

The Three Wishes.

Three little girls sat idly on the beach;
One like a lily tall and fair,
One brilliant with her raven hair,
One sweet and shy of speech.

"I wish for fame," the lily said,
"And I for wealth and courtesy life."
Then gently spoke the third: "As wife,
I ask for love instead."

Years passed. Again beside the sea
Three women sat with whitened hair,
Still graceful, lovable and fair,
And told their destiny.

"Fame is not all," the lily sighed,
"Wealth falls if the heart be dead."
"I have been loved," one sweetly said,
"And I am satisfied."
—SARAH K. BOLTON in Demorest.

DIAMONDS IN HER HAIR.

A SECRET SERVICE MAN'S STORY.

"Years ago," said an old secret service man, "I was in business in New York. Men at my trade as a detective bear all sorts of stories; some of them long after the knowledge will do any good. Nevertheless, now and then, these yarns form curious bits of history. Not long ago a gentleman from the inside was telling me a bit of unwritten history of the New York custom house. What he related took place over twenty years ago; in fact, not long after the war. He was explaining how money was made inside of the custom lines.

"A friend of mine, said that gentleman, 'was one of the inspectors in the New York office. His business was to go aboard boats, ransack the trunks of passenger and overhaul the effects of immigrants.

"One day his chief came to him and said: 'You must meet such and such a boat when she comes in. She's at the Narrows now. Take with you one of the women of our office, because she will have to search a German girl who is aboard the boat. This girl will be with her father, whose name is Schmidt, and who comes from Bremen. He has nothing on him that is wrong, but the girl has a whole handful of diamonds done up in her hair. You have the inspectors, who is with you, to search the girl, and have her finally find the diamonds in her chignon. Don't bungle the job, nor go straight to the diamonds as if you knew where they were. I want the discovery to come along in a regular way and nothing done to show that we have had any pointer as to the folks and their diamonds.

"There was no time," continued my friend, "to ask any questions as to how my chief knew of the whereabouts of this plant of diamonds. I took the woman inspector as he directed me, and we went aboard the boat and quickly found our passengers from Bremen. This Schmidt had been further described to me by my chief as having only one eye, so he was easy to pick out. I searched the old man in a careful way and the woman with me took the girl into a stateroom and after fooling away ten minutes in a pretended search, finally discovered the diamonds in her waterfall, as the peculiar coiffure of that day was termed.

"As we always did at that time, we contented ourselves with confiscating the diamonds. Of course I made a bluff. I told the old man and his daughter they were under arrest, but that I would let them go for the night. The next day they must return at 10 o'clock to the custom's office, when we would send them to the penitentiary for anywhere from ten to twenty years.

"This last, as I say, was only a bluff, however, and the people never came back, as we had every reason to suppose would be the case. We had no time to try criminals, and usually contented ourselves with confiscating the goods which they attempted to smuggle, and as these were generally very valuable, it was punishment enough.

"When I found my chief I told him I had the diamonds all safe enough, and had given the old German and his daughter such a scare that none of us need expect to see either of them again. Then I asked him how he knew so accurately about the diamonds.

"My chief told me that his information came from the son-in-law of the old man. It seems that the old German had two daughters. The elder one was married, and already in this country, living in New York city. The younger girl, when she and her father got ready to come over, wrote the other how they had turned all of their property into diamonds, which could be bought at a low figure in Europe, and on account of the tariff sold for double the money here; and how she intended to conceal them in her hair in order to smuggle them ashore. Naturally, the elder sister told her husband, and it was he who informed my chief. What was his

object? Why, the rascal expected to get 45 per cent of the proceeds of the confiscated property when sold, being the amount which in that day went to the informer.

"I couldn't for the life of me see where my chief and myself and the other boys in the custom house were going to get any part of the proceeds of these diamonds. They were of course reported to the office as confiscated and their sale would duly take place; but with the reptile son-in-law getting 45 per cent as informer, and Uncle Sam the other 55 per cent as confiscator, I couldn't see where we'd get in. But my chief, who was a very intelligent man, bid me be of good cheer. He had a plan which he was confident would work.

