

Democratic Watchman

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TO A LITTLE BOY AND GIRL.

By James J. Montague.
And so you think the robin's child
Has not a thing to do
But chirp and flutter, free and wild,
The happy hours through,
And bathe himself in crystal brooks
And fill the air with song,
While you must bend o'er lesson books
In school the whole day long!
But you are wrong, my little friends,
For where the branches sway
The school the robin's child attends
Makes yours seem merely play.
And if he fails to learn to fly
Or firmly clutch a limb,
Old Mr. Pussy Cat comes by,
And that's the last of him!
And he must train his beady eye
For almost half a year
With watchfulness to scan the sky
When Old Man Hawk is near.
And oh! the weary weeks of work
Before he knows the sound
That tells where worms—and dinner—lurk
Beneath the grassy ground.
And if one lesson's left unlearned
Out yonder in the wood,
Well—up his little toes are turned
And school is out for good.
The school the robin's child attends
Is hard and stern and grim,
And not for worlds, my little friends,
Would you exchange with him!

WHEN CIRCUS ELEPHANTS GO BAD.

In the circus menagerie wild animals are always held to be dangerous. In the performing arena, this assumption is the first rule of training. No animal can be trusted. The most tractable and obedient beast will turn and attack at any time the mood seizes it. Trainers know this well, and the successful ones are always prepared for a sudden spring or a sweeping stroke of unheated claws. But, until an animal has once rebelled successfully—broken down man's mastery temporarily—it is not "bad" in the sense the trainers use the term.

A bad elephant is ever biding his time to kill, or watching for a chance to lead other elephants into a stampede. And nothing in circus life is so fraught with terrifying possibilities as an elephant stampede.

Of all the bad elephants ever in America, "Snyder, the tuskier," came nearest to dying "in character," as theatrical slang has it. For Snyder died with "his boots on." It was in Salina, Kan., Monday, September 13, 1920. Snyder had done nothing unusual since the engagement of the circus at the Chicago Colosseum. However, one of his trainers had been left ill in a hospital along the route. The boss elephant man was the day before called home on urgent business. This left a trainer in charge who had not been with the herd for three years. This change made the herd restless, especially Snyder. After parade that Monday forenoon, the general manager of the show ordered a rehearsal of the middle-ring elephants, among which was Snyder, the pre-eminent feature. No sooner had Snyder reached the ring than he turned and raced out, with two attendants clinging to him with bull hooks jabbed deep into his trunk. Out of the big top into the menagerie loped the big tuskier, the men fighting him at every stride. Through the wall of the menagerie tent Snyder plunged and shook off the attendants, striking at them with his trunk. The tuskier's small eyes were red with blood lust, and circus men forming a line of skirmishers, headed the crowds on the lot onto the streets outside the fences. Others, led by the elephant men, formed a great circle about the elephant in order that he might be headed if he turned toward the townspeople. For three hours the big elephant spent his time in turning over immensely heavy pole, seat, and baggage wagons. Once he picked up a cage of lions and hurled it 30 feet. He started for a den of leopards, but the snarling cats, rearing against the bars with their claws extended, scared him off. . . . All during the excitement, the elephant heeded his name. So, as he would start a charge, the circus men would divert him by calling to him. Thus, the field of his activities was restricted. Outside the menagerie was a small tent in which the elephant men were wont to rest between shows. This the elephant knocked over, stamping upon every square foot of the flattened canvas in the apparent hope that some one of the men was underneath.

Once he rushed for the great six-pole top in which 300 of the show's finest draft stock were stabled. As the elephant approached, a quick whistle from the boss hostler brought 60 drivers and grooms with pitchforks into line in front of the tent. There were men in that line who had driven and nursed their six and eight-horse teams for years. They were there to die rather than see their pets harmed. The sun glinted on the thin line of pronged steel. Snyder, charging with long, lumbering strides, saw and understood. He came to a full stop, turned and went back to the menagerie tent, where he wrecked the candy stands.

Meanwhile the general manager had sent for rifles. He also had prepared apples with cyanide of potassium. These were thrown to the elephant. He ate one and then tossed the others aside. It is likely he detected the poison. That contained in the one apple had no effect on him. The manager had managed to get "Tribby," Snyder's mate, chained at one side of the show lot where people would not obstruct the line of fire if he should decide to shoot the mad brute. When the poisoned apples failed to slow up Snyder's rushes, he gave the word. It was then a matter of luring or driving the elephant to a point where he could see Tribby, for it was almost certain that he would attempt to loosen her when he sighted her. Such proved to be the outcome. But, as Snyder neared her the assistant manager, armed with a 45-90 rifle, fired. The bullet caught the tuskier in the hollow over the right eye, piercing the brain. Three ex-officers of the army also

opened fire, but unnecessarily, for the manager's shot was fatal. Slowly, without a sound or a struggle, the elephant sank to his knees and stretched out on his right side. So ended the only elephant hunt ever held in the heart of Kansas.—By Frank Braden, in Popular Mechanics Magazine.

