

"A LITTLE BROTHER OF THE AIR,"

There is a bird I know so well,
It seems as if he must have sung
Beside my crib when I was young;
Before I knew the way to spell
The name of even the smallest bird,
His gentle, joyful song I heard.
Now see if you can tell, my dear,
What bird it is that, every year,
Sings "Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer."

He comes in March, when winds are strong,
And snow returns to hide the earth;
But still he warms his heart with mirth
And waits for May. He lingers long
While flowers fade; and every day
He peeps his small, contented lay;
As if to say, we need not fear
The season's change, if love is here
With "Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer."

He does not wear a Joseph's coat
Of many colors, smart and gay;
His suit is Quaker brown and gray,
With three dark patches at his throat,
And yet of all the well-dressed throng
Not one can sing so brave a song.
It makes the pride of larks appear
A vain and foolish thing, to hear
His "Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer."

A lofty place he does not love,
But sits by choice, and well at ease,
In hedge, and in little trees,
That stretch their slender arms above
The meadow brook, and there he sings
Till all the field with pleasure rings;
And so he tells in every ear,
The lowliest home to heaven is near
In "Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer."

I like the tune, I like the words:
They seem so true, so free from art,
So friendly, and so full of heart,
That if but one of all the birds
Could be my comrade everywhere,
My little brother of the air,
I'd choose the song-sparrow, my dear,
Because he'd bless me, every year,
With "Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer."

A Foolish Masquerade.

THREE girls domiciled in the next room! There's an end of my writing for one month, at least!

Kenneth Ross pushed his papers into a confused heap, shut his desk with a vindictive snarl, and lighted a cigar.

"Three chattering, noisy girls, each with a tongue three times its proper length! There's my cousin Flora, Alice Aymer, and Rosa Fernall—blue eyes, black eyes and melting gray; by the way, that little monkey Rosa, isn't bad looking. I rather fancy that peculiar shade of brown hair. She

is a considerable study for my next heroine. I may as well put her to some useful purpose. Heigho! I think Aunt Meg was crazy to invite all those girls here at once!"

He paused a moment, as the merry pearl of girlish laughter echoed in the adjoining apartment.

"They're laughing at me. Girls always think a bachelor fair game." Tap! tap! tap! sounded softly on the panel of his door, and he had just time to take his heels off the table before Flora Edgeworth put her head into the room.

"Cousin Kenneth, are you there?" "Well, what's wanting now?" "May we come in?" "I may as well say yes!"

"I just want the girls to see what a dear little den you've got here." Flora threw open the door, and admitted her two companions.

"Here he is, girls! the old bachelor, as he appears in his native wilds!" "Now, young ladies," said Mr. Ross, throwing his half-smoked cigar out of the window. "I'll trouble you to be a little less unceremonious!"

For Alice and Flora had pounced on his sheets of loose manuscript like honey bees on a bed of heliotrope, and were laughing over the rather illegible chirography. Miss Fernall stood near the door, a little confused and very pretty, in her blushes and uncertainty.

"Don't be cross, Kenneth," said Flora. "We're going down to the post office now. Rosa Fernall has written a twelve-page letter to her sweetheart out in Canada!" "Flora!" exclaimed Rosa.

"And," pursued the relentless Flora, "we're going to post it. Come, girls."

And Mr. Ross was left alone with the heavy musk roses nodding at the open casement and the dreamy murmur of maple boughs and far-off bees in his ear.

"A twelve-page letter to her sweetheart!" he pondered. "She must have had something very interesting to write. Canada, eh? I wish it was Van Diemen's Land!"

Mr. Ross rose from his easy-chair, and began to walk up and down the floor.

"It's too confounded hot to breathe here!" he said, impatiently taking up his hat. "I'll go and take a tramp in the woods."

Flora Edgeworth had succeeded in planting a rankling thorn in her cousin's breast, all unconscious though she had been.

The sun was low in the sky when Kenneth returned from his abstracted ramble in the woods, and the wide, old-fashioned country house was very still as he ascended toward his own apartment.

"Hullo!"

Mr. Ross gazed vacantly round the room with something of the bewildered feeling that might have belonged to the Eastern Prince when he

found himself transported from pole to pole in an enchanted dream.

