The Story of the Robins.

her nest, in order to acquaint the rest of the family with this dreadful catastrophe, and the redbreasts took another flight.

They alighted on the ground, and began pecking about, when all of a sudden they heard a strange noise, which rather alarmed the young ones. Their father desired them to have no fears, but to follow him. He led them to the top of a high tree, in which was a nest of magpies, who had the day before made an excursion round the orchard, and were conversing on what they had seen, but in such a confused manner that there was no understanding them; one chattered of one thing, and one of another: in short, all were eager to speak, and none inclined to hear.

"What a set of foolish, ill-bred little creatures are these!" said the cock redbreast. "If they would talk one at a time, what each says might afford entertainment to the rest; but by chattering all together in this manner they are quite disagreeable. Take warning from them, my nestlings, and avoid the fault which renders them so ridiculous."

So saying, he flew on, and they soon saw a cuckoo surrounded by a number of birds, who had been pecking at her till she had scarce a feather left upon her breast, while she kept repeating her own dull note,