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Pictures & Stories of Animals.
Mary Thresher
New Year's Day, 1874
PICTURE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.

ANIMALS.

No. 2.
THE RED-BREAST.
THE PICTURE LIBRARY. SECOND SERIES.

No. 2.

PICTURE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.

ANIMALS.

BY THE

REV. C. A. JOHNS, B.A., F.L.S.,
Author of "Botanical Rambles," "Flowers of the Field," &c.

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For the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
THE RED-BREAST.

As I was walking one spring morning with Mary Miller in her garden, she called "dick, dick!" and a robin red-breast flew out of a hedge and perched on the ground near us. Mary held out her hand, on which was a crumb of bread, and the robin flew up first into a bush, and then perched on her hand, picked up the crumb, and flew back with it to the hedge. "Now come into the other
garden,” said Mary, “and I will show you one much tamer than that.” When we were come into the other garden, she called “dick, dick!” once more, and another robin, came at once. This time Mary put a crumb of bread between her lips, and as soon as the bird saw it, he flew up, fluttering with his wings all the while, took it out of her mouth with his bill, and flew back to the stack of wood, where another robin joined him, his wife, I suppose, and they
ate the crumb most lovingly together. Then Mary took me back to the house, and showed me, in the ivy which grew around the porch, a beautiful nest, with eggs in it. She told me, too, that her robins came to see her every morning when she drew up the blinds of her window, and waited for their breakfast. How they must have loved her for her kindness!
THE WHITE BEAR.

Away in the cold, cold north, where the ground is never clear of snow, and where, even in summer, mountains of ice float about in the sea, lives the Polar bear. No cold is so severe as to hurt him, for he is covered with the thickest of fur: he walks along the fields of ice, and enjoys the sharp air as much as you do the sunshine in a bright May morning. His feet never slip on.
The White Bear.

the ice, for they are covered with long hair, which makes his footing sure. If he finds himself on an island of ice, no matter to him, for he can swim in the water as fast as he can walk on the shore; now floating on the surface like a duck, and now diving under like a fish. Quietly he prowls about in search of food, and finds a meal everywhere, though you would think there was little to eat in those dreary regions. Sometimes he catches a seal asleep on the ice,
or dashes after one into the water; sometimes he dives after fish, and catches even them, swift though they are. A dead whale gives him enough food to last for many a day. And if animal food becomes scarce, he tries to find some mountain from which the snow is melted, and feasts on berries, or, if he is very hungry indeed, he manages to make a meal off sea-weed.
THE FOX.

If the story I am going to tell you is true, the fox must be a cunning animal indeed. Some huntsmen and hounds once hunted a fox across a common near the sea until they came to a steep cliff. Then they thought they should catch him; but when they came to the edge, no fox was to be seen, and so they thought that he had jumped over and was killed. This hap-
The Fox.

pened several times, till at last some one watched, and saw the fox, when he came to the edge of the cliff, catch hold with his teeth a bramble which grew on the edge, and swing himself over into a hole a little way down the face of the cliff. The man who watched must have been very cruel, for, instead of admiring him for his cleverness, he determined to show the fox that he was cleverer. So one day, when the hounds were hunting, he cut off the bramble
with his knife, and let it lie on the cliff just as before. Presently up came the fox in a great hurry, laid hold of the bramble with his teeth, swung himself over, but, instead of stopping at his hole, tumbled down to the bottom and was dashed to pieces. So the hunters and the cruel man between them managed to kill the fox, and, I suppose, thought they had done a very fine thing.
THE MOLE.
THE MOLE.

One day as I was walking through a field, I saw something black moving a little way off. I ran up and found it was a small animal, bigger than a mouse, but not so large as a rat, with a soft smooth skin like velvet, short legs, and a sharp snout. As soon as I came near it began to dig into the ground, and in a minute or two it had crept into the hole which it made, and
was out of sight. But I could tell whereabouts it was, for it did not go down deep, but crept along just below the roots of the grass, which moved where it was digging. All about the place were heaps of fine earth, which it had thrown up while at work. These are called mole-hills. Moles have very small eyes, which are much sunk in their heads, so that the dust cannot get into them. Rabbits, I suppose, shut their eyes while they are burrowing to keep the dust out; but the mole need
not take this trouble. Moles are very useful animals, as they eat numbers of grubs which destroy the roots of corn and grass; but some farmers say that they are mischievous, and kill all that they can find; but what harm they do I cannot tell, unless it be the casting up of mole-hills, which might easily be levelled with a spade.
THE WEASEL.
THE WEASEL.

The weasel is a sly-looking animal, with a body well fitted for creeping into holes. It is a great enemy to rats, mice, and moles, which it chases into their underground burrows. Though small, it is very fierce, and is not afraid of animals much larger than itself. These it kills by fixing its teeth in the back of their heads, and eating into them until they fall dead. Young hares
and rabbits are often killed by it, and when it can get into a hen-roost, it sucks the eggs, and kills the young chickens and ducklings. It can climb trees and walls with ease, and when it finds a bird’s nest, it kills the hen bird while sitting, and destroys the eggs or young birds. Some people say that it does more good than harm, by killing or driving away rats and mice, which are much afraid of it; but it is a sad character to be always hunting about for something
to kill and eat. Another animal very like the weasel, only a little larger, is the stoat. This lives much in the same way as the weasel. In cold countries the skin of the stoat turns white in the winter, all except the tail, which is quite black. It is then called an ermine, and is much hunted for the sake of its fur, which is used in making the robes of kings and nobles.
THE LIZARD.

