

SPARROWS INSTEAD OF WRENS

(© by D. J. Walsh.)

THE young Russells had come to Oakville in the procession of eager workers the recent establishment of a factory had brought there. They were very young indeed and fresh from the city. Indeed, it was the first time in her life that Peach Russell had ever set foot in a small country town. She found a keen difference from what she had been used to.

"But I like it, Billy; I really do," she told her husband. "It's so quiet and orderly. I'm sure we can save lots of money here. And do you know what I'm thinking?"

"No; what?" returned Billy. He was continually being astonished by the wisdom of Peach's little blond pate. She was only a confectionery salesgirl when he married her, as delectable and unsubstantial seemingly as a pink french cream, but she was making a wonderful wife. Billy was a very good sort of young fellow himself, steady and grave and honest, but he would have told you frankly that he "wasn't a marker to Peach." And so he thought now.

"I've been thinking that I wish we had a real home," said Peach. "You know, Billy, a little house where I could learn to cook and do things like that. It's nice here at Mrs. Killen's, but it costs so much. I'm sure we could live cheaper in our own home. And if we're ever going to have a home we want to establish it while we're young."

"You're right, Peachie," agreed Billy. "We'll look up a house."

One March Saturday when they had half a day's leisure they went forth to look for a house. They had gathered a few facts to guide them, but they were as ignorant as ever were a pair of young birds attempting to build their first nest.

Not that Saturday did they find what they wanted, and perhaps they never would have found it at all if it had not been for Mr. Kling, the kindly real estate man. As it was, the instant they saw the house they knew they must have it.

It was gray and small and compact like a bumble bee's nest, only neither Billy nor Peach had ever seen a bumble bee's nest, so they could not draw that comparison. Within it had just the kind of rooms that a pair of young married people would delight in—a darling tiny kitchen and dining room, a staid living room, a wee den to snug down in cold winter evenings. There were two closets, all freshly papered and white painted. There was land enough about the little house for flowers and vegetables and a lawn.

"I can just see you with your coat off pushing a lawnmower while I sit here on the porch darning your socks!" whispered Peach. "Oh, Billy, let's have it!"

"It will take lots of saving and economy, Peachie," said Billy.

"But it will be fun to save and economize! I'll be the best little saver and economizer you ever saw, Billy. Honest, I will!"

What could Billy say to that except that she should have the house? Mrs. Duke smiled wryly.

I forgot to say that Mrs. Duke was the woman who owned the house and lived in it. She was very old, in Peach's eyes, and she had never been anything that was worth looking at. She sniffed and cackled and sighed—she was just that kind of woman. She made Peach feel that she was making a sacrifice when she gave up her dear little house.

"I've lived here twenty-six years," she sniffed, "and Mr. Duke has been gone from me sixteen. That's a long time to be a widow, my dear. I wouldn't sell out only my sister wants me to come and live with her. I hope you'll be good to my dear little house. I always wash the paint spring and fall with gasoline and water. Be careful about always taking hold of the doorknobs. And if you have rubber heels put on your shoes your floors will stay nice longer. And you must always lower the window in the kitchen when you bile meat. And then—a heavy sniff—"there's my birdies, my dear little wrens. They come every spring and nest under the veranda. How they'll miss me! I hope you'll be good to them, my dear. My poor little wrens! If you'll just throw them a few crumbs now and then. It's a hard world for little birdies. I hope you'll feed my wrens."

Peach nearly wept as she heard this. She promised everything, especially to feed the wrens. She did not know what wrens were. Almost the only bird names she knew were the swan and the ostrich, and she had seen them in the city parks. She made up her mind there and then that she would protect and care for Mrs. Duke's little birdies, even as Mrs. Duke herself would have done.

Within a week Mrs. Duke was gone and the Russells were in the little gray house. They had nothing, being so newly married, to make a home out of aside from love and energy and high enthusiasm. But there was a really well-stocked furniture store and a second-hand shop, both open to their patronage. Perhaps Peach bought most at the second-hand shop. She found such bargains there and they cost so little. And Billy discovered that he was something of a genius with hammer and gluepot.

Such a good time as they had with their home-making! Such adventures,

GIRL WORKS ISLAND CLAIM IN FAR NORTH

Canadian College Graduate Lives in Cabin.

Toronto.—Women are "sitting on the top of the world" in many fields of activity, but to Miss Kathleen Rice, graduate of the University of Toronto, goes the unusual distinction of active operations as a mining prospector.

