

A BUSY DAY.

My papa has a little sign, Printed in black and gray; It's only just a single line— "This Is My Busy Day!"

THE ELVES' BUSY WORK.

'Tis said elves thought a lack of time Could be the only reason The autumn leaves were not curled Before the Jack Frost season.

A TRUE STORY.

How many of the readers of this story have ever owned a Newfoundland dog? I know of no more faithful animal. My youngest brother and the dog who is the hero of my story were born on the same day.

we wandered about, feeling very lonely. Everything seemed dreary without our companion.

On the evening of the third day after Rover's departure we were just saying good-night when, suddenly, a bark and a scratch at the front door brought a loud exclamation from us both—for whose bark was that if not Rover's!

Yes, there he was, our beautiful dog! Twenty miles he had traveled to reach his old home and friends.

What a happy reunion it was! Such bones as we begged of the cook! No dog fared better than did our Rover that night.

My father said nothing, although at the time we did not notice his silence; and little we dreamed how short-lived our happiness was to be.

Early next morning we were up and planning all sorts of fun. Rover, in spite of his long run of the day before, seemed ready for everything.

I think it was late in the afternoon of the same day, as we were returning from the boat-house, where Rover, my brother, and I had been playing, that we heard my father calling the dog.

Off Rover bounded in answer to the call; and as we neared the gate we saw a man, seated in a carriage, in deep conversation with my father.

Then it dawned upon us what it all meant. Again Rover must go!

My father got into the carriage, and off he and the man started, Rover running under the wheels in obedience to my father's whistle.

Oh, how we cried as we watched the carriage disappearing in the distance! We felt the world to be a sad place indeed!

The days came and went, however, and gradually we grew reconciled to our loss—perhaps my brother and I became greater chums, having no third companion to share our fun.

On Sunday morning, about ten days later, my brother, who, after we returned from morning service, had been sitting quiet and in a listening attitude for some minutes, suddenly disappeared, and presently we heard him calling us from the garden to come quickly.

What could it be? we wondered, as again he called to us. Through the large French windows and down the garden path we hastened to a clump of trees from which, as we neared it, a faint moaning also was heard.

There we found my brother kneeling on the ground, and beside him, licking his hand, was our Rover!

Around the dog's neck was a strong iron chain and to that chain was attached the heavy block to which he had been fastened. His coat was covered with bars which stuck to his long black hair, making him a pitiable object to behold.

So tired and weak was the dog that all he could do was to lick our hands instead of giving the joyous bark which he was wont to welcome us with.

It was nearly half an hour before we were able to remove the chain and heavy weights which he had dragged so far in his frantic efforts to reach his home and friends; and after giving him the food of which he was so sorely in need, and making him as comfortable as we could, we left him to rest.

The bars had to be removed so gently that, knowing the poor dog had suffered so much already, we decided to wait until the following day before giving him further pain.

So in we went to talk over our dog's brave act with our parents.

We found our good father, quite overcome by the dog's faithfulness, waiting to tell us that Rover should not be sent away again.

The arrangement was that we were to try once more giving him his freedom, and if at any time he attacked the sheep, then he was to be chained at all hours when we were not able to be with him.

Perhaps Rover knew the reason of his punishment or had learned his lesson through suffering; for, from that day until his death at the age of fourteen years, we never heard another complaint about him. And no wonder!

For, six months later, as my brother and I were playing in the garden one morning, we saw walking toward us the farmer whom we had come to look upon as a personal enemy.

In one arm he carried a little lamb, and in his hand a queer looking box, between the bars of which peered a pair of bright eyes.

The box contained a rabbit—a present for my brother, and the pet lamb was for me. For a few moments my brother and I quite forgot our old-time resentment.

The farmer had come to effect a reconciliation. In the first place, he wanted to tell us that the real culprit had been found; and, secondly, he wished to give us each a peace-offering, and to ask us to forgive his suspicions of Rover.

The dear old dog, as he watched us, did not appear to be at all surprised.—By Katharine Clarke, in St. Nicholas.

Queer Tastes of the Eskimo. The Eskimo, as your geographies will tell you, are the natives of that cold desolate country called Greenland, far up in the icy North.

Because they live in such a cold climate, and fat is a heat-producing food, they eat a great deal of blubber, which is the name given to the fat of whales.

Mrs. Justgot Herman: "My new home has stained glass in all the windows." Mrs. Noyes Bateson: "Now that's too bad. Can't you find something that'll take it out?"

What Do The Birds Eat?

