

BIRDS OF ILL NATURE.

The Cruelty of Swans as Displayed Toward Other Fowl.

The graceful swan is one of the most ungracious in its ways. Not only (in the breeding season) does a male bird resent the intrusion of a strange gentleman, but it will spend the day in driving off from its domain any unlucky geese which might be plausibly assumed to have no designs upon its domestic arrangements and have, indeed, no desire beyond that for a comfortable wash and swim. It will also pursue even the most innocent of newborn ducklings while they unwittingly rejoice in an early taste of their common element.

When an only child has passed out of the cygnet stage of life and grown to full physical if not mental maturity father and mother swans have been known to fall upon and deliberately beat it to death with wing and beak. The gratified parents swam gracefully about the mere in which they lived while the great white corpse of their son lay battered and dead upon the shore. The following year, after another had been born to them and in infancy carried upon his mother's back, they began to treat him so roughly that, not being plucked like them, he wisely flew away, and we saw him no more. Curiously enough, geese which have experienced rudeness from swans in the lusty spring have been known to retaliate in the calmer autumn, when the fierceness of their enemy had become mitigated. I have seen a gander leap upon the back of a once arrogant swan and pound away at it in the full enjoyment of gratified revenge.—Cornhill Magazine.

THE NATIONAL FLAG.

No Possession of a Country More Loyal Loved and Revered.

There is no possession of a country which is more deeply revered, more consistently loved or more loyally supported than its national flag. In our country is this especially true, for in that one emblem are embodied all the principles which our forefathers upheld, all the benefits of a century and a quarter of enlightened progress and all the hope and assurance of a promising future.

The stripes of alternate red and white proclaim the original union of thirteen states to maintain the Declaration of Independence. Its stars, white on a field of blue, proclaim that union of states constituting our national constellation which receives a new star with every state. Thus the stars and stripes signify union and "in union there is strength."

The very colors have a significance. White stands for purity, red for valor and blue for justice, together forming a combination which it is our inherited privilege to honor and uphold.

It is not the flag of a king or an emperor or a president. It is the flag of the people, brought into being by their patriotism and to which they turn for protection in time of danger. No matter into what parties our people may be divided, due to political beliefs and leanings, they all stand united under one flag. It is the emblem of unity, safety and faith.—St. Nicholas.

Word Fashions.

The history of the word asparagus shows how, even in the days of dictionaries, word fashions change. In the eighteenth century, even in elegant usage, the delicacy was regularly called "sparrow grass." A dictionary of 1791 says that "sparrow grass" is now so general that "asparagus" has an air of stiffness and pedantry. "Sperage" had been the usual English form in the sixteenth century, but in the seventeenth heralds brought back the original Greek and Latin spelling "asparagus." Pepsy varies between "sparrow grass," "asparagus" and "sperage." No doubt the eighteenth century relapse was the last, and the "a" is back for good now.

Hogs and Storms.

Hogs are always more restless than usual on the approach of bad weather, and when these animals run to and fro with mouthfuls of straw, leaves or branches the indication is for very foul weather. In their native state hogs probably made their own beds, and when bad weather was coming perhaps gathered a larger supply of straw or leaves than usual to serve as a protection against the rain.

Fireworks.

Fireworks originated in the thirteenth century, along with the evolution of powder and cannon. They were first employed by the Florentines, and later the use of fireworks became popular in Rome at the creation of the popes. The first fireworks, which resemble those which we see nowadays, were manufactured by Torre, an Italian artist, and displayed in Paris in 1764.

Consolation.

"So you are still unmarried," said the girl friend. "Yes," answered Miss Cayenne. "And when I see the disappointments of the girls who are married I begin to believe there is, after all, something in this doctrine of the survival of the fittest."—Washington Star.

Experience.

Mother—Now, Tommy, you know what happens to little boys who are naughty. Tommy—Yes, I know. Their papas give 'em a licking, and then their mammas pet 'em and kiss 'em and give 'em nice things to eat.—New York Press.

HIS WIFE'S STRATEGY

By DONALD ALLEN

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"Martha, are you there?" called Farmer Milton from the back door.

"What is it, pa?" asked his wife as she appeared with a dish in her hand.

"There's Jim Thomas coming down the road."

"Well, what of it?"

"He looks all dressed up."

"He's probably going to a dance somewhere."

"He's probably coming right here to see our Minnie."

"Then he'll have greased his boots for nothing. Minnie ain't wasting her time on no such fellows as Jim Thomas."

The farmer had more to say, but before he could say it Jim Thomas had arrived. He was a young man of twenty-five who had no particular occupation, but traded horses, helped to put up windmills and now and then acted as a piano agent.

He sat down beside the farmer, reached for his jackknife and a stick and proceeded to whittle and talk. Mrs. Milton came to the door to shake the tablecloth and gave him a nod, but during the two hours he remained he saw nothing of Minnie. He seemed much disappointed.

