

flitting about. Some of them like to play just as you do at bed-time."

"How funny," said Don. "Do birds really play, Mother?"

"Certainly they do; have you never seen them around the bird-bath? But, listen! Now they are beginning to sing."

The forest rang with the happy bird voices—bellbirds, tuis, robins, fantails, grey warblers, and all the other little songsters took their parts in the wonderful chorus.

"If only Daddy had come with us!" sighed Elsa.

By the time they reached the garden gate it was dusk, and there was Mr. Grey waiting for them. "I was beginning to think I should have to come and look for you," he said. "I've been listening to your birds, children; it's the first time I have really noticed their singing."

"You should have been as near to them as we were," said Don. "It was great!"

After the children had gone to bed, Mr. Grey picked up the "Forest and Bird" magazine, and as he glanced carelessly through it, the story of

the destruction of some of the beautiful forests of New Zealand caught his eye. "It is too bad!" he remarked. "After all, it's only a matter of a few acres."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Grey, "and you would gain far more by leaving the forest on our hills just as it is."

"This is my first experience of hilly country," said Mr. Grey. "This journal says that the forest will help to prevent flooding of the flats."

"Not only that," said Mrs. Grey, "but the forest will be a never-ending delight to the children and of great value in their education. Then, also, it is the home of the birds; and, lastly, I have always longed to live as close to the forest as we are now."

"That decides the matter," replied Mr. Grey. "We will set aside the whole forest as a sanctuary."

When Elsa and Don heard the good news next morning they were delighted. They went with their mother on many exploring expeditions after that, and often their father joined the picnic parties at Bellbird Hollow.

#### BELLBIRD HOLLOW.

