens to fancy one of the boxes put up for bluebirds he does not hesitate to take it. He is usually not slow to avail himself of boxes, gourds, tin cans, or empty jars placed for his accommodation.

In food habits the house wren is entirely beneficial. He may be said to live upon animal food alone, for an



House Wren—Above, Reddish Brown; Below, Soiled White Wings and Tail Barred.

examination of 88 stomachs showed that 98 per-cent of the contents was made up of insects or their allies, and only 2 per cent was vegetable food, including bits of grass and similar matter, evidently taken by accident with the insects. Half of this food consisted of grasshoppers and beetles; the remainder of caterpillars, bugs and spiders. As the wren is a prolific breeder, frequently rearing in a season from 12 to 15 young, a family of these birds must cause considerable reduction in the number of insects in a garden. Wrens are industrious foragers, searching every tree, shrub and vine for caterpillars, and examining every post and rail of the fence and every cranny in the wall for insects or spiders.

The house wren is only one of a numerous group of small birds of similar habits. There are within the limits



Catbird—Slate Color, Pale Below; Under Rump Chestnut.

of the United States 34 species and subspecies of wrens, occupying more or less completely the whole country from the Atlantic to the Pacific. With the exception of the marsh wren, they all appear to prefer some cozy nook for a nesting site, and, as it happens, the farm buildings afford just the place desired. This has led several of the wrens to seek out the habitations of man, and he is benefited by their destruction of noxious insects. No species of wren has been accused of harm, and their presence should be encouraged about every farm, ranch, village or suburban residence.

The brown thrasher breeds throughout the United States east of the great plains, and winters in the South Atlantic and Gulf states. It occasion-

ally visits the garden or orchard, but nests in swamps or in groves standing upon low ground. The thrasher's favorite time for singing is in early morning, when, perched on the top of a tall bush or low tree, it gives an exhibition of vocal powers which would do credit to a mockingbird. Indeed, in the South, where the latter bird is abundant, the thrasher is known as the sandy mocker.

The food of the brown thrasher consists of both fruit and insects. An examination of 636 stomachs showed 36 per cent of vegetable and 64 of animal food, practically all insects, and mostly taken in spring before fruit was ripe. Half the insects were beetles and the remainder chiefly grasshoppers, caterpillars, bugs and spiders. A few predacious beetles were eaten, but on the whole the work of the species as an insect destroyer may be considered beneficial.

Eight per cent of its food is made up of fruits like raspberries or currants which are or may be cultivated, but the raspberries at least are as likely to belong to wild as to cultivated varieties. Grain, made up mostly of scattered kernels of oats and corn, is merely a trifle, amounting to only 3 per cent. Though some of the corn may be taken from newly planted fields, it is amply paid for by the destruction of May beetles which are eaten at the same time. The rest of the food consists of wild fruit or seeds. Taken all in all, the brown thrasher is a useful bird, and probably does as good work in a secluded retreat as it would about the garden, for the swamps and groves are no doubt the breeding grounds of many insects that migrate thence to attack the crops of the farmer.

The catbird, like the thrasher, is a lover of swamps and delights to make its home in a tangle of wild grapevines, greenbriers, and shrubs, where it is safe from attack and can find its favorite food in abundance. It is found throughout the United States west to the Rocky mountains, and extends also from Washington, Idaho and Utah northward into the provinces of Canada. It winters in the southern states, Cuba, Mexico and Central America.

Reports from the Mississippi valley indicate that the catbird is sometimes a serious annoyance to fruit growers. The reason for such reports may possibly be found in the fact that on the prairies fruit-bearing shrubs, which afford so large a part of this bird's food, are conspicuously absent. With the settlement of this region comes an extensive planting of orchards, vineyards and small-fruit gardens, which furnish shelter and nesting sites for the catbird as well as for other spe-

cies. There is in consequence a large increase in the numbers of the birds, but no corresponding gain in the supply of native fruits upon which they were accustomed to feed. Under these circumstances what is more natural than for the birds to turn to cultivated fruits for their food? The remedy is obvious: Cultivated fruits can be protected by the simple expedient of planting the wild species which are preferred by the birds. Some experiments with catbirds in captivity show that the Russian mulberry is preferred to any cultivated fruit.

