

KINGS OF NATURE

MYTHS AND REALITIES OF ANIMAL NOBILITY



S the lion is called the king of beasts, so the eagle is called the king of birds; but except that it is bigger, stronger, and swifter than other birds, there does not seem much reason for the name. It is a mistake to attribute noble or mean qualities to animals or birds, or to think they can do good or bad actions, when they can only do what God has created them to do, and as their instinct teaches. The most powerful of the eagles is the Golden Eagle, so called because of the rich yellowish-brown bordering to its feathers. It makes its nest in the clefts of the rocky sides of the mountains, and seldom on a tree, unless where one has sprung up in between the clefts, and the tangled roots make a sort of platform. This the eagles cover with sticks, and here they make their house, living in it always, and not only when they lay eggs or have young ones. If there are eaglets in the nest, the food is at once carried home to them, and the skinning and eating done at home. Eagles are very attentive to their young, and feed them with great care until they are able to take care of themselves. standing with her baby by her side, asks proudly of the lookers-on, "Did you ever see such a likeness?" and certainly mother and child are very much alike, striped all over their bodies, from head to foot, and from nose to tail, with the same regular marks of black. Strong and wild by nature, the zebra family are left very much to themselves, which is a source of great happiness to the mother and child in the picture before us. "No! no! my baby is not going to become as tame as the donkey, or to draw carts and carriages like the horse; it is to have its freedom, and go just where it likes all over these large plains;"—so says and she means it too, for if anybody took the trouble to go all the way to the hot country of Africa, where it is at home, and tried to carry off her baby, they would find their journey a vain one, and that she would kick severely, and perhaps break the legs of the person bold enough to take away her darling. HIS is the American black bear, who is looking so lively and seemingly inviting the young folks to have a romp, which they will be only too willing to join in. The black bear is of a timid disposition, and seldom attacks man except in selfdefense. The female bear is a most affectionate mother, and many stories are related showing her care and love for her young, and her sorrow and mournful cries when any evil befalls them. On one occasion a black bear with her two cubs was pursued across the ice by some armed sailors. At first she urged her cubs to increased speed, but finding her pursuers gaining upon them, she carried, pushed, and pitched them, alternately, forward, until she effected their escape from her pursuers. LITTLE OWLS. WHO has not at one time or other of his life read fairy tales and sympathized with stories of enchanted princes and princesses? I once thought of this when a country boy offered me a nest with four of the young of the Little Owl. I put them into a large cage, where they could stare at each other and at my pigeons to their hearts' content. Let me say that this little owl is a very useful bird, for it keeps mice, bats, beetles, and other creatures in check, which might otherwise multiply too fast. On a spring or summer evening you may hear its plaintive hoot among the appleblossoms of an orchard, or the sheaves of a cornfield. Curiously enough, this simple sound earned the little bird the name of being the harbinger of death, and peasants believed that whenever its cry was heard where sickness was in the family, the patient was sure to die. AUROCHS. A N Aurochs in blind rage, charging through thick and thin, has had a fascination for me as long as I can remember. The true aurochs and this, the European Bison, ceased to exist in the British Isles, except in the Zoological Gardens; but the latter is still found wild in Lithuania, and is also carefully preserved in other parts of Russia, of which the Emperor has a herd.

There is much talk about their being untamable—that they will not mix with tame cattle—that tame cows shrink from the aurochs' calves; but does not any cow shrink from any calf not her own? The American Bison, with which you are all pretty familiar, is very similar to the one just mentioned. There have been several attempts made to domesticate the American bison, and have been so far successful. The size and strength of the animal make it probable that if domesticated, it would be of great use. THE KANGAROO. WELL," said little Herbert Joyce, as he looked over the books of drawings which his cousin had just brought home from Australia, "I never saw anything so extraordinary before in all my life; why here is an animal with three heads, and two of them are very low down, and much smaller than the others." "What do you mean, Herbert?" asked his cousin, who just then came into the room. "There are no three-headed animals—let me see the picture. Oh! no wonder you were puzzled; it does look like a queer creature. That is a kangaroo, and the small heads belong to her children, whom she carries about in a bag formed by a hole in her skin, until they are old enough to walk; and the little things seem very happy there; and sometimes, as their mother moves along over the grass, you may see them nibbling it." THE PEACOCK. PROUD bird! I watched thee stalking by, With stately step and slow, As though thou fain would'st charm each eye With glittering pomp and show: And truly thou art brave to see, In heaven's hues arrayed, And plainer birds at sight of thee Might shrink and be dismayed: Yet, pampered bird! there still are those I value higher far, Albeit their garb nor glints nor glows With many a jeweled star. I love them for their gentle ways, Their voices soft and sweet In summer chorus, that repays Right well their winter's meat. For what is outward form at best But accident of birth? That form in splendid raiment drest Is still but common earth. And yet 'tis he whose painted plumes Shine fairest in the sun, Who haughtiest look of pride assumes, As though by him 'twere done. We smile to see yon bird strut by, Thus proud of his array; But human friends we may espy As foolish every day. Not beauty's form nor grand attire Upon the wise will tell, But acts of those who e'er aspire To do their DUTY well. FEEDING THE PET. SWANS. THIS beautiful and majestic bird was considered the bird-royal in England, owing to a law of England that when found in a partially wild state on the sea and navigable rivers it belonged to the crown; but of course it is to be found on the ponds and lakes of many a gentleman's estate, and is always prized as a great ornament to the lake. The swan is also very valuable in clearing the ponds of weeds, and makes a most effective clearance, as they eat them before they rise to the surface. The swan affords a pleasing illustration of the love of the motherbird for its young, and has been known to vanquish a fox who made an attack on its nest—showing that the instinct of motherhood kindles boldness and bravery in the breast of the most timid animals. The nest is generally made on an islet, and composed of reeds and rushes, and when the five or seven large eggs are hatched, the mother may be seen swimming about with the young ones on her back. THE SEA LION. ALTHOUGH such large and powerful creatures, these sea lions are innocent and playful. See, one of them has reared himself up on his hind legs, if legs they may be called, and is sitting on a chair with his flappers over the back of the chair. It inhabits the eastern shores of Kamtchatka, and is in some places extremely abundant, and measuring about fifteen feet in length. It is much addicted to roaring, which, as much as the mane of the old males, has obtained for it the name of the Sea Lion. The old males have a fierce appearance, yet they fly in great haste on the approach of man, but if driven to extremities they will fight desperately; but in captivity they are capable of being tamed, and become very familiar with man.

