

# **BY-WAYS AND BIRD NOTES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649481217

By-Ways and Bird Notes by Maurice Thompson

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**MAURICE THOMPSON**

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MAURICE THOMPSON

AUTHOR OF

"AT LOVE'S EXTREME," "HIS SECOND CAMPAIGN," "SONGS  
OF FAIR WEATHER," "A TALLAHASSEE  
GIRL," ETC.

NEW YORK  
JOHN B. ALDEN, PUBLISHER  
1885

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BY  
JOHN B. ALDEN.

TROW'S  
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY,  
NEW YORK.

12 Apr. 10. N. E. (1)

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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for consistent and reliable data collection processes to support informed decision-making.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of technology in modern data management. It discusses how advanced software solutions can streamline data collection, storage, and analysis, thereby improving efficiency and accuracy.

4. The fourth part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data security and privacy. It provides guidance on implementing robust security measures to protect sensitive information from unauthorized access and breaches.

5. The fifth part of the document explores the importance of data quality and integrity. It discusses strategies for identifying and correcting errors in data, ensuring that the information used for analysis is accurate and reliable.

6. The sixth part of the document discusses the role of data in strategic planning and performance evaluation. It explains how data can be used to identify trends, measure progress, and make adjustments to organizational goals and strategies.

7. The seventh part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed and offers recommendations for further action. It encourages organizations to embrace a data-driven culture and invest in the necessary resources to succeed in the digital age.



BY-WAYS  
AND  
BIRD-NOTES.

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IN THE HAUNTS OF THE MOCKING-  
BIRD.

THE mocking-bird has been called the American nightingale, with a view, no doubt, to inflicting a compliment involving the operation, known to us all, of damning with faint praise. The nightingale presumably is not the sufferer by the comparison, since she holds immemorial title to preëminence amongst singing-birds. The story of Philomela, however, as first told, was not an especially pleasing one, and the poets made no great use of it. Nowhere in Greek or Roman literature, so far as I know, is there any genuine lyric apostrophe to the nightingale comparable to Sappho's fragment *To the Rose*; still the bird has a prestige gathered from centuries of poetry and upheld by the master romancers of the world.

To compare the song of any other bird with that of the nightingale is like instituting a comparison between some poet of to-day and Shakespeare, so far as any sympathy with the would-be rival is concerned. The world has long ago made up its mind, and when the world once does that there is an end, a *cul de*

*sac*, a stopping-place, of all argument of the question. Indeed, it is a very romantic distance that separates the bird from most of us. Chaucer's groves and Shakespeare's woods shake out from their leaves a fragrance that reaches us along with a song which is half the bird's and half the poet's. We connect the nightingale's music with a dream of chivalry, troubadours, and mediæval castles. It is as dear to him who has heard it only in the changes rung by the Persian, French, and English bards as it is to him whose chamber window opens on a choice haunt of the bird in rural England.

I might dare to go further and claim that I, who have never heard a nightingale sing, can say with truth that its music is, in a certain way, as familiar to me as the sound of a running stream or the sough of a spring breeze. I often find myself reluctantly shaking off something like a recollection of having somewhere, in some dim old grove, heard the voice that Keats imprisoned in his matchless ode. There is a sort of aerial perspective in the mere name of the nightingale; it is like some of those classical allusions which bring into a modern essay suggestions with an infinite distance in them. So thoroughly has this been felt that it may safely be said that the nightingale has been more frequently mentioned by our American writers, good, bad, and indifferent, than any one of our native birds. No doubt it ought to provoke a smile, this gushing about a music one has never heard; but, like the music of the spheres and the roar of the ocean, the nightingale's voice is common property, and we all take it as a sort of hered-

itary music, descending to us by immemorial custom. Its notes are echoing within us, and we feel their authenticity though in fact we know as little about the bird as chemists do about Geber. How shall we doubt that the bird whose song inspired Keats to write that masterpiece of English poetry is indeed a wonderful musician? Shakespeare and rare Ben Jonson and Burns and Scott and Shelley and Byron heard this same song; it was just as clear and sweet as it is now when Chaucer was telling his rhymed tales, when Robin Hood was in the greenwood, even when the Romans made their first invasion.

In a general way, we do not think of the nightingale having a nest and rearing a brood and dying. It is simply the incomparable nightingale, philomela, rossignol, or whatever the name may be,—a bird that has been singing in rose-gardens and orange-orchards and English woods night after night for thousands of years without a rival. Its song is to the imagination of all of us

“L’hymne flottant des nuits d’été.”

as Lamartine has expressed it. So it can easily be understood how hard a struggle our American mocking-bird is going to have before it reaches a place in the world’s esteem beside the nightingale. Nor is it my purpose to do anything with a special view to aid it in the struggle; but I have studied our bird in all its haunts and in all seasons, with a view to a most intimate acquaintance with its habits, its song, and its character.

To begin with, the name *mocking-bird*, is a heavy load for any bird to bear. Unmusical