In order to determine the harmful or beneficial relations of birds to agriculture, horticulture, and all plant life, a remarkable work is being carried forward by Prof. F. E. L. Beal, who is in charge of the Division of Ornithology of the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, at Washington, D. C.

Beal has alone examined over thirty thousand bird stomachs, the greatest work of the kind ever accomplished by a single man, while his assistants have examined an equal number, making over sixty thousand in all.

A seemingly endless task it is, investigating with microscope each minute particle in each of these thousands of stomachs, yet all this has been accomplished in a period of seventeen years.

When one considers that to do this intelligently and successfully requires a thorough knowledge of the anatomy of bugs and insects, and a familiarity with characteristic of the seeds of both domestic and wild plants, the labor assumes formidable proportions to the uninitiated.

To increase their knowledge, workers in this line must spend much time in woods, gardens, and fields, studying hundreds of species of insects, worms and bugs. The result of these investigations, which are invaluable to science, and of great practical importance to the American farmer, have led to a movement that can intelligently favor the increase of such bird species as are best adapted to preserve the proper balance of nature, and reduce the number of those who prey too greedily on the products of orchard and field.

Ornithologists from all parts of the country, and in many instances special field agents who have been engaged for the purpose, forward great numbers of bird stomachs to the department, and thus aid in the practical and scientific research.

It is difficult, almost impossible to determine what a bird eats by his actions, as he frequently goes through all the motions of eating a hearty meal without taking a thing "the proof of the pudding" is in the eating.

Beal has found that if he is loaded with garden seeds, cultivated fruits, or beneficial insects (parasites on other insects), he is relegated to the black list; but if examination reveals a goodly number of bugs, worms, and insects that are injurious to plant life, he is hoisted high upon the pedestal of usefulness, and vice versa.

The contents of a bird's stomach consist of a pulverized, soggy mass, and it is necessary to separate and study each minute particle in order to determine to what species of fruit or insect he belongs.

Caterpillars are sometimes recognized by their skins, always by their jaws, and the tiny chitinous plates that surround the breathing holes. The presence of ants and wasps is discovered by the hard thorax, spiders by their mandibles, and sometimes by their eyes, which sparkle in the stomach mass like rubies.

Angle worms have hard, indigestible spicules, which project from their sides. Beetles have fierce bony jaws, grasshoppers hard mandibles and tiny leg-armor plates, and so on through the entire insect world.

Most astonishing things have been found in the stomachs of birds, everything but diamonds," says Prof. Beal. "A bird stomach which had been kept in alcohol for two years, waiting its turn to be examined, contained poison oak berries, which are the favorite food of many birds.

Spiders and ticks, and their innocuous and harmless demagogues. For instance, the bobolink ravages the rice fields of the South, annually destroying millions of dollars' worth of rice; then, as if remorseful, he wings his way to the North, where he is thoroughly well-behaved, where, with his sweet voice, innocuous demeanor, and his propensity for eating bugs and other insects injurious to crops, he earns an enviable reputation. But after the fashion of "Jekyl and Hyde," his methods change with abruptness, and he becomes an incarnate devil when he returns to the southern rice fields. So great a pest is he to the planters, that in one season 2,500 pounds of gunpowder were used on one plantation in an attempt to reduce his numbers.

After examining hundreds of insect stomachs, the investigators have passed the verdict that this bird is an abominable pest, with few redeeming qualities. He ignores insects that are injurious to plant life, and gleans his living by robbing the wealth of orchard and field. He works with systematic energy, defoliating trees, eating fruit, and scratching up seeds. He is a shrewd, well-groomed little fellow, but he is wicked, deserving all the bad names and gushes bestowed upon him. Birds are most seriously harmful to crops when a single species is super-abundant in a certain locality, and there is no remedy other than an unparagon of powder and shot, else orchards will be devastated, the labor and hopes of the farmer be lost, and families left financially destitute.

Crows do immense damage in New England corn fields, and about the only method of protection is to tar the corn before it is planted. The efficiency of this scheme was demonstrated by Prof. Beal, who planted several acres to corn. Toward the end of the planting the supply of tar ran out, and he was compelled to finish without it. The areas planted to tarred corn were ignored by the crows, while the untarred patch furnished a glorious picnic ground for the roosting banquets. Though crows are ravenous corn eaters, it is stated that this fault is more than counteracted by their usefulness in destroying harmful insects. In one crow's stomach the investigators found the mandibles of ninety grasshoppers, showing that these birds are partial to such food. Robins eat fruit with a vengeance, and many an eastern farmer has been near distraction because of the ravages of these birds. It has been discovered, however, that they prefer wild fruit, and that whenever it is obtainable they scorn fruit that is useful to man. In the stomachs of three hundred robins were found the seeds of forty-two species of wild fruits, and only four or five domestic. Because of this pre-

ference, the department suggests that wild fruits be planted in close proximity to orchards, so that birds may be attracted and kept out of mischief. As many of these wild growths are ornamental, the advantages of having them about would be doubled.