This picture makes us think of a crocodile, or of some poisonous reptile that we should be afraid to meet. But it is in reality no larger than the picture, and is both gentle and harmless, so that it would not hurt us if it could. When you happen to be going across a heath in warm summer weather, you will perhaps hear a slight rustling among the dry leaves.
The Lizard.

Watch closely, and you may see one darting nimbly across the tops of the heath and furze. If you should ever see one lying basking in the sun, keep quite still, and perhaps you may see it feed. It lives on insects, and when one comes within its view, it darts on it like lightning, seizes it with its little sharp teeth, and instantly swallows it. I once caught a lizard alive, and put it in a box. When I had reached home, I placed the box on the table, and opened it. Out
darted the lizard, and before I could stop it it had run across the table and fallen to the ground. In the fall, it broke off a little bit of its tail. I was very sorry, but the poor little animal did not seem to mind its loss, so I caught it, and carried it out into a field, when it ran away and was out of sight in a minute.
THE PIKE.
THE PIKE.

The pike is thought to be the greatest eater among fish. Fish of all sorts, rats, mice, and frogs are its food, in short, almost any living thing which its mouth is big enough to swallow; and it sometimes pays dear for its gluttony. A gentleman was once walking by the side of his lake, when he saw one of his swans quite still on the water. Next day, he saw the swan in the same place;
and wondering what could be the reason, he got into his boat and went to find out. And what do you think the reason was? The swan had plunged its long neck under the water to crop some of the weeds on which it feeds, when a large pike, seeing the head under water darted at it with open mouth, and partly swallowed it. The swan, I suppose, had struggled and tried to draw out its head, but the sharp teeth of the pike held it fast till it was drowned. Meanwhile, the pike
either could not or would not let go its hold; but not being big enough to swallow the swan whole, nor strong enough to bite the head off, it was choked; and thus both were killed. I am very sorry for the poor swan; but I am not sorry at all for the glutton.
THE PHEASANT.
THE PHEASANT.

If you should happen to be walking by the side of a wood, where there is plenty of long grass and thick bushes, you may chance to get a sight of this very handsome bird. Very likely, too, you may be so frightened that you will not know at first what it is that you see. "Frightened at a bird?" you say, "I am not so silly as that." Yes, but indeed, you are quite
silly enough for that; and I will tell you why. The pheasant is very fond of hiding among thick grass, and if you do not come too near, it will lie quite still till you are gone by. But if you come quite close to its hiding place, it suddenly bustles out through the bushes, and flies straight away, making a loud whir-r-r-r with its wings, which sounds like some great wheel set a spinning. Now you do not expect to hear the noise of a great wheel in a wood; and
besides that, the pheasant is so much bigger than the birds we commonly see flying about, that you will scarcely think at first that it can be a bird; so that if you are not startled, you are much braver than I am. In spring you may often hear a pheasant crow if you are passing through a wood; or in the evening you may see some picking up acorns or grains of corn.
THE SWALLOW.
There are three kinds of bird which people call swallows. First is the swift, which is black all over, and is shaped, when flying, like a bent bow, with the arrow ready to start. It is the largest of the three. Next is the swallow, which is whitish underneath, with a reddish chin, and has a tail shaped like the blades of an open pair of scissors. Then comes the house-martin, which is
black above, with a white patch near the tail, quite white underneath, and has a tail which is only a very little forked. A fourth kind, the sand-martin, is like the house-martin, but is light-brown above instead of black. All of these are nearly all day on the wing, catching flies and beetles; and when they have reared their young they fly away to some distant land, where there is summer while it is winter here; and come back to us in the spring. And how do you suppose they know when winter is
coming? Perhaps they feel it growing colder, and find flies getting scarce. But how do they know that spring is beginning here when they are hundreds of miles off, and how do they find their way across the sea to a country which they cannot see? It can only be that God Who gave them their lives, teaches them the seasons and guides them in the way.
THE TIGER.