"I'm in the wrong room, I believe—for there is Flora Edgeworth's light wrap on the bed, and Rosa's hat and no end of ribbons and gloves and lace collars on the bureau."

He balanced the comestish little "hat" on his hand.

"So this is the fashionable style of chapeau, eh? I wonder now whether Rosa's hat would fit me!"

Mr. Ross adjusted the article jauntily on one side of his curls, and viewed himself in the mirror.

"Upon my word, it don't look so bad! And now where's the saque? A little tight in the sleeves, but otherwise quite a decent fit if a fellow holds his arms well back. There's Alice's blue muslin dress. I've two minds and a half to put it on, just for the joke of the thing!"

A momentary silence ensued, broken by the rustling of muslin.

"Don't meet round the waist by a good six inches, but I can hold it up. I wonder what makes the thing drag on the floor and cling round one's legs so! Oh, I know—the crinoline ought to go under!"

"I'm not certain but that I should make quite a nice looking woman," mused Kenneth, strutting backward and forward before the mirror. "On the whole—Tom of the Prophet! is that the girls?"

Mr. Ross gave a blindly desperate jerk at his "saque," and a pull at the crinoline; but all in vain. The gay voices, intermingled here and there with a ringing laugh, or a snatch of song, drew nearer and nearer.

For an instant Mr. Ross wildly contemplated a rush through the hall to his own door, but a moment's reflection convinced him that such a retreat would be impossible.

"I must stay and face it out!" he thought, "but hold on! there's the closet. It's just possible they will only stay here a minute or two."

And totally oblivious of the "majesty of man," he fled precipitately into the closet.

"Why the deuce didn't I think to secure the key?" he thought, as the girls streamed into the room. "However, I can hold on to the door-handle if any one attempts to get in. By Jove, if the girls should see me in this rig, I should never hear the last of it!"

He leaned against the shelves, and breathlessly awaited the progress of events.

"Why!" ejaculated a soft voice—Rosa's own—"where's my hat? Was I careless enough to leave it down stairs? Flora, you have hidden it."

"I wonder what you'll accuse me of next!" said Flora, in an injured voice.

"You told Mr. Ross that Cousin Simon's letter was to—"

"Your sweetheart! Well, he ought to be, I'm sure. He is the handsomest young man I know."

"Oh, Flora! he don't compare with Mr. Ross."

"Rosa, be honest," said Flora, "which do you like best—Cousin Ken, or Simon Montrose?"

STAMMERING.**CAUSES OF THE DEFECT AND CURATIVE METHODS.**

Difficult to Say What Causes Infirmity of Speech—Treatment Without Surgery or Drugs.

It is estimated that 433,000 persons in the United States stammer and stutter. One-fourth of them are women. Children who are inclined to be hasty are in the majority, but their defects often pass away as they grow older.

Physicians have become greatly interested in the treatment of these defects, and institutions are being founded for that purpose. Chicago has one operating under a State charter, the only one of its kind in the country enjoying that position.

Douglas McCallum, who has spent much of his life in scientific study of this infirmity, and who is at the head of the institution there, was asked by the Record to give some of his views on the scope and efficiency of this new field of special treatment. He said:

"Stammering, under which general head all speech defects are frequently classed, is often supposed to result from nervousness, but stammerers as a class are not more nervous than others. Defective speech seems to be more generally the result of a want of balance or lack of harmony between the mental and physical natures, and until something like order is restored little can usually be done for the patient. It is not a lack of force in any direction, for a stammerer will often be found in possession of an unusual degree of mental and physical power and may not be in the slightest degree 'nervous.' It is impossible to say definitely what causes the difficulty. In some cases it seems to be conscious or unconscious imitation. Often, apparently, it is inherited, and again it first appears directly after some disease.

Sudden shocks have caused stammering in an adult and again the same kind of a shock has been known as suddenly to cure a life-long case of stammering. Cases where it appears of hereditary origin and of more than twenty years' continuance have yielded readily to corrective measures, while others, where the habit has recently been acquired by mocking a stammerer, have proved more obstinate.

