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[Bird Number.]

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, VICTORIA.

Clarice Wasson

THE SCHOOL PAPER.

FOR GRADES V. AND VI. (1913).

No. 182.] [*Registered at the General Post Office, Melbourne, for transmission by post as a newspaper.*] MELBOURNE. Price 1d. [Oct. 1, 1913.

SING ON, BLITHE BIRD.

Ber'ry, small, round fruit with seeds.
Cu'ri-ous, odd; strange.
Glit'ter-ing, giving out rays of light; sparkling.
Blessed, prayed or wished happiness to.
Lus'ty, full of life; hearty.
Rogue, rascal. (The name is often used in fondness.)
In'ter-rupt', break in upon.
Blithe (the "i" as in *ice*), cheery; gay.
Ach'ing (*ak'ing*), being in pain; feeling grief.
Meas'ures, here, songs or tunes.

1. I've plucked the berry from the bush, the brown nut from the tree,
But heart of happy little bird ne'er broken was by me;
I saw them in their curious nests,
close crouching, slyly peer
With their wild eyes like glittering
beads, to note if harm were
near.
I passed them by, and blessed
them all; I felt that it was
good
To leave unmoved the creatures
small whose home was in the
wood.



RUFOUS FANTAIL AND NEST.

2. And here, even now, above my
head, a lusty rogue doth sing;
He pecks his swelling breast and
neck, and trims his little
wing;
He will not fly; he knows full well,
while chirping on that spray,
I would not harm him for a world, or interrupt his lay.
Sing on, sing on, blithe bird! and fill my heart with summer gladness;
It has been aching many a day with measures full of sadness!

—William Motherwell (1797-1835), a Scottish poet, born at Glasgow and reared in Paisley. He edited various magazines and books, including a famous collection of Scottish ballads, entitled *Minstrelsy Ancient and Modern*.

* BIRD DAY AT KANYAPELLA.

Mel-o-dy, series of sweet sounds.
Me-tre, arrangement of syllables in poetry.
An-them-ing, singing in parts, time about.
Ac-com-pan-ied (*kum*), helped by supplying blending notes.
Plain-tive, sad; complaining.
Her-alds, those who announce the coming of the great.
Cul-ti-va-tion, adjective, used for growing crops.
Ga-lah, red-crowned parrot; gang-gang cockatoo.
Car-ol-ling, singing joyously.
Per-sists, refuses to stop.
Spi-ral, winding.
Un-dis-turbed, not disquieted.
Sol-i-ta-ry, alone; lonely.
Hov-er-ing (the "o" as in *love*), remaining poised in the air.

"They know not a melody sweeter
Who have heard not the glorious rush
Of music, in morning metre,
When the day breaks over the bush."

1. Here,[1] instead of "sweet birds antheming the morn," Bird Day was ushered in by the crowing of a fine Orpington[2] rooster in a neighboring farmyard. Not only did he succeed in rousing every other rooster within hearing of him, but he also disturbed little Blue-bonnet, who called sleepily from his nest built among the bushes that roof the plant-house. The moon still shone brightly as the sweet notes sounded, accompanied by the plaintive "cur-le-e-ew" of the stone plover; and, then, the roosters were left, for a time, sole heralds of the morn.



Photograph by Mr. L. G. Chandler.]
"LITTLE BLUE-BONNET."

2. The moon sank below the sky-line. Blue-bonnet awoke, and began his song in earnest. Right under the window, he sang; and, above him, the house-swallows joined in with the twittering of their second brood; while, from a pepper-tree, came the cry of "Wake! Teacher, teacher, teacher!" And Blue-bonnet and Brown Flycatcher mingled their notes with the dainty song of a yellow-tailed tit, and the warbling of a lark from the cultivation paddock.

3. Bird Day had dawned,

"And pealed, overhead, the jay's laughter note harsh,
And shot the first sunstreak behind us, and, soon,
The dim, dewy uplands were dreamy with light;"

and, in the forest timber along the river bank,

"The magpies, glad in the morning,
Were carolling clear in the gums."

4. Silently, a pair of blue herons fly overhead to the gum swamp in search of breakfast. Two white cockatoos flit across the river, uttering harsh cries. A flock of galahs rests for a moment on the limbs of some dead box-trees; and, then, the birds alight to march in single file through the green grass, picking up food as they go. Two red-backed parrots pay their usual morning visit to the box-thorn that grows from an old stump; and rosellas screech among the branches of a big red-gum.

