

Christian Family.

Birds of a Feather.

Four little birds in a nest too small,
Only one mamma to care for all;
'Twas a twitter and chirp the livelong day,
No wonder the mamma soon grew gray.

Papa-bird was a dashing fellow,
Coat of black with a flash of yellow,
Never a bird in the early spring
Could rival him when he chose to sing.

He helped the mamma-bird hang the nest
Where the winds would rook it the very
best;

And while she sat on her eggs all day,
He'd cheer her up with a roundelay.

But when from each egg in the swinging
bed,

A little birdie popped its head,
He said to his wife, "I've done my share
Of household duties; they're now your
care."

Then off he'd go to a concert fine
In the apple trees and bright sunshine,
Without a thought of the stupid way
His poor little wife must pass her day.

At last the mamma-bird fell ill,
And the papa forced, against his will,
To take her place with the birdies small,
Ready to answer their chirp and call.

Sorry day for the wretched fellow,
Dressed so gay with scarf of yellow!
Shut in the house from morning till night
Was ever a bird in such a plight?

Tie on a hood, or fasten a shoe,
Or mend a dolly as good as new,
Or tell a story over again
Or kiss a finger that had a pain.

Or settle a dispute of which and who,
Or sew on a button to baby's shoe—
These were a part of the calls he had
In that single day to drive him mad.

At even he said, "Another day
Would turn my goldenest plume to gray;
Or else, in a fit of grim despair,
I'd fling these children into the air!"

Have I mixed up birds with human folks?
And homes with nests in lofty oaks?
The story is true, and I overheard
Those very words of the papa-bird.

But who he was, and where he did dwell,
I'll never, no never, no never tell!
The truth for once is truth for aye,
And this is the reason mamma grows gray.

—Wide Awake.

Over the Wires.

I hear a faint, low singing,
Like the sound of distant choirs,
'Tis a message gleefully winging
Over the telegraph wires.

And what are the glad wires humming
As they stretch in the sunlight away?
"I am coming, coming, coming—
I am coming home to-day!"

And now I hear a sobbing,
Like some soul sitting alone,
With a heart that is wearily throbbing,
And lips that can only moan.

Oh! what are the sord wires sighing
As they reach through the darkness of
night?

"He is dying, dying, dying—
Come on the wings of light!"

The titillation of laughter
Next falls upon my ear,
And a burst of mad mirth after,
Like the sound of a distant cheer.

And what is the gleeful story
That the round wires spread afar?
"Our Nine is crowned with glory—
Hip, hip, hip, hurrah!"

Oh! what are the wires relating,
Morning, and noon, and night?
"The market is fluctuating!"
"Reports of the Senate fight!"

"Cashier S—— a defaulter!"
"Arrest a man named Brown!"
"Jones died to-day by the halter!"
"Wheat went suddenly down!"

"Dead!" "Born!" "Going!" "Coming!"
"Deluge!" and "drought!" and "fires!"
Singing and sobbing and humming
Over the telegraph wires.

The Waiting Ones.

To some 'tis given to stand and wait,
And watch the green mold of decay
Steal o'er their work, because stern Fate
Has scourged them back and barred the
way.

Some lives stand ever on the brink
Of joy. They wait all through life's
day

To see hope's sun shine out and sink,
And drag their sunset tints to gray.

They wait and watch some coming good
That flings its radiance ahead.

'Twas for another, where they stood
Falls but the shadow cold and dead.

As starving children through a pane
Watch others at some rich repast,
They see each boon they craved in vain
On happy, sated favorites cast.

Courage leaps for valorous deeds,
And time will wipe out sorrows tears.

But for the waiting hearts sore needs
Patience grows threadbare through long
years.

Aye! if the lines grow hard and deep,
And eyes grow cavernous that wait,
'Tis nobler far to wait and weep
Than conquer worlds when helped by
Fate.

Brave, brave is he who bears his curse
With courage and a cheerful heart,
Who says, "It might be worse."
And lifts his head when hopes depart.

—Baltimore American.

—The pain of parting is keenest to those
who go, but it stays longer with those who
are left behind.

—The diamond fallen into the dirt is
not the least precious, and the dust raised
by high winds to heaven is not the less
vile.

"Little Things."

BY EDEN E. HENFORD.

"I like my nephew very much, and
think he is just the boy I want."