What a fierce and cunning-looking animal is this! we might fancy it to be a huge cat gone mad with disappointment and rage. Think then how dreadful it must be to meet a wild beast like this. Thank God there are no such terrible animals in this country, though in India one must take good care how one ventures into the places where they are to be found. The tiger, though
not swift, leaps with great strength, and his large head, heavy paws, and the great weight of his body enable him to spring on the head of the largest elephants, and fairly pull them down to the ground, riders and all. But the elephant sometimes shakes him off under his feet, and then either kneels on him and crushes him at once, or gives him a kick which sends him away limping. Some one on the elephant's back, most likely, has a gun; then he tries to shoot him through the head,
and many tigers have been killed in this way. The tiger is strong enough to kill and carry off to the woods a deer, a horse, or even a buffalo, and often does much mischief when it pays a visit to a village where cattle and flocks are kept; for it is too bold and savage to be driven away by men, and too cunning to be often caught in a trap.
THE NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.
THE NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

My house-dog Topsy is chained to her kennel all day; but when I go to walk I call out "Topsy! will you go?" and Topsy jumps up and barks as if she meant to be very fierce. But this is all fun and joy; for when I come near her she stands quite still until I have unbuckled her collar. Then when she finds that she is free, she capers
all round the yard to pick up stray bones, and comes after me down the lane as fast as she can run. When we come to a pond she jumps into the water and stands barking till I throw my stick in. Then away she dashes, swims up to it, and having brought it out, lays it at my feet for another throw. I let her loose at night that she may walk round the house and frighten away robbers. One night she barked so long that I went out into the yard to see what was
the matter. I heard, as I thought, some one moving outside the gate. So I called out loud, "Be off, there! I am coming out with a pistol, and if you touch me I will fire.” But no one spoke, so I opened the gate and went out, and all that was there was a poor lame horse, which had strayed from a field hard by. Topsy deceived me that once; but she is a good dog for all that.
THE FLYING-FISH.
THE FLYING-FISH.

"A fish with wings! That must be a strange creature. And is it covered with feathers; and does it sing, and build a nest like birds?" Not quite so fast, my young friend. There are birds, you know, which can swim and dive; but they are not fish on that account, nor are they covered with scales. And so a fish may be able to fly, and yet not be a bird. The flying-fish has
two very large fins, with which it swims when it is in the water, but not fast enough to escape from other large fish, which chase it for the sake of devouring it. When pressed hard by one of these it springs out of the water, and clapping its fins as a bird does its wings, it keeps going on for some distance through the air. Here sometimes sea-birds try to pounce upon it, when it dashes into the sea again, and has another turn at swimming. But when the sun has dried its wings it is obliged
The Flying-Fish.

to drop. One would think that it must lead a very unhappy life, to be so hunted by great fishes in the sea, and by birds in the air; but the great and good God Who has fitted it so wonderfully for living in two elements, has no doubt made its life as happy as that of the lark soaring in the clouds, or of the minnow sporting in the brook.
THE KANGAROO.
THE KANGAROO.

"So you are called kangaroo, are you? Your name, I think, ought to be little-head-and-great-tail. Your upper half seems as if it did not belong to the lower. And why do you stand in that awkward way, letting your fore-paws hang down like a pair of gloves. And those heavy, clumsy hind legs; what can you do with them? How much better off you would be if your tail
were cut off, and your legs shortened!” “My young friend,” the kangaroo might say, if he could speak, “little people should look and learn. I do not hunt animals, so I have no need either of tusks or claws. When I graze I bend forward, and my mouth is close to the ground. If I should like to change my diet and eat a few leaves, I can sit up on my tail as long as I like. If I wish to go in search of new pasture I can amble along most pleasantly with my four legs, and I
have no trouble in bringing my tail with me, heavy though you may think it. But when I am in a hurry, ah, you should see me then, and you would be surprised. By the help of my long legs and tail I can jump over bushes and streams, or over your head if you come in my way. It must be a very swift hound that can keep up with me.
THE SHREW.
THE SHREW.

“Look here!” said little George to his uncle as they were walking together through a wood, “what is this curious little animal? It is very like a mouse, except that it is white beneath, and has a long tapering snout. It is quite dead: I wonder what killed it!” “That,” said uncle Willie, “is a shrew, a very useful little animal, because it eats a large number of insects
which destroy the farmers' crops." "And can you tell me, uncle," said George, "how this one was killed?" "That I cannot well say. They are often found lying dead in the fields and lanes. The reason, perhaps, is, that the shrew has a very strong smell, like that of musk, which some animals of prey do not like; so, perhaps, this shrew was killed by a cat or stoat, but left uneaten. Cats will chase any small animal that they see moving, but they will not eat shrews, I know;
for my cat often catches them, and brings them into the house; but she would rather have a fish's head for her dinner, no matter how stale it is, though that, in my mind, smells much worse."
THE ORANG-OUTANG.
THE ORANG-OUTANG.

This strange animal is called sometimes the wild man of the woods; and, no wonder, for it has very much the look of a man. The country where it runs wild is very warm, so, when one of these animals was brought to England it was clothed in a dress of flannel, that it might not suffer from the cold. This it liked very much, and did not try to tear it off as one
might suppose it would do. It learnt to drink out of a cup or glass, and to use a spoon for its food; and when it had done, it would carefully lay them down on the table or give them to its keeper. It was not given to be playful; it looks too grave for that perhaps you think; yet sometimes it would run after its keeper and pretend to fight with him; and if he went away, it would grow angry and try to break open its door. It was also very fond of playing with a cat,
which it would carry about in its arms, whether pussy liked it or not, just as you, I dare say, sometimes carry about a kitten. At night it would put its bed to rights very carefully, and cover itself with blankets as snugly as you could.
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