Feed for Balancing Ration. Every locality in the country can produce a kind of feed capable of balancing up the corn ration.

HIS LOVE STORY

MARIE VAN VORST  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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SYNOPSIS.

Le Comte de Sabron, captain of French cavalry, takes to his quarters to raise by hand a motherless Irish terrier pup, and names it Pitcheoune. He dines with the Marquise d'Esclignac and meets Miss Julia Redmond, American heiress, who sings for him an English ballad that lingers in his memory. Trying to save Pitcheoune's life, he declines a second invitation to dinner because of a "very sick friend." No more invitations come from the Chateau d'Esclignac. Pitcheoune, though lame from his accident, thrives and is devoted to his master. Sabron and Pitcheoune meet the Marquise and Miss Redmond and after the story of Pitcheoune is told Sabron is forgiven and invited to dinner again. Sabron is ordered to Algiers.

CHAPTER VI—Continued.

Pitcheoune, whose eyes had followed the cat out of sight, sprang upon his master and seemed quite ready for the new departure.

"I shall at least have you," Sabron said. "It will be your first captaincy. We shall have some famous runs and I shall introduce you to a camel and make you acquainted with several donkeys, not to speak of the historic Arab steeds. You will see, my friend, that there are other animals besides yourself in creation."

"A telegram for mon capitaine," Brunet came in with the blue envelope which Sabron tore open.

You will take with you neither horses nor dogs.

It was an order from the minister of war, just such a one as was sent to some half-dozen other young officers, all of whom, no doubt, felt more or less discomfited.

Sabron twisted the telegram, put it in the fireplace and lighted his cigarette with it, watching Pitcheoune who, finding himself a comfortable corner in the armchair, had settled down for a nap.

"So," nodded the young man aloud. "I shall not even have Pitcheoune."

He smoked, musing in the rigid discipline of his soldier's life he was used to obedience. His softened eyes, however, and his nervous fingers as they pulled at his mustache, showed that the command had touched him.

"What shall I do with you, old fellow?"

Although Sabron's voice was low, the dog, whose head was down upon his paws, turned his bright brown eyes on his master with so much confidence and affection that it completed the work. Sabron walked across the floor, smoking, the spurs on his heels clanking, the light shining on his brilliant boots and on his uniform. He was a splendid-looking man with race and breeding, and he combined with his masculine force the gentleness of a woman.

"They want me to be lonely," he thought. "All that the chiefs consider is the soldier—not the man—even the companionship of my dog is denied me. What do they think I am going to do out there in the long eastern evenings?" He reflected. "What does the world expect an unaccompanied wanderer to do?" There are many things and the less thought about them, the better.

"A letter for Monsieur le Capitaine." Brunet returned with a note which he presented stiffly, and Pitcheoune, who chose in his little brain to imagine Brunet an intruder, sprang from the chair like lightning, rushed at the servant, seized the leg of his pantaloons and began to worry them, growling, Brunet regarding him with adoration. Sabron had not thought aloud the last words of the telegram, which he had used to light his cigarette.

Nor will it be necessary to take a personal servant. The indigenes are capable ordonnances.

As he took the letter from Brunet's salver he said curtly: "I am ordered to Algiers and I shall not take horses nor Pitcheoune."

The dog, at mention of his name, set Brunet's leg free and stood quiet, his head lifted.

"Nor you either, mon brave Brunet," Sabron put his hand on his servant's shoulder, the first familiarity he had ever shown a man who served him with devotion, and who would have given his life to save his master's. "Those," said the officer curtly, "are the orders from headquarters, and the least said about them the better." The ruddy cheek of the servant turned pale. He mechanically touched his forehead.