The speaker was Mr. John Giamah,
a merchant in one of our large cities.
The person to whom he spoke was his
brother, who had come on a visit from
the West, bringing with him the nephew
of whom the remark with which
I have begun this little story was
made.

"I want a boy whose word can be
relied on every time, and one I can
trust with money. I have had several
clerks whom I could not trust, and
I begin to think it's a hard matter to
get one that suits in all ways. From
what I have seen of Harry I feel sure
I can depend on him every time. He
seems to be a manly little fellow."

"Harry is a manly boy," his father
said, with pride, as he looked toward
the lad, who was waiting on the cro-
quet ground for his uncle to join him
in a game. "I have brought him up
to be honest and truthful. I do not
think I ever knew a boy whose word
I could put more implicit confidence
in than his. If I leave him with you
John, I hope you will be careful to
see that the examples he has put be-
fore him are good ones. It is not
only easy, but quite natural, for a boy
to imitate the conduct of those about
him. He does it unconsciously, often,
and if that conduct is not what it
ought to be, he soon gets into bad
habits."

"Oh, you may feel easy on that
score, Dick!" answered his brother.
"If Harry comes into the store, I shall
have him near me most of the time;
and you can trust me, can't you? I
think you know my habits are well
enough to feel safe in leaving him to
my special care."

"Yes I think I do," answered the
other. "I want my boy to grow up
honest, truthful man, and I certainly
would not leave him with you if I did
not have confidence in your ability to
set him a good example."

His brother joined Harry on the
croquet ground, and they began their
game. The boy and his uncle were
very fond of the game and both played
to win. Harry's father had no
fault to find with that. It was what
he liked to see. He wanted his boy,
in work or play, to go into it with his
whole heart, and do the very best he
could. But he did not want him to be
so desirous of winning as to stoop
to the use of unfair means. He wanted
him to win honestly and fairly, or
not at all. As he watched the game,
he saw several performances that
startled him. More than once, when
his ball was out of position for its
wicket, he saw his brother move it
until it was in position. Harry de-
tected the cheat once or twice, and
told his uncle that he had moved his
ball. Without saying, in so many
words, that he had not moved it, his
uncle managed to convey that idea, and
the play would go on. Harry made
a skillful run and struck for the last
wicket, but hit the wicket and the ball
bounded back, stopping in such a
shape that it would have been impos-
sible for him to have driven it through
when his play came if he had not
moved it a few inches. When his un-
cle was playing, he gave it a push with
his mallet, and succeeded in getting it
into such a position that, when his
play came, he ran the wicket, and hit
the post.

"You moved your ball, didn't you?"
said his uncle; "I saw where it stop-
ped, and thought that I had the ad-
vantage of you, as you would have to
take one stroke to get into position,
and that would throw the game into
my hands."

But Harry protested without telling
what might be called a "square lie"—
though it was that in fact, and not-
withstanding, that he had not meddled with
his ball, and his uncle gave up as hav-
ing been mistaken.

"Come here, Harry, I want to talk

with you," his father said; and Harry
came and sat down on the steps, while
his uncle went to the stable.

"Do you feel satisfied with the way
in which you won that game?" Harry's
father asked.

The boy's face flushed. "No, I
don't," he said; "but uncle John
cheated, and I had to, or I wouldn't
have stood any chance at all."

"Does dishonest action on the part
of another justify one on your part?"
asked his father gravely.

"You don't call Uncle John dishon-
est—do you?" asked Harry, in sur-
prise.

"Yes; what else could you call it?"
asked his father. "Dishonesty is dish-
onesty in work or play. He cheat-
ed. He stole an advantage. He real-
ly denied having done so. You did
the same. Can you call your conduct
anything but stealing, and telling a
lie to cover up the theft?"

"No," answered Harry, after a mo-
ment's thought. "But I didn't think
it could be so very bad, because—be-
cause—"

"Because what?" asked his father,
as Harry hesitated.

"Because Uncle John's a member of
the church, and I didn't think he'd
cheat and—deny it, if it was
wrong. It was only croquet anyway,
and that's why he did it, probably.
If it had been anything else—"

"There is no excuse for him or for
you," his father said. "It was the
example that I looked at. Dishonest-
ty is dishonesty, as I said, in play as
well as work. If you can justify it
when you are merely amusing your-
self, you certainly will justify it when
there is anything to be gained by it.
If you cheat at one thing it is quite
likely you will cheat at another. If
you tell a lie about your play, you
will be apt to tell one about your
work. You see what it leads to. It's
the beginning of greater things. A
little cheat or theft, and a little lie
prepares the way for larger ones which
are sure to follow."