5. From over the river, in mellow tones, comes the query of an unknown bird—"Have you-seen Mrs. Bunyip?" Willie Wagtail persists in declaring that he is a "Sweet, pretty creature." One little bird asserts "It's going to be wet;" while another says, "I'm bothered if it is." Leatherheads are calling for "tobacco! tobacco! tobacco!" The mudlark's piercing note and the saucy chirp of the sparrow strike sharply on the ear. Wattle-birds are voicing their joy at the coming of Bird Day. And, hark! there is the glorious song of the thickhead.[3] (Why did they give him such an unlovely name?) As the eye strives to search him out, a flash of sunlight glints on the lovely plumage of a bee-eater, and, later, on the firetail of a finch.



YELLOW-FACED HONEY-EATER.

6. A couple of peaceful doves are quietly feeding at the haystack; a restless flycatcher is hovering over the budding vines; and babblers are chattering all around. A miner flies down to the doorway; tree creepers begin their spiral ascent of the big red-gum. Away in the dense timber, the bell-bird's note is ringing.

7. On the lagoon, a couple of teal ducks, with their young brood, are quite undisturbed by the approach of human beings; and, among the trees, blue kingfishers sit watching. Presently, one darts down to the water, and flies away with a small fish in its bill. Why, there is a solitary pelican, strayed, most likely, from its mates farther along the Murray!

8. Stately black swans sail past, water-hens run along the bank, and cormorants dive gracefully within a few feet of it. A flock of ducks rises as the puffing of a steamer is heard, and fly, quacking, straight ahead. There goes a cockatoo-parrot! Ha! that's a harsh note! It comes from the direction of a heron's nest, and a hawk, hovering above a tall gum-tree, seems to be the cause.

9. No other discord, no sound of gun, comes to mar the peace of the scene, or frighten into silence the song-birds. Honey-eaters and tits of various kinds flit from tree to tree, and all bird life seems to rejoice at the advent of the day that is to set them free from thoughtless cruelty.

—Mrs. F. H. Ennis, formerly of the Kanyapella School, Victoria.

1. Here. The Kanyapella School is situated eight miles east of Echuca, on the River Goulburn, and about four miles from its junction with the Murray. The district includes river, lagoon, swamp, plain, and

forest. On a recent Bird Day, over 100 varieties of birds were seen and identified by teacher and children. The interpretation of the calls of those mentioned in the foregoing article was given by the school children.

2. **Or'ping-ton,** a breed of large, deep-breasted domestic fowls, with single combs and short, unfeathered legs.

3. **Thick'head.** The name now used is "whistler." The rufous-breasted whistler and golden-breasted whistler are well known to school children.

A SONG OF LOVE.

Fledg'lings, birds newly fledged.
Lures, coaxes; entices.
Cheep'ing, chirping.
Mag'ic (*maj'ik*), secret power.
Whence, from what place
Ach'ing (*ayk'ing*), pain of mind or body.
Yearn'ing, having earnest desire or pity.
Mead'ow (the "a" silent), grass-field.

1. Say, what is the spell, when her
fledglings are cheeping,
That lures the bird home to
her nest?
Or wakes the tired mother,
whose infant is weeping,
To cuddle and croon it to
rest?
What the magic that charms
the glad babe in her arms,
Till it coos with the voice of
the dove?
'Tis a secret, and so let us
whisper it low—
And the name of the secret
is Love.
For I think it is Love,
For I feel it is Love,
For I'm sure it is nothing but
Love!

2. Say, whence is the voice that,
when anger is burning,
Bids the whirl of the tempest
to cease?
That stirs the vexed soul with
an aching—a yearning
For the brotherly hand-grip
of peace?
Whence the music that fills all
our being—that thrills
Around us, beneath, and
above?
'Tis a secret! none knows how
it comes or it goes—
But the name of the secret is
Love.
For I think it is Love,
For I feel it is Love,
For I'm sure it is nothing but
Love!