"Bien, mon Capitaine," he murmured, with a little catch in his voice. He stood at attention, then wheeled and without being dismissed, stalked out of the room.

Pitcheoune did not follow. He remained immovable like a little dog cut from bronze; he understood—who shall say—how much of the conversation? Sabron threw away his cigarette, then read his letter by the mantlepiece, leaning his arm upon it. He read slowly. He had broken the seal slowly. It was the first letter he had ever seen in this handwriting. It was written in French and ran thus:

Monsieur—My aunt wishes me to ask you if you will come to us for a little musicale tomorrow afternoon. We hope you will be free, and I hope, she added, that you will bring Pitcheoune. Not that

I think he will care for the music, but afterward perhaps he will run with us as we walk to the gate. My aunt wishes me to say that she has learned from the colonel that you have been ordered to Algiers. In this way she says that we shall have an opportunity of wishing you bon voyage, and I say I hope Pitcheoune will be a comfort to you.

The letter ended in the usual formal French fashion. Sabron, turning the letter and rereading it, found that it completed the work that had been going on in his lonely heart. He stood long, musing.

Pitcheoune laid himself down on the rug, his bright little head between his paws, his affectionate eyes on his master. The firelight shone on them both, the musing young officer and the almost human-hearted little beast. So Brunet found them when he came in with the lamp shortly, and as he set it down on the table and its light shone on him, Sabron, glancing at the ordonnance, saw that his eyes were red, and liked him none the less for it.

CHAPTER VII.

A Soldier's Dog.

"It is just as I thought," he told Pitcheoune. "I took you into my life, you little rascal, against my will, and now, although it's not your fault, you are making me regret it. I shall end, Pitcheoune, by being a cynic and misogynist, and learn to make idols of my career and my troops alone. After all, they may be tiresome, but they don't hurt as you do, and some other things as well."

Pitcheoune, being invited to the musicale at the Chateau d'Esclignac, went along with his master, running behind the captain's horse. It was a heavenly January day, soft and mild, full of sunlight and delicious odors, and over the towers of King Rene's castle the sky banners were made of celestial blue.

The officer found the house full of people. He thought it hard that he might not have had one more intimate picture to add to his collection. When he entered the room a young man was playing a violoncello. There was a group at the piano, and among the people the only ones he clearly saw were the hostess, Madame d'Esclignac in a gorgeous velvet frock, then Miss Redmond, who stood by the window, listening to the music. She saw him come in and smiled to him, and from that moment his eyes hardly left her.

What the music was that afternoon the Count de Sabron could not have



He Stood Long Musing.

told very intelligently. Much of it was sweet, all of it was touching, but when Miss Redmond stood to sing and chose the little song of which he had made a lullaby, and sang it divinely, Sabron, his hands clasped behind his back and his head a little bent, still looking at her, thought that his heart would break. It was horrible to go away and not tell her. It was cowardly to feel so much and not be able to speak it. And he felt that he might be equal to some wild deed, such as crossing the room violently, putting his hand over her slender one and saying: "I am a soldier; I have nothing but a soldier's life. I am going to Africa tomorrow. Come with me; I want you, come!"

All of which, slightly impossible and quite out of the question, nevertheless charmed and soothed him. The words of her English song, almost barbaric to him because incomprehensible, fell on his ears. Its melody was already part of him.

"Monsieur de Sabron," said Madame d'Esclignac, "you are going away tomorrow?"

"Yes, Madame."

"I expect you will be engaged in some awful native skirmishes. Perhaps you will even be able to send back a tiger skin."

"There are no tigers in that part of Africa, Madame."

The young soldier's dark eyes rest-

ed almost hostilely on the gorgeous marquise in her red gown. He felt that she was glad to have him go. He wanted to say: "I shall come back, however; I shall come back and when I return . . . but he knew that such a boast, or even such a hope was fruitless.