"I think you're right," Harry said.
"In fact, I know you are, when I
come to think of it. But I didn't
think it could be so bad, because Un-
cle John did it."

"Never do anything because some
one else does it," said his father. "Ask
yourself if it is right or wrong, and let
your conscience guide you."

That night the brothers were sit-
ting in the library together.

"I shall not leave Harry here," Mr.
Graham said. "Shall I tell you the
reason why, John?"

"Yes, certainly," answered his brother.

"Well, I'm afraid I can't trust you
to set him an example!"

"Can't trust me?" Mr. Graham
faced about in great surprise. "What
do you mean, Dick?"

His brother told him about the talk
he had had with Harry over the
morning game of croquet.

"But that was nothing but a game
of croquet," said the merchant. "You
didn't mean to say you think I'd cheat
or lie about my business, do you?"

"No, I don't," answered his brother.
"You have formed honest busi-
ness habits, I think. You formed
them years ago, and they have become
part of yourself. But with Harry it
is different. He is a boy, and is more
easily influenced than you are. He is
susceptible to all impressions. Unfair
play at croquet would not end there.
He would not be expected to reason
about cheating or stealing, or taking
unfair advantage of another, call it
what you choose to, is allowable only
in croquet. He would form the habit
of cheating, and that habit would
make itself felt in all its transactions.
If a boy becomes accustomed to lying
in a game, do you suppose he will
never lie about anything else? A
habit, once formed, reaches out into
all the avenues of a man's life."

"The playground is the world in
miniature, and as the boy receives
impressions there, and forms habits, so

will the world of work into which he
is to go by and by find the man to be.
Boys are imitative. They do not dis-
criminate as men do. They follow
our examples. If they have faith in
us, they think they can do as we do,
and never stop to ask whether it is
right or wrong. It was so with Har-
ry. He did feel, however, in a vague
way, that there was a moral wrong
involved; but because you were a
church-member, and he had faith in
you, he did not think there could be
anything really bad about it. Don't
you see the force of your example? It
dulled the boy's sense of honor and
right. It was a seed which might
have borne bitter fruit. The child is
father of the man, they tell us, and
truly. If Harry learned to cheat at
croquet, and to lie about it, he would
not hesitate to do the same in business,
and the boy who grows up to man-
hood with those habits fixed upon
him is on the road to ruin. What
was done to-day may have been a
trifling thing in itself, but it was lay-
ing a foundation for a structure of
dishonesty, and I felt startled when I
saw how readily Harry imitated your
example. Don't you understand how
it weakened his faith in your principle
of honesty and fairness, and blunted
his own perceptions of what was
right and wrong? He could do it be-
cause you did it, and took it for granted
that you were the better judge of
the moral questions involved than he
was. It was the principle of dishonesty
that he was learning; and this
principle would have taken root in
his heart, and flourished, and what
the result would have been God only
knows."

"I do see it," his brother answered,
"But I never thought of it in that
way before. I ought to ask Harry's
pardon for what was done thoughtless-
ly, and I will. Of course I knew it
wasn't right, but I thought it was
only a game of croquet, and never
took the trouble to think anything
more about it."

Ah, that's it! Only a "little thing,"
and we think no further? If we did,
we might set the world a better exam-
ple than we do.—S. S. Times.

The Hum of Telegraph Wires.

Every boy living in the country
near a telegraph line has listened to
the hum which can be often heard
near a telegraph pole. It is a juvenile
theory that the noise is caused by the
passage of the messages. The more
general notion has been that it was
caused by the wind. A writer in an
Australian journal, however, calls at-
tention to the fact that one who will
give close observation to both the
wire and the sounds will find that the
latter make themselves obvious when
there is a total absence of wind; and
in a quiet morning in winter, when
the wires appear to be covered with
frost to the thickness of a finger, they
nevertheless carry on lively vibra-
tions while the air is totally quiet.

According to this writer, therefore,
the vibrations are due not to the
wind, but to changes of atmospheric
temperature, cold producing a short-
ening of the wires extending over the
whole length of the conductor. A
considerable amount of friction is pro-
duced on the supporting bells, thus
inducing sound both in the wires and
the poles.—Ex.

