

FIGHT FOR A BIRDHOUSE.

Flycatchers Driven Out by Bluebirds. Wrens the Final Victors.

"One spring," said a lover of birds, "there came to a birdhouse in my garden a pair of great crested flycatchers. I had a dozen birdhouses scattered around. This particular one was about a foot square, with a peaked roof and a chimney at each end, a doorway for the birds to go in and out and a couple of anger holes bored through the back to give the house light and air.

"This birdhouse, the summer before, had been occupied by a pair of bluebirds, who had left their nest behind them. This nest the great crested flycatchers pulled apart and threw out of the house, every twig and straw. They cleaned the house out completely and then they brought in everything new and built a nest of their own and settled down comfortably for the summer.

"But in a few days a pair of bluebirds came along, and they made for this house. It might have been the same identical pair of bluebirds that occupied it the summer before. I don't know about that, though I have no doubt that robins and other birds that have been south for the winter, hundreds of miles away, do come back in the spring to the same places and to the same trees. Anyhow this pair of bluebirds wanted that birdhouse, and they were ready to fight for it, and that is what they did. The flycatcher is a nice little bird and a pretty plucky sort of a fighter, but not a match for the bluebird. They had a grand round up inside the house, and finally the bluebirds pitched the flycatcher out, and later they pitched out every stick of furniture that the flycatchers had brought in, cleaned the house out entirely and then brought in fresh material and built a new nest according to their own ideas, and they settled down for the summer.

"Well, a few days after that a pair of wrens came along, and they took a fancy to that particular birdhouse, too, and they sailed right in and tackled the bluebirds on the spot. You couldn't see the fight from the ground, but every now and then you could see a straw or a feather shoot out of the front door of the house. The bluebird is a good, second fighter, but the wren is a better one, and the upshot was that the wrens fairly put the bluebirds out and took possession of the birdhouse themselves. And then the wrens did just what the others had done. They pitched out every scrap of stuff in the birdhouse—just tumbled it out of the door, to fall on the ground—and then they brought in new stuff and built a nest for themselves.

"Nobody molested the wrens. They staid there and raised their young there, and in the fall they all flew away and left the birdhouse again deserted for the winter."—New York Sun.

LADIES WHO STOLE.

Strange Tales Are Told of Our Ancestors of Washington's Time.

We naturally have a very exalted opinion of the aristocracy of our country and can scarcely be convinced that the ladies of society in the early days of independence conducted themselves in any but the most dignified manner. Indeed some of their descendants would feel highly elated to know that they in any wise resemble their supposed courtly ancestors. It is to be hoped that they are not kin to the personages referred to in the following complaint:

One of our early statesmen actually complains that "between tippees beaus and fashionable belles an honest fellow will stand a good chance of being fleeced by the politest tissue of mistakes conceivable. The gentleman will help himself very casually to your hat if it is better than his, take up your umbrella with the most absent air imaginable, bear off your loose coat without once perceiving his mistake and pick up your gloves, 'they so much resemble his.'"

And now for the ladies' part in this proceeding: "The lady will borrow your penknife, very accidentally put your pocket handkerchief into her muff or playfully take your ring from your finger or breastpin from your bosom, all as innocently as though it was the very thing you called upon her for, so that between ladies and gentlemen you will stand a good chance of being turned out, stripped of all your possessions, according to the newest rules of etiquette."—Philadelphia Press.

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COURSING LIZARDS.

The Amusement of a Tame Eagle in the Arizona Desert.

In St. Nicholas Wolcott Le Clear Beard writes of "Moses, a Tame Eagle," which was one of his pets while he was engaged in engineering in southern Arizona. Mr. Beard says he was very fond of the lizards with which these plains abounded, and one large variety, called swifts, from their remarkable speed in running, seemed to be especially coveted.

Whenever one of these was caught, which was not often, Moses would be brought out, and, after the swift had taken a ten foot start, would be set free. The lizard would promptly resolve itself into a white streak across the desert, and, screaming with excitement, half running, half flying, Moses would pursue, followed by the laughing crowd, of which only those on horseback had much chance of keeping up. It was in no sense a cruel sport. It amused Moses and us and didn't hurt the swift, for he got away every time, and if the feelings of our pet were a trifle injured as he returned, perched on some one's wrist or saddle horn, from his fruitless hunt these were speedily soothed by the prompt gift of a nice bit of fresh beef, so no one was the worse. The lizards, however, he seemed to view as a sort of dessert, and as he could absorb an unlimited quantity they were always in demand.

A certain stick kept on the veranda of our office was generally under his eye, and when any one picked this up and started for a walk across the desert Moses would hop gravely along behind, sure that some of his favorite dainties would soon be forthcoming.