When he had departed the farmer entered the sitting room and said to the wife:

"Look a-here, Martha, what's the use in hurting a fellow's feelings?"

"What fellow?"

"Jim Thomas, of course. You didn't say three words to him, and Minnie didn't appear at all. It was a regular snub, and I felt sorry for him."

"Then your sympathies are wasted. I want to tell you that Jim Thomas is a sneak, and if Minnie ever speaks to him again I'll box her ears, though she is going on nineteen years old."

The farmer sat down and pulled off his boots.

"Martha," he began, "I've known for two weeks that there was something up and that Minnie and you were keeping it from me. Now, then, I want to know all about it. Jim Thomas was down in the lot where I was at work today, and he had just begun to tell me that Minnie and Burt Anderson were mad at each other when Elder Davis came along and hung around so long that Jim had to go before finishing his story. You might as well tell me the whole story."

"I told you Jim was a sneak," answered the wife. "If he hadn't been there wouldn't have been any fuss between Minnie and Burt, and if he hadn't been he wouldn't have shown his face here tonight."

"This seems to be a 'tarnal nice howdy-do—two folks engaged to be married and fighting like cats and dogs. What's the row about?"

"Nothing but Burt's jealousy. Minnie wrote her name in an autograph album, and Burt found it out through Jim Thomas and gave her a blowing up about it. She sassed back, and he got mad, and that's the reason he hadn't been here for the last two weeks."

"What in thunder is an aw-to-graff album?" asked the husband after thinking for a minute or two.

"It's a book that folks write their names in, and you needn't swear about it. It belonged to a summer boarder down at Scott's."

"And all she did was to write her name in it?"

"That's all, though Jim made Burt believe the fellow was struck on Minnie and said she had eyes like a sloc."

"What sort of a critter is a sloc?"

"I don't know, and I don't care, and I want to tell you that you are not to mix into this business."

"But ain't I her father, and ain't it my business to go to Burt Anderson and tell him that Minnie is a hundred times too good for him."

"No sir, it ain't! Abijah Milton, you are a thick headed man, and you are so nearsighted that you run against fences. If you had your way you'd spoil your only daughter's happiness forever. You are not going to have your arms and keep still and let me work this thing out myself."

"By thunder, Martha, but"—

"Swearing some more! No wonder you have become afraid of lightning! Swearing won't help you, however. You have got to do as I say. If Jim Thomas comes around again you can talk about windmills all you want to, but don't talk about Minnie. If you see Burt Anderson use him just as you always have. The rest can be left to me."

"And what'll you do?" asked the husband and father.

"You wait and see. If you don't see Burt Anderson around here in less than two weeks then my name wasn't Martha Tompkins before I married you, and I didn't take a prize spelling the whole school down."

"I don't see how"— But she interrupted by saying it was time to wind the clock and go to bed, and during the next ten days she resolutely refused to answer a word whenever he approached the subject. Then one evening she queried of him:

"Pa, what's Burt Anderson working at now?"

"Hoing 'corn in the field alongside the road," was the answer.

"Do you think he'll be there tomorrow?"

"Likely to be. Why?"

"Never mind why. Did our old horse Charlie ever run away?"

"Lord, no!"

"Could he run away if he wanted to?"

"He might get up a sort of hen canteer."

"Suppose," continued the wife, "that the lines were to get under his heels and some one was to hit him five or six cuts with the whip, would he break into a canter?"

"I guess he would. Yes, he'd be so astonished that he would probably dust along for a few rods."

"And would he keep to the road?"

"I guess he would. What are you asking all these questions for?"

"Perhaps I'll tell you this evening. Don't bother me now, as I've got three pans of milk to skim."

Farmer Milton had no sooner left the house for the fields next morning than his wife began fixing up a crock of butter for the village grocer, while Minnie harnessed the old horse to the democrat wagon and got ready to drive to town.

"Now, then, remember what I've told you. When you come along to the cornfield keep your eyes straight in front of you and don't look around even if Burt calls to you. Just make out that you don't hear. On your way back when you get to the schoolhouse"—

"I understand," nodded the daughter.

"Don't forget the screaming part."

"No, but do you suppose"—

"There is no supposing about it. I am your mother, and I am no spring chicken. Now go on with you."

Burt Anderson was working in the cornfield that morning within two rods of the highway when he caught the pounding of hoofs and the rattle of wheels and looked up to see Minnie Milton driving by. He dropped his hoe and opened his mouth to call, but she struck the horse with the whip as if to hurry on. He couldn't say that she saw him, but he thought she did, and the thought hardened his heart. He had forgiven her "sassy" days and days ago and was ready to "make up," but this action on her part showed that she was punishing him. From then until 3 o'clock in the afternoon the young man managed to hoe about twelve hills of corn. The rest of the time was spent in sulking or sitting on the fence and looking down the village road. His waiting and sulking was rewarded at last. A mile away arose a cloud of dust kicked up by old Charlie's feet, and as it drew nearer and nearer the young man prepared to drop off the fence and hide. Minnie should not have the pleasure of flouting him again. He was on the ground when he heard a woman's screams for help. He heard the hoof beats of a horse on the gallop. He heard the clatter of a rickety old one horse wagon.