3. Say, whose is the skill that
paints valley and hill
Like a picture so fair to the
sight?
That flecks the green meadow
with sunshine and shadow
Till the little lambs leap with
delight?
'Tis a secret untold to hearts
cruel and cold,
Though 'tis sung, by the
angels above,
In notes that ring clear for the
ears that can hear,
And the name of the secret
is Love.
For I think it is Love,
For I feel it is Love,
For I'm sure it is nothing but
Love!

—LEWIS CARROLL, pen-name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832–1898), English clergyman, story-writer, humorist, and mathematician.

AMONGST THE BIRDS.

State'ly, of noble appearance.
Maj'es-ty, here, greatness of manner.
Con'sort, partner; mate; wife or husband.
Ad-mit', let in.
Struc'ture, that which is built.
Di-am'e-ter, straight line through the center, terminated both ways by the circumference.
Junc'tion, joining.
Sti'fle, choke; smother.
Cu'ri-os'i-ty, eagerness to know.
Dis-tinct'ly, clearly.

1. I am walking beside the Emu Creek,[1] in the Western District of Victoria, with nothing more to do than merely to watch and to listen. Soon, a stately emu stalks along in all his majesty, followed by his graceful consort. Not far away, I notice several of those beautiful birds, the Cape Barren geese—feeding, but watchful, for the wild goose is very shy. They look charming when they are on the ground, their buff plumage suiting so well with the green of the grass.



From a pen-and-ink sketch by Captain Brew.]
REED WARBLER.

2. There, where the rocks project above the water-course, I see something else worth noting—several brown objects, which prove to be the bottle-shaped nests of the fairy martin. These nests are made of clay, as are the nests of most other swallows, but, instead of the half-saucer shape, their form is that of a full-bodied bottle with a narrow, drooping neck, which is just large enough to admit the bird. The whole structure is about a foot in length, and seven or eight inches in diameter at the base.

3. The nest is placed at the junction of shelf and bank, and is, therefore, well protected from the weather and from birds of prey. I should like to know what is inside the nest, but home is a sacred place. I stifle my curiosity, and walk on.

4. On such a day as this, it is natural that the birds should be busy. I notice several parrots, flitting, in an anxious manner, about those old tree-stumps that stand well out in the stream, and suspect they have some treasure there.

5. Perhaps the most winning of the birds I have seen this morning is that little warbler in the reeds below me. He is singing sweet music, giving out his best for anyone who cares to hear it. I try to write down

the sounds as I hear them. He repeats them again and again very distinctly—"Jim—Jim—Jim—birdie—birdie—birdie—come here—come here—come here—Peter—Peter—Peter—Jew—Jew—Jew—duty—duty—duty—twee—twee—twee—widgee—widgee—widgee," and so on. He has evidently a good deal to say about something—something that will not leave his memory even in the night, for he often repeats part of his song when he ought to be asleep.

—Captain Brew, of Ballarat, F.Z.S. (Fellow of the Zoological Society).

1. **E-mu Creek**, probably the Mount Emu Creek, the principal tributary of the River Hopkins.

A SPRING EVENING IN SOUTH GIPPSLAND.

Plain-tive, sad; complaining.
Con-sid-er, deem.
Weath-er-proph-et, one who foretells the weather.
Quar-rel-ling, having an angry dispute
Mer-ri-ly, gaily; joyously.
Out-vie', strive with and overcome.
Me-lo-di-ous, full of sweetness of sound.
Pro-test, objection to something said or done by others.
Prac-tis-ing, using one's powers to gain skill.
Mim-ic, one who acts or speaks like another.
Mock-er-y, act of mocking
Cho-rus (*ko-rus*), song sung by a band of singers.

1. The air is full of sounds on this bright spring evening, and one sits back to listen to them, and to count the number of bird-voices.

2. High over all, though far away, comes the shrill, plaintive, long-drawn trill of the fantail cuckoo, and the throaty "kwah-koo" of the grey bell-magpie, or "rain-bird," as the children sometimes call it. They do not, however, consider it the "proper rain-bird." They set apart that title for the black cockatoo, which they regard as a sure weather-prophet. When these cockatoos are seen to be flying inland, rough, wet weather is looked for; but, when their harsh scream is again heard, and they are flying back to the coast country, our little observers look for a spell of settled fine weather.



COACHWHIP BIRD.