Woodpeckers are both harmful and useful. The good they do is in excess of the injury. Flickers thrive on ants. In a single stomach were found five thousand of these little pests. The ants best liked by the flickers are those that breed plant lice, carrying them from one growth to another, as each becomes defoliated. The red-bellied woodpecker, common in the north of Pennsylvania, causes some disturbance in the orange groves of Florida by pecking holes in the ripe fruit. The yellow-bellied woodpecker, indigenous to the northern part of the United States and the Allegheny mountains, have an exasperating trick of girdling trees, and pecking holes in the trunks in order to obtain a sap that exudes from the bruises. They also eat insects that become imprisoned in the glutinous sap.

On expanding leaves and flower buds plant lice accumulate, and most of the warblers perform a work of benevolence for the farmer by going over orchards systematically, and gleaming the offensive and destructive insects. They are indefatigable insect exterminators, and are of great value to the world of agriculture.

Meadow larks and cuckoos are helpful, and have black marks against their names in the ornithological records. The worst insect enemies of the fruit grower are caterpillars, cankerworms, fall webworms, tussock moths, and cooking moths. All these creatures the cuckoos dispose of with gusto and dispatch. Few other birds will eat the hairy caterpillars, because the stiff hairs pierce the inner lining of most bird stomachs, and produce discomfort and the cuckoo experiences no bad results, though sometimes his stomach is completely tormented with these hairs. As the food rotates in the stomach, these hairs are brushed round and round like the silk nap of a silk hat. In the stomach of one cuckoo the remains of two hundred and fifty ten caterpillars were found. Bush-tits and other birds are found invaluable for ridding orchards of scales and minute insects that destroy the value of crops. The microscopic eyes of these birds detect the tiniest insect eggs and every species of life, and they perform tasks in insect extermination that would be impossible for man. It is said they can be attracted to orchards by hanging meat on trees.

Has a bird any use to orchardists, for they prey on soppers, ground squirrels, field mice, rabbits, and many other rodents that do great mischief in girdling trees and stealing seeds. True, these birds sometimes feed on small birds and poultry, but their chief food consists of harmful rodents. This was proved by examining two hundred and seventy-seven stomachs. Out of the seventy-three species of these birds to be found in the United States, only six were found to be really harmful. Some states have offered bounties on hawks and owls, while rabbits are allowed to go their mischievous way unmolested. Rabbits are found to be more harm to farmers than they are of value as food. Owls and hawks are helpful, and it has been suggested that the bounty be placed on the head of the erring rabbit, and removed from those of the enterprising birds.

Two men stepped up to the desk at the Brown Palace Hotel yesterday afternoon and one of them registered. The other was acquainted with C. H. Churchill, the clerk. "Hello, Church!" he said. "I want you to meet my friend, Mr. Fish. He's out for a Chicago firm."

The clerk shook hands with the man who had just registered. "Glad to know you, Mr. Fish," he said. "What do you sell?"

"Scales," was the reply. "A good line for a fish," said Mr. Churchill.

The traveling man drew a little book from his pocket. "Let's see," he said, as he turned the pages. "Your number is 9784."

"My number?" said the clerk, perplexed.

"Yes," said the drummer. "Just 9784 people have sprung that joke on me since I took up this work 15 months ago."

"Aw, go weigh!" said Mr. Churchill. The traveling man winced, but decided to remain at the hotel, anyway.

They had been married in due and ancient form. "Geoffrey," said the young wife, you endowed me with all your worldly goods, didn't you?"

"I did," answered the young husband. "Well, I hereby give them back to you."

"Gwendolen," he said, "you promised to obey me, did you not?"

"I did."

"Well, dear, I hereby solemnly command you to do as you please hereafter, no matter what orders I may give you."

On that basis they lived happily ever after.

The average house is too full of furniture and meaningless things. Everything in the house that does not add something to the convenience, happiness or education of the family or some member of the family is an extravagance.

To be sure, every house needs a vase or two for flowers, but so many of these vases are too fancy for use and are good for nothing but to stand upon the mantel and be dusted.

An epileptic dropped in a fit on the streets of Boston not long ago and was taken to a hospital. Upon removing his coat there was found pinned to his waistcoat a slip of paper on which was written:

"This is to inform the house-surgeon that this is just a case of plain fit: not appendicitis. My appendix has already been removed twice."