STORIES OF OLD HOME SONGS. My Old Kentucky Home.

One of the best song writers America ever had was Stephen Collins Foster—also one of the most prolific, for he penned between one and two hundred. This famous Pennsylvanian created "My Old Kentucky Home" while he and his sister were visiting in the State with Judge Rowan who lived a short distance east of Bardonia. Stephen and his sister were walking on a certain soul-thrilling morning. The Negroes were at work in the cornfields of the old plantation and the sun was shining gorgeously when the two young people sat down upon a bench. A mocking bird was merry-making in a tree while a thrush sent out wonderful notes from the bush that served as his stage. A number of pickaninies were playing in and around a near-by shanty. With this as a setting Foster began to write the immortal words.

His sister read the first verse and then sang it. The mocking bird seemed to be enraptured for he drew his head to one side and descended to a lower bough of the tree. Did he think himself outdone?

In the meantime Stephen had written the chorus. When the last sweet note of his sister's voice had died away, he followed with his compelling deep bass.

The slaves put aside their tools and listened to the sentimental ditty. The old black women peeped around a corner of the house, and the children stopped their playing. A dog gave his attention. Even the leaves seemed to cease their rustling. The wonderful stillness was not broken until the brother and sister blended their voices in singing, "They hunt no more for the possum and the coon," and the entire second and third stanza.

As the pair finished the song, the cheeks of the black faces became wet with tears. The children acted as if a spell had been cast upon them. The mocking bird and the thrush vanished into the thicket. The old dog lay down to bask in the sun.

Though this story of the origin of "My Old Kentucky Home" has been told at various times, it seems too good to be true. At least, songs are not written in that fashion in this day and age of the world. A modern poet revises and polishes his work; if he wishes to make a song out of it and is a musician himself, he then hums the words over and over until he gets a melody. Sometimes a writer-composer will work the other way around, from the music to the words; but Foster liked to do the lyric first. It is entirely possible, however, that he may have written the air of "My Old Kentucky Home" before he penned the words; he may have discussed the whole matter with his sister, for otherwise she could scarcely break out in full song as the words were set down.

On the day that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died Stephen Collins Foster was born in Pittsburgh. This remarkable day was the Fourth of July, 1826, just half a century after the Declaration of Independence.

The boy quickly qualified as a musician; in fact, he attained this goal almost before he graduated from the cradle. He required no teacher, for at the age of seven he mastered the flageolet himself. Soon every instrument yielded its sweetness to him. Stephen differed from his mates. Running and jumping did not appeal to him half as much as composing songs with the words and music complete. With his boyhood largely spent in this fashion, his success as a song writer did not surprise those persons who really knew Stephen Collins Foster.

His first published song, "Open Thy Lattice, Love," appeared in 1842 when he was a book-keeper for his brother in Cincinnati. He followed this up a few months later with "O Susanna" which a minstrel troupe featured. As these productions became popular almost over night, he quit his job and turned his attention toward the field of endeavor that was his true heart's love.

Foster also studied French and painting. Once he attempted to illustrate a pathetic song—but never again! He handed his sketch and the manuscript to his publisher who gave it a glance and commented, "Oh, another comic song, Mr. Foster!" The sensitive would-be artist thereupon tore up the drawing; nor could any one ever persuade him to make another effort.

The author of "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Folks at Home" and "Old Black Joe," sailed smoothly and serenely on his way until he entered the sea of matrimony in 1854. Leaving his wife after six years, he went to New York city to live. There he kept a small grocery, but he squandered both his earnings and himself. There in 1864 he died—poverty-stricken and a victim of his own dissolute habits.

The man was not a great musician; he often regretted that he had not in his youth studied the masters. The success of his compositions may be ascribed to the undeniable fact that they appeal directly to the human heart.

"Foster," says L. C. Elson, "was like Robert Burns, a man who sang the purest poetry of humble life."

His career resembles that of the Scotchman as both were lovers of pleasure, too fond of drink, and unusually gifted. Like Edgar Allan Poe, his life was unfortunate; like that of American genius, his talents were not appreciated until long after his death.

Terrible Dissipation.

A small, henpecked, worried-looking man was about to undergo a medical examination for life insurance.

"You don't dissipate, do you?" asked the physician, as he made ready for tests. "Not a fast liver, or anything of that sort?"

The little man hesitated a moment, looked a bit frightened, then replied in a small, piping voice:

"I sometimes chew a little chewing gum!"

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

One constant element of luck
Is genuine solid old Teutonic pluck.
Stick to your aims—the mongrel's hold
Will slip.
But only crows loose the bulldog's grip.
—Holmes.