Mining is one of the chief topics of conversation in Canada at present, but while the home woman, the business woman and the professional woman discuss how many shares of this or that they own, Miss Rice is working her claim. Her part in the romance of mining is a definite one. At present her base camp is on an island in Herb lake, or to use the more melodious Indian name, Wetsko Lake, northern Manitoba. From this base she has worked since 1921. Here she lives in a log cabin that harks back to the days of the pioneers, and here she pioneers on one of her most promising claims, a copper and nickel vein on an island, within a stone's throw of her cabin. Hard work has been tangled up in the romance, and Miss Rice had considerable difficulty in proving the claim. Now, however, she is receiving encouragement, for engineers on the ground have pronounced the prospects good.

Takes a Gun.

Kathleen Rice is one of those "girls of the great open spaces" who tote guns, seen often on the screen as being typical of Canada, but very rare, indeed, in the Canada of real life. Most women would be satisfied to gain distinction in man's field by prospecting in the summer, but Miss Rice adds further laurels to her outdoor reputation by trapping in the winter. In this way she actually is successful enough to make her stake for summer operations. While she uses a gun like a veteran, she never shoots for sport. Once, when a moose fell to her rifle she preserved the meat for future use.

Devotion to animals is one of Miss Rice's outstanding characteristics. Always, in the North, she is seen with and known by her famous dogs. Despite the unwritten law of the north country, she ignores and never uses the lash. In this matter she has the full approval of the dogs, who not only shower her with devotion but repay her by being the best trained dogs within hundreds of miles.

Lone Ventures.

It is now 15 years since Miss Rice, daughter of Henry Lincoln Rice, B. A., of Toronto, went North on a lone venture. The spirit of adventure was financed by a college chum from Chicago, who staked her when she homesteaded in the name of her brother, Lincoln Rice, of St. Mary's, Ontario. The young Canadian girl was lifted of cities and classrooms. She longed for the North; felt "the call of wind-swept places," so she left her position as a mathematics specialist in an Ontario high school and liked to an unknown land. The rest of the story is teeming with adventure; her richest gold quartz claim is on the shore of Herb lake, in the line of strike with the Bingo, Rex and Kinsid mines. Because Starr is a family name, she calls it the Starr claim. The name connects the Rice family with the earliest New England settlement. This claim shows not only gold but other high mineral values. She was one of the first prospectors in the North to find vanadium.

Danish Student Called "Busiest Man in Pitt"

Pittsburgh, Pa.—Christian Neilson, a Danish student at the University of Pittsburgh, has won the distinction of being called the "busiest man in Pitt."

Neilson, registered for a premedical course, is doing two full-time jobs each day. He carries on a full schedule of studies and works eight hours a day as railroad weightmaster at Aliquippa, near-by steel center. He travels 50 miles each day to go to and from the university.

Injured several years ago while with the Danish merchant marine, he was left at Baltimore to recuperate. Later he came to this district, completed a four-year high school course in three years with highest honors and entered college. When he was left in Baltimore he could not speak a word of English. Now he speaks the language flawlessly.

Puts Color in Leaves and Finds Trick Pays

Jacksonville, Fla.—Green oak leaves take an autumnal turn in about five minutes in the factory here of Dr. Henry Dux, who rouges nature's cheeks so successfully that he finds a ready market for his goods.

In Doctor Dux's factory leaves and plants used by florists are so prepared as to make them last indefinitely without becoming brittle and without losing their natural beauty.

The head of the factory, a licensed physician, says the process of treatment of the leaves, plants and ferns that come to his workshop for beautification is secret.

Find Old Ballot

Lexington, Va.—"For President, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi," is the heading of a faded ballot presented to the Lee museum of Washington and Lee university. The ballot, found in an ante-bellum home at Petersburg, Va., was used in the first and only Presidential election of the Confederacy and bears the date November 15, 1861.

Zones in Space Where Silence Is Absolute

When rising from the earth's surface, the air becomes lighter and more rarefied. All of its components decrease in amount; at 30 miles up there is little or no oxygen and the density of the air at that altitude is about one one-hundredth that at the sea level; at 50 miles, the nitrogen ceases, and there is practically no water vapor above five miles. Above 25 miles the air is too rare to transmit sound and absolute silence there prevails. As the air is very rare at that altitude, and as no notes or dust are there, the light waves pass almost unobstructed, and there is nearly total darkness and absence of all color; the temperature, too, is very low, probably approaching that of outward space, this region is then one of dark, cold silence. The fact, however, that meteors sometimes become luminous at the height of 100 miles and more, shows that there is an atmosphere of some sort at that height, probably hydrogen, helium or kindred unknown gases.