It was raining very hard and little Mary, who wished to go out, fretted.

"Mother," she asked, "where does so much rain come from?"

"Heaven, my dear."

"Does God do it?"

"Yes, dear."

"Well, I do wish He'd turn off the spigots now."

"I am convinced," said the nervous man, "that we ought to rearrange our holidays."

"So as to bring Thanksgiving Day on the fifth of July. I always feel most devoutly grateful to find all my family with me uninjured."

About the Presidents.

Twenty-five Presidents of the United States in one hundred and sixteen years, makes the average term for each four years and eight months.

Had none been re-elected and all served their full terms, there would have been twenty-nine. Had all, both elected and re-elected, served their full terms, there would have been only twenty, or an average term for each of five years and nine months.

Eight—Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Lincoln, Grant, Cleveland, and McKinley—were re-elected. All but Lincoln and McKinley served their full terms. Five—William Henry Harrison, Taylor, Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley—died in office.

The five Vice Presidents who succeeded these Presidents served seventeen years, an average of three and a half years, or almost a full term each. Harrison survived his inauguration only thirty-one days, and Lincoln his second inauguration forty-two days, so that Tyler and Johnson each practically served a full term. Arthur and Roosevelt served three years and a half each, and Fillmore two.

Based upon past experience, there is one chance against four that a President will not serve his full term.

All but Washington, William Henry Harrison, and Grant were lawyers, although few if any attained to great eminence in their profession.

Monroe, Hayes, Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, Arthur, McKinley, and Roosevelt had some soldierly fame.

Washington, Jackson, William Henry Harrison, Taylor, and Grant were elected primarily on account of successful military achievements.

Both Adamses, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Van Buren, Buchanan, Lincoln, Cleveland, McKinley, and Roosevelt were chosen by reason of distinguished political careers.

Polk, Pierce, Hayes, and Garfield were nominated as compromise candidates, because of the close contests between more prominent aspirants.

All were Anglo-Saxon, except Monroe, Polk, and Buchanan, who were of Gaelic origin; McKinley, of Celtic; Pierce, of French; and Van Buren and Roosevelt, Dutch.

Two elected from Tennessee bore practically the same name, Jackson and Johnson.

Seven—Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, William Henry Harrison, Tyler, and Taylor—were natives of Virginia; as was Lincoln's father, who resided there only a short time previous to the birth of his distinguished son.

Five—Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, and McKinley—were natives of Ohio; three—Jackson, Polk, and Johnson—of North Carolina; three—Van Buren, Arthur, and Roosevelt—of New York; two—the elder and younger Adams—of Massachusetts; and one, New Hampshire; Buchanan, of Pennsylvania; and Cleveland, of New Jersey.

Nearly one-half of the twenty-five were born in Virginia or Ohio; the other thirteen in seven other States. All but two of the nine States were of the original thirteen.

Two men stepped up to the desk at the Brown Palace Hotel yesterday afternoon and one of them registered. The other was acquainted with C. H. Churchill, the clerk. "Hello, Church!" he said. "I want you to meet my friend, Mr. Fish. He's out for a Chicago firm."

The clerk shook hands with the man who had just registered. "Glad to know you, Mr. Fish," he said. "What do you sell?"

"Scales," was the reply. "A good line for a fish," said Mr. Churchill.

The traveling man drew a little book from his pocket. "Let's see," he said, as he turned the pages. "Your number is 9784."

"My number?" said the clerk, perplexed.

"Yes," said the drummer. "Just 9784 people have sprung that joke on me since I took up this work 15 months ago."

"Aw, go weigh!" said Mr. Churchill. The traveling man winced, but decided to remain at the hotel, anyway.

They had been married in due and ancient form. "Geoffrey," said the young wife, you endowed me with all your worldly goods, didn't you?"

"I did," answered the young husband. "Well, I hereby give them back to you."

"Gwendolen," he said, "you promised to obey me, did you not?"

"I did."

"Well, dear, I hereby solemnly command you to do as you please hereafter, no matter what orders I may give you."

On that basis they lived happily ever after.

The average house is too full of furniture and meaningless things. Everything in the house that does not add something to the convenience, happiness or education of the family or some member of the family is an extravagance.

To be sure, every house needs a vase or two for flowers, but so many of these vases are too fancy for use and are good for nothing but to stand upon the mantel and be dusted.

Toys as Educators.

A striking feature of the Christmas toys now being exhibited in the shop windows is the use that has been made of modern inventions.