Of course Moses was perfectly well able to catch the smaller kinds of lizards for himself, but there was less exertion in allowing some one else to do it for him, and exertion at this period of his life was a thing to which Moses was violently opposed. These occasions were almost the only ones when he would be silent for any length of time, for he seemed to understand perfectly that at the first note of his voice every lizard within hearing would run for its life to the nearest refuge, and only when a blow of the stick failed for the second or third time to reach its mark would he give utterance to his deep disgust at such clumsiness.

THE POULTRY YARD.

If the fowls have brood disease, change the food for a day or two. Success with young chickens demands warmth, dryness, liberal feeding and, above all, pure air.

If the hens appear lazy and show no inclination to eat, do not give stimulants, but rather decrease the rations. There are six or eight standard breeds of chickens, ten of ducks, nine of turkeys and seven of geese, not including mongrels.

To fatten hens rapidly there is nothing that will excel cornmeal. Fattening fowls may be given all that they will eat up clean.

Too much stimulating food causes over egg production and as a result these will be poor hatchers, weak chickens and inferior stock.

Hens will readily eat parings from any kind of vegetables if well cooked. If the quantity is not sufficient, add wheat, bran and skim milk.

It pays to feed young fowls liberally until full grown. Chickens, like other young stock once stunted, never fully regain their vigor, no matter how carefully fed.—St. Louis Republic.

TIRE PUNCTURES.

All that is needed now is a few more bicycling clubs, and then every wheelman can have one of his own.—Chicago Post.

The bicycle is said to be closing the theaters in New York, and it is making business dull also in the cemeteries.—Chicago Tribune.

Physicians declare that by excessive bicycle riding the nervous system may be exhausted without the knowledge of the rider, and that when attacked by disease the bicyclist may find himself without reserve force to resist it.—San Francisco Argonaut.

Whether it is because the "1897 wheel" is faster, or because there exists a spirit of bravado, makes very little difference. The fact remains that wheels are being today propelled through this city at speed which precludes pedestrians from occupying crosswalks with even a fair chance of safety.—Rochester Democrat.

MESSAGE TO MEN

Proving that You are Honest and True Men and by Still Exist

If any man who is weak, nervous and debilitated, or who is suffering from any of the various troubles resulting from youthful folly, excesses or overwork, will take heart and write to me, I will send him confidentially and free of charge the plan pursued by which I was completely restored to perfect health and manhood, after years of suffering from Nervous Debility, loss of Vigor and Organic Weakness.

I have nothing to sell, and therefore want no money, but as I know through my own experience how to sympathize with such sufferers, I am glad to be able to assist any fellow-beings to a cure. I am well aware of the prevalence of quackery, for I myself was deceived and imposed upon until I nearly lost faith in mankind but I rejoice to say that I am now perfectly well and happy once more and am desirous therefore to make this certain means of cure known to all. If you will write to me you can rely upon being cured and the proud satisfaction of having been of great service to one in need will be sufficient reward for my trouble. Absolute secrecy assured. Send 5c silver to cover postage and address Mr. G. Strong, North Rockwood, Mich. 135 p.w.

She Accompanied Him.

"The fact that I was a good musician," said the lady from Johnstown, "was the means of saving my life during the flood in our town a few years ago."

"How was that?" asked the young lady who sang.

"When the water struck our house, my husband got on the folding bed and floated down the stream until he was rescued."

"And what did you do?"

"Well, I accompanied him upon the piano."—New York Journal.

Her New Hat.



"Now, miss, it ain't no use yer tryin' for ter hide. I knows ye're under that hat, 'cos I can see yer feet."—Nuggets.

Quick and Witty.

Lord Young is said to be one of the ablest Scotchmen on the bench or at the bar. At least he has a ready tongue. One day in September he was driving into town from his place in the country when he met an acquaintance.

"Hallo!" said the latter, "what are you doing here? I thought all respectable people were out of town."

"Well," said the other, "have you seen anything to make you alter your opinion? I haven't."

At the time of the general election of 1892 he was visiting at Dalmeny House, and the report came that Lord Wolmer, now the Earl of Selborne, had been returned for the western division by a majority of 3 over Mr. T. R. Buchanan. Soon after some one came in and said that the majority was 300. He added that Lord — and Lord — had voted for Wolmer.

"Ah," said Young, "that accounts for the two ciphers."—Youth's Companion.

A Familiar Problem.

Young Mrs. Torkins had been carefully studying a picture which showed the costumes of the Greek and Turkish soldiers. Laying the paper aside, she exclaimed, with a sigh:

"There's nothing new under the sun, is there, Charley dear?"

"To what do you refer?"

"The European situation. It seems to be the same old question of which it's to be—skirts or bloomers."—Washington Star.

He Got Them Mixed.

A Greek fruit dealer asked a passing pedestrian to step into his store and address a letter for him. Its destination was, "Isle of Patmos."

"Do you know," said the stranger, as he wrote, "that John wrote 'Revelations' in Patmos?"

"Oh, yes—John. He sell fruit—he write letter—I marry his sister. He come 'Merica nex' year."—Atlanta Constitution.

