

Take Heart!

Half of our human life
 Have a color rose;
 Winter brings the chills—
 But its fires are easy!
 Let the winds of winter blow!
 There are daisies 'neath the snow.
 When the lightning rends
 Skies that cease to love us
 Soft a rainbow beams and bends,
 And makes light above us!
 Let the black skies work their will,
 So God's rainbows span them still!
 —F. L. STANTON in Atlanta Constitution.

The General's Canary-Bird.

BY CLARENCE MULLEN.

Shadows were gathering in the Horse Creek Valley as the February day drew to an end. A frosty chill was creeping into the air that had been so genial warm all the afternoon by the sun now sinking behind the distant Rocky Mountain peaks.

On the rolling, drab-tinted prairie were to be seen two upright figures between two patches of gray. They were shepherds, going homeward with their flocks. Two cow-boys, loping their horses along a ridge, moved as silhouettes against the wintry sky. Three men who had been building a wire fence about the bay meadow were walking up the Creek Valley; half a mile behind them rode a hunter, leading two packhorses with loads of antelope skins.

Far to the north a teamster urged his mules, as if fearful of being belated.

The point toward which all these figures were moving was an unpainted, weather-beaten building, about which stood a stable, haystacks and corrals. It faced pleasantly to the south, and commanded a long valley view. Through its open door came a hearty baritone voice singing of "My Sweet Highland Mary," with varying accompaniment of rattling dishes and stove irons and the grinding of coffee.

The song ceased. There was a moment's silence. Then a caged canary within the room chirped, twittered and trilled into a melody, full round and sustained, that subsided to a warble and died away in a mellifluous quaver.

The first who had sung was the veteran plainsman, Jim Sheridan, commonly known as "the General." He was a short, wiry, florid man with a large head, thick, yellowish hair, aquiline features, and a gray, soldierly-moustache. The General was moving actively about a large cooking range, preparing an abundant supper. Busy though he was, he stopped his work a moment to clap his hands and shout:

"Bravo, Dick! You're the primo donner of the cattle country!"

After a visit to Colorado Springs, the General had astonished the ranchmen by bringing home with him the cage and songster, a bag of canary seed, and a "fish bone" for the bird to peck at. He hung the cage from a rafter of the unceiled room, and there were no bounds to the care he bestowed on the small male bird, which survived, thrived, and sang most sweetly.

The lamps had been lighted when the ranchmen, having gathered in, doors, sat down at the long table and fell to hungrily. After the rattle of knives and forks had subsided, the canary struck up his song again. In the midst of rough talk, tobacco smoke, the clink of spurs and the show of weapons on every hand, he was as happy as if his cage swung in a fine lady's boudoir.

Some one stepped out upon the veranda, leaving the door open. From the darkness without came the long wailing chorus of gray wolves.

"Sassy, ain't they?" said Ed Dyer. "We'll have to get up a hunt for 'em."

The General was examining the loaded magazine rifle of the antelope hunter, when the bird-cage door, which had in some way become unfastened, swung open. The men saw a tiny flash of yellow as the canary flew across the room and out through the open doorway.

General Jim, still holding the magazine rifle, darted after his pet with a yell of dismay. The others rushed to the veranda just in time to see the cook's check flannel shirt, blue trousers and slippers disappear in the darkness.

"Leave us a lock of your hair, General!" roared Ed Dyer; but the General made no reply.

The men had returned to the kitchen, when galloping hoofs were heard. In a few moments Tom Stepman, whose place adjoined the Horse Creek Ranch, stood in the doorway, breathless and speechless. His eyes searched the room.

"What's the matter, Tom? Is anything wrong?" said one.

"Have any of you seen my little Oly?"

The man looked blankly at one another. Most of them had seen Tom Stepman's sweet-faced little seven-year-old daughter, Olivia. For a moment no one spoke. Then McClure, the carpenter, said:

"No, Tom. She hasn't been round here. That's nothing wrong, I hope? Her hair's lost her, have ye?"