Keynotes to the Mode.—Simplicity is the keynote of the coming mode. Slip-on frocks, chemise frocks, and models of straight lines, carefully adjusted to each individual figure, prove that the vogue for simplicity will continue. There is greater variety in the use of panels, and more subtle unanities in the drapery. The new dresses are practically untrimmed and have an air of careless grace that is very smart.

The outline is generally straight and loose, but there is a very strong tendency towards concentrated fullness at the hips by means of pleats or shirrings. A hint of ancient Tanagra appears in some of the classic drapery for evening gowns, and the Persian tunic is a suggested mode. Crepe de Chine and crepe Maroccan are the leading fabrics of the moment. There is a noticeable return of high-luck, as well as the Bodier woolsens and French serges. Handkerchief linen in bright colors is much used, and lace continues to be popular, particularly dyed laces and fine black laces.

The majority of crepe dresses are of black, brown, or coffee color. All shades of grey and yellow are popular, and red is a favorite color which will be widely used for hats and, combined with white, for general summer wear.

What the Silhouette Will Be.—There is no longer a single silhouette; the woman of taste now chooses the style that is suited to her individual type. This spring, we are offered bodices that are loose and bloused or that hang straight to the hips, and our waist-lines may be normal or a little lowered, and marked with a sash tied on one or both hips. Or, if we prefer, we may choose a rather close-fitting bodice or a gown showing a Directoire influence.

Skirts are longer; the prevailing length is eight to ten inches from the floor. They are a little fuller, also, and hardly any sheath skirts are seen. The uneven hem-line remains, with the greater length usually at the sides. There is a distinct tendency to keep all the fullness or ornamentation of the skirt at the hips. To some extent, the circular skirt is worn, and a circular flounce that flares below the knees has been introduced.

Four varieties of top coats predominate: Those that are long and straight; those that are belted snugly; those that are belted about the hips and blouse above; and those that are entirely or partially circular in cut and full. The majority of the suit-coats are short, full, and unbelted or finger-tip length, belted, and straight in cut.

Details of the Mode.—Many sleeves remain short, especially for afternoon wear, when the usual cap is sometimes replaced by a tiny puff sleeve. The newer sleeves, however, are long and slashed, and caught in at the wrist in a band.

The coat-dress, which resembles both coat and dress, is very popular with all the couturiers.

There is a persistent effort to establish the very high collar, but it has not been generally accepted.

Hats may be either very large or very small. The large hats generally have brims slightly rolling or slightly drooping and fairly low crowns. The Venetian tricorn, worn with a lace veil, will be very popular, as will the bicorne.

Many fancy straws are being shown. Chrysanthemum straw, fancy Batavia, and novelty hair braids are particularly smart. A straw through which is woven a glittering thread of metal is a novelty that has won favor. Of the simpler straws, Milan, hemp, and li-sere are much used, often in combination with taffeta or crepe de Chine.

Grapes are a favored trimming, and they are often in bronze or shiny black. Pheasant feathers are used, and heavy fringed ribbons sometimes hang at each side. The trimming is often placed under the brim and dangles low.

Veils are still very popular, and they are often the only decoration on a hat that is otherwise entirely plain.

Baked Ham.—Wash a ham. Set to cook in cold water to cover, boil slowly four hours. Remove from water. Cut the skin in points five inches from where it meets the shank bone, retain the skin around the bone and remove the rest. Mix one cupful of the liquor in which ham is boiled with one cupful of cider or one cupful of cider vinegar and pour over the ham set in a baking pan. Let cook two hours in a moderate oven, basting often with liquor in the pan. Remove from the oven. Insert whole cloves in the fat. Mix one-half cupful brown sugar, one-half teaspoonful pepper and one-half cupful fine bread crumbs. Sprinkle over ham. Return to oven. Bake one hour. Serve with pineapple rings.

Waterproof Shoes.—The United States Bureau of Chemistry has worked out a method by which anybody can make his shoes waterproof unless they have holes in them.

The chief reason why shoes are not waterproof is that the seams admit moisture. Thus the feet get damp and the wearer is liable to catch cold.

An occasional use of castor oil on shoe uppers will help to make them waterproof, but too much should not be used lest it interferes with the "shine." Much better, especially for use in winter, is a mixture of twelve ounces of tallow and four ounces of cod oil. Melted together by moderate heat, the stuff should be applied warm and thoroughly to the edge of the sole and the welt, where footgear is most liable to leak.

The sole can be best waterproofed by letting the shoe stand for fifteen minutes in a shallow pan containing enough of the grease to cover the sole.

This protected one need not wear overshoes, which, while they keep water out, also keep perspiration in. Moreover, they are cold in winter and hot in summer.

FARM NOTES.