The scientific name of the sea lion is Otary. THE LION. A—THE ASS. FORBEAR to vex the patient Ass, Its heaving sides to good, And for and safe its useful back Will carry many a load. B—THE BITTERN. IN reedy swamp and lonely marsh, Where all is shade and gloom, The Bittern stalks, and you may hear His voice in sullen boom. C—THE CAMEL. THE Camel is a useful beast, Patient, and slow, and mild; To man a blessing and a boon In Afric's sandy wild. BADGERS. O NE day at the Zoological Gardens, I saw the group of Badgers as they are here given. Little do visitors to the gardens take into account how much a wild animal goes through till it has got used to a state of things so opposite to its natural habits. Their wants are attended to as much as possible, but cannot be always met; and so we have here a devoted mother, worn out by the demands of her cubs, and vainly anxious to hide herself from daylight and man's gaze. She has long given up trying to dig or scratch her way out. All she can do is to lean against the wall, ready for a last defence, should anybody come within her prison. She dares not curl up into a ball, like the one cub, and go to sleep; while this little careless imp on her back, happy and trustful, adds to her tiredness by his weight. THE BIRD'S NEST. "Her little nest, so soft and warm, God teaches her to make it; I would not dare to do her harm, I would not dare to take it." H OW curious is the structure of the nest of the Bullfinch or Chaffinch! The inside of it is lined with cotton and fine silken threads; and the outside cannot be sufficiently admired, though it is composed only of various kinds of fine moss. The color of these mosses, resembling that of the bark of the tree in which the nest is built, proves that the bird intended it should not be easily discovered. In some nests, hair, wool, and rushes are cleverly interwoven. In others, the parts are firmly fastened by a thread, which the bird makes of hemp, wool, hair, or, more commonly, of spiders' webs. Other birds—as, for instance, the blackbird and the lapwing—after they have constructed their nests, plaster the inside with mortar; they then stick upon it, while quite wet, some wool or moss to give warmth; but all alike construct their nests so as to add to their security. THE CHAMOIS. T HE chamois are indeed high-born, for among the high mountain-peaks, where the eternal snow rests and the Alpine roses bloom, there they make their home! There they spring up over the snowy slopes to those heights to which man cannot climb. They rest upon the glittering ice, the snow does not blind them, neither does it cool their hot blood. Carelessly they stride across the snowedover crevices, and when the terrible storms, at which men are so alarmed, hurl down rocks and avalanches from the summits, the Chamois do not fear them. They find their way safely through the thickest mist and darkest clouds. Agile and light-footed, gentle and peaceable, proud and courageous, they lead a happy life among the mountains, as long as man does not molest them. JACKO WITH PUSSY'S BONE. J ACKO is a bird called a Macaw, and has fine feathers—scarlet and yellow and blue. Jacko can talk a little. He says, "Come along, Jacko, come along;" and when you come, as soon as he thinks you near enough, he pecks at you with his great beak. When he is in a good temper he will say, "Poor, poor!" He will sit upon the ivy all the morning and talk to himself, and he will call the gardener, and he will cough and sneeze, and crow and cackle, in a very funny manner. If Jacko sees sparrows picking up a few crumbs, he will rush up, sweeping his great wings along the ground, and take their meal for himself. If he sees poor Pussy picking a bone, he takes great delight in creeping down from his ivy, helping himself down with beak and claws, and at a sight of Jacko's approach Pussy darts away, leaving the bone in Jacko's possession. Pussy, of course, does not like this, but stands at a respectable distance, and with curved back and flashing eyes shows her indignation at Jacko.

Presently Jacko retires to the ivy and Pussy resumes her feast. MEMBERS OF THE POACHING FRATERNITY. AMONG the various wild animals which inhabit the earth, it is difficult to decide which are really friendly and which are really hostile to man's interests. The actual fact appears to be that there is neither hostility nor friendship. If farmers and gardeners kill off too many birds, nature revenges herself by sending a plague of insects which the small birds, if alive, would have eaten. Gamekeepers ruthlessly shoot hawks and kites, or snare stoats and polecats, with the result that their game grows up too thick for its feeding ground, sickly specimens are allowed to linger on, and a destructive murrain follows. The rook, no doubt, is fond of eggs; but nevertheless he does the farmer good service when he devours the grubs which are turned up by the plow; and as the salmon disease, which of late has proved so destructive, is attributed by the best authorities to overcrowding, that glossy-coated fisherman, the otter, is really a benefactor to the followers of Izaak Walton's gentle craft. NEDDY'S BREAKFAST. A COW WORKING A PUMP. MY informant writes me as follows: "We have a wonderful cow here—about ten years old, and very clever at opening gates and breaking fences. There is an Abyssinian pump about three feet high in the center of the field, near my house, over a trough, which is, or ought to be, filled daily. It was on a hot day, when my man had omitted to pump the trough full, that the cow was first observed to help herself: the way in which she managed to pump was by pushing the handle up with her head and then forcing it down with her horns. Very little elevation of the handle is required to get water, and she would work it for five minutes together, and sometimes drank from the spout, and sometimes from the trough." CARRIER PIGEONS. THE carrier pigeon is remarkable for the degree in which it possesses the instinct and power of returning from a distance to its accustomed home. In Eastern countries it is the practice to bathe the pigeon's feet in vinegar to keep them cool, and to prevent it from alighting in quest of water, by which the letter might sustain injury. Pigeons intended for this use must be brought from the place to which they are to return, within a short period, and must be kept in the dark and without food for at least eight hours before being let loose. The carrier pigeon was of great service during the siege of Paris in and conveyed many important messages. It goes through the air at the rate of thirty miles an hour, but has been known to fly even faster. THE Siasin, or Antelope of India, roams over the open and rocky plains of that immense country. It is distinguished from the rest of its family by the beauty and singular shape of its horns, which are annulated or ringed, and spirally convoluted or curved together, making two or more turns, according to the age of the animal. The fakirs and dervishes of India, who are enjoined by their religion from carrying swords, frequently wear at their girdles the polished horns of the siasin instead of the usual military arm. This antelope is one of the fleetest-footed of its family, and its leap is something wonderful. It is not uncommon for it to vault to the height of twelve or thirteen feet, passing over ten or twelve yards at a single bound. In color it is almost black on the upper part of the body, and light-colored beneath. When full grown, it is about the size of our common deer. THE COMMON SNIPE. THESE birds frequent swampy woods, marshes, morasses, and the borders of rivers. Their usual time for seeking their food is early in the morning and during the twilight of the evening. They subsist principally upon insects and worms; for these they search among the decayed leaves, and probe the mud and ooze with their lengthened bills. When alarmed, they generally lie close to the ground, or among the grass, or, suddenly starting on the wing, escape by flight, which is short but elevated, rapid, and irregular. The eggs, which are four in number, are deposited on the ground. In the snipe, and all its immediate allies, the bill is thickened, soft, and very tender at its extremity;