"At one of the sales which the custom house periodically holds, the old German's diamonds were duly hawked off. We had never seen either him or his daughter since I turned them loose on the wharf, although we knew from the son-in-law that they were at his home in New York, very much overcome with their loss and the fear of being punished as smugglers. A fear which he very much fed, by the way, by telling them some awful stories of what happened to people who were caught trying to beat the custom house. The diamonds, when sold, if I remember correctly, brought between \$9,000 and \$10,000. The share due the informer was over \$4,000.

"The amount due to the government was turned over, and shortly following the faithless son-in-law came skulking in to get his share of the money.

"Certainly," replied my chief. "You're the informer and the money's yours; there is something over \$4,000 coming to you. But I propose to have witnesses when it is paid over. I will pay it to you any time when you bring your wife and her sister and your father-in-law with you to see it done. I intend that they shall witness this transaction and learn just exactly what sort of a cur you are."

"The son-in-law informer crept away and never returned. He couldn't face the conditions which made his obtaining the money possible. It was not lost, however; you may be very sure it went to good people who knew how to use it."—Washington Post.

Coyote and Decoy Ducks.

Cunning and treachery being its marked characteristics, the coyote is no disgrace to his kind. Picture an ordinary prairie wolf with a last-stage-of-consumption expression on his thievish countenance, his teeth habitually exposed to the yellowing influence of the arid region sun, and a spirit of gaunt hunger pervading his every look and action, and you have a good idea of Mr. Coyote of the plains. His cunning is illustrated by the following incident:

A poultry farmer living in the Pinon timber, near the Rio Piedra, a tributary of the Rio Grande, had constructed a reservoir for the double purpose of affording water in time of drouth and furnishing a swimming place for a fine lot of Muscovy ducks. Those ducks were the pride of the coyote's heart, and more especially the stay of his stomach. His visits to the duck pond had the merit of regularity and the charm of success.

The farmer is a great sportsman, and has, among other field accessories, a case of wooden decoy ducks. With these and a little scheming he proposed to annihilate the coyote.

Having placed the decoys in a sedge place in the lake, and kept his ducks confined all day, he lay in concealment ready to shoot the coyote, but the rascal was too smart, and never showed a hair. The farmer gave it up in disgust, but neglected to remove his decoys. The next night the wolf went his rounds, and, finding the painted decoys, carried them to the farthest point on the lake, for what purpose I do not know; but when the ducks were released in the morning, they immediately made for the decoys. The coyote was there, as if keeping an appointment, and—curtain.

Fixing his heart on vengeance, and a percussion cap on his muzzle-loader, the farmer made a systematic hunt for the coyote, and found him asleep on a ledge of rocks. The thief got a half-ounce ball in his stomach, which being unable to assimilate, he carried off a hundred yards, where it caused his death.—St. Louis Republic.

The Dear Things.

"Have you heard the news? May Pastor has become engaged at last."
"What kind of a man is he?"
"Oh, he impresses me of one of those men who can put up with anything."
"I wonder how much she had to put up to get him?"—Buffalo Erie.

Alaska's Ice Bear.

When the Government sent out a commission to investigate the coal fields of Alaska last spring, Prof. W. G. Dall, was made one of the party. While the scientific men were investigating the Mt. St. Elias glaciers, Prof. Dall saw an animal he had never seen before. It was a bear, but such a bear as nobody in the party had ever seen or heard of. They thought they had discovered an entirely distinct species. Professor Dall made an elaborate report of all the circumstances, together with all the information he could get from the natives about the bear. This is his description:

"The general color of the animal resembles that of the silver fox. The fur is not very long, but remarkably soft and with a rich under-fur of a bluish-black shade, numbers of the longer hairs being white or having the distal part half white and the basal part slaty. The dorsal line from the tip of the nose to the rump, the back of the very short ears and the outer faces of the limbs are jet black. Numerous long, white hairs issue from the ears; black and silver is the prevalent pelage of the sides, neck and rump; the under surface of the belly and the sinuses behind the limbs are grayish white, or even nearly pure white, I am told in some cases. The sides of the muzzle and lower anterior part of the cheeks are of a bright tan color, a characteristic I have not seen in any other American bear, and this characteristic is said to be invariable. There is no tint of brown elsewhere in the pelage. There is no tail visible on the pelts. The claws are small, very much curved, sharp, black above and lighter below; the animal evidently can climb trees which the brown bear cannot do."