Rival Lovers Submit to Cruel Punishment

A quality wild custom for the capture of young maids' hearts has survived in the Sudan down to the present day. Where it is a case of two young men enamored of the same girl, they subject themselves to the "mobatnah," a love test of a savagely cruel nature.

The rivals hail down blows on one another's backs either with a whip or stick, the weapon having been agreed upon by them in advance. The one who bears up the longest under the punishment takes home the bride and receives the title of "Achu-el-Banat" (Brother of the Daughters). Although these contests have been prohibited by the police, they continue to be held in secret.

New Kind of Disease

It was at one of those Sunday dinners that only Hooster mothers can prepare. Every one proceeded to eat too much, as is usually the case on such occasions. At last Uncle Otto, refused the sixth—or maybe it was the ninth—helping.

When urged to partake of cake and dessert, he declined with the tactful remark:

"It looks mighty tempting, but I have limitations."

Hearing this, William, his nephew, age seven, asked:

"What kind of disease is that, Uncle Otto?"—Indianapolis News.

Famous Italian Caves

Italy claims to have the two deepest subterranean caverns in the world. The deepest is the famous Abisso del Preta, near Verona, and the second deepest is the cave of Verco, near the River Isonzo. Hitherto both have remained practically unexplored, but the Alpine society of Julian Venetia recently led an expedition to the bottom of the cave of Verco. The mouth of the cave is 1,900 feet above sea level and the depth from the mouth to the lowest pit is about 1,700 feet. The cave contains several lakes and streams.

Tides Within Earth?

Edmund Halley was the first to note the decrease in the spinning rate of the earth, and Sir George Darwin, second son of Charles Darwin, ascribed this phenomenon to the friction produced by the tides piling up on shore and dragging across the bottom of shallow seas. That, however, would account for only two-thirds of the aggregate loss of speed, and Professor Boss believes that the difference can be ascribed to the existence of similar tides within the earth as well as in the ocean.

Handkerchief's Beginning

The necktie worn by the men of today was evolved from the bunch of fabric adopted in long ages past, which was worn as a protection for the clothing. It served as a napkin at meals and general utility at other times. To shield its offensiveness it took the form of a fancy lace-trimmed article and subsequently men who were more exquisite than others took to carrying one of these in the hand, which finally led to the idea of the handkerchief.

Has Legs to Spare

An argument for the harmlessness of the centipede is deduced from the fact that when the creature is grasped it does not try to defend itself, but seeks rather to escape. It often does so by "leaving its legs behind." That is, the creature automatically throws off a number of legs that have been caught by the enemy and limp off on the remaining ones. It can easily spare a dozen or more of its thirty legs, for the lost members are replaced.

No Expenditure for Ice

A natural cold-storage plant centuries old has been a boon to the reindeer industry at Elephant Point, Alaska. A tunnel was cut for 100 feet into an immense glacier, then a shaft sent up through the top for circulation of air. Several individual chambers or rooms were gouged out of the ice to hold in cold storage about 5,000 reindeer carcasses to await the arrival of refrigerator ships to transport the meat to Seattle.

CONFUCIUS' GRIP ON CHINA SLIPS

Policy of Religious Freedom Dooms Old Creeds.

Nanking, China.—Confucianism, under the nationalist regime, has lost its last claim to be the state religion of China.

The Nanking government has decreed that nothing be done to prevent veneration to the memory and teachings of the great sage, but the old influence of Confucius has crumbled under the weight of modernistic nationalism.

This summary of Nanking's attitude toward the ancient faith and code which has molded Chinese thought and conduct for more than two thousand years was given the Associated Press by a direct descendant of Confucius who is also a member of the nationalist government. He is Dr. H. H. Kung (Kung Hsing-shih) of the seventy-fifth generation in direct line from the sage, whose Chinese name was Kung Fu-tzu. Doctor Kung, alumnus of Oberlin and Yale universities, is minister of industry and commerce and, while proud of his Confucian lineage, is a Christian.

"Many persons, especially abroad, erroneously conceive of Confucianism as a religion," said Doctor Kung. "Confucianism actually is a code of philosophy, a standard of ethical conduct for which no claim is made of divine or supernatural sanction.

"However, the policy of the nationalist government is complete religious freedom and toleration, and we shall do nothing to interfere with those who still worship Confucius.

"Certainly we shall do nothing to cast disrespect on the memory of this great man, who is venerated as the great sage and teacher of the Chinese people."

Noted Scot to Judge Steers at Exposition

Chicago.—Visitors at the International Live Stock exposition, to be held in Chicago from December 1 to 8, will have the opportunity of seeing Walter Digger of Dalbeattie, Scotland, judge the individual street classer again.

It will be the fourth time that Mr. Digger has crossed the Atlantic in this capacity. Opinion is that this division of the exposition requires a fund of knowledge of animal form and a great deal of care and good judgment in exercising it. Ring-side audiences, reporters of the show, and exhibitors themselves are united in their opinion that the work has never been performed more faultlessly than by this Scottish judge. It will evolve upon him to pick the grand-champion steer of the show. From \$1.10 to \$3.60 a pound have been paid for these grand-champion selections of Walter Digger, in the auctions of fat cattle that follow his judging.

A Canadian of note among livestock circles who will visit the Chicago show in the capacity of judge is William Dryden of Brooklyn, Ontario. He will serve as one of a committee of three to pass upon the Aberdeen-Angus breed, and another illustrious Canadian is W. L. Carlyle, who will journey to Chicago to tie the ribbons in the Clydesdale horse classes. Mr. Carlyle is the manager of the Prince of Wales ranch at Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Soldier's Pay Is a Gift, Court Rules in Canada

Vancouver, B. C.—Holding that a soldier cannot sue for his pay, Justice Audette, in exchequer court, dismissed the suit of John Williams Cooke for \$3,275 claimed due as pay and allowances for time he was held as a prisoner in Germany. During the time he says he was prisoner, he was classified on army rolls as a deserter and his pay stopped.

The case was decided on the crown's contention that there was no contractual relation between soldier and crown, the undertaking of the latter to pay being voluntary and the pay itself a gratuity, since the soldier, as a citizen of the state, could not enter into a contract with himself.

2,976 Languages

Berlin.—A total of 2,976 languages spoken throughout the world is given by Der Deutsche as the result of carefully compiled statistics from the various countries. This number includes the many barbaric means of expression used in various obscure corners of the earth.

Liberia Floods Uncover Rich Diamond Field

Monrovia, Liberia.—Recent heavy rains have disclosed the existence of what appears to be a rich diamond field. In the wake of disastrous floods which changed the landscape in many sections of the country four diamonds of excellent quality have been found.

A report of a survey made by an English engineer 20 years ago says: "I have every reason to believe that on this spot a new diamond field will one day be found having the same character as the great Kimberley mines." The report designated the exact locality where the recent discoveries were made.

Odd Mineral That Is Mined Only in Utah

Gilsonite is one of the oddest minerals in the world. According to the bureau of mines, it is mined only in Utah and is a brilliant, black, asphaltic substance used in the manufacture of varnish, paint, electrical insulation, inks, telephone mouthpieces, electric switch handles and knobs and buttons of various kinds.

This queer mineral was discovered in Ashley valley several years after the first white man settled in the valley in 1878. At first it was thought to be a variety of coal. When it burned, however, it gave off large quantities of dense black smoke with a peculiar odor and instead of reducing to ashes melted and became a tarlike substance.

"Various theories have been advanced as to the formation of the veins of gilsonite in Utah," says the bureau of mines. "The most plausible theory appears to be that the formation of this great synclinal basin resulted in gigantic cracks in the brittle and nonelastic sandstone measures of the Uintah formation with enough heat to distill the oily matter in these carbonaceous measures from the underlying Green river shales."

Gardens at Night

The delights of the garden have been heretofore limited to the hours of daylight, when the beautiful colors and arrangements of the plants could be observed, but this delight is now to be enjoyed at night as well, by the use of flood lighting. The lights are hidden and are located to make spots of light and shade throughout the landscape work with fascinating effect. The modern art of illumination engineering has gone among the rose bushes and thickets with its flaming brush and daubed and tinted with a delicacy of lime and color that is winning for this tourtain the reputation of being "the painted garden."

Avoid Meddling

Meddling never pays any dividends except trouble. It brings no friends, creates no jobs, results in no gain. There is a Spanish proverb which aptly describes it: "He that mindeth not his own business shall never mind mine."—Grit.

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