It was a runaway. Burt Anderson saw that it was the instant he got his head above the fence. It was Minnie returning home. The lines had fallen under the horse's feet, and she was standing up and swaying from side to side and screaming. There was a hero and a rescue. There were explanations. There was no apology to old Charlie, though he certainly deserved one.

"No, I'm no spring chicken!" observed farmer Milton's wife to herself as she stood at her gate and saw that Burt Anderson was driving Minnie home and that Minnie's red cheeks had come back to her.

"Say, now, but how did you manage it?" whispered the husband to the wife that evening as the two lovers had the piazza to themselves.

"Manage what?" was the reply in a puzzled voice. "Abijah Milton, you are the most thick headed man I ever saw. How did I manage it! Just as if I'd been managing something—conspiring and plotting and all that sort of thing! There are certainly times when you make a body tired!"

A Surprise For Horace Greeley.

In the early days of the suffragist movement Miss Susan B. Anthony had no more bitter opponent than Horace Greeley, says a writer in the Boston Transcript. It was for a long time his custom to wind up all debates with the conclusive remark, "The best women I know do not want to vote."

When the New York constitution was being altered in 1867 Miss Anthony laid a train for him. She wrote to Mrs. Greeley and persuaded the editor's wife not only to sign a petition for woman's suffrage herself, but to circulate the paper and get 300 signatures among her acquaintances. In the committee Mr. Greeley, who was chairman, had listened to the debate and prepared to introduce to the convention an adverse report. He was just about to utter his usual "settler" when George William Curtis rose.

"Mr. Chairman," said he, "I hold in my hand a petition for suffrage signed by 300 women of Westchester, headed by Mrs. Horace Greeley."

The chairman's embarrassment could hardly be controlled. He had found at least one of "the best women I know" wanted to vote, but he revenged himself later upon the leaders by scathing editorials.

Decidedly Improved.

Mr. Snagsby (rummaging in closet)—Martha, this is a new hat, isn't it? Why don't you wear it? It looks better than anything you have worn this season. Mrs. Snagsby—That's my old hat. It blew off my head the other day and was run over by a street car, and I think you are just as mean as you can be!—Chicago Tribune.

Queered Himself.

Miss Withers (showing photograph of herself)—I'm afraid it's rather faded. Blinks (inexperienced, aged nineteen)—Yes, but it's just like you.—London Mail.

Goodness does not consist in greatness, but greatness in goodness.—Athenaeus.

Our enemies are our outward confidences.—Shakespeare.

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The Laundry Auction. "Ever got to a laundryman's auction?" asked the man who was sorting bundles. "You can get bargains there sometimes. Here are forty-eight packages that will be sent to the auctioneer tomorrow. One bundle is labeled 'W. Joblotz. No address. Will call. Now, I wonder what has become of W. Joblotz, who had no address and promised to call? What has become of the owners of these forty-seven packages? Some of the things thrown on our hands are very fine and as good as new. Just look at that pile of handkerchiefs and those shirt waists and collars and cuffs. It has been more than a year since they were left here. All unclaimed packages are kept a year or more, then they are sent around to a general receiving station to be disposed of at auction."—New York Sun.

Archbishop of Canterbury. The archbishop of Canterbury is referred to as "his grace," and he writes himself archbishop, etc., "divina providentia," whereas other prelates use the phrase "divina permissione." He is the first peer in the realm. At coronations he places the crown on the head of the sovereign, and the king and queen are his domestic parishioners. The bishop of London is his provincial dean, the bishop of Winchester his subdean, the bishop of Lincoln his chancellor and the bishop of Rochester his chaplain.

Medical. BLOOD HUMORS. Commonly cause pimples, boils, hives, eczema, or salt rheum, or some other form of eruption; but sometimes they exist in the system, indicated by feelings of weakness, languor, loss of appetite, or general debility, without causing any breaking out. Hood's Sarsaparilla expels them, renovates, strengthens and tones the whole system. This is the testimony of thousands annually. Accept no substitute, but insist on having HOOD'S SARSAPARILLA. In usual liquid form or in chocoleted tablets known as SARSATABS. 100 doses \$1. 51-28

Man and His Money. Almost every woman has her basis for the valuation of a man. One girl who recently broke off an engagement to be married certainly has hers. "I couldn't stand him," she said, "because he carried his money in a fish scale purse. That seemed to me the limit. To my mind there is only one really manly way for a man to carry money, and that is to throw it around loose in his trousers pockets, so that when he wants a nickel he has to dig up change by the handful to get it. For bills, of course, I can stand one of those flat leather pocketbooks. They have a businesslike aspect and do not detract from a man's dignity. But to see a big strapping fellow who has the appearance of a real live man draw a little purse from his pocket and fish around for a dime is too much for me."—New York Sun.

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