"Two-thirds of our toys are educative," said the manager of a certain toy department the other day. "We have to follow the times and study the newspapers with the most careful attention."

"For instance, we may see predicted a clever invention which will shortly be placed on the market. Our inventor immediately sets his brains to work, and the toy will make its appearance among the children at the same time as the original is interesting the older members of the community."

"Children are our critics nowadays. That is one of the reasons why it is necessary for us to be so careful. Take as an example any slight difference in equipment of the military. We will be obliged to make this difference in all our soldiers. The same applies to our toy uniforms. If a badge were placed on the wrong side, if the slightest mistake were made, those uniforms would not pass muster. Our boys know too much."

"The old order is changed. A boy does not come to us requesting a toy boat. He may want anything from an electric launch to a submarine, but every detail must be perfect."

At present there is the motor-car boom, and the toy cars are exactly like the real thing, with the exception that they are driven by pedals.

"Next year the aeroplane will be fitting about the nursery, and a top aeroplane will be an easy matter, because the great difficulty of weight-lifting capacity will not affect the miniature model."

Writing of Ellis Island scenes Ernest Poole says: "In this same hall an old Austrian mother was kept five days. She had lost the railroad ticket her son had sent her. Again and again they telegraphed to the small town where she said he lived, but no reply came."

"He is so fine, so strong, so rich—my Fritz!" she kept saying. "This fine dress and this bonnet he sent me. To Austria he wrote me every week. Surely—surely he will come!"

"She grew worse and worse. She could not sleep at night, and all day she sat by the window watching the Manhattan skyscrapers. Her face grew haggard and lined with tears. She was so bewildered, she could no longer answer questions. The name of the town was all she could give. There were eighteen towns of this name in various states; but the name of her son's state she had forgotten. All the knew was that Fritz lived in a town 'quite near New York.' Town after town was telegraphed to. Still no reply. At last it seemed hopeless; and the old lady was about to be deported."

"Suddenly came a telegram: 'Hold mother! Am coming!' And four hours later another: 'Don't deport my mother. I have plenty to support her. Am coming by fast train. Hold her!'"

"And late that afternoon a young man, sleepless and wild-eyed, arrived—from Kansas! 'Quite near New York.'"—Everybody's.

At the time of the San Francisco fire last April 100,000 quart bottles of choice California champagne boiled for forty-eight hours in 1,000,000 gallons of sherry. The result was the production of 10,000 quarts of champagne of rare flavor at a cost however, never before expended on a like quantity.

The sherry was contained in 80,000-gallon casks on the upper floor of the building of the California Wine Association. The fire destroyed the casks and the flood of sherry poured into the cellars, where were stored the 100,000 bottles of wine. The fury of the flames soon heated the sherry to boiling point and the boiling continued for two days and nights. When cooled the sherry was found to be filled with extraneous matter and worthless, so it was pumped out into the streets. Then it was found that 10,000 of the bottles of champagne were unbroken and that the unparallelled process had imparted to the wine rare flavor. Wine experts are now testing out the "boiling process" and the result may be a revolution of the methods of this industry.

A distinguished lawyer, when a small boy, made a visit to friends, after giving his mother a solemn promise that he would ask for nothing to eat. The family were not accustomed to the ways of boys. One day he endured the pangs of hunger as long as he could, and then sang out, "O, there is plenty of bread and butter in this house; but what is that to me?"

"I wouldn't mind your playing poker with the crowd, but you always lose."

"Well, dear, that merely proves the truth of the old saying, 'Lucky in love unlucky at cards.'"

"Oh, well, I guess you can afford to play once in a while."

Mary Elizabeth—"Mamma, have we any ant-brothers?"

Mamma—"No, dear; but I don't quite understand you."

Mary E.—"Well, because we have ant-sisters, you know, I thought we might have ant-brothers somewhere."

"Very well, sir," cried Dr. Kwack after his quarrel with the undertaker, "I'll make you sorry for this."

"What are you going to do?" sneered the undertaker. "Retire from practice?"

—Merchant: "I would be glad to give you the position, young man, but I make it a rule to employ married men only."

Applicant: "Beg pardon, sir, but have you an unmarried daughter?"

"Do you believe in divorce?"

"No, indeed!"

"Why not?"

"My wife won't let me."

—Some men pay so much attention to the proper curling of their mustaches, that they have no time left to cultivate their brains.

—Learning by study must be won; it was never entailed by sire to son.

—A kind word will go farther and strike harder than a cannon ball.

—The preacher does not show his grit by slinging sand at the saints.

—One man's reputation cannot be built on another's ruin.

—Some men mistake their moral dyspepsia for religion.