

Queer Whistling Language of the Canary Island Natives.

In Gomera, one of the smallest of the Canary Islands, the silvando, or whistling language, survives. A correspondent writes: "A traveler must land at the little port of San Sebastian and there find a muleteer from the interior. With him he must ride up the steep bridge paths that wind through the mountains. When no longer any living thing is within sight and the wilderness is only broken by the crimson flower of the cactus growing in the clefts of the rock, the muleteer dismounts, sets his forefingers together at a right angle and places them in his mouth. An arrow of piercing sounds shoots across the ravines and up the stony terraces into the fastnesses of the mountains. A moment's pause and there comes a thin, almost uncanny, answering whistle from far away. Conversation begins and, as the sounds rise and fall, are staccatoed or drawn out, so they are faithfully echoed and transmitted by the hills.

"Then comes the ghostly reply, and then question and answer follow without hesitation or misunderstanding. Perhaps the stranger will ask, 'What are you doing here?' Answer: 'There is a traveler with me. One of our mules is lame. Can you bring us a fresh one?' Yes, I can. Do you want anything else? 'You might bring some milk along if you have any,' and so on. That the conversation is correctly interpreted is presently confirmed by the arrival of the mule and the milk, and the distance that separated the parties to the dialogue turns out to be about three miles. "Long notes and short notes, rising and falling tones, go to make this marvelous means of communication. No record is to be found of its origin or history, and it will be a thousand pities if scientific investigation is not made before the silvando is added to the list of dead languages, as assuredly it will be within the next two or three generations."—Chicago News.

STRANGE COMPANIONS.

The "Happy Family" and a Kitten and a Hawk.

The first public exhibition of a "happy family" in England was given about fifty years ago, when there were shown a monkey, a cat, several rats and three or four pigeons in one cage. The monkey was on excellent terms with the cat so long as puss would allow him to warm himself by cuddling her; otherwise he would show his vexation by slyly giving her tail a nip with his teeth.

The birds perched on the cat's back and pecked at her fur, and the rats were as friendly with their natural enemy as if she were one of their own sort.

A lady walking in the Isle of Wight observed a little kitten curled up on a mossy bank taking a midday nap. As she stopped to stroke it a hawk swooped down and, pouncing upon the kitten, hid it from sight.

The lady, fearing for the life of the kitten, tried to rescue it, but the hawk firmly faced her, stood at bay and refused to move. She hastened to a fisherman's cottage and told the inmates of the impending tragedy. "It's always so," they said, laughing. "That hawk always comes down if any one goes near the kitten. He has taken to it and stays near at hand to watch whenever it goes to sleep."

The lady, greatly interested, made further inquiry and learned that the kitten's mother had died, after which the nursing was missed for several days. One day the hawk was seen about the cottage picking up scraps of meat and carrying them to the roof of the cottage.

The fisherman climbed up and found the lost kitten nestled in a hole in the thatch and thriving under the care of its strange foster father. It was brought down and restored to the cottage, but the hawk would not resign his charge and was always at hand to rescue the kitten from the caresses of strangers.—Philadelphia North American.

How to Open a New Book.

The best way to open a new book without risk of injuring it is to place it on its back upon a smooth or covered table, let down the fore and then the hind board, hold the leaves in one hand and open a few of the fore and after-ward the end leaves until you reach the center of the volume. Do this several times and you will not break the back of the book.

Made It Very Clear.

"How do you suppose she manages to keep up appearances on her husband's income?" "What is her husband's income?" "I don't know; but, of course, it can't be as big as it would have to be if they could afford to live as they do."—Chicago Record-Herald.

The New England Spirit.

One thing we New Englanders like about us is our all around superiority to the people of the rest of this great and glorious country.—Springfield Union.

An Old Saying Amended.

The Man—Won't you marry me, then? Bachelor Girl—Certainly not! When singleness is bliss 'tis folly to be wived.—Illustrated Bits.

A man must be excessively stupid as well as uncharitable who believes there is no virtue but on his own side.—Addison.

Do You Really Love Dogs?

Perhaps the final test of anybody's love of dogs is willingness to permit them to make a camping ground of the bed. There is no other place in the world that suits the dog quite so well. On the bed he is safe from being stepped upon, he is out of the way of drafts, he has a commanding position from which to survey what goes on in the world, and, above all, the surface is soft and yielding to his outstretched limbs. No mere man can ever be so comfortable as a dog looks. Some persons object to having a dog on the bed at night, and it must be admitted that he lies a little heavily upon one's limbs, but why be so base as to prefer comfort to companionship? To wake up in the dark night and put your hand on that warm, soft body, to feel the beating of that faithful heart—is not this better than undisturbed slumber? The best night's rest I ever had was once when a cocker spaniel puppy, who had just recovered from stomach ache (dose one to two soda mints) and was a little frightened by the strange experience, curled up on my shoulder like a fur tipper, gently pushed his cold, soft nose into my neck and there slept sweetly and soundly until morning.—H. C. Merwin in Atlantic.

Absentminded Dyer.

Charles Lamb had a friend named George Dyer who was perhaps the most absentminded man on record. It was Dyer who, leaving Lamb's Islington home at broad noonday, walked straight into the New River. He was known to take up a walk on the river bank, and to walk home with a footman's cockade hat on and even to leave one of his shoes under the table and get well on his homeward way before discovering his loss. He called at a friend's one morning, heard that the family was away in the country, left his name in the visitors' book, and a few hours later called again, asked for the book again and was astonished to see his own freshly written name. Once, when Proctor breakfasted with him, Dyer forgot the tea. The omission being noted, he filled the teapot with ginger. Proctor left as soon as he could to get a better breakfast at a coffee tavern, and there Dyer strolled in and asked him how he did, quite unconscious of having seen him earlier.

