
Some

Australian Birds

ON my first morning in Grafton, Australia, I was awakened about five o'clock by what I thought was people quarrelling outside. It was daylight, and when I looked out I saw that it was not people but birds who were making the noise. They were Noisy Friar Birds — a very suitable name. Their call sometimes sounds like, "It's half past four!". The bird book said, "They squabble and show off like a bunch of naughty school-boys". That is just what they were doing that morning. Don't you think that squabbling and showing off by boys and girls can upset other people? I did not like being awakened at five o'clock by Noisy Friar Birds saying, "It's half past four! It's half past four!". And I'm sure your Mum or Dad does not like it when you are showing off or quarrelsome. Remember that the Bible says, "Be ye kind one to another".

Another bird is the Laughing Kookaburra. Its nickname is "The Laughing Jackass", and its call is like a cackling laugh. This laughing call may be heard at any time of the day. For you and me there is a time to laugh, and there is also a time not to laugh. You laugh when you are having a happy time with good friends, but it is not right to laugh at people because they may not be

as clever or strong as you are. Also, we should never laugh at wicked things, and we should never laugh at holy things.

I was walking across a park in Sydney one day when I met the Australian Magpie, and I did not enjoy meeting it! The bird dived to attack me and then flew to a tree. Three times it swooped down, and I had to duck very quickly! Why was it attacking me? The bird book said, "During the breeding season they fiercely defend their territory against other animals, including man". Yes, the magpie thought I was coming to rob its nest in the tree, but I had no thought of doing any harm. I'm afraid some people are like the magpie — they are suspicious for no reason and they are ready to attack others for no cause. We must be careful not to jump to wrong conclusions or wrongly accuse others.

Have you heard of an Australian bird that sounds like a bell? It is