3. Five or six white-backed magpies are quarrelling and gurgling in liquid notes on a tree close at hand; the wrens are chirping merrily in the scrub beside the school; and one blue-cap sounds as if he were trying to outvie all his feathered rivals. From farther down the creek, the melodious note of the butcher-bird comes clearly; and the harsh cry of the red wattle-bird strikes in now and then. A violet-eyed satin bower-bird and two mudlarks are having a dispute in the playground as to the ownership of some crusts. The satin-bird screeches very harshly; and the daintly little magpie-larks give little cries of protest, as if they would like to tell their greedy neighbor that there is enough for all.

4. Up the gully, all the birds of the bush seem to be practising for a grand concert. But we know it is only our beautiful mimic, the lyre-bird. He seems to repeat and throw back the notes of the other birds; and it is hard to tell if it is really the coachwhip-bird's note that I hear, or the lyre-bird's mockery. I have often heard the whip-bird at this time of the evening, but closer to the creek than it seems to be to-night. With much outcry, and many sweet-toned notes, a small flock of lory parrots sweeps over the school.



IN BIRD LAND.

The Sassafras School, Victoria, takes an outing.

5. The kookaburras in the dry tree over the way are not laughing just now, but giving out harsh "yapping" notes. They seem displeased. The young birds are out of the nest, and, perhaps, the elders are chiding them for some fault. It is too early yet for their evening chorus, but it will surely come, even after it seems dark enough for their bedtime. When other bird-voices have sunk into silence, we shall hear, through the night, the plaint of the boobook and the boom of the bittern, for both these birds abound.

—M. H.

* TWO BIRDS FROM ALABAMA.

Bri'er or bri'ar, prickly bush.
Guests, visitors staying for a time.
Cu'ri-ous, here, eager to find out.
Cau-tious-ly, using caution; warily.
Ab-sorb'-ing, sucking or drinking in (knowledge).
Trans-lat'-ing (the "a" as in *ale*), turning from one language into another.
In'ter-vals, spaces between, either of time or distance.
Soli'-ta-ry, alone; lonely.
Glis'tened (the "t" silent), shone; sparkled; glittered.
Moss'-scal'-loped, fringed with curving lines of moss.

1. Up this seashore, in some briers,
Two feathered guests from Alabama,[1] two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted with brown,
And, every day, the he-bird, to and fro, near at hand,
And, every day, the she-bird, crouched on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And, every day, I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating;

2. Till, of a sudden,
Maybe killed, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon, the she-bird crouched not on the nest,
Nor returned that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appeared again.

3. And, thenceforward, all summer, in the sound of the sea;
And, at night, under the full of the moon; in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea;
Or, flitting from brier to brier by day;
I saw, I heard, at intervals, the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

4. Yes, when the stars glistened,
All night long, on the prong of a moss-scalloped stake,
Down almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer, wonderful, causing tears.
He called on his mate.
He poured forth the meanings which I, of all men, know.

—Walt Whitman (1819–1892), an American poet.

1. Al'a-ba'ma (*bah*), one of the United States of North America, east of the Mississippi River and north of Florida.

THE SPURWING, OR WATTLE PLOVER.

In'ter-est-ing, taking hold of one's attention.
In-hab'-it, dwell in.
Sim'i-lar, like in many respects.
In-vis'i-ble, not able to be seen.
Es-pe'cial-ly (*pesh*), most of all; in a very great degree.
Ap-proach'-ing, coming near.
Ap-par'-ent-ly (the "a" as in *care* or as in *am*), seemingly.
Ruse, trick; dodge.
Pre-tend'-ing, making believe; shamming.
Gen'er-al-ly, most often.
In-trud'er (the "u" as in *rude*), one who comes in without being asked or wanted.
Pro-tec'tive, granting protection or defence.
Col'or-a-tion (the first "o" as in *love*), coloring; tinting.
Av'o-cet (*set*), bird with long legs, webbed feet, and upward-curving bill.
Wholly (*hole'lee*), quite; altogether.
Va-ri'e-ty, thing or group of things differing only a little from others of the same kind.