so that this part, which is richly supplied with nerves, serves as a delicate organ of touch, and is used for searching in the soft ground for the insects and worms that constitute the food of these birds. A VISIT TO THE MONKEYS. D—THE DOE GRACEFULL and gentle is the Doe; Its tawny coat how sleek! How bright yet tender are its eyes! Its glance how softly meek! E—THE EAGLE. UPON the lonely mountain peak The eagle builds her nest, And there, when weary of the chase, In silence takes her rest. F—THE FOX. THE Fox will skulk in ferny brake, Yet loves the haunts of men; And prowls around the farm, to pounce On capon, goose, or hen. T HIS wild Rabbit has been startled by some noise, and the next moment she may be scampering away to her burrow, with the little bunnies, at the top of their speed, and crouch there until all is quiet again. Rabbits usually select, if possible, a sandy soil overgrown with furze, in which to make their burrows, as such a soil is easily removed, and the dense prickly furze hides their retreat, whilst it affords them a wholesome and never-failing food. These furze bushes are constantly eaten down, as far as the rabbits can reach standing on their hind legs, and consequently present the appearance of a solid mass with the surface even and rounded. These animals retire into their burrows by day to rest, and come out only in the twilight to obtain food. THE LYNX. T HE body of the lynx, beautifully spotted with black and brown rings, is more solid and hardy than that of the wild cat. His ears are longer, his tail is shorter, his great eyes light up like bright flames; and since he prowls about chiefly at night, he is thought to have very keen sight. For this reason, when we wish to say that a person can see very clearly or can look beyond the outward appearance of things, we call him lynx-eyed. Like all cats, the lynx possesses in his mustache a very correct power of feeling. This, with the sense of hearing and sight, guides him in all his expeditions. The lynx in the picture is in the act of springing upon a timid hare. Although he can measure twenty paces in a jump, I think for once he has made a misstep, and the dear little creature with one more bound will be safe. One very remarkable fact about these animals is this: if there are several together, and one starts over the snow in pursuit of booty, all the others will follow in exactly the same tracks, so that it will look as if but one lynx had passed over the snow-covered earth. GOOD MORNING, BIRDIE! THE SWAN AND THE DRAKE. CONFUCIUS LOWLY, in majestic silence, Sailed a Swan upon a lake; Round about him, never quiet, Swam a noisy quacking Drake. “Swan,” exclaimed the latter, halting, “I can scarcely comprehend Why I never hear you talking: Are you really dumb, my friend?” Said the Swan, by way of answer: “I have wondered, when you make Such a shocking, senseless clatter, Whether you are deaf, Sir Drake!” Better, like the Swan, remain in Silence grave and dignified, Than keep, drake-like, ever prating, While your listeners deride. W. R. E. THE BEAVER. T HIS industrious animal is generally found in Canada and the northern portions of the United States, where it makes its home on the banks of the rivers and lakes. Here they assemble in hundreds to assist each other in the construction of their dams, and in the building of their houses, which are put together with a considerable amount of engineering skill. The materials used in building the dams are wood, stones, and mud, which they collect themselves for that purpose, and after finishing the dam, or winter storehouse, they collect their stores for the winter's use, and then make a connection with their houses in the banks. Their skins are valuable in making fine hats, and their flesh is much relished by the hunters. The beaver is an interesting animal in many respects, and the expression “busy as a beaver” is borne out by its habits. T HE lioness is much smaller than the lion, and her form is more slender and graceful. She is devoid of the mane of her lord and master, and has four or five cubs at a birth, which are all born blind.

The young lions are at first obscurely striped and spotted. They mew like cats, and are as playful as kittens. As they get older, the uniform color is gradually assumed. The mane appears in the males at the end of ten or twelve months, and at the age of eighteen months it is very considerably developed, and they begin to roar. Both in nature and in a state of captivity the lioness is very savage as soon as she becomes a mother, and the lion himself is then most to be dreaded, as he will then brave almost any risk for the sake of his lioness and family.

A PET JACK. THE first fish I ever saw in an aquarium, twenty years ago, was a "Jack," as he is called when young, or a "Pike," when he grows older; and ever since then I have contrived to have a pet one, and this, drawn from life by Mr. Harrison Weir, is an accurate portrait of the one I now possess in the Crystal Palace Aquarium. There he is, just as he steals round the corner of a bit of rock. He is glaring at a minnow, at which he is taking most accurate aim; he hardly seems to move, but yet he does by a very trifling motion of the edge of his back fin—sometimes resting a little on the tips of his two foremost fins, as they touch the ground, carefully calculating his distance; and then, at the very moment when the minnow has got into a position which leaves a space of clear water in front, so that Mr. Jack shall not hurt his nose against any hard substance when he gets carried on by the violence of his rush, he darts at the minnow with the speed of Shakspeare's Puck:—"I go, I go! look, how I go! Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow."

THE SWALLOW'S NEST. OFTEN in former years the twitter of the birds glittering in the morning sun was the first sound that met my ear during the wakeful hours which frequently accompany illness after the worst crisis has passed, and you are recovering by degrees. The gutters ran beneath my bedroom windows, and I could see the steel-blue backs of the swallows as they sat on the rims of the gutter, twisting their little heads, opening their yellow-lined beaks, singing to their hearts' content. Whole families would perch there together, or the young would rest in rows of four or five, according to the nest-broods of each. How delightful to see them fed by their agile parents! how tantalizing to have them almost within reach of my hands, yet not to be able to catch them or give them a kiss, as they would cower in my hollow hands if I only could have got them in there!