Gather Up The Fragments.

Let a professional man, or any man,
when he starts in life, have a side
study, be it history, or a language, or
poetry, or any branch of natural his-
tory, or geology, and let him give to
it the fragments of his time, and he
will be surprised at his own acquisi-
tions. The whole tone of his thoughts
and life will be elevated; the change
of subject will be his best recreation.
And what is thus true in literature
and science, is more so in religion,
and in all that relates to duty. There
is no time too brief for ejaculatory

prayer. When the countenance of
Nehemiah was sad for the desolations
of Jerusalem, and the king asked
him, "What is thy request?" there
was time between the question and
the answer for him to pray to the
"God of heaven." If the object of
this world had been to furnish oppor-
tunities for doing good, it could hardly
have been arranged better than it is;
and whoever has a heart set upon
that will have no need to fear that
any fragments of time he may gather
up will be lost.—Mark Hopkins.

The Size of Our Great Lakes.

The latest measurements of our fresh
water seas are as follows:

The greatest length of Lake Super-
ior is 335 miles; its greatest breadth
is 160 miles; mean depth, 688 feet;
elevation, 627 feet; area, 82,000 square
miles.

The greatest length of Lake Michi-
gan is 300 miles; its greatest breadth,
108 miles; mean depth, 690 feet; ele-
vation, 506 feet; area, 53,000 square
miles.

The greatest length of Lake Huron
is 200 miles; its greatest breadth is
169 miles; mean depth, 600 feet; ele-
vation, 274 feet; area, 20,000 square
miles.

The greatest length of Lake Erie is
250 miles; its greatest breadth is 80
miles; its mean depth is 84 feet; ele-
vation, 555 feet; area, 6000 square
miles.

The greatest length of Lake Ontario
is 180 miles; its greatest breadth, 65
miles; its mean depth is 500 feet; ele-
vation, 261 feet; area, 6000 square
miles.

The length of all five is 1265 miles,
covering an area upward of 135,000
square miles.

A Word to Young Men.

Young man, come out into the hot sum-
mer sun and show that you are both able
and willing to do a whole man's full day's
work in what you must see is most needed
to be done. It won't do for you to stand
back, saying, "I am willing to work but
can't get anything to do." This excuse is
on a par with that pitiful plea put up by
those idling loungers, who, when asked,
"why stand ye all the day idle," sought to
excuse themselves by saying, "because
nobody hath hired us." They were told to
go into the vineyard and work, and not
wait for the vineyard or work to come to
them. Need it be urged that this is just
as applicable to you, now, as it was to
them. Go to work, hire or no hire, and
very soon, if you show that you are willing
and capable, you will find plenty of bid-
ders for just such workers as you ought to
make yourselves. You ought to be ashamed
to hold back and wait for your father to
do the brunt of the farm work, and espe-
cially should you pitch in where you
see no one else to do the work but your-
self. Become familiar with all kinds of
farm work, the best mode of doing it and
you will soon acquire skill and knowl-
edge that should make you successful.
Study and reap your business, and then
you will be sure to fall in love with what
was hitherto an uninteresting and tire-
some business. Remember that it is he
who takes hold and works day by day,
that places himself a peer beside the nob-
lest of the land! It is he who takes step
by step, climbing gradually, till he reach-
es the highest point, while he who likes
his ease and dreads action lies asleep at
the foot.—The Sunbeam.

—All things are engaged in writing
their history. The planet, the pebble
going attended by its shadow. The
rolling rock leaves the scratches on
the mountain: the river, its channel
in the soil; the animal, its bones in
the stratum; the fern and leaf, their
modest epitaph in the coal. The fall-
ing drop makes its sculpture in the
sand or on the stone. Not a foot
steps into the snow, or along the
ground, but prints, in characters, more
or less lasting, a map of its march.
Every act of the man inscribes itself
in the memories of his fellows, and in
his own manners and face. The air is
full of sounds, the sky of tokens, the
ground is all memoranda and signa-
tures, and every object covered over
with hints, which speak to the intelli-
gent.—Emerson.

—The Yale Faculty has issued a
ukase condemning to immediate trial
before a military tribunal, within
twenty-four hours, all students who
shall be caught in the act of singing
society songs on the college campus.