—It is estimated that a good crop of sweet clover when turned under will add as much humus as 15 tons of barnyard manure.

—The incubation period of turkey eggs is 28 days. The first egg is usually hatched during the first part of the twenty-seventh day, the first poult hatched by the middle of that day, and the hatch completed at the end of 28 days, although in extreme cases all the poults are not hatched before the end of 30 days. Turkey eggs are tested for fertility and for dead germs, as a rule, on the tenth and twentieth days.

—Winged white ants are often observed flying about houses in early spring, and are sometimes supposed to have come in from the outside. The Bureau of Entomology of the United States Department of Agriculture explains that these winged insects really are hatched inside the buildings, and usually are to be taken as indicating nests of wingless white ants working destruction in the timbers.

These insects, which really are not properly ants, enter the wood wherever it comes in contact with damp earth, and often eat into the center of an upright beam without manifesting their presence on the outside until the wood is entirely ruined, and possibly a settling and cracking of the building has resulted.

The department urges that buildings be constructed with such foundations that no wood touches the ground, or if it is necessary to use wood, that it be impregnated with tar creosote. Concrete floors should be laid on a gravel base to prevent dampness and cracking, and where cracks occur they should be promptly filled.

—Intelligent culling of the poultry flock is of the utmost importance for success in poultry keeping, say specialists of the Department of Agriculture.

Cull These Hens.—Sick, weak, lacking vigor, inactive, poor eaters, early molters, with small, puckered, hard, dry vents; with small, shriveled, hard, scaly, dull-colored combs; with thick or coarse, stiff pelvic bones, that are close together, small spread between pelvic bones and rear end of keel, and hard, small abdomen. In breeds with yellow skin and shanks, the discarded hens should also show yellow or medium yellow shanks and yellow beaks and vents.

Save These Hens.—Healthy, strong, vigorous, alert, and active; good eaters; not molting or just beginning to molt in September or October; with large, moist vents; with full, red combs; thin, pliable pelvic bones well spread apart, wide-spread between pelvic bones and rear end of keel, and large, soft, pliable abdomen. In breeds with yellow skins and shanks, the hens saved should also show pale or white shanks, and pale or white beaks and vents.

—Chicken hens and incubators can be and often are used successfully for hatching turkey eggs, but the surest means, United States Department of Agriculture poultry specialists say, is to use the turkey hen and give her proper management. Turkey hens are close sitters and will cover, so there will be no danger of chilling, from 15 to 18 eggs, depending on the size of the hen.

Nests for setting turkey and chicken hens are best made on the ground by hollowing out a little earth, so that the center is deep enough to keep the eggs from rolling out of the nest. A thin covering of clean straw or hay can then be used to prevent the eggs from being directly on the ground, and a large, roomy coop should be placed over the nest to keep the hen from being disturbed. When a number of hens are to be set, a long row of nests can easily be made on the ground, separating them with board partitions. If this is done care must be taken to see that when the hens come off the nests each returns to the right one instead of crowding into a nest with another hen and leaving some of the eggs to become chilled. With only a few hens it is better to set them some distance apart, as they will then require less attention.

—When a hen becomes broody and shows that she is in earnest by remaining on her nest for two or three nights, she may safely be trusted with the eggs, provided she is allowed to sit in another nest, as is usually the case, then she should be removed to the new nest, preferably after dark, given a few nest eggs, and shut in to prevent her from returning to the old one. If she sits quietly on the nest eggs she should be taken off in the evening of the following day, and the eggs to be incubated placed in the nest. On being freed, she probably will return to her old nest; if so, she should be carried back and set quickly on the eggs. She should be handled in this manner until on being let off she returns to the new nest rather than to the old one. It sometimes takes only two or three days, and seldom more than a week, to break a hen from returning to her old nest. Turkey hens do not ordinarily come off for feed and water more than once every 2 or 3 days, but when confined they should have a chance to come off every day. Occasionally a turkey hen does not come off at all, and in such case she should be taken off once a day, as otherwise she will die on the nest.

On coming off the nest the first thing a turkey hen does is to stretch her wings, step gingerly for a few steps, and then she often takes a running start and flies for a short distance. Exercise of this sort helps greatly to keep a sitting hen in good condition, and for this reason it is not well to confine her to a small space. A dust bath is greatly enjoyed by sitting hens, and helps to keep them free from vermin. Whole corn is a good feed, and fresh water and grit should always be accessible.

Lice are a great annoyance to sitting hens, and are one of the worst enemies of young poults. To prevent their getting a start, the hen should be dusted thoroughly with sodium fluoride or some good lice powder before she is placed on the nest. The nesting material should be kept clean, and if the eggs become dirty they should be washed with a soft cloth dipped in lukewarm water. Just before the poults are to hatch, the old nesting material should be replaced with clean straw.



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