"Yes, she's gone! I had her with me this afternoon. On my way home from River Bend the wagon broke down about three miles from my place. 'Oly,' says I, 'would you rather walk in, or wait here till I ride in to the ranch for my spare wagon?' She didn't want to walk, so I left her. 'Twas sundown afore I got back there, an' my little girl was gone."

"Gone!"

"Yes, gone clear away. I rode to right an' I rode to left, an' I called an' I called an' yelled, but that came no answer. Then I thought she might have headed for your light, an' rode over to see if she'd turned up here. My wife's expectin' us every minute. She'll be plumb crazy when I have to tell her that Oly's strayed off."

"Boys," said Mr. McClure, reaching for his spurs, "that's but one thing for us to do—start out and find that little gal."

The men hurried on their revolvers and spurs; caught and saddled horses at the corral, and soon were sweeping the country westward above the trail between Horse Creek and Stepman's ranch in the forlorn hope of finding the lost child. Out from the darkness to the north came the ominous howling of wolves.

Oly Stepman, for a time, had waited contentedly enough for her father's return. Then she descended from the wagon to the ground, and began to search for a "lady warrior," the white flower that comes when spring begins to green the buffalo-grass roots. Walking with eyes bent downward, she passed over the brow of a ridge and on into the hollow beyond. There Oly found a "lady warrior," but lost her direction completely.

On going to the top of the ridge that she supposed she had descended, she could see nothing of the wagon. Bare prairie was about her in every direction. She kept on walking; she meandered unconsciously; she gained one eminence after another, only to look around in vain for the missing wagon. And now the dimness and chill of approaching night were in the air. How strange the prairie ridges looked in the twilight.

Oly stopped in the sandy bottom of one of the deep gulches which the Mexicans call arroyos. Before her was a high steep bank with an overhanging top. Tired and discouraged, she sat down upon a heap of fallen sods beneath the bank.

She was too much at home upon the plains to be very much frightened, and she was confident that her father would soon find her. Still she cried. The more she cried the more she felt like crying. From the long fit of weeping she was suddenly startled by the rustling of an approaching animal. Could that be Jip, the house dog?

"Jip! Jip!" said Oly, joyfully. No, it was too large for Jip. Those upright ears, the pointed nose, and the gray, shaggy hair were not Jip's. Oly gazed at her visitor for a moment before she realized that the beast before her was a gray wolf.

As the child started up with a shriek, the cowardly beast stopped, turned tail, stopped again, then set down on his haunches, faced her, lifted its nose, and gave a long howl. Knowing that to attempt to run away would be useless, the trembling child waited in helpless horror for the death to come.

With answering howls shadowy forms came sneaking down the gully one by one, and the wolves ranged themselves in a semicircle facing the little girl. With the bank behind her she gazed despairingly on the long, sharp teeth, and grinning jaws of her circle of enemies. They were at the point of springing upon her when with a rattling down of earth and sods, a heavy body crashed over the bank and landed directly at Oly's feet. It was the General.

He had run from the ranch in eager pursuit of his bird. Again and again he almost grasped the yellow spot that rose and fell in the moonlight. Sometimes his foot came down upon the dry disks of the prickly pear, which pierced his thin slippers. Sometimes he stumbled into a prairie-dog hole, and measured his length upon the ground.

But Dick always waited till the pursuit began once more. The canary seemed to be playing a game with its owner.

On and on went the General for miles, now following at full run along

flight of bird, and again stealing forward with catlike tread as the little fugitive perched upon some prairie weed as if waiting to be taken. But always when the pursuer was near the canary renewed its flight.

So the chase went on until, at last, the bird disappeared. Incautiously hurrying forward, the General felt the ground give way beneath his feet. Next moment he tumbled heels over head into a gully with soft sand at the bottom.

He got upon his feet and felt himself over to make sure that no bones were broken. In the darkness of the gulch he could hear the scurrying away of several animals. He picked up the rifle he had dropped in his tumble, and looked about him.

"Wolves, eh?" said the General. "Just show a mark, will ye?"

But the wolves seemed to think that would be foolish conduct.

"It's a pretty trap that Dick led me into," said the General. "I've seen the last of him, sure enough. It's the worse for himself, for the hawks'll get him tomorrow sure, if the weasels don't tonight. Serve the little fool right for running away from his friends."

The General was looking ruefully up the steep bank, twelve or fifteen feet high, when he heard the sobbing of a child.

"Who's there?" cried the amazed man.

"Me!"

"Where are you?"

"Here."

The General moved a few steps before he saw a small girl who cowered close by the dark bank, shivering with cold and terror, and trying hard not to cry aloud.

"Why, if this isn't a little girl out here alone!" he cried. "What brought you here?"

"I'm Oly Stepman, Mr. General," she whimpered. "I lost my way. I thought when you came tumbling down that you were—um, well—I didn't know what you were!"

"No wonder," he said, laughing cheerfully. "Now, Oly, you shall go to the Horse Creek Ranch right away with me, and get some supper. Then we'll send you home to your folks. Come, come, that's enough of crying. There's a brave girl!"

"May I see your bird when we get there?" faltered Oly, whose tears were drying. She had once beheld the famous canary of the Horse Creek Ranch, and greatly longed to see it again.

The General groaned. For a time he had forgotten the loss which Oly's words recalled. But he had scarcely begun to tell her the doleful story of the bird's escape when small wings fluttered close to his face, and Dick flew to his familiar roost on the General's head. The bird, already wearied of its freedom, had returned to its master of its own accord!

"If Dick isn't ready to go home with us!" he whispered, joyfully.

With a sudden movement, he caught the bird in a secure but tender grasp.

"Well, little one!" he cried, joyfully. "I'm glad to have you back. You've—"

A quick rustling of the sand up the dry creek channel drew his attention. He thought he could see the gleam of eyes and vague shapes of animals.

"Here, dear, hold Dick now," said the General, gently placing the canary in the child's hands. Don't let him fly away when the rifle speaks. We've got to tell those wolves that they can't have little Oly this time."

He threw the repeating rifle to his shoulder, and its muzzle spouted flame to the ringing crack, crack, crack, of six shots sent in quick succession among the wolves. With loud yelping the pack bounded away, all but one, which rolled and tumbled about on the sands in his death struggle.

The searching party heard the shots, and hastened toward the sound. They were met by the General leading Oly Stepman, who was carrying the canary with great care. The first man to learn the good news fired his pistol; the man repeated the signal, and thus, in a few seconds, it was known among all the searchers that the little girl was found.

Tom Stepman came at a gallop, reckless of road and darkness, to catch up and kiss his daughter, and thank the General in such words as he could summon in his joy and excitement.

"General," he said, "I believe that yaller bird o' yours knowed he was a-goin' to take you straight to my daughter when he flew out on the prairie. He's little, but Jiminy! he's got sense and feelin' that ud do credit to an ostrick with legs seven feet long."—[Youth's Companion.

In the United States there are said to be 870,000 Freemasons and 650,000 Odd Fellows.

SOLDIERS' COLUMN

AT CANE RIVER.

Had Scenes That Came to a Veteran's Notice There.

DURING the first artillery duel between the Union troops and rebels at the battle of Cane River, La., in I think, April, 1874, there came a young negro to one of our Generals who told him of a ford a short distance down the river where he could cross and came up in the rear of the rebels.

We a part of the Nineteenth Corps and the remnant of the Thirtieth Corps were sent for the ford, which we found and commenced the passage of. How cold that water was! But we put arms, ammunition and 'tubs' above our heads and succeeded in wading across safely and commenced our march in line of battle up a long, low bluff thickly covered with trees, fallen logs and underbrush.

At the summit of the bluff, or bluff, we surprised the rebel rear-guard who fired a few shots and started on a run down the opposite slope into and across a little valley about one half mile in width, closely pursued by the Nineteenth Corps boys, who were ordered to charge them closely followed by our (Thirtieth Corps) boys.

During this charge and while the Thirtieth Corps was following closely upon the heels of the Nineteenth Corps, I came upon a little dry run with here and there quite high banks and just as I crossed this run I met two men with a wounded comrade from some Maine regiment. I helped them to get him into the run behind one of the high banks for protection and got our Assistant Surgeon, Dr. O. H. Wood, to come and dress his wound. This comrade was shot in the forehead; his brains were oozing out of the wound and the nose. He kept asking the Doctor if he thought he would live. It seems he was the only son of a widowed mother, who, together with one daughter, were dependent upon him for support. He told the Doctor that he had a few days before received a furlough for 30 or 40 days to go home and visit mother and sister.

Although so used and hardened to scenes of this kind, it is as vividly impressed upon my mind as though but yesterday. Of course we know that there were thousands of just such cases, but they seldom fell under the notice of any one man, hence were not so realistic to him.

There is also another little episode of which I would like to speak connected with this same battle. After having crossed this valley, and while ascending a very steep bluff, heavily covered with timber, brush and rocks, I found a wounded rebel sitting with his back against a tree. I heard him cursing and groaning. I got Comrade C. A. Langdon, fier of my company, to go with me and see who he was. When I got to him I asked him where he was hit. His reply was, "In my stomach." He was scribbled from Richmond Va., and sent away down in Texas and Louisiana, so he could not easily get away. At least, that was his version of it. He told Comrade Langdon and me that he had a wife and two children back in Richmond, but had not heard a word from them for two years.

We fixed him up as comfortable as we could, gave him a canteen about half-full of water and as we turned to leave him he told us that he would like to ask a favor of us. We said to be quick about it, as the troops were getting quite a long way from us. He thereupon pulled out a "housewife" such as our mothers, sisters and sweethearts used to make for us, which contained the pictures of his wife and two children. That and a few trinkets that he had some day to send to his wife and two children he handed to Comrade Langdon and asked him, if he lived until after the war was over, to send to his wife, whose name and address was upon the back of her picture. After this we left him to die.

After the war was over and we came home Comrade Langdon wrote to the address and received a very nice letter in return with instructions where and how to send the trinkets.—E. A. CRANDALL, in "National Tribune."

WHAT A "VETERAN" IS.

A Nine Month's or More First Enlistment Necessary to a Second.

A question of interest to soldiers and sailors of the late war, and to enlisted men of the regular service will soon be decided by the Navy Department. "It relates to the preference which appointment officers must show according to law to 'veterans' who have passed satisfactory examinations for appointment to positions under the Government."

An employe of the Navy yard brought the question to the attention of Secretary Herbert. He had been refused "preference" by a naval officer on the ground that his service in a Maine regiment from early in 1863 to the end of the war did not entitle him to classification as a veteran.

The question has never been definitely decided although many opinions have been rendered by various Government officers, and the Navy Department has secured all of these, also informal opinions of other persons in authority. The War Department, Webster's Dictionary, and the Second Auditor of the Treasury practically agree as to the definition and if these three authorities have weight in determining the question submitted to Secretary Herbert, many applicants for employment under the Navy Department, at least, will be affected.

Webster says that in the United States a veteran is one who has served one enlistment during the civil war and had re-enlisted.

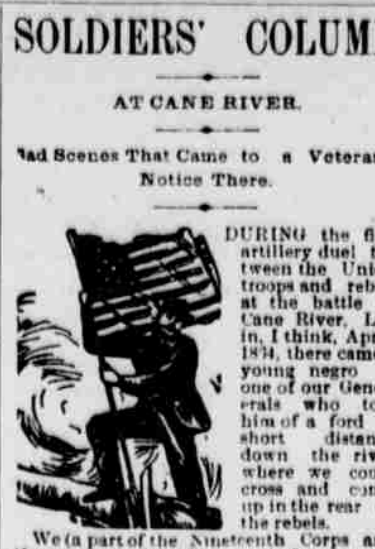
In an order issued in 1861 the War Department says "men who have served for not less than nine months can be re-enlisted as veteran volunteers."

The present Second Auditor of the Treasury gives an informal opinion that to be entitled as a veteran requires two enlistments. The soldiers must have served at least nine months of the first enlistment, and then be re-enlisted for three years or during the war. The chief clerk of the Pension Office also holds that two enlistments are required.

Traffic on Our Inland Waterways.

The magnitude of the traffic on the important inland waterways of the United States is well illustrated by the following comparison: The Pennsylvania Railroad, on the 451 miles of its main line, the world's greatest freight carrier, had a traffic of 69,036,245 tons in 1893, a sum a little larger than the freight on the Great Lakes and New York canals. The Reading's main line, 327 miles in length, had a traffic of 15,825,482 tons, nearly the same as the Hudson River. The New York Central and Hudson River Railroad carried on the 849 miles of its roads 29,473,879 tons, practically the equivalent of the traffic on the Mississippi River and its tributaries. The total tonnage on these three trunk lines, whose combined length is 1,605 miles, was 114,135,598 tons; the four waterways named carried very nearly the same amount—112,316,233 tons.

HICKS—Jove! I came near giving you one of Mr. Barton's cards instead of my own. Casar—Dat's all right, sah. Er' yo' sen' up Mr. Barton's card, Miss Polly sho' to come down.



KEYSTONE STATE CULLINGS.

BLOODED HORSES BURNED TO DEATH.

The barn on the Keystone stock farm, in Manor township, near Kittanning, owned by Bowers Bros., was destroyed by fire. Twenty-two horses perished and two men made a narrow escape. The fire is attributed to incendiarism. The loss is put at \$29,000; insurance \$5,000. Of the horses burned, those best known were Montaigne 2:27; Chimbrino 2:28 1/2; Halleck, half miler, 1:19; Juanita 2:29 1/2; Major Mont, Ozelma, J. G. Wilkes and Jay Gee, 2:37.

KILLED BY A PREMATURE EXPLOSION.

HOLLIDAYSBURG—Miles Kennedy, chief blaster in the Juniata limestone quarries at Carlin, was blown to atoms by a premature explosion in the quarries. His brother, Russell Kennedy, touched the button of the electric battery, not knowing that Miles was at the dangerous end of the line. The dead man leaves a wife and four children.

THE UNEMPLOYED AT HARRISBURG.

HARRISBURG—Gilbert McCaulley, president of the Harrisburg benevolent society, says of the 15,000 wage earners in Harrisburg and Steelton at least 7,500 are working half time and 3,000 are out of employment. Of the 8,000 unemployed the Harrisburg benevolent society is providing for between 5,0 and 1,000 persons.

DIPHTHERIA AT NEW CASTLE.

NEW CASTLE—There have been three deaths in the family of William Emery, in Mahoning township, caused by diphtheria. Two other children in the family have the disease which is black diphtheria. Seven other families in the locality are afflicted.

AN EARTHQUAKE AT HUNTINGTON.

HUNTINGTON—About 3:20 o'clock Tuesday morning a shock of earthquake was felt here of sufficient force to awaken many sleepers. The duration of the shock was about five seconds and in direction seemed to pass from southwest to northeast.

KILLED BY A TROLLEY R. R.

ALTOONA—John Hoar, a blacksmith, 65 years of age, was struck by a motor car on the Logan Valley electric railway in the West End and instantly killed. He was well known and leaves a wife and a large family.

THIRTEEN DEATHS FROM DIPHTHERIA.

NEW CASTLE—Diphtheria is raging in Mahoning township. So far 13 deaths have resulted, the latest being a 9 year old daughter of William Emery. The children of six families are now down.

A WHITE DEER WAS RECENTLY KILLED BY A. G. Kellar, in Center county, and B. V. Fox, of Harrisburg, shot a white partridge in Adams county the other day. Among other odd animals killed in Sullivan county during the present month by Amos Bennett were a white pheasant and a black rabbit.

DR. H. E. McWILLIAMS, of Mahoningtown, was handling a bottle of muriatic acid, when it burst and the contents flew all over his face and entered his eyes. His sufferings for over an hour were terrible. It is feared that his eyesight may be completely destroyed.

The Mahoning Rolling Mill Company with headquarters in Philadelphia and mills in Danville, is in the hands of a receiver. The liabilities are \$340,000 and assets \$352,000.

THE designs for a monument to mark the spot where William Penn received the original deed for land from the Indians have been submitted at Harrisburg.

The body of William Rendig, aged about 50 years, was found near Middletown. It is supposed he was burned to death as the result of a fire which he built.

The tracks of the Allegheny Valley road are sinking near Logan's Ferry, and ten car loads of cinders are required every day to fill in after trains pass.

The Arcthus and Aetna iron mills and the tin plate and steel mills at New Castle have resumed work after a shut down of some time.

HENRY CORDER, a farmer of Rochester, was killed on Tuesday night by the overturning of his wagon on a hillside.

CHARLES MOFFAT, aged about 23 years, was thrown or fell from a freight train at Kenwood station and instantly killed.

In a riot between Hungarians and Police at Scranton one police was shot and several others were badly hurt.

JAMES MALONEY, a farmer, of Hanlin, Washington county, was killed by a train at a crossing.

In a burning Slav boarding house at Hootdale an unknown Slav and a baby perished.

HOWARD E. TULLIS, a 10 year old boy, was killed at Uniontown by a freight train.

SUBURBS ARE BUSY AT NEW CASTLE. Four houses were broken into in four days.

The Carnegie mills at Beaver Falls have shut down for repairs.

The Nugzar Tank.

One of the innumerable curious sights of India is the Nugzar tank of Kutch. In former times the crocodiles which inhabit it roamed the neighborhood at their will, seeking whom they might devour, but so great were their depredations that the authorities were forced to build a wall round their haunt. This is a swamp, caused by hot springs, the medicinal virtue of which have been known from early times, and are attributed to the sanctity of a Mohammedan whose tomb is close by, and to whom the crocodiles are sacred. The tank, as it is called, is about 150 yards long by about half that distance in breadth. In this space one observer counted over 200 reptiles, from eight to fifteen feet long, and smaller ones innumerable. They are so tame, in a sense, that it is necessary to poke them with a stick before they will move. Buffaloes are always standing in the water and are not attacked, but any other animal is instantly seized. "The whole appearance of the place," says one writer, "with its green, slimy, stagnant water, and so many of these huge, uncouth monsters moving sluggishly about, is disgusting in the extreme, and it will long be remembered by me as the most loathsome spot I ever beheld."—Chambers' Journal.

SHR—I see the Elizabeth ruff is to return. What in the world shall we do? He (embarrassed)—Er—why can't we put the police on him?

Dream On.

Dear love, I feel your face
 Close, close to mine, though we are far apart,
 And soon between us lies some wicked heart;
 It purifies the place.

I hear your robes low glide
 Now in, now out. Some angel it may be,
 Bearing a blessed message to me;
 And bright is eventide.

Those stars which are my fanes,
 Your deep, deep eyes, shine in my lonely room,
 Gilding the airy castles of my gloom,
 And glittering on its chains.

I know that you are true;
 These are not baseless images I see;
 Perhaps your dreams are reaching out to me
 As my heart yearns for you.

Dream on, though years go by!
 Rise not, sweet love, from the unworthy theme;
 Let me be ever pleading in your dream,
 And you dream on for aye.

—The Capital.

HUMOROUS.

Well posted—The ledger that balances.

One good way to improve the memory is to lend money.

The orchestra leader is never troubled by stage fright—his always faces the music.

The bridge jumper may not inherit notoriety, but it comes to him by descent all the same.

It surely must be safe to say,
 Without the least transgression,
 That he who "gives himself away"
 Has lost his self-possession.

"Poor Miss Grabb is a confirmed kleptomaniac." Aunt Tilly:—"Dear me! Why don't she take something for it?"

Probably few people take so much interest in their business as the pawn-brokers.

"You surprise me! That quiet little man a safe robber!" "Entirely so— from detection. He's the man that makes out my gas bills."

The boy stood on the burning deck,
 And seemed to think it funny,
 He knew the old craft was well insured,
 And he was after money.

George—"You would marry the biggest fool in the world, if he asked you, wouldn't you?" Ethel—"Oh, George this is so sudden!"

Traveler:—"Now what ought little boys to say when a gentleman gives them a penny for carrying his bag?" Small boy:—"Tain't'nough."

Aunt:—"I was pleased to see you so kind to your little visitor. Is he one of your dear friends?" Robbie—"No, but he can lick me any day."

He sat by the stove that hapless man,
 And sorrow perched his soul,
 While a shiver ran thro' his diaphragm,
 As he thought of the price of coal.

"Don't be down hearted. Every rose must have its thorn, you know."

"Yes, what I'm kicking about is that every thorn doesn't have its rose."

He (an old hand)—"They have dropped their anchor." She (a beginner)—"Serves them right! It has been hanging over the side all day long."

After all it is the condition of trade that regulates the fashions. Nearly all kinds of garments are worn longer in dull times than in prosperous ones.

If every man were but as big
 As he assumes to be
 The half would soon be crowded off
 And drop into the sea.

"It makes me tired to see that wheel go round," said Lazy Lumpkin to his friend. "If it wasn't tired it wouldn't go around," answered his friend.

"That Auger is a sharp fellow," said the Hammer to the Saw, "but he runs around a good deal." "Yes," replied the Saw, slowly between his teeth, "and what an awful bore he is."

Fond Father—"Mr. Meanital has asked me for your hand. Do you want to accept him? He says his adoration for you is unlimited." Dutiful Daughter—"Very good papa; but how is his credit?"

"I'll woo thee in the moonlight," sang the lover to his girl.
 Who was gazing fondly on him from the enshement.

"It's much cheaper than the gaslight," sang her father, the old churl,
 Who was taking observations from the basement.

Young Bride (pouting)—"Here we have only been married two days. Clarence, and you're scolding me already." Husband—"I know, my dear, but just think how long I have been waiting for the chance."

"Can't you wait upon me?" said the impatient customer. "Two pounds of liver; I'm in a hurry." "Sorry," said the butcher "but there are two or three ahead of you. Surely you wouldn't have your liver out of order!"

Too Much.

Algy—"Why this dog knows as much as I do."
 Miss Kiddemham—"Don't you think three dollars was a big price to pay for him?"

Did you know?

The man who has been building a wire fence about the bay meadow were walking up the Creek Valley; half a mile behind them rode a hunter, leading two packhorses with loads of antelope skins.

Far to the north a teamster urged his mules, as if fearful of being belated.

The point toward which all these figures were moving was an unpainted, weather-beaten building, about which stood a stable, haystacks and corrals. It faced pleasantly to the south, and commanded a long valley view. Through its open door came a hearty baritone voice singing of "My Sweet Highland Mary," with varying accompaniment of rattling dishes and stove irons and the grinding of coffee.

The song ceased. There was a moment's silence. Then a caged canary within the room chirped, twittered and trilled into a melody, full round and sustained, that subsided to a warble and died away in a mellifluous quaver.

The first who had sung was the veteran plainsman, Jim Sheridan, commonly known as "the General." He was a short, wiry, florid man with a large head, thick, yellowish hair, aquiline features, and a gray, soldierly-moustache. The General was moving actively about a large cooking range, preparing an abundant supper. Busy though he was, he stopped his work a moment to clap his hands and shout:

"Bravo, Dick! You're the primo donner of the cattle country!"

After a visit to Colorado Springs, the General had astonished the ranchmen by bringing home with him the cage and songster, a bag of canary seed, and a "fish bone" for the bird to peck at. He hung the cage from a rafter of the unceiled room, and there were no bounds to the care he bestowed on the small male bird, which survived, thrived, and sang most sweetly.

The lamps had been lighted when the ranchmen, having gathered in, doors, sat down at the long table and fell to hungrily. After the rattle of knives and forks had subsided, the canary struck up his song again. In the midst of rough talk, tobacco smoke, the clink of spurs and the show of weapons on every hand, he was as happy as if his cage swung in a fine lady's boudoir.

Some one stepped out upon the veranda, leaving the door open. From the darkness without came the long wailing chorus of gray wolves.

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General Jim, still holding the magazine rifle, darted after his pet with a yell of dismay. The others rushed to the veranda just in time to see the cook's check flannel shirt, blue trousers and slippers disappear in the darkness.

"Leave us a lock of your hair, General!" roared Ed Dyer; but the General made no reply.

The men had returned to the kitchen, when galloping hoofs were heard. In a few moments Tom Stepman, whose place adjoined the Horse Creek Ranch, stood in the doorway, breathless and speechless. His eyes searched the room.

"What's the matter, Tom? Is anything wrong?" said one.

"Have any of you seen my little Oly?"

Did you know?

The man who has been building a wire fence about the bay meadow were walking up the Creek Valley; half a mile behind them rode a hunter, leading two packhorses with loads of antelope skins.

Far to the north a teamster urged his mules, as if fearful of being belated.

The point toward which all these figures were moving was an unpainted, weather-beaten building, about which stood a stable, haystacks and corrals. It faced pleasantly to the south, and commanded a long valley view. Through its open door came a hearty baritone voice singing of "My Sweet Highland Mary," with varying accompaniment of rattling dishes and stove irons and the grinding of coffee.

The song ceased. There was a moment's silence. Then a caged canary within the room chirped, twittered and trilled into a melody, full round and sustained, that subsided to a warble and died away in a mellifluous quaver.

The first who had sung was the veteran plainsman, Jim Sheridan, commonly known as "the General." He was a short, wiry, florid man with a large head, thick, yellowish hair, aquiline features, and a gray, soldierly-moustache. The General was moving actively about a large cooking range, preparing an abundant supper. Busy though he was, he stopped his work a moment to clap his hands and shout:

"Bravo, Dick! You're the primo donner of the cattle country!"

After a visit to Colorado Springs, the General had astonished the ranchmen by bringing home with him the cage and songster, a bag of canary seed, and a "fish bone" for the bird to peck at. He hung the cage from a rafter of the unceiled room, and there were no bounds to the care he bestowed on the small male bird, which survived, thrived, and sang most sweetly.

The lamps had been lighted when the ranchmen, having gathered in, doors, sat down at the long table and fell to hungrily. After the rattle of knives and forks had subsided, the canary struck up his song again. In the midst of rough talk, tobacco smoke, the clink of spurs and the show of weapons on every hand, he was as happy as if his cage swung in a fine lady's boudoir.

Some one stepped out upon the veranda, leaving the door open. From the darkness without came the long wailing chorus of gray wolves.

"Sassy, ain't they?" said Ed Dyer. "We'll have to get up a hunt for 'em."

The General was examining the loaded magazine rifle of the antelope hunter, when the bird-cage door, which had in some way become unfastened, swung open. The men saw a tiny flash of yellow as the canary flew across the room and out through the open doorway.

General Jim, still holding the magazine rifle, darted after his pet with a yell of dismay. The others rushed to the veranda just in time to see the cook's check flannel shirt, blue trousers and slippers disappear in the darkness.

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