THE BRAVE DOG OF ST. BERNARD. WHERE the St. Bernard Pass climbs up Amid the Alpine snows, The far-famed Hospice crowns the heights With shelter and repose. Its inmates, with their faithful dogs, Are truly friends in need When snowdrifts block the traveler's way, And blinding storms mislead. Brave "Barry," once, far down the track That crossed a glacier steep, Found buried deep beneath the snow A poor boy, fast asleep. He licked the cold, numb hands and face To warmth and life once more, And bore him safely on his back Up to the Hospice door. COME TO ME! G—THE GIRAFFE. FULL seventeen feet the Giraffe tall Measures "from top to toe," And with his neck outstretched can reach The branch that bendeth low. H—THE HYENA. IN Asia and in Africa The fierce Hyenas prowl, And oft at night the traveler starts To hear their savage howl. I—THE ICHNEUMON. A FOE to birds and rats and mice, See the Ichneumon glide! Oft, too, on reptiles or their eggs Its hungry teeth are tried. MOTHER-DEER AND BABY. SOMETHING has startled them, as they fed securely enough, one would think, on the grass at the foot of the rocks; and if we could only get a little nearer, this is what we should hear the mother-deer saying to her baby: "My child, I am sure there is danger about; look out and tell me if you see the slightest movement on the hill yonder, or if I see it first, I will give you the signal, and you must follow me, and run for your very life."

And the baby, with cocked ears and glistening eyes, promises to do as it is told. But after all it will probably prove a false alarm, for this is not the time of year for deerstalking; and I dare say the noise they heard was made by a party of people coming up the valley below to see the waterfall, which is famous in the neighborhood.

WHOOPING CRANE. T HE Whooping Crane is much larger than the common crane, which it otherwise much resembles except in color; its plumage, in its adult state, is pure white, the tips of the wings black. He spends the winter in the southern parts of North America, and in summer migrates far northwards. The crane feeds on roots, seeds, etc., as well as on reptiles, worms, insects, and on some of the smaller quadrupeds. They journey in flocks from fifty to a hundred, and rise to an immense height in the air, uttering their loud harsh cries, and occasionally alighting to seek food in fields or marshes; and when they descend on a field they do sad havoc to the crops, several doing sentinel duty while the majority are feeding. In general it is a very peaceful bird, both in its own society and those of the forest. T HIS is the largest existing species of the deer family, and is a native of the northern parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. It grows to be six feet high and twelve hundred pounds in weight. They are very rare in Europe and this country, but at one time they extended as far south as the Ohio River. They love the woods and marshy places, and live off of the branches of trees, being unable to eat grass unless they get upon their knees. They are very timid, and not easily approached by the hunter, but should a dog come in the way, one stroke from an elk's foot will kill it. Many of the parents of our little friends in Maine and Canada are, no doubt, familiar with the elk and its habits.

TOYS FOR ANIMALS. T HE "Daily News" says: "Our readers have often doubtless observed appeals in the papers for toys for sick children. We hear that a naturalist who feels much for animals is struck with the cruelty of leaving the creatures at the 'Zoo' without anything to play with. This gentleman had in his possession a young otter, for whom he made a wooden ball, to the extreme delight of his pet, who used to divert his simple instinct with it for whole hours at a stretch. Following up the idea, the same gentleman presented the elephants and rhinoceroses in the Zoological Gardens with globes for diversion suited to their sizes, but it seems the elephants took to playing ball so furiously, that 'there was danger of their houses being swept down altogether; so they were forbidden to use them indoors.' The polar bear was given a toy which, we are told, 'amuses him immensely.'" **THE SUCKING-PIG.** T HE other day our children came home delighted at having seen a little pig drinking out of a bottle, just like a baby. I went to see it, and I was introduced to its owner, who lived in a cottage, the principal room of which was painted light blue. A good-natured old woman was there with her two orphan grand-children. The red tiles of the cottage floor were enlivened by a gray-and-white cat, and a shiny-skinned little pig, of about a month old, which was fed out of a feedingbottle. This was the hero of the place. The little pig is grateful for good treatment, and as capable of attachment as a horse or a dog. The pig is intelligent, and it can be taught tricks. Performing pigs are often the attractions of country fairs. I have seen pigs in the poor neighborhoods of London follow their masters through noisy streets, and into busy public-houses, where they laid down at their masters' feet like a dog.

BELL-RINGERS. W HEN a child, my father took me to see some feats performed by some traveling cats. They were called "the bell-ringers," and were respectively named Jet, Blanche, Tom, Mop, and Tib. Five bells were hung at regular intervals on a round hoop erected on a sort of stage. A rope was attached to each bell after the manner of church bells. At a given signal from their master, they all sprang to their feet, and at a second signal, each advanced to the ropes, and standing on their hind feet, stuck their front claws firmly into the ropes, which were in that part covered with worsted, or something of the kind, so as to give the claws a firmer hold.

There was a moment's pause—then No. 1 pulled his or her rope, and so sounded the largest bell; No. 2 followed, then and so on, till a regular peal was rung with almost as much precision and spirit as though it were human hands instead of cats' claws that effected it.

THE GUINEA-PIG. THE Guinea-pig is a native of South America, and is remarkable for the beauty and variety of its colors, and the neatness of its appearance. These little pets are very careful in keeping themselves and their offspring neat and tidy, and may be frequently seen smoothing and dressing their fur, somewhat in the manner of a cat. After having smoothed and dressed each other's fur, both turn their attention to their young, from whose coats they remove the smallest speck of dirt, at the same time trying to keep their hair smooth and unruffled. The Guinea-pig feeds on bread, grain, fruit, vegetables, tea leaves, and especially garden parsley, to which it is very partial. It generally gives birth to seven and eight young at a time, and they very soon are able to take care of themselves.

FAITHFUL FRIENDS. J—**THE JAY.** METHINKS the Jay's a noisy bird, Yet now with crimson breast, Silent and fond, she watches o'er The treasures of her nest.

K—**THE KANGAROO.** THE timid Kangaroo frequents The wild Australian brakes; With long hind-legs and fore-legs short Tremendous leaps he takes.

L—**THE LION.** WITH tawny hide and flowing mane, And loud-resounding roar, Of animals the Lion's king, And all bow down before.

WAITING. CONFUCIUS AITING for master to come down the stair, Are "Noble" and "Floss," and his favorite mare— "Brenda" the gentle, with skin soft and gray, Waiting the signal, "Now off and away." Noble stands holding the whip and the rein, His gaze fixed on Brenda, who tosses her mane; While dear little Floss sits quietly by, Winking and blinking her liquid brown eye. Master's so kind to them—nothing to fear Have horse or dogs when his footsteps they hear; Look how they're waiting with eagerness there, Ready to go with him everywhere. And what a pleasure it is when these three There on the staircase their kind master see; Now he is mounted, the waiting is o'er— Floss, Brenda, and Noble race off from the door.

Argus is a bird with magnificent plumage; it inhabits the forests of Java and Sumatra, and takes its place beside the pheasant, from which it only differs in being unprovided with spurs, and by the extraordinary development of the secondary feathers of the wings in the male. The tail is large and round, and the two middle feathers are extremely long and quite straight. When paraded, as it struts round the female, spreading its wings and tail, this bird presents to the dazzled eye of the spectator two splendid bronze-colored fans, upon which is sprinkled a profusion of bright marks much resembling eyes. It owes its name of Argus to these spots.

