

Buttercup Gold & Other Stories

The Robin

by Ellen Robena Field

One day, while walking home from the Kindergarten, I met some travelers coining from the South. They did not come on the car or the boat, but they traveled very quickly. As they passed me I fancied I heard them say, "How do you do? We are glad to see you again. Are there plenty of houses to rent this Spring? You will have a great many more visitors by and by, for our friends are coming North as soon as the weather gets a little warmer."

"Yes," I replied, "some of the houses you occupied last spring are waiting for you, and you will find pleasant places on which to build new ones in Crab Apple Lane, Woodbine Walk, Maple Park, and Apple Tree Avenue."

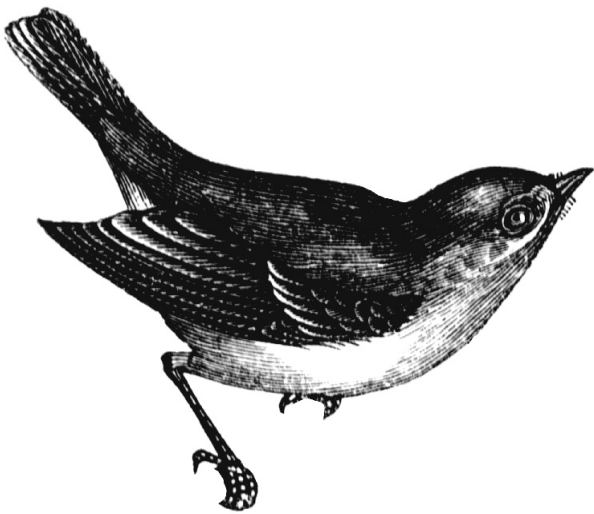
"Thank you," they called, and hurried on, leaving me to wonder what sort of a journey they had. All day long I saw them flying to and fro, carrying loads of straw and mud.


Just at twilight there came a rap at my window, and there stood Mr. Robin Redbreast, looking in as saucily as you please. "I thought you'd be there," he chirped; "and if you will look out a minute, I'll show you my house."

Sure enough, there was a tiny home on Apple tree Avenue, just at the corner of Branch Alley. There was a cellar of mud, and the rest of the cottage was neatly woven of straw. "How do you like it?" he chirped.

Of course I admired it, and asked him if he was all ready to go to housekeeping. "All but the beds," he replied, "but if you will give me some hair and a few feathers, I will soon have a soft place for our eggs to rest on."

I threw some out, and in a short time the nest was lined. Then Robin flew off, returning





the next day with his mate, who showed her delight at the new home by cozily settling down in it.

Every morning the birds gave a concert above my window, and one day I heard some new notes, and, peeping out, saw that five little robins had come to brighten the cozy nest. Such a busy time as the papa and mamma Redbreasts had now! Such a digging for worms to drop into the big mouths which seemed to be always asking for food! In a few weeks the baby birds learned to fly, and left the nest to make new homes and sing their own sweet songs.

The old birds stayed on the Avenue awhile longer, but when the leaves put on their holiday dresses, and the flowers tied on their nightcaps and went to sleep, the Redbreasts sang good-by to their friends and, spreading their wings, flew away over the house tops toward the Sunny South.