"There may be the most violent physical contortions in one case and again another may remain perfectly silent and motionless, giving no outward sign of effort to speak, but the latter may suffer the more.

"Often if violent exertion has been the accompaniment of stammering ease and deliberation are studied. If any movements have been practiced, as moving the head, eyes or hands, they must be discontinued. These and other physical movements often are given to stammerers as a means of cure, either by well-meaning persons who know no better or by ignorant charlatans. One will advise the sufferer to drink water from a brass bell, another to take a full breath before speaking, to nod the head before articulation or to 'think' before speaking. All are useless or injurious to a greater or less degree. Many stammerers could utter a sentence on the spur of the moment, but if the same sentence were brought over too much the very vital force required for saying it would be exhausted and speech would be impossible. All physical movement cures may be similarly exploded. They serve for a while to take the attention from the thought of stammering, but soon become futile.

"The habit in different ages has passed successfully through various treatments. Once the sufferer was called 'possessed of a devil' or bewitched. Later, supposing him to be tongue-tied, he was subjected to the surgeon's knife and cruelly butchered by ignorant practitioners. Long ago it was demonstrated that the habit did not arise from any organic defect.

"It is not safe to fix any definite age at which stammering should be treated. If the subject be a bright, intelligent child the conditions are favorable for a speedy cure, as habits are less deeply cut. In many cases it is well to wait until the stammerer sees the importance of becoming cured. Years of experience only teach that childhood is the best period to treat some cases, while others will yield more successfully at a later day.

"In treating stammering modern science has discarded surgery, drugs, secret methods, all physical movements not actually necessary for the most refined speech and all artificial tricks or aids. A careful observation is made of the patient, and measures are resorted to to restore harmony of action between the mental and physical organizations. Calmness of manner and composure of mind are the first requisites. Training is given in control of respiration and in production of tone, so progressing by easy and regular steps into correct speech. If any improper or useless habits are found they are corrected at once, and the course of treatment demands of every person the fullest possible development of the best side of character, order, self-control, patience, deliberation and concentration. The same course of lectures, study and practice cannot be given to all, for what would tend to cure one person of stammering would greatly aggravate the defect in another."

Tagged the Babies.
There is a proud mother in Harlem, New York City, who employs a half-grown girl to help in the care of her three cherubs, aged respectively six, four and two years, says the Providence Journal. It happens that she has the greatest possible maternal affection for the three youngsters, and not overmuch confidence in the good sense and stability of the young nurse maid. So she used to live in a state of mortal terror lest in some manner, stray or stolen whenever they went out on fine afternoons for their little airing in the Park.

At last she has invented a little plan of her own, which at least adds vastly to her motherly peace of mind. She has made out of her visiting cards three little tags, on which are plainly written the name and address of each of the cherubs. Before the youngsters start on their daily health excursions two of these tags are carefully fastened with a safety pin under the frock of the four-year-old girl and the two-year-old baby, and the third is similarly pinned inside the waistband of the six-year-old boy's knee breeches. The children don't know they are ticketed, and wouldn't care if they did, but their fond mother never forgets to put on the tags. She has not patented the scheme, and cheerfully recommends it to other fond mothers.

A Tale of Castaways.
The captain of the schooner Ellen Johnson, which arrived at San Francisco last week from Nicaragua, reported that he had been compelled to abandon three sailors on a barren coral atoll, three miles in diameter and rising but two or three feet above the ocean level, off the Pacific coast of Nicaragua. The reef is rich in phosphates, and the schooner went there with twenty-five men to get aboard a cargo. There is no harbor, and vessels are loaded by lighter. The sea was very rough, and when the vessel was nearly loaded the line parted while three men were ashore. The captain had to put to sea for safety and leave the men. The men have plenty of food, but will have to depend on rain for water, and will have to remain on the barren reef until another schooner may chance take them off. There are birds on the reef and sharks in the sea surrounding it, and altogether the men must be having as unlovely a time as could well be imagined.—New York Sun.

The Largest Pecan Orchards.
The largest pecan plantation, of which we have seen any account, is that of F. A. Swineln, Brownwood, Texas, which is said to contain 11,000 trees and occupy 490 acres. We have no report on the yield or the price obtained for the nuts. Colonel W. B. Stuart, of Ocean Springs, Miss., is also an extensive cultivator of pecans, and he made a very fine exhibit of these nuts at the World's Fair, Chicago, 1893.

One More Insano.
Science is an exacting taskmaster, and he who serves must be ever ready to give up time, talents, hope, ambition, even life itself at the beck and call of the tyrant. The search for the North Pole has cost many lives and more treasure, and yet there is no lack of enthusiasts who are ready to take up the work where the last victims had laid it down. The latest idea is to explore this region by means of a balloon, which seems quite the most visionary and hopeless of all of the many fruitless efforts that have been made in that direction. The effect of intense cold on the gas in the balloon, the possibility of blinding storms, the impossibility of getting out of trouble in case of accident, and the certainty that no rescuing hand could reach the party, as no one would know where to find them, should all be considered. It may be among the possibilities of science to store gas under pressure and at such a low temperature that an amount could be provided sufficient to bridge over any emergency that might arise; but in tasks of this kind there is so much to be looked out for and guarded against that only a temperament of the most elastic and daring description would think of going into it. The history of explorations is punctuated with horrors and tragedies and fringed with the bones of martyrs to science. This, however, is no bar to future investigations, and there is not the slightest difficulty in filling up the ranks when the order comes to go forward.—New York Ledger.

A Silver Skull.
The police of Quincy, Ill., have arrested George Barns and detained him on account of his peculiar actions. It was discovered that there was a cause for his eccentricity. He had papers which showed that he was the head engineer on the steamer City of Savannah, which was wrecked off the coast of Massachusetts on January 18, 1884, while en route from Boston to Florida. He was reversing the lever when the steamer struck the rocks, and he was thrown into the machinery, receiving injuries which crippled him for life.

There were 118 lives lost in the accident, and Barns is one of the thirty-seven survivors. For a long while he lay on a cot in the death row of Bellevue Hospital, New York. Dr. Hayes Agnew attended his case and removed five ribs from his left side and trephined his skull, using six ounces of silver sheeting for this purpose. He was compelled to wear a plaster of paris jacket for four years after the accident.

A portion of the lower end of his spine and both elbow joints are gone. One knee cap is on the back of the leg, and his heart is on the extreme right side of the body. He is now sixty-four years of age, and walks very well and has a cheerful disposition. He is a member of the G. A. R., and served during the war on the ironclad gunboat Essex, which was stationed at Cairo during the early days of the Rebellion.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A Woman's Postscript.
"Why women write postscripts" is a problem that has been engaging the attention of one of the London women's weeklies. The answers betray that the sex understands itself, and does not mind exposing its amiable weaknesses. All are from women, who ascribe, among others, these reasons: "Because they seek to rectify what of thought by an afterthought;" "because they are fond of having a last word;" "because they write before they think and think after they have written."

Our correspondent puts down the feminine P. S. to the same cause "which leads women to prolonged leave-taking in omnibuses, namely," and rather profoundly it appears to the casual observer, "that they lack organization of thought." Another woman comes to the defense of her sisters with the suggestion "that when women have anything special to communicate they know that their P. S. is equivalent to N. B.," and yet another friendly soul tapers a neat compliment in her reason: "Probably because woman herself is the embodiment of the P. S. in the scale of creation—she—the indispensable—was added last."—Detroit Free Press.

Onyx and Petrified Wood.
Probably every visitor to the Columbian Exhibition spent some time in admiring the beautiful specimens of onyx and petrified wood shown on that never-to-be-forgotten occasion. Of late there have been some exceedingly fine slabs of this material worked out and used in wainscoting in handsome dwellings. It is said by an expert that in Utah are the finest onyx fields in the known world, and that the largest slabs ever cut out have been taken from quarries in that State. Petrified wood is being used in manufactures of various sorts—table-tops, panels, sections for mantels, brackets and similar pieces are brought out and used with excellent effect.—New York Ledger.

Buffaloes in a Fight.

There was trouble in the buffalo herd at the Zoological Garden recently, which ended in as fierce a battle as has ever been seen in the wilds of the West—a battle in which it seemed that one at least would suffer mortal wounds, so desperate was it, says the Philadelphia Press.

Early in the morning the first inkling of trouble was had. Three of the buffaloes had attacked a single member of the herd. With lowered heads they charged together at the object of their wrath. Slipping nimbly aside, the latter caught one of the largest of the assailants squarely with his horn, and the two clashed their great, broad foreheads together with a force that made the air resound.

They sparred with their great shaggy heads for awhile, and then one of the others made a lunge at the offending buffalo. It was the act of a coward, but it did not daunt the brave fighter. He swerved just in time for the charging animal to graze his hind legs. Then he transferred his attention to this enemy. The two became locked in a deadly contest. Their noses nearly touched the ground as their heads came together. Each glared at the other, though their eyes were almost together, and the flash of hatred that came from them boded no good for the loser of the fight.

Meanwhile the other two buffaloes joined in the attack. There could be no retreat, and, clever as he might be, the object of the hatred of the trio could not hope to hold out long against them. Things began to look pretty serious for the single-handed fighter. He kept his foes at bay until a corner of the pen was reached, and then he had a little better chance, for he could not be attacked except from the front. Still, his chances were small.

What might have happened no one can tell had not several keepers, armed with pitchforks, come to the rescue of the under dog in the fight. For a time it looked as though their efforts to quell the disturbance would be unavailing. The rage of the buffaloes was not to be set aside so easily. Finally, however, the yells of the keepers and the sharp prongs of the pitchforks restored order and saved the life of the animal.

Cholera Precautions.
Cholera has again broken out in the East. The Mecca pilgrims are experiencing a severe visitation. Constantinople is alarmed. St. Petersburg reports twenty-two cases, thirteen of them fatal, in one locality, while in others there have been some hundreds of cases, with a proportionate number of deaths. The eleven thousand pilgrims had come from all quarters of the world, and as at the end of their visit they scattered to their homes, there is no telling where the disease will end. Among the pilgrims there are always many who turn their faces toward America, and who may, in their clothing or other effects, bring cholera germs to our shores. It is not unusual for this disease to break out in Egypt and Turkey as well as in Russia in the month of March. Cold and environment have little to do with the incipient stages. There are English troops quartered at Cairo, and English authorities are deeply concerned at the exposure of the soldiers to the epidemic. The rank and file are not fastidious about their associates, and the apprehension on the part of the Government is not without excellent foundation. An ounce of prevention is worth a great many pounds of cure, and as weather prophets tell us we are to have an exceedingly dry and hot summer, the quarantine authorities and health boards of this country should be on the alert that no unsuspected source of infection be permitted to enter our borders.—New York Ledger.

Plants growing near the sea have thicker leaves than those growing inland. Apparently the sea salt is the cause of this phenomenon, as plants cultivated in artificially-salted soil yield thicker leaves.

A spectroscopic detector, by which one part of blood in a solution of 85,000 parts can be discovered, has been invented by M. de Thierry. It will be of value in murder cases where the stains are very minute.

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POPULAR SCIENCE.

All kinds of insects are afflicted with some form of parasite.

Maxim's new cavalry gun, which fires 700 shots a minute, weighs but thirty pounds.

A nicely articulated skeleton of a man can be bought for \$40, whereas a woman's costs \$10 more.

One of the moons of Mars goes through all of its phases, "new, full and old moon," once each twenty-four hours.

The disappearing guns at Fort Hamilton, New York Harbor, have been made available by an electrical contrivance for aiming them.

A London restaurant is said to use an electrically-heated plate to keep one's food warm. There is no danger of receiving a shock from touching the plate.

The largest telegraph office in the world is in the general postoffice building, London. There are over 3000 operators, 1000 of whom are women. The batteries are supplied by 39,000 cells.

It is claimed that, owing to the good work done by the Improved Industrial Dwelling Company of London, the death rate of that city has been reduced from forty to only eleven in a thousand.

It is estimated that 293 hairs on the head, thirty-nine on the chin, and twenty-three on the forearm and nineteen on the back of the hand are respectively contained in an area of a quarter of an inch.

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