Lawyers' Wills.

A remarkable specimen of a lawyer's invalid will was that of Sir Joseph Jeckyll, master of the rolls, who died in 1738 and bequeathed his fortune after his wife's death to pay off the national debt. "Sir Joseph was a good man and a good lawyer," was Lord Mansfield's comment, "but his bequest was a very foolish one. He might as well have attempted to stop the middle arch of London bridge with his full bottomed wig." The testator's patriotic intentions were therefore treated as proof of mental weakness, and his will was promptly set aside. Among the many blundering wills that lawyers have made for their clients, if not for themselves, the strangest on record was that of a Dublin gentleman who left all his money to the elder son of his brother and, if he had no elder son, to the second.—London Chronicle.

Raindrops.

Drops of rain vary in their size perhaps from a twenty-fifth to a quarter of an inch in diameter. In parting from the clouds they precipitate their descent till the increasing resistance opposed by the air becomes equal to their weight, when they continue to fall with uniform velocity. This velocity is therefore in a certain ratio to the diameter of the drops; hence thunder and other showers in which the drops are large pour down faster than a drizzling rain. A drop of the twenty-fifth part of an inch in falling through the air would, when it had arrived at its uniform velocity, acquire a celerity of only eleven and a half feet per second, while one of a quarter of an inch would have a velocity of thirty-three and a half feet.

A Peacemaker.

It is a commonly accepted belief that nothing short of being pried loose will induce a bulldog to give up his grip on another dog or on an intruder, but this is a mistake. A little household ammonia poured on him as near his nose as circumstances will allow will make him let go immediately. The fumes of ammonia are so overpowering that a dog cannot possibly maintain his grip and his breath at the same time.—Country Life in America.

A Word to Parents.

Never amuse your children at the expense of other people; never allow your children to ridicule other people. Neglect this advice and the time will assuredly come when these children will amuse themselves with your follies and ridicule your authority.—Exchange.

Which Was the Worst?

"When I returned from our poker party last night my wife just looked at me; not a word was spoken." "My wife looked at me, too, and I don't believe that a word was spoken."—Houston Post.

Reaching Conclusion.

"I imagine from your speech that you are a taxidermist." "What makes you think so?" "Principally because you tell me I am as wise as an owl and then try to stuff me."—Exchange.

Peaceful.

Mrs. Frost—Who was it that said "Peace, perfect peace?" Frost—Some one whose telephone was out of order.—Life.

Cheerfulness is one of the surest indications of good sense.

It Has Its Prototype in Every Spherical Drop of Water.

Nature offers a free microscope whenever one is wanted. She has been dealing in free optical instruments and optical phenomena ever since the first dewdrop formed or the first raindrop fell earthward. Every dewdrop and raindrop and spherical water drop has all the powers and principles of a microscope. To get one of nature's microscopes in operation take up a drop of water between the two points of two sharpened sticks, say matches, and hold the drop over the minute object to be examined. The result will be that the object will be magnified about three diameters. The supposed invention of the microscope was nothing more than shaping a piece of glass into an imitation of a water drop so as to be easily handled. Spiders have made suspension bridges for ages. The rough edge of sword grass gave the inventor the idea of the reaper blade for the harvester. The buzzard has been using the aeroplane for flying a good many centuries. By tapping on an end of a long beam the man at the farther end can hear you telegraphing, the sound traveling through the timber. Fishes have been using bladders of wind for balloons, lifting them in water for countless years. Water has been a camera ever since the world had sunshine.

Help yourself to nature's store of all things man needs, but never say anything about the invention. Nature invented; you can only arrange and combine facts.—St. Louis Republic.

EARLY BALLOONING.

Some Odd Ideas That Prevailed in the Eighteenth Century.

As far back as 1844 the American public were led to believe that the Atlantic had been crossed in a balloon. On May 23 in that year the New York Sun published a detailed account of an aerial voyage from Liverpool to Charleston, which purported to have been accomplished by "the steaming balloon Victoria in a period of seventy-five hours from land to land." Five columns were devoted to the description of the journey and to a scientific account of the balloon, of which a woodcut was given, and an air of verisimilitude was added by a list of eight passengers, one of the names mentioned being that of Harrison Ainsworth, who was then at the height of his fame.

At the end of the eighteenth century balloons were all the rage. Then, as now, enthusiasts predicted a time near at hand when war would either be an awful matter of the annihilation of armies and forts by bombs from above or would cease altogether through the abolition of frontiers and the fusion of nations. Prophecy went even further.

Canals and roads were to vanish and the space occupied by them to be restored to agriculture. And ships (if any still existed) were caught in a storm would be whirled by the mast from balloons above and safely conveyed into port or even carried over mountain ranges.—Chicago News.

Self Protection.

"You didn't really need a wig." "I was driven to it. Now the barber won't try to sell me any tonics or hair restorer."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Never add the burden of yesterday's trouble to that of tomorrow. The one is past; the other may never come.

A Misunderstanding.

"The management of one of the big opera houses in New York has to pay \$2,000 a week for conductors." "Does it pay the same rate for mortemen?"—Judge.

Clean Living.

James—A bath bun and two sponge cakes, please. Waitress—Two sponges and a bath for this gentleman, please!—London Opinion.

From swearing men easily slide into perjury.—Hierocles.

Forgetful.

Mistress—Did you have company last night, Mary? Mary—Only my Aunt Maria, mum. Mistress—When you see her again will you tell her she left her tobacco pouch on the piano?—Illustrated Bits.

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