THE YOUNG MONKEY. A LITTLE Monkey chanced to find A walnut in its outward rind; He snatched the prize with eager haste, And bit it, but its bitter taste Soon made him throw the fruit away. Soon made him throw the fruit away. "I've heard," he cried, "my mother say (But she was wrong), the fruit was good; Preserve me from such bitter food!" A monkey by experience taught, The falling prize with pleasure caught; Took off the husk and broke the shell, The kernel peeled, and liked it well. "Walnuts," said he, "are good and sweet, But must be opened ere you eat." And thus in life you'll always find Labor comes first—reward behind.

THE CLEVER FOX. ONE summer's day on the banks of the river Tweed, in Scotland, a fox sat watching a brood of wild ducks feeding in the river. Presently a branch of a fir tree floated in their midst, which caused them to rise in the air, and after circling round for some time, they again settled down on their feeding ground. At short intervals this was repeated, the branch floating from the same direction, until the ducks took no further notice of it than allowing it to pass by. noticed this; so he got a larger branch than the others, and crouching down among the leaves, got afloat, and coming to the ducks, who took no notice of the branch, he seized two of the ducks, and then allowed himself to be floated to the other side,

where, we suppose, he had a repast. TESTING HIS STRENGTH. SEE this monster of the forest uprooting trees, as a test of its strength before entering on a fight with one of its companions, which is often a bitter struggle for supremacy. There are two species of Elephants, the Indian and African; the ears of the latter are much larger than the Indian, covering the whole shoulder, and descending on the legs. Elephants live in herds, and each herd has a leader— generally the largest and most powerful animal—who exercises much control over the herd, directing its movements, and giving the signal in the case of danger. The trunk of the Elephant is of great service to it, and is a wonderful combination of muscle; Currier, the famous Naturalist, stating that there is not far short of 40,000 muscles, having distinct action, and so giving it an acute sense of touch and smell—so much so, that it can pick up a pin, or pluck the smallest leaf. The Elephant is generally about ten feet high, and sometimes reaches to twelve feet, and lives to the age of seventy or eighty years. A WISE DOG. THERE is a curly retriever at Arundel bearing the name of “Shock,” which sets an example of good manners and intelligence to the animals which are not dumb. He carries the cat of the stables tenderly in his mouth, and would carry the kitten, but at present the kitten prefers its own means of locomotion. When Sanger's elephant got into trouble in the river Arun, this wise Shock was sent to turn him out, and his perseverance succeeded. He often will insist on carrying a bundle of umbrellas to the station, and safely he delivers them to their owners, and then, with many wags of his brown tail, he demands a halfpenny for his trouble. This halfpenny he carries to the nearest shop, lays it on the counter, and receives his biscuit in return. Need we say this dog has a kind, sensible master? SUMMER. M—THE MANDRILL. IN Africa the Mandrill lives, Full five feet tall he stands; With furrowed cheek-bones, tufted hair, And hairy arms and hands. N—THE NYLGHAU. IN Hindustan's dense forest-depths, Among the tangled groves, With slender limbs but powerful frame The shapely Nygheu roves. O—THE OSTRICH. O'ER desert sands the Ostrich skims, Beneath a burning sky; Swift as the swiftest horse he runs, But has no wings to fly. SPRING. WHEN Spring's soft breath sets free the rills, And melts the Winter's hoards of snow, How fast they leap adown the hills, How wildly t'wards old ocean flow! Jack Frost! we gladly part with thee, For long indeed thy iron hand Hath crushed the flowers relentlessly That longed to brighten all the land. And now the busy plow can trace Its furrows through the fallow ground, While countless lovely blossoms grace The blooming fruit trees all around. Yet though the snow amidst the brook Is gliding fast—it fain would stay, And as it takes a lingering look, Says:—“Listen ere I flow away! “Soon as Spring spoke its royal word, I humbly doffed my wintry cap— But when the north wind's voice was heard, I covered up the earth's green lap. “And gently swathed each baby flower, As snug as in a feather bed— Until in field, and wood, and bower, Their fragrance might be safely shed. “And now my snowdrops gaily ring A merry peal to herald May— And all rejoice at coming Spring, While I must hasten far away!” SUMMER. NOW the corn has grown ripe in the Summer's hot days, And the reaping began with the sun's early rays, Mike and Jack since the morn, Have been cutting the corn, Which is bound up by Peggy and Sue; And gay, flaunting poppies and flow'rets of blue Wag their heads o'er the sheaves and seem nodding at you. But when noon's sultry hour proves oppressively hot, The reapers look out for a cool, shady spot, And a respite they snatch, Their short meal to dispatch, And well earned indeed is their rest! While the children give chase to the hare that's hard prest, Or the bird by the harvest disturbed from her nest. For what care the children for heat or for work, At that age when all labor so gaily we shirk? Play, then, little ones, play, And enjoy while ye may, But to all of God's creatures be kind— Then when months have rolled by and left Summer behind, Its joys unalloyed shall still dwell in your mind.