1. These interesting and useful birds are found throughout the whole of Australia, wherever there is any swampy land or like place to meet their needs. They are seen mostly in pairs, except when the young ones are with them after the nesting season. As is the case with most other birds which inhabit open country, their backs are of a dark brown, similar in hue to the dark-colored soil where they are generally found. If danger threatens, they simply squat down on the ground wherever they happen to be, and, by so doing, cover up the white breast and throat, and render themselves nearly invisible.

2. They are very noisy birds; and, long before the danger approaches, they usually fly circling round in the air, especially when they have nests or young in the neighborhood. When a sitting bird sees or hears any enemy approaching her, she quietly slips off her nest, and, running in a crouching position fifty yards or more from the spot, rises up from the ground, uttering her loud cry, apparently with the idea of misleading the intruder as to where her precious treasures are, as he naturally makes for the spot where the bird rises up from the ground. If this ruse does not succeed, the bird shams to be wounded by pretending to have either a broken wing or a broken leg; but this does not always mislead a human being, though it generally has that effect on a dog. When the intruder is safely drawn away from the nest, the bird flies away.



Photograph by Mr. Dudley Le Souëf.]

YOUNG SPURWING.

3. In passing over a dreary inland plain in Australia, one is often cheered by meeting these birds near some small, damp hollow, and is struck by the thought—how lonely any country without birds would be.

4. The spurwing lays four eggs, which are very large at one end and very small at the other. The shape of the egg shows that hardly anything worth calling a nest is made by the birds, for one sees that, with the small end always inwards, they are easily sat upon by the mother, and also that they cannot roll away because of their shape. The eggs are dark mottled brown, in color almost exactly the same as the dark soil on which they are laid. This protective coloration is found also in the case of stilts, avocets, and similar wading birds that lay their eggs on the ground.

5. Spurwings live wholly on insects, destroying large numbers of aquatic ones, besides fresh-water snails, which are frequently the hosts of the liver fluke.[1] Therefore, under no consideration should these birds be shot or their eggs be taken, but it should be our duty to protect them, seeing that they are doing good work for us all the year round.

6. A smaller variety of spurwing, which is usually found on the plains in Riverina[2] and like places, is the black-breasted plover. Its habits are similar to those of the one mentioned above, except that it is frequently found on dry plains and in other places well away from water. It is also much smaller than the spurwing. The variety found in Queensland is the masked plover. It is smaller than the spurwing, but its habits are very similar.

—DUDLEY LE SOUËF, Curator of the Melbourne Zoological Gardens, author of *Wild Life in Australia*, &c.

1. Liv'er fluke. Fluke is a disease-producing animal which passes part of its life in the liver of cattle, swine, and even human beings, but especially of sheep. "In the liver of the sheep, the fluke produces eggs, which find their way into the water. In order to mature, the young must pass into a pond snail, where it grows into another form, that leaves the snail and swims in the water. Then, it attaches itself to a plant, which the sheep eats. Finally, it follows the bile duct to the sheep's liver, and becomes what we know as liver fluke"—From *Nature Studies in Australia*, by Gillies and Hall.

2. Riv'er-i'na (the second "i" as *ee*), pastoral district in New South Wales between the Murray and the Murrumbidgee.

THE BIRD I LIST.

List, poetic for "listen to."
Scope, space in which action is possible; range.
Mor'tal, here, human.
Sear, dry; withered.
A-vail', are of use; serve; profit.
Low'vault'ed, shallow; confined.
Spa'cious, roomy.
En-chant'ment, charm; magic wrought by singing.
Fleet, rapid; fleeting.
Cov'ert (the "o" as in *love*), adjective, hidden from sight.
Sci'ence (*sy'ens'*), knowledge of principles and relations.
Feat, difficult action.

1. The bird I list[1] hath never come
Within the scope of mortal ear;
My prying step would make him dumb,
And the fair tree, his shelter, sear.

2. Behind the hill, behind the sky,
Behind my inmost thoughts, he sings;
No feet avail; to hear it nigh,
The song itself must lend the wings.

3. Sing on, sweet bird, close hid, and raise
Those angel stairways in my brain,
That climb from these low-vaulted[2] days
To spacious sunshines far from pain.

4. Sing when thou wilt, enchantment fleet;
I leave thy covert haunt untrod,
And envy Science not her feat
To make a twice-told tale of God.[3]

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (*lo'-el*), a noted American poet and essayist, who lived from 1819 to 1891.