To this the Alaska Mining Record says:

"Professor Dall seems to have discovered our ice bear."

Gullmots.

Birds of a strange feather are many of those in the collection brought by Lieutenant Peary from Northern Greenland. An interesting member of the collection is a gullmote that was shot by Lieutenant Peary. The gullmots live in enormous colonies and as the tens of thousands of females sit each on a single egg, on the edge of the cliff, with their black summer backs toward the sea, they darken the rocks. When approached by a boat, in their fright they suddenly turn, presenting their white breasts, and thus instantly apparently transform the rock from black to white. Then, as they take flight they often carry their eggs some distance between their legs, and literally pelt the approaching boatman with them.

Specimens of the gullmots show the remarkable change in the plumage of Arctic birds from the dark of summer to the light of winter. This change is strongly emphasized in the specimens of *lagopus* in the collection, which are sufficient in number to show every graduation from black to white, according to the season in which the bird was killed.

These changes are remarkable for they are very radical and sometimes take place in a single week without the loss of a feather. This change is a wonderful example of protective coloration, the bird in summer being nearly the color of the moss and Arctic shrubbery, and in the winter that of snow.—New York Herald.

Facts About Lightning.

Certain facts about lightning strokes the result of years of experiment by the United States weather bureau, have recently been tabulated. Thunder storms reach their maximum in June and July, though reported in every month, except in January, the region of winter thunder storms centering about Louisiana. Forty such storms are the maximum average for any such section. The average annual loss of life from lightning in the United States is twenty-four persons; of loss of property, over \$1,500,000. People living in cities and thickly built towns run little danger, the risks in the country or suburbs being five times as great. For the same reason the center of a grove or forest is much safer than its edges or isolated trees, the dense growth acting to distribute the current.

A Highland Stoic.

A man walking by an old graveyard in Aberdeenshire beheld, seated on a wall, an aged Highlander, with his head wrapped up in a shawl, evidently suffering from a bad cold in the chest. "Good-Morning, Donald," said he. "You seem to be suffering from a bad hoast" (cough). "Ech, sir," said the old man pointing to the tomb; "but there's mony a yin over there would be glad to ha' it."—The Realm.

TESTING ORES.

How Assayers Discover the Value of Minerals.

The Process of Sampling Used at the Mines.

To the uninitiated but observant stranger who wanders up and down in the labyrinth of shafts and tunnels, diggings and dumps of a genuine mining camp, perhaps there is no subject more full of interest than the process by which a lump of brown ore, which, to his inexperienced eye, looks not in the least attractive, is made to yield its share of silver and gold; or the means and methods by which the mining man at his side so confidently assures him that a ton of that ore will go 82.35 ounces in silver and \$17.55 in gold.

Even the Eastern mining expert, or graduate from some mining school, will wonder how, in the log cabin or pine shanty, destitute of all the elaborate paraphernalia to which he has been accustomed, these results are so readily and accurately obtained.

As a general rule the majority of the ores, except those containing the precious metals, for purposes of purchase and sale, are valued according to the cost of mining and shipping, so that, except for metallurgical purposes, it is unnecessary to seek to determine with much accuracy the contents and value of such ores.

In the case of ores rich in the precious metals, however, it is entirely different, as in their purchase and sale, both parties, the buyer as well as the seller, want to ascertain accurately and to a certainty the value of the entire lot. The methods by which this knowledge is obtained are so simple as to be easily understood and practiced by many a man who does not know the technical symbols of the metals he is determining, or could not give a scientific exposition of the process; but, nevertheless, in his line, he is an accurate and successful assayer.

When a quantity of ore is to be sampled for assaying it is first broken up by an ordinary rock crusher into pieces of the size of an English walnut, after which it is shoveled back into the car, but in such a manner that every fifth shovelful is thrown aside by itself, the remaining four-fifths being finally taken away. This fifth portion, known as the "sample," is then reduced to a much greater degree of fineness by means of Cornish rolls. It is then piled on the floor in a cone, flattened out, and divided into four equal portions; and two opposite quarters are then removed. The remaining quarters are again thoroughly mixed, and again piled in a cone, flattened and quartered; this operation being repeated until the sample is reduced to 100 pounds. It is then weighed repeatedly, for the purpose of determining the amount of moisture contained in the ore, which in some ores, especially those of the concentrates, is so considerable as to make a very appreciable difference in the weight. The moisture is then expelled, and the ore is crushed to such a degree of fineness that it can be passed through a sieve containing 100 holes to the linear inch. The sample is next put up in small glass bottles, which are sealed with sealing-wax, and then stamped, for the purpose of preventing the possibility of their being opened or tampered with without detection.