TIMOTHY. TIMOTHY was our pet hedgehog. I bought him in Leadenhall Market, brought him home, and put him into the back-garden, which is walled in. There, to that extent, he had his liberty, and many, and many a time did I watch him from my study window walking about in the twilight among the grass, searching for worms and other insects. And very useful was he to the plants by so doing. When the dry weather came food got more scarce; then Timothy was fed with bread and milk from the back-kitchen window, which is on a level with the stone. Soon he came to know that when he was hungry there was the supply; and often he would come and scratch at the glass or at the back-door for his supper, and after getting it, walk off to the garden beds to make himself useful. Few people know of the great use of a hedgehog in a garden, or they would be more generally kept. Our Timothy, poor fellow, however, in spite of all his good qualities, came to a bad end. A strange dog coming one day, saw him walking about in search of his accustomed food, and pounced on him and bit him; still I had hopes of his recovery, but in a few days he died, and all of us were sorry. ONE Charles Durand, of whose travels and adventures a book has been written, owned a cockatoo, which he carried about with him on his journeys; the bird's name was Billy, and he seems to have been as wise as he was loving. Charles was asleep in his tent, when he was roused by a sharp, shrill cry of the bird, of "Time to rise! time to rise!" accompanied by a violent flapping of the wings. So awakened, Charles looked around, wondering what had disturbed his feathered friend. The cause was soon plain—a deadly snake lay coiled up close to his bed, prepared to spring on the defenseless man. Just when he thought that all hope was at an end, the brave cockatoo sprang from his perch, seized the reptile by the neck, and held him tight till his master could summon help. HARE TAKING THE WATER. I was pike-fishing one season on the Dorset Stour below Canford Major, when on passing from one field to another, I disturbed a hare. The animal at once entered an open, dry drain, and I lost sight of her. Presently, as I silently made my way plying my rod by the bank, I saw her, this time without any appearance of alarm, take to the water, and making her way through the sedges. She put her head to the stream so that the force of the current, with but slight exertion by swimming on her part, carried her nearly in a straight line to the opposite bank. Here I watched her to see whether she would trundle herself like a dog, but she merely rested a bit, letting the water run from her, and then set off at a rattling pace across the mead, which doubtless soon thoroughly dried her. AUTUMN. THE breeze is somewhat cooler growing, The flowers less scent unfold— But see!—the luscious grape is growing With purple or with gold. Now drain we up The social cup, When music blithe invites us— Though Winter threatens from afar Our present mirth he shall not mar, While Autumn still delights us. Yes! Autumn brings the best of pleasures, With grape and garnered corn— And lays in stores of future treasures To glad the year unborn. What need we dread, When wine and bread God's bounteous hand hath given? Oh! rather let our voices raise, In fervent hope and humble praise, A grateful hymn to Heaven! WINTER. TERN Winter—most unwelcome guest!— The earth in whitest robes has drest; And hast'ning through the crunching snow, With tinkling bells, the sledges go. The leafless wood looks drear and sad, No birds sing now with voices glad;— But boys are romping far and wide, And o'er the ice delight to slide. When on the panes with frost encased, The mimic fir-trees may be traced, In spite of biting cold and snow, Poor housewives to the forest go. And there they gather moss to form Their children's bed all soft and warm, And dried up twigs to make a blaze That cheers the hearth with kindling rays.

Their treasures next the ashes yield, And hot potatoes lie revealed, Which little hungry mouths invite,
With dainty smell and welcome sight. Lord! all Thy ways are great and good! Thou giv'st e'en orphaned
birds their food— Thy blessing and Thy fostering care Alike the hut and palace share! OUR WILD BIRDS. I
dare say you notice that all the birds in this picture have long beaks. We may be sure from this that they
live in places and seek for their food in ways in which long beaks are just what they want. The fact is
they are all marsh birds, and the soil of marshes being wet and soft, and full of worms, these long beaks
enable them to probe it, and so get at the worms. I think the beaks of birds afford a striking example of
how good God is in adapting creatures to the mode of life He has appointed for them. The eagles and
hawks, you know, are provided with strong, short bills to enable them to seize and tear flesh. Those of
canaries and all the finches are just the very instruments to crack seeds with. Parrots, with their
tremendous weapons, can crush the hardest nuts of the tropic forest. The crossbill is fitted with a
wonderful tool for tearing fir-cones to pieces. Robins and the other warblers have soft bills, which are all
they want for eating insects and grubs. ON river banks, on shores of lakes, Or marge of sounding sea,
The Pelican, in quest of fish, Roams uncontrolled and free. Q—THE QUAIL. WHEN come the leaves and
buds of spring Then comes the swift-winged quail: But ever quits our western lands Before the winter
pale. R—THE RHINOCEROS. DOWN to the waterside to drink, Within the jungle's shade, Has come the
huge Rhinoceros, In knotty hide arrayed. BLACKBIRDS AND YOUNG. A country lad having taken the nest
of some blackbirds containing young ones, made off with it, but was closely pursued by the parents,
who tried to peck his face so as to make him give them up. Mr. Jesse relates a similar instance, where a
pair of old birds followed a boy into a house, pecking at his head while he was carrying off one of their
young ones. People little think of the misery they cause when they rob the birds of their nestlings. The
bird's nest is thus described: Now put together odds and ends, Picked up from enemies and friends: See
bits of thread and bits of rag, Just like a little rubbish bag. A USEFUL PILOT. T HERE is a trained sheep
kept on board a steamer plying in California. It goes out on the gang-plank, when a flock is to be loaded,
to show that the approach is safe, and to act as pilot to the flock, which readily follows it on to the boat.
The sheep, when in a flock, are all alike timid, and it is difficult to find a leader among them, each being
afraid to go first; but when one goes, they all follow after, so that this clever sheep is very valuable. The
only other way to get a flock on board a ship is to catch one and drag it on board; but this is not such a
good way as having the clever "Pilot." JACK. T HE name of the bear is "Jack." I fetched him from the
West India Import Dock on the of November. He was running about with another bear on board ship,
but the job was to catch him. After many attempts we at last put a strong collar round his neck, to which
was attached a long chain, and then we got him into a large barrel, and fastened the head on with hoop-
iron, lowered him over the side of the vessel into a boat, and then pulled to the quay, and hauled him up
into a cart. For a time the little fellow was quiet enough, but he got very inquisitive when being driven
toward the city, and wanted to have a look round. I managed to quiet him by giving him pieces of lump
sugar. He arrived safely at the Crystal Palace, and has lived in an aviary till the beginning of last month,
when he was put into his new bear-pit. The little fellow has grown twice the size he was when he first
came. He is very playful, but sometimes shows his teeth when he is teased. JUST ARRIVED! S—THE
SWALLOW. NOW hovering on rapid wing, Now down to earth, now high, And, circling round in airy ring
To chase the painted fly.

T—THE TIGER. FIERCEST of all the beasts of prey, With eyes that glow like fire, And glossy hide, who does not dread The Tiger, yet admire? U—THE URSINE OPOSSUM. IN hollow trees the Opossum lives, And slumbers through the day, But when the shades of night descend, Goes forth in search of prey. A SINGULAR HABIT OF THE WOODCOCK. A MONG several curious habits of the woodcock, described by the editor of the Zoologist, its practice of carrying its young is perhaps the most interesting. The testimony of many competent witnesses is cited to corroborate the statement. The late L. Lloyd, in his "Scandinavian Adventures," wrote, "If, in shooting, you meet with a brood of woodcocks, and the young ones cannot fly, the old bird takes them separately between her feet, and flies from the dogs with a moaning cry." The same author makes a similar statement in another work, this habit of the woodcock having been observed by a friend. One of the brothers Stuart gives, in "Lays of the Deer Forest," a graphic account of the performance. He says, "As the nests are laid on dry ground, and often at a distance from moisture, in the latter case, as soon as the young are hatched, the old bird will sometimes carry them in her claws to the nearest spring or green strip. In the same manner, when in danger, she will rescue those which she can lift; of this we have frequent opportunities for observation in Tarnaway. Various times when the hounds, in beating the ground, have come upon a brood, we have seen the old bird rise with the young one in her claws and carry it fifty or a hundred yards away." THE SKY-LARK. H AS any one ever told you that they were "happy as a lark," and have you stopped to think how happy a lark is?—its joyous flight up into the sky, as high or higher than the sight of man can reach, singing louder and louder, and more and more gayly the higher it ascends? When the sweet hay-time comes on, and mowers are busy in the fields with their great scythes, it is sometimes a dangerous season for larks, who make their nests on the ground. Often the poor little nests must suffer; but only think how ingenious their owners are if they do. A mower once cut off the upper part of a lark's nest. The lark sitting in it was uninjured. The man was very sorry for what he had done; but there was no help for it—at least so he thought. The lark knew better, and soon afterward a beautiful dome was found made of grass over the nest by the patient, brave bird. S OME years ago a German Artist was travelling in Norway, on foot, with his knapsack on his back and his stick in his hand. He lodged most of time in the cottages that he fell in with on his road. In one of them there was a seal, which the fisherman had found on the sand, after harpooning the mother of the poor animal. No sooner was it admitted into the cottage than the seal became the friend of the family and the playmate of the children. It played from morning till night with them, would lick their hands, and call them with a gentle little cry, which is not unlike the human voice, and it would look at them tenderly with its large blue eyes, shaded by long black lashes. It almost always followed its master to fish, swimming around the boat and taking a great many fish, which it delivered to the fisherman without even giving them a bite. A dog could not have been more devoted, faithful, teachable, or even more intelligent. THE KING OF THE MOUNTAINS. W HAT is that, mother?" "The eagle, boy, Proudly careering his course with joy, Firm on his own mountain vigor relying, Breasting the dark storm, the red bolt defying; His wing on the wind, and his eye on the sun, He swerves not a hair, but bears onward, right on. Close to the sun in lonely lands, Ringed with the azure world he stands; The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls, He watches from his mountain walls. Boy, may the eagle's flight ever be thine, Onward and upward, and true to the line." THE BEE. W H! busy bee, On wing so free, Yet all in order true; Each seems to know, Both where to go, And what it has to do.

'Mid summer heat, The honey sweet, It gathers while it may; In tiny drops, And never stops To waste its time in play. I hear it come, I know its hum; It flies from flower to flower; And to its store, A little more It adds, each day and hour. THE LARK AND YOUNG. V—THE VULTURE. ON rugged rods the Vulture waits To scent its carrion prey, When down, into the plains below It takes its rapid way. W—THE WOLF. FIERCE is the wolf, and crafty too, And swift of foot is he; In forest depths and mountain glens He loves to wander free. X—THE XEMA. IN far-off lands, 'neath northern skies, And on the surfy shore, Lives the lone Xema, and delights In ocean's thunder roar. MOTHER AND PUPS. T HE dog that you see here looking quite maternal with her family around her, is the sheep dog, the shepherd's faithful and invaluable friend. It is the most sagacious and intelligent of all dogs, and volumes of anecdotes might be written of its intelligence and affection. Mr. St. John, in his "Highland Sports," tells the following: "A shepherd once, to prove the quickness of his dog, who was lying before the fire where we were talking, said to me in the middle of a sentence concerning something else, 'I'm thinking, sir, the cow is in the potatoes;' when the dog, who appeared to be asleep, immediately jumped up, and leaping through the open window and on to the roof of the house, where he could get a view of the potato field, and not seeing the cow there, he looked into the farm-yard, where she was, and finding that all was right, returned to his old position before the fire." THE FRIENDLY TERNS. O NE day the Scotch naturalist shot at a Tern, hoping to secure the beautiful creature as a specimen. The ball broke the bird's wing, and he fell screaming down to the water. His cries brought other terns to the rescue, and with pitiful screams they flew to the spot where the naturalist stood, while the tide drifted their wounded brother toward the shore. But before Mr. Edward could secure his prize, he observed, to his astonishment, that two of the terns had flown down to the water, and were gently lifting up their suffering companion, one taking hold of either wing. But their burden was rather heavy; so, after carrying it seaward about six or seven yards, they let it down, and two more came, picked it up, and carried it a little farther. By means of thus relieving each other they managed to reach a rock where they concluded they would be safe. AN EXCITING TAIL. Y—THE YAK. IN Central Asia, far away, 'Mid Thibet's pastures green, With shaggy hide and bushy tail, The valued Yak is seen. Z—THE ZEBRA. AS strong and swift as any horse, The Zebra skims the plain; With glossy bands of deepest black, Long ears, and upright mane. SHEEP AND LAMBS. HE sheep were in the fold at night; And now a new-born lamb Totters and trembles in the light, Or bleats beside its dam. How anxiously the mother tries, With every tender care, To screen it from inclement skies, And the cold morning air! The hail-storm of the east is fled, She seems with joy to swell; While ever, as she bends her head, I hear the tinkling bell. So while for me a mother's prayer Ascends to Heaven above, May I repay her tender care With gratitude and love. squirrel lithe and wee! Thy fur's as soft as down can be, Thy teeth as ivory are white, Yet hard enough through nuts to bite. "Squirrel—squirrel lithe and wee! How gladly would I purchase thee— But mother says: 'Twill never do, Thou nibblest table, book and shoe.'" Squirrel—squirrel hung his head; "Oh! speak not thus," he sadly said, "Heav'n gave me once a woodland home Where I the livelong day might roam, And gaily leap from branch to twig As blithe and merry as a grig; Then came a wicked man who laid The snare by which I'm captive made, And now 'twill be my mournful doom Instead of in the forest free, To live pent in a narrow room By way of bush or stately tree! What wonder if, thus sad and lorn, From all my dearest habits torn, A-foraging I sometimes go And get a snubbing or a blow?

Child, should you on some summer's day, Within the greenwood chance to stray, I pray you that from me you greet The happy creatures that you meet, The fawns, ants, sparrows and the hares And tell them how with me it fares, That while they leap, creep, sing and fly. In chains and prison I must lie." A STROLL IN THE COUNTRY. PUT on your hat and let us take A stroll amidst the rural scene— The boat is gliding o'er the lake, The cows are browsing pastures green, The herdsman's horns the echoes wake, And holiday like Nature's self we'll make! Into the garden next let's come To pluck a pear or downy plum, And hear the bird's sweet trilling— While all around, on fragrant beds, The flowerets lift their little heads, The air with perfume filling. The merry kid is leaping gaily, And soberer Nanny gives us daily Sweet milk to make us cheese; While all our tastes to please, His nets the busy fisher flings, And eels and carp for dinner brings.