1. The bird I list. The bird is the viewless "bird of poesy," the echoes of whose singing are found in the poet's rhymes.

2. Low'vault'ed. The word recalls the lines of Oliver Wendell Holmes in "The Chambered Nautilus":—

"Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast."

3. Make a twice'told tale of God. The poet accepts the mystery without attempting or desiring to justify his faith by formal scientific proof.

2. Day after day, he would wander through the deep, fern-grown gullies, and over the ridges crowned with musk and hazel, seeing much that most men never see, harming nothing, loving all. The Bush talked to him as it talks only to those who know and love it—those to whom every stone, every tree, every rustle, tells its own story.

3. The birds and other animals came about him fearlessly; there was something in the grave, happy face that told them he was their friend. So he would live for many days; and it seemed to him that every day taught him more of the great lessons that Nature holds for those who have understanding to read her aright.



From *Beautiful Victoria*, a booklet published by Osboldstone and Co. Photograph by Sears.]

NEAR BACCHUS MARSH, VICTORIA.

4. He would watch the dawn creep over the tree tops, tinging the tender greens with a strange, rosy flush that turned every hanging dewdrop into a flawless gem; seeing, as he lay, the night animals wander past him on their way to rest, while those of the day rose up to greet him with a hundred voices. In the heat of the day, he sought the great rocks in the creeks, in whose cool hollows, fringed with maidenhair, he could sit and dream strange dreams that the world would never understand. But, at night, when the world sleeps, but the Bush wakes up, came the best time of all. Then, it seemed to him that he was most in touch with the ceaseless, invisible life about him; and he would wander through the scrub, smiling gravely, ever and anon, at some bird or animal that flitted by in the moonlight; treading so quietly as not to disturb the very shyest of them all.

5. For, to him, the Bush had given that peace which comes to one who loves Nature truly; who, from the roar of the world, turns to the hush of the forest, to find rest like a tired child.

—From *Timothy in Bushland*, by MARY GRANT BRUCE, a Melbourne writer. By permission of the publishers, Messrs. Ward, Locke, and Co.

1. Bush. The word is spelt with a capital letter throughout because the bush is personified. It is represented as a great, kind friend.
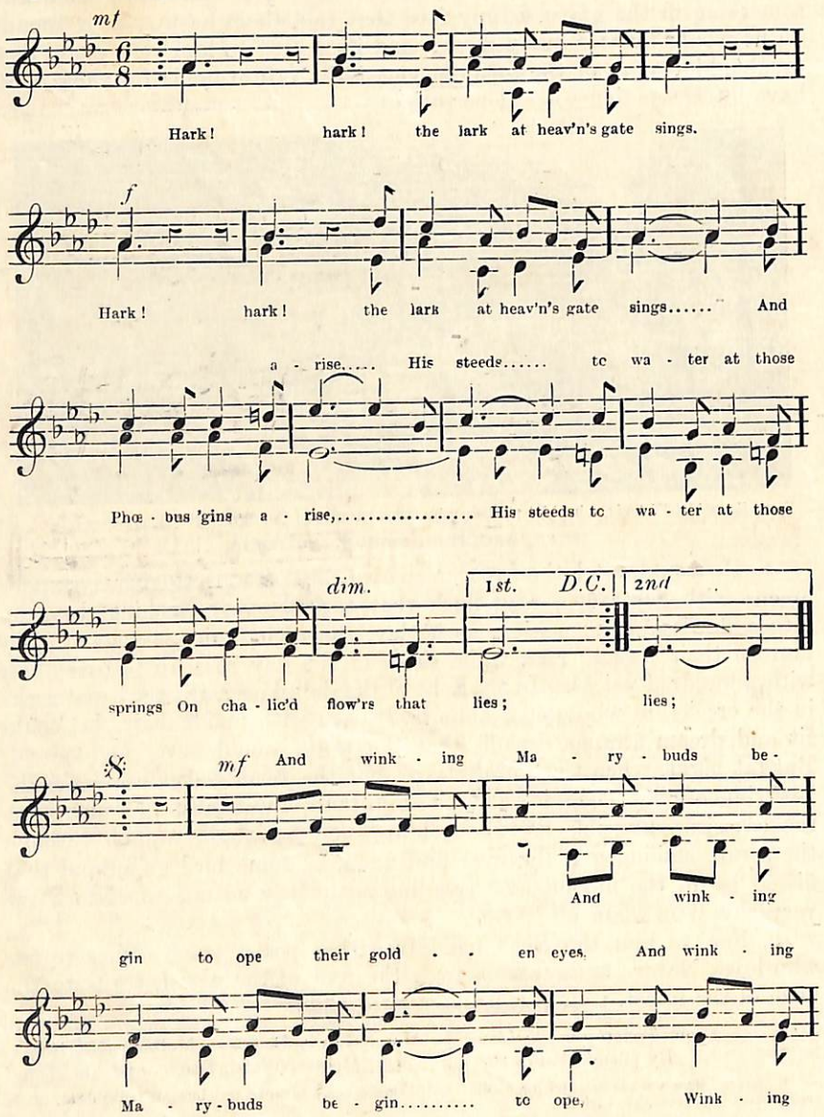
HARK! THE LARK.

(GLEE.)
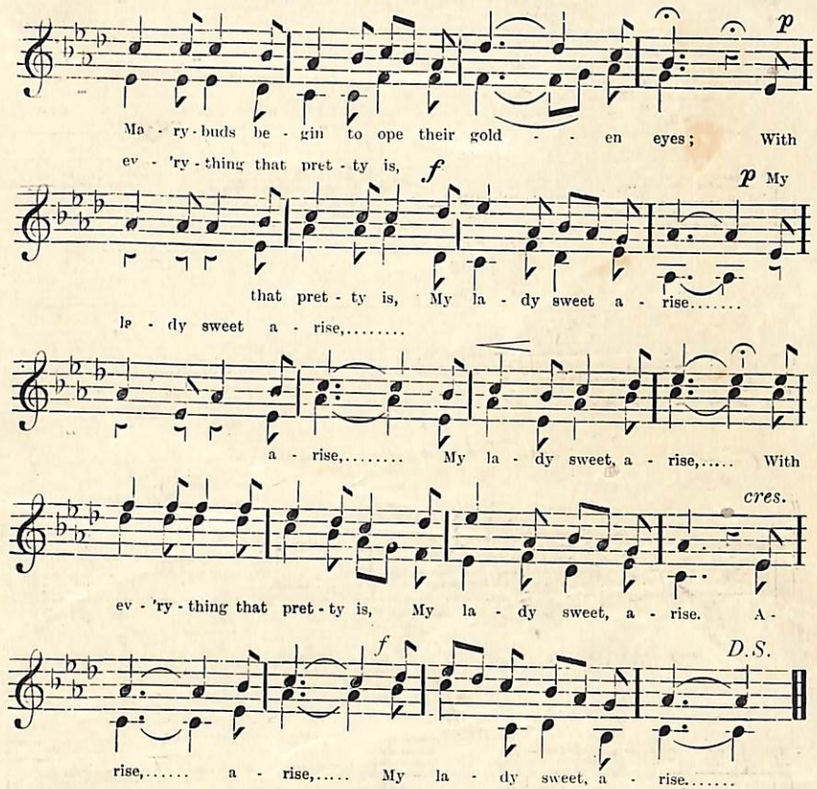
Words by Shakespeare. Music by Dr. B. Cooke.

Serenade to Imogen in "Cymbeline."

Quick and lively.



Hark! the Lark—*continued.*

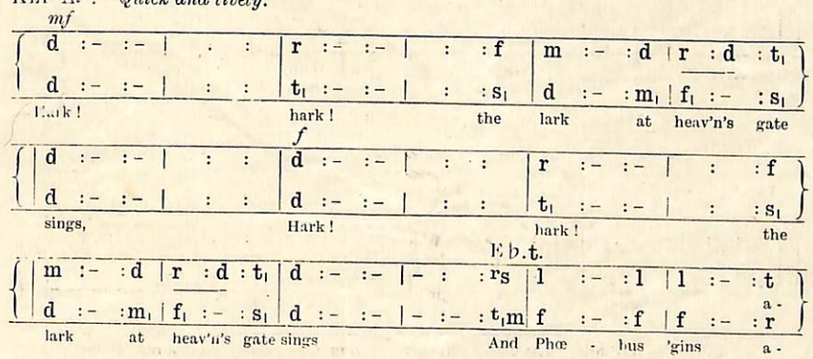


HARK! THE LARK.

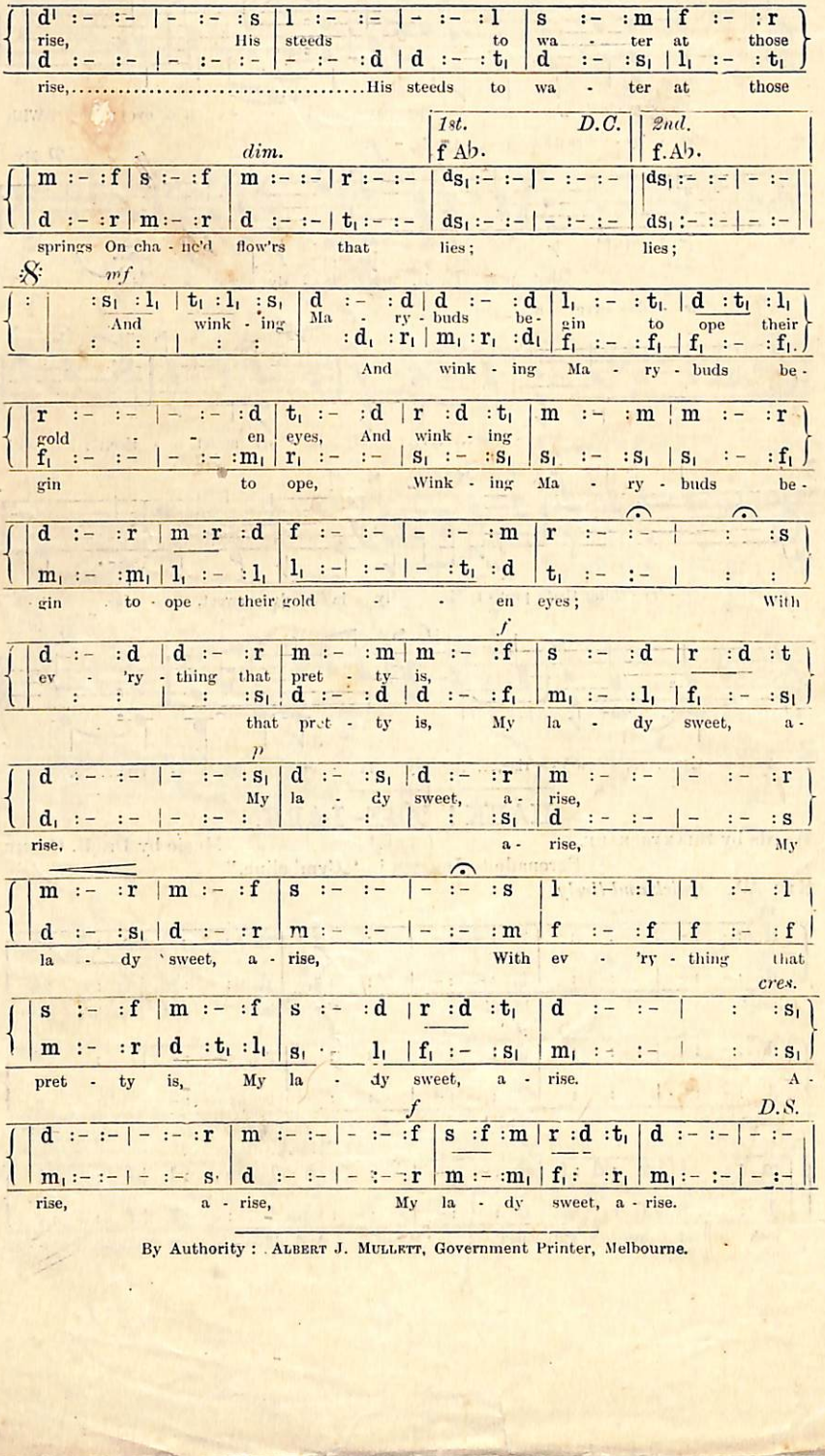
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Serenade to Imogen in "Cymbeline."

Key Ab. *Quick and lively.*



Hark! the Lark—*continued.*



By Authority: Albert J. Mullett, Government Printer, Melbourne.