His colonel had told him only the day before that Miss Redmond was one of the richest American heiresses, and there was a question of a duke or a prince and heaven only knew what in the way of titles. As the marquise moved away her progress was something like the rolling of an elegant velvet chair, and while his feelings were still disturbed Miss Redmond crossed the room to him. Before Sabron quite knew how they had been able to escape the others or leave the room, he was standing with her in the winter garden where the sunlight came in through trellises and the perfume of the warmed plants was heavy and sweet. Before them flowed the Rhone, golden in the winter's light. The blue river swept its waves around old Tarascon and the battlements of King Rene's towers.

"You are going to Algiers tomorrow, Monsieur de Sabron?" Miss Redmond smiled, and how was Sabron to realize that she could not very well have wept there and then, had she wished to do so?

"Yes," he said. "I adore my regiment. I love my work. I have always wanted to see colonial service."

"Have you? It is delightful to find one's ambitions and desires satisfied," said Miss Redmond. "I have always longed to see the desert. It must be beautiful. Of course you are going to take Pitcheoune?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Sabron, "that is just what I am not going to do."

"What!" she cried. "You are never going to leave that darling dog behind you?"

"I must, unfortunately. My superior officers do not allow me to take horses or dogs, or even my servant."

"Heavens!" she exclaimed. "What brutes they are! Why, Pitcheoune will die of a broken heart." Then she said: "You are leaving him with your man servant?"

Sabron shook his head. "Brunet would not be able to keep him."

"Ah!" she breathed. "He is looking for a home? Is he? If so, would you . . . might I take care of Pitcheoune?"

The Frenchman impulsively put out his hand, and she laid her own in it. "You are too good," he murmured. "Thank you, Pitcheoune will thank you."

He kissed her hand. That was all.

From within the salon came the noise of voices, and the bow of the violoncellist was beginning a new concerto. They stood looking at each other. No condition could have prevented it although the Marquise d'Esclignac was rolling toward them across the polished floor of the music-room. As though Sabron realized that he might never see this lovely young woman again, probably never would see her, and wanted before he left to have something made clear, he asked quickly: "Could you, Mademoiselle, in a word or two tell me the meaning of the English song you sang?"

She flushed and laughed slightly. "Well, it is not very easy to put it in prose," she hesitated. "Things sound so differently in music and poetry; but it means," she said in French, bravely, "why, it is a sort of prayer that someone you love very much should be kept safe night and day. That's about all. There is a little sadness in it, as though," and her cheeks glowed, "as if there was a sort of separation. It means . . ."

"Ah!" breathed the officer deeply. "I understand. Thank you."

And just then Madame d'Esclignac rolled up between them and with an unmistakable satisfaction presented to her niece the gentleman she had secured.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Your Own Home.

William L. Price in "The House of the Democrat," gave us a description of his ideal dwelling in words so genial and simple, and full of such picturesque feeling, that they seem a fitting preface to an article on the planning of a home. "The rooms," he said, "shall be ample and low; wide-windowed, deep-seated, spacious, cool by reason of shadows in summer, warmed by the ruddy glow of fire-sides in winter; open to wistful summer airs, tight closed against the wintry blasts; a house, a home, a shrine."

One cannot but wish that every homebuilder and architect would learn these words by heart, and hold them as a constant reminder—for in that one prophetic sentence seems to be condensed the very spirit of home.

The atmosphere of comfort and restfulness cannot be attained, however, without much wise and thoughtful planning. Its roots are in the practical, the seemingly commonplace—which, rightly treated, results in lasting homelike charm.—The Craftsman.

Chinese Currency.

Currency in China has had all sorts of surprises for the layman, but the present situation is simply extraordinary. There is now found to be an actual plethora of dollars and small coins, and since last August the Chinese have been melting them and converting them into sycee. The reason why dollars are being melted is that large issues of the provincial mints have found no use in the market, and as all Chinese accounts are in taels the present price of the dollar is not very conducive to its existence and circulation.