THE OTTER. THE Otter belongs to a class of animals which we may call the Weasel tribe. Their bodies are long and lithe, and their legs short. This family includes the weasel (its smallest member), the stoat, the ferret, the pole-cat, the marten, and the otter (its largest member). You may then think of the Otter as a water-ferret, or waterweasel. He can swim most elegantly, and he is a beautiful diver. Let a fish glide underneath him, and he is after it in a moment; and as the fish darts here and there to escape, the Otter follows each rapid movement with unerring precision. When the fish is caught, the Otter carries it to the bank and makes a meal. But the Otter is like naughty Jack who leaves a saucy plate—he spoils much more fish than he eats. The trout and other fish are so much alarmed at the appearance of an Otter, that they will sometimes fling themselves on the bank to get out of his way.

THE MASTIFF. THE mastiff is a large, grave, sullen-looking dog, with a wide chest, noble head, long switch tail, bright eyes, and a loud, deep voice. Of all dogs this is the most vigilant watcher over the property of his master, and nothing can tempt him to betray the confidence reposed in him. Notwithstanding his commanding appearance, and the strictness with which he guards the property of his master, the mastiff is possessed of great mildness of character, and is very grateful for any favors bestowed upon him. I once went into the barn of a friend where there was a mastiff chained; I went up to the dog and patted him on the head, when out rushed the groom from the stable exclaiming, "Come away, sir! He's dangerous with strangers." But I did not remove my hand nor show any fear. The consequence was, that the dog and I were the best of friends; but had I shown any fear, and hastily removed my hand, I might have fared rather badly, for this dog always couples fear with guilt.

THE CUNNING WOOD-PIGEONS. THE one who loves our feathered friends has described a curious instance of their instinct. On the back lawn at a gentleman's house, they have a feeding-box for the pheasants, which opens on their perching upon it, but remains shut if any lesser bird than a hen pheasant perches there, which saves the contents from the thefts of these, and of rats, mice, and other vermin. But the gentleman discovered that the contents of the box was being more rapidly emptied than the wants of the pheasants warranted. So he kept a watch on the box, and soon discovered a wood-pigeon perch on the box, but his weight not being sufficient to open the lid, he beckoned to another pigeon, and their combined weight made the lid fly open, and after each had taken what they required, they flew away, and the box closed with a "click."

SEA REPTILES. THERE were in the sea in very ancient times—long before the flood—two very large and wonderful reptiles. Of them we present striking illustrations. One of them has been named the Ichthyosaurus, which means Fish Reptile. Its head somewhat resembled that of the crocodile, except that the orbit was much larger, and had the nostril placed close to it, as in the whale, and not near the end of the snout. It had four paddles and a powerful tail, and was very active in its movements and a rapid swimmer.

The other huge reptile was the Plesiosaurus, the meaning of which is "Near to a Reptile." Its structure was very singular and its character very strange. In the words of Buckland: "To the head of a lizard, it united the teeth of the crocodile, a neck of enormous length, resembling the body of a serpent, a trunk and a tail of the size of an ordinary quadruped, the ribs of a chameleon, and the paddles of a whale."

SWISS MOUNTAIN SCENERY. I N Switzerland, one of the chief employments of the people is that of herdsmen and shepherds, and nearly the half of the surface of the country is occupied as mountain pastures and meadows. Here you see the woman tending the sheep and goats, and spinning industriously, while her husband is busy with some other part of the duties of tending the sheep. It is often painful to see how much the poor sheep and oxen suffer while being driven through the streets. It is pitiful to see them looking in vain for some place of rest and shelter. Little boys in towns sometimes like to HELP—as they call it—to drive cattle, but they generally increase the terror and confusion of the poor beasts, and little think of the pain they are causing. Sheep and goats are very useful to us; besides serving us for food, they supply our cloth and flannel clothes, blankets, and other warm coverings.

PARTRIDGE AND YOUNG. O NE afternoon, while walking across a meadow, near a village, I saw a dog of the terrier breed pursuing a partridge, which every now and then turned and made at it with its wings down, then rolled over, then ran, and again rushed at the dog. I drove the dog away, when I was surprised to see a number of young partridges running from behind the old bird who had been trying to protect them from the dog, and guarding their retreat. So you see how brave the most timid creatures become when in danger, and when their young are near. Instinct tells them that they have to protect their little ones, and risk everything, even their own lives, for their safety. We can get beautiful lessons every day from the birds and poor dumb animals, if we only study them as we ought. THE KINGFISHERS' HOME. V ERY pretty birds were, with dark, glossy, green wings, spotted with light blue. Their tails were also light blue, and there was a patch of yellow near their heads. The little Kingfishers were quite as pretty as their parents, and were exceedingly proud of them. "Only they eat a great deal," said; "I am getting very tired." For had been flying backward and forward all day, and it was surprising to see the quantity of fish he caught for his family. When he built his nest he took care that it should be near a stream, and he found one close by a high cliff that Mrs. Kingfisher said would be just the place; so they scooped out a deep hole, and there the eggs were laid, and in due time six little Kingfishers burst out of the shells. RATS CARRYING EGGS UP STAIRS. R ATS are very ingenious little creatures; they have actually been known to convey eggs up a staircase, from the pantry to their nest! Here is a beautiful picture, by Mr. Harrison Weir, from the "Children's Friend," showing how they did it. The rat bears little resemblance to the rats with which we are chiefly acquainted, namely, the black rat, the albino or white rat, and the brown rat. The other day, as I was walking by the river-side, I saw a beautiful little creature sitting on a stone in the stream, with a piece of succulent root between its forepaws, and nibbling its repast in perfect peace with every living thing. It was timid and innocent in the expression of its countenance. Its color was of a reddish brown. It was about as large as the common rat of the sewers, but its tail was much shorter, and covered with hair. A HERON ATTACKED BY A HAWK. T HE Heron when attacked by an eagle or falcon endeavors to escape by rising in the air and getting above its foe. The wings of the heron strike the air with an equal and regular motion which raises its body to such an elevation that at a distance nothing is seen except the wings, which are at last lost sight of in the region of the clouds. If its enemy gets above it, and upon or near its body, it defends itself vigorously with its long and powerful beak, and often comes off victorious.