How the Mix Up Began.

"It was this a-way, judge. Ye see, I doled de cards, and Jim Brown he had a pah of aces and a pah o' kings."

"What did you have?"

"Three aces, judge, and"—

"What did Jim do?"

"Jim, he drew."

"What did he draw?"

"He drew a razzar, judge."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Flood Sufferer.

"You a flood sufferer? Nit!" said the hired lady. "You have been hanging around town here all this winter and spring."

"But I am, lady—indeed I am," protested Mr. Dismal Dawson. "I got to thinkin of all that water, an it made me that sick 'n weak that I ain't been even able to ask fer work."—Indianapolis Journal.

Profound Grief

"I never saw a woman mourn her husband as deeply as Mrs. Fitzjones does."

"Does she really seem bereaved?"

"She hasn't crimped her hair since he died."—Chicago Record.

An Irresistible Conclusion.

Knockett—Do you believe in a personal devil?

Sprockett—Well, I don't know who else would scatter broken glass on the pavements.—Detroit News.

Poor Plaster.

"By gosh!" said the clerk of the county court as a part of the ceiling fell with a crash, "that's very poor court plaster."—New York Sunday Journal.

Disagreeable.

"What a fretful, peevish temperament Jiggers has!"

"Yes, he acts just like a citizens' reform association."—Detroit News.

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL.

Jerusalem Is Not Disillusionizing to the Western Visitor.

In The Century an article on "The Miracle of the Greek Fire," by Richard Watson Gilder, describes the scenes of Holy Week in Jerusalem. Mr. Gilder says:

A city beautiful! On Palm Sunday, from the stairway near the spot where Mary stood when the body of her Son was taken from the cross, I saw the Greek procession in the Church of the Sepulcher. Then I went over to the Mount of Olives. Looking back from a field well up on the hillside, the whole city lay beneath—the temple area, with the great mosque in full view across the valley of Jehoshaphat. From here Jerusalem, with its clear and stately outline of walls, the domes and minarets of the mosques, and the old towers and churches, has a singular completeness. Perhaps even in Solomon's time, from the outside, though different, it was not more lovely. The warm gray of the stones of the city is the color of the unbleached wool of goats. The hills are darker, with a delicate bloom over them, spotted with gray olive orchards and melting in the distance into violet. It is indeed a city set upon a hill, isolated, distinguished. The picture realizes one's lifelong dream of the city of God.

The sunset sky was wild and cold, with streaks of sunshine. The rain ceased and the air grew warm. In the rich, low light all blemishes were lost, and the City Beautiful was spread before the pilgrim's eyes. Perhaps it was heard that Christ wept over Jerusalem. Along or near this path he must have come on the day of his "entry" on the first Palm Sunday, whose feast was being kept this very day throughout all Christendom. There were no other travelers. A few Syrians passed by. I gathered some flowers by the wayside and turned again homeward.

You see that we did not find the Holy Land disillusioning. There are many things that confound the western mind. There are filth and degradation and superstition. But here are the same sky, the same landscape, the same dominating orient. The painter who knows the Holy Land best said to us in Jerusalem, "At times when I look at these fields and realize that this very picture was reflected in the eyes of Jesus I feel myself shiver." The Bible, no matter what one's theology or philosophy, here takes on a vitality and meaning beyond the power of conception hitherto. Are the places real? Jerusalem, all Syria, is real, and some of the "sacred places" are unquestionable. But you do not have to be sure that the place is exact when you listen, with a new emotion, to the words of Jesus repeated by the French monk on Good Friday, and that at "station of the cross" where Christ cried out, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

True to Life.

The early patroness of Burns, Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop, had an old housekeeper, an especially privileged person, who had certain aristocratic notions of the family dignity which made the admiration of her mistress for the rustic poet incomprehensible to her. In order to overcome this prejudice, Mrs. Dunlop gave her a copy of "The Cotter's Saturday Night," which the poet had just written.

The old housekeeper read the poem, but when her mistress inquired her opinion of it, she replied with indifference, "Aweel, madam, that's vera weel."

"Is that all you have to say in its favor?" asked Mrs. Dunlop in amazement.

"Indeed, madam," returned the old woman, "the like o' your quality may see a vast deal in 't. But I was aye used to the like o' all that the poet has written about in my ain father's house, and I dinna ken how he could hae described it any other way."

It is said that Burns counted the old housekeeper's criticism one of the highest compliments he had ever received.

He probably valued it as greatly as a writer of New England stories values a remark once made to her by an old man.

"I should think when you're writtin stories you'd like to kind o' make up things more," said this aged critic in a tone of kindly reproof. "Now my wife and I were talkin about your last book the other day, and my wife says to me, 'Why, John, there's just such folks and such things happenin right in this very town as she's written down in this book, and most likely been well paid for,' and I couldn't stand up for ye against her, for I knew 'twas the truth."—Youth's Companion.

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