POPULARITY OF BASE BALL

Base ball has grown to gigantic proportions within the last decade and the scientific work of the teams has been the delight of millions of spectators. There are so many things to admire in the game that it is impossible to describe them. Outdoor exercise is one of Nature's best aids in promoting health and strength and keeping the blood rich and pure; but perhaps you are one of the many who are denied that privilege. You lead a sedentary life which always has a tendency to make the liver lazy, the bowels clogged and digestion poor. Oftentimes you are nervous, sleepless, have no appetite and feel run down.

Under these conditions you will greatly appreciate the assistance to be derived from a trial of Hostetter's Stomach Bitters. It helps Nature by toning and strengthening the Stomach, Liver and Bowels, and with these organs in a normal condition your system is well fortified against an attack of Sick Headache, Heartburn, Indigestion, Cramps, Constipation, Biliousness or Malaria, Fever or Ague.

Always take good care of your health and you will be well repaid, while carelessness only brings suffering and distress. Let Hostetter's Stomach Bitters help you to maintain your health.

Balzac's Hatred of Tobacco.

Perhaps no celebrated author was more hostile toward tobacco than Balzac. It is true that Lamartine speaks of the novelist's teeth as blackened by cigar smoke, but Lamartine was not intimate with Balzac. Gautier on the other hand knew him well and wrote eloquently about his hatred of tobacco. Balzac's ruling passion was coffee, which injured him and perhaps killed him. In some of his novels he anatomizes tobacco. When he allows some of his characters to smoke there is veiled contempt. "As for De Marsay, he was busied in smoking his cigars."

Wouldn't Have Sister Hurt.

When Walter was a tiny fellow he accompanied his older sister to the dentist's. She was to have a tooth extracted and as the dentist commenced to pull Helen began to scream. Instantly, face aghast, Walter scrambled from his chair and grabbed the dentist by the leg. Tugging with all his might, he shouted fiercely: "You beaser stop dat if you know what's dood for you!"

If Arms Are Too Fat.

If the arm is too fat, vigorous massage will help to reduce; but should be supplemented by active exercises. To massage the arm, grasp with the open hand, near the shoulder; and, treating it as if it were a wet sheet lifted from the wash tub, twist the flesh with a wringing motion. Go over the entire arm in this way several times.

You Can Get Allen's Foot-Ease FREE.

Write Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y., for a free sample of Allen's Foot-Ease. It cures sweating, hot, swollen, itching feet. It makes new or tight shoes easy. A certain cure for corns, ingrowing nails and bunions. All drug stores sell it. Don't accept any substitute.

Atonement.

"I hate the smell of mothballs and there's the woman next door hanging up the clothes she has had put away with them." "Why object to that? She's doing you a neighborly kindness in airing your grievances."

His Preference.

She (fond of rattle)—"Now that you have looked over my music what would you like to have me play?" He—"Whist or casino."—Boston Transcript.

FARMER'S WIFE TOO ILL TO WORK

A Weak, Nervous Sufferer Restored to Health by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Kasota, Minn.—"I am glad to say that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done more for me than anything else, and I had the best physician here. I was so weak and nervous that I could not do my work and suffered with pains low down in my right side for a year or more. I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and now I feel like a different person. I believe there is nothing like Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for weak women and young girls, and I would be glad if I could influence anyone to try the medicine, for I know it will do all and much more than it is claimed to do."—Mrs. CLARA FRANKS, R. F. D. No. 1, Maplecrest Farm, Kasota, Minn.



Women who suffer from those distressing ills peculiar to their sex should be convinced of the ability of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to restore their health by the many genuine and truthful testimonials we are constantly publishing in the newspapers.

If you have the slightest doubt that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you, write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass., for advice. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman, and held in strict confidence.