THE BOY HUNTER

I used to kill birds in my boyhood, blue birds, robins and wrens,
I hunted them up in the hills, and down in the cool dark glens.
I never thought it was sinful, did it only for fun,
Had great sport in the woods with little birds and my gun.
One fine day in the summer, I spied a brown bird in a tree
Merrily singing and chirping, as happy as a bird could be,
I raised up my gun and fired; the aim was only too true.
In a moment the little bird fluttered, and out of the tree it flew
I followed it quickly but softly, and there to my sorry I found
Right close to a nest of young ones, a mother bird dead on the ground.
I picked up the bird in my anguish and stroked the poor motherly thing,
That never again would fly through the air, a-hunting on careless swift wing.
I made a firm vow in that moment when my heart with sorrow was stirred
That never again, so long as I lived, would I kill a defenseless bird.

- Eddie Jarvi - '37