PROFESSOR MARSH AND THE POINTER

NEW STORY OF DOLLY AND THE PRIMROSE BOARDING-SCHOOL

FOR a long time after the occasion on which Professor Marsh had been unwigged by means of the line and bent pin let down through the stovepipe hole over the rostrum, recitations had gone very smoothly and quiet. The whole affair had been, of course, an accident, still the girls felt that it would not do to play any tricks on the poor German while he still smarted from the recollection of that trying scene.

For days after he met his classes with a defiant look in his pale-blue, near-sighted eyes which warned them of a smouldering volcano ready to burst forth in a perfect storm of broken English at a moment's notice.

As the weeks went by, however, the unwonted docility of his pupils gradually gave way to the customary giggling and surreptitious whispering which usually marked the conduct of his classes.

With his poor sight and his uncertain grasp of English the unfortunate professor had a hard time of it. When his anger got the better of him, as it often did, he would bang upon the floor or the blackboard with his long pointer and sputter, "Yong ladees, wull you kindly pay attenchun!"

It was this thumping with a pointer that gave Julia Norris a brilliant idea in the way of a practical joke. The very thought of it made her burst out laughing in class; but as luck would have it, Professor Marsh had just perpetrated a feeble joke to which he attributed Julia's merriment and accordingly he beamed on her, squinting his queer bespectacled eyes as he always did when pleased.

Julia continued to go into spasms of laughter with the monotonous regularity of a minute gun; so that when the gong sounded and the girls trooped out into the hall, Dolly and Edna Williams rushed up to her, dying with curiosity as to the cause of so much levity.

With a few gasps Julia recovered her composure and wiped her eyes.

"Sneak up to my room for a moment, girls, and I'll tell you all about it."

When the three inseparables were comfortably ensconsed in Julia's pretty room, she explained to them her proposed joke on Professor Marsh.

The girls fairly shouted at the delightful scheme.

"How did you ever think of anything so clever?" cried Dolly, when the three were once more "able to sit up and take nourishment," as Edna expressed it.

"My dears, I don't know!" said Julia, her eyes twinkling. "It was one of those inspirations of genius that come to one but once or twice in a lifetime.

"Do you think we can buy 'em at the village store?" said Edna, the practical. "You know, Fourth of July is a good ways off, yet."

"Oh, I guess we can get them. If we can't I'll send to the city for some," was Julia's answer. "Of course, that would delay the fun somewhat and we should run the risk of being caught by Miss Primrose. That charming principal of ours has such a fearful curiosity as to what is in every package that comes for any of us girls. I guess we can arrange that by getting that obliging young man at the express office to hold anything for me till I call for it personally."

"Well, will you look at that!" cried Dