

I remember, too, seeing one perched upon a fresh furrow making repeated jumps into the air. Closer examination proved that a host of small insects were flying up and down the fresh earth, and this astute bird was enjoying the feast of a lifetime.

The native lark appears to be able to outwit any cat. The old grey and white cat who lives here has long since grown tired of attempting to catch them. Nowadays he never bothers to raise his eyes at them. True, one lark a while ago appeared one morning minus its tail. My suspicion fell on a stray black cat which had taken up residence under the dairy. Perhaps it was unjust, but one morning I shot that cat, and the larks have been left in peace since then.

Usually our pets nest in the long grass not far from the house where they have no difficulty in procuring food for their hungry offspring. The nest is generally well hidden in a bunch of grass. Well made of dried grasses and carefully woven and moulded, it forms a very comfortable home. From three to five eggs are laid; they resemble those of the skylark except that they are of much lighter colour. Usually the young birds are brought up to the door by the proud parents and fed until such time as they are able to take care of themselves. Rather remarkably, the youngsters never remain here after they are full-grown. If they do—the adorable little sprites—we shall be delighted to feed them.

THE PIHOIHOI.

(New Zealand Ground Lark).

Not yours to soar into the blue
At break of morn, not yours to sing
In song immortal, when the dew
Lies on the grass and jewels cling
To shrub and tree, not yours to dress
In raiment fine, but just to wear
The greyness of the wilderness
And all its joys and sorrows share.

And yet your homeliness in me
And cheerful chirp on summer days
Awake a deeper memory
Than gayer plumes or grander lays.
They bring me back the long ago,
The happy days when as a child
I knew life's joy without its woe,
Amid the wonders of the wild.

—D.L.P.