The above is the process of sampling used among the mines, and the sample is now ready to be assayed, but only a small portion of it will be used for that purpose, and the quantity generally taken is what is known as an "assay ton," which weighs 29,166 milligrams, or a little more than 450 grains troy weight. This definite amount is taken, partly as a matter of convenience, and also because the assayer wishes to ascertain, as quickly as possible, how many ounces of the precious metals to the ton are contained in this ore. The method used depends upon the following principle: The avoirdupois gram ton of 2,000 pounds contains 29,165 ounces troy weight; hence when 29,166 milligrams of the unassayed ore are taken, the weight of the resulting "button" of gold or silver, in the milligrams represents at once, without any further calculation, the number of troy ounces of gold or silver in the avoirdupois ton of ore.

This method was invented in the Columbia School of Mines in New York City, and is in general use throughout the world wherever there is assaying to be done.—Boston Transcript.

How to "Charm" Snakes.

"Everybody's guide to snake charming" is old "Chub" Monroe, who lives in the hills of Brown County, Indiana, and owns a collection of 140 reptiles, all tame to his hand. He will tell you how to catch, break and "educate" snakes; and those are things that are not in printed books. He hates a dog and cannot tolerate a cat. But he thinks his trick rattler and copperhead, whose fangs have been extracted, are the most interesting pets alive.

"Ever since I was a boy," he said the other day to a newspaper correspondent. "I have had a fondness for snakes. I began first to experiment with bull snakes. I would catch them by their tails and jerk their heads off. I became bolder and commenced to handle them. I would hold their heads tightly so they could not bite me. I soon could handle them as I wished. Next I began to experiment with garter snakes. That is the way I developed into a snake charmer.

"The first copperhead I ever picked up I was unfortunate with. While extracting his fangs with my fingers my hand slipped off his head and in its struggle to get away it inserted one of its fangs in the second finger of my left hand. I was four miles from Delaven at the time, and it was a furious ride to the little town for medical assistance. While riding along at breakneck speed I took a chew of tobacco and began sucking the wounded finger. That is what saved my life. Some of the poison, however, got into my system and I had quite a siege of it. That experience taught me it was safer to use a pair of forceps than my fingers.

"I always take the fangs out of poisonous snakes, and have to watch them closely to prevent their fangs growing back. Fangs grow again in about three months. When I capture copper heads or rattlers I usually put them in my pocket and carry them home in that way. To get them out of my pocket is not dangerous, because a poisoned snake seldom strikes unless he is coiled. My biggest rattler, a fine fellow about four feet nine inches long, I lost some days ago in a strange way. I put a large rat in the cage for him to make a meal of. A fight ensued and the rat got the best of the battle by biting his snake-ship through the small of the neck, and the snake died in two minutes.—New York Press.

Paper Piano Case.

"All manner of articles in place of wood have been used in the manufacture of pianos," says one of the greatest English piano makers. "Perhaps the most successful of all these is paper, of which many pianos of exquisite tone and appearance have been made. The Duke of Devonshire has one of the finest specimens of the paper piano, this being of French make, and decorated most ornately with pictures by French artists. The duke gave 500 guineas for this, mainly no doubt, on account of the ornamentation. I suppose you know that pianos for very hot and very cool climates—all instruments for export, in fact,—have to be specially made, and in this direction all manner of experiments have been tried. Among others, a sort of cellulose, one factor in which is actually common molasses, from which sugar is made, is employed, and a composition made from the chemical treatment of gutta percha and leather pulp has been tried. Ivory pianos are by no means uncommon, and the Dowager Countess of Dudley has a magnificent carved specimen. Pianos of ivory are, I might say, made every year in numbers, but chiefly for Indian princes and rich Spanish Americans. Many pianos of solid silver have been made; indeed, one was only recently completed by a London firm for the Nizam of Hyderabad, and piano cases have at various times been made of bronze, a species of aluminum, glass, porcelain, and, in combination, mother-of-pearl."—London Answers.

Giving Credit.

The customs surrounding the giving of credit differ widely in different countries. In Italy credit is only on undoubted security, in Cuba five months after delivery. In the Bermudas settlements are annual. In Austria it is impossible to do business without giving a year's credit; in England settlement is counted upon every three months; in Spain four-fifths of the business is done on a cash basis; Turkish and Russian credit averages twelve months; in China credit is unknown, and thirty days is the rule in Canada.

Ole Bull is to have a statue at Bergen, his native town, \$25,000 having been subscribed for the purpose, part of it in the United States.

PEARLS OF THOUGHT

Genius always gives its best at first; prudence, at last.—Lavater.

Idleness travels very slowly, and poverty soon overtakes her.—Hunter.

A good book is the best of friends, the same today and forever.—Tupper.

Enjoy present pleasures in such a way as not to injure future ones.—Seneca.

Human foresight often leaves its proudest possessor only a choice of evils.—Colton.

If thou desirest ease, in the first place take care of the case of thy mind.—Fuller.

The true danger is when liberty is nibbled away, for expedient, and by parts.—Burke.

The instinctive feeling of a great people is often wiser than its wisest men.—Kossuth.

The true work of art, is but the shadow of the divine perfection.—Michael Angelo.

Learning teaches how to carry things in suspense without prejudice till you resolve.—Bacon.

A miser grows rich by seeming poor; an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.—Shenstone.

Contentment swells the principal to no purpose, and lessens the use to all purposes.—Jeremy Taylor.

My name and memory I leave to men's charitable speeches, to foreign nations and to the next age.

One part of knowledge consists in being ignorant of such things as are not worthy to be known.—Orates.

Calumny shall make me set a surer guard on myself and keep a better watch on my actions.—Ben Johnson.

A Matrimonial Ambassador.

Marriage customs in Finistere have remained among the peasants very much what they were centuries ago, and their old-fashioned ceremoniousness is not their least interesting peculiarity. The Breton peasant of today has an almost religious respect for those notions of polite manners which have come down to him from his forefathers of the middle ages, who, as far as they dared, imitated the etiquette of their princes of nearer feudal lords. The basfanel, who with stately bows and old-fashioned phrases performs the delicate office of asking for a girl in marriage on behalf of the suitor, is really acting the part of a matrimonial ambassador. But the basfanel's functions do not end here.

When the bride has been put to bed by her maids, all the wedding party reassemble in the nuptial chamber, which is often the kitchen and general room. Then the basfanel steps forward and on behalf of the whole company, he addresses the final felicitation to the young couple. This courtly personage is almost invariably a tailor. His habit of going from house to house in the exercise of his calling—the rural tailor seldom works at home—enables him to become the best informed man concerning the private affairs of all the families in his district. He is a great favorite of the women, because he is to them an unending fountain of local gossip and scandal. Their liking for him causes the men to despise him, but they nevertheless have recourse to his services as an intermediary whenever the need arises. Such is the basfanel—a name more suggestive to the Breton of ridicule than respect.—Temple Bar.

Entangled Birds.

Birds that employ hair in the building of their nests, sometimes come to grief by hanging, but I should say very seldom indeed in the following singular manner: A gentleman who had a number of coits upon his farm one day noticed a small bird entangled in the long hair of the tail of one of them. The little creature had evidently been in search of material wherewith to line its nest, and by some unaccountable accident had become ensnared in the unkempt hair of the coit's tail.

Cases of birds getting their feet entangled in bits of yarn or string are not at all uncommon, especially in the breeding season, and whenever a victim of this kind of a mishap happens to get the impediment fastened in a tree or among stones, death is pretty sure to be the result, unless prompt human aid is forthcoming. In the spring of the year, as everybody knows, the dead leaves of the pampas grass fall to the ground and curl up like the shavings from a carpenter's bench. A Field correspondent mentions finding a poor robin which had accidentally got one of these pieces coiled round its neck so tightly that it was unable to feed, and died of starvation.—Cornhill Magazine.