

At last the bush got angry,
And Tane heard it pray
To him that silly Johnny
Be spirited away.
Then Tane shook the mountains
And made the tempest blow
To waken up Old Moa
Who died so long ago.

When Johnny met Old Moa,
Old Moa saw him first,
And of the short encounter
Poor Johnny got the worst. . .
Perhaps he's shooting devils
Or something just as brave
To-day; but all the bush birds
Sing gladly o'er his grave.

—*Will Lawson.*

A BIRD MONTH.

August is the hardest month of the three hard months, July, August, and September; yet it is the first month of Spring, the sign being the start of growth in vegetation—we see the first signs of the crocus, narcissus, daphne — all these show that growth has begun. The singing of the birds, too, begins—especially the singing of the vigorous thrush; and this declares that the blood is mounting and the sap rising.

All the same, August is the coldest month of the year, which makes some people think it is the last month of the winter. No—it may be the tail end of the winter—and that is where the sting is. It is the coldest month, when the food of the birds is scarcest, therefore let us make it THE BIRD MONTH. The Autumn berries are largely gone, and there is little else to take their place; few nectarous flowers, and the insects have not yet awakened from their metamorphosing winter dream. The birds, therefore, find it particularly hard to procure food, and when the birds are cold as well as hungry, their semi-starvation too often proves fatal. Moreover, weak birds fall an easy prey to enemies. There is, therefore, great mortality among