The Story of the Robins.

They soon alighted on a tree in which was a Mocking-bird, who, instead of singing any note of his own, kept successively imitating those of every bird that inhabited the orchard, and this with a view of making them ridiculous. If any one had any natural imperfection in his singing, he was sure to mimic it, or if any one was particularly attentive to the duties of his station, he ridiculed him as grave and formal. The young redbreasts were excessively amused with this droll creature; but their father desired them to consider whether they should like to hear him mimic them. Every one agreed that they should be very angry to be ridiculed in that manner. "Then," replied the father, "neither encourage nor imitate him." The Mocking-bird, hearing him, took up his notes—"Neither encourage nor imitate him," said he. The cock redbreast on this flew at him with fury, plucked some feathers from his breast, and sent him screaming from the place. "I have made you sing a natural song at last," said he, "and hope you will take care how you practise mimicry again." His mate was sorry.

* The Mocking-bird is properly a native of America, but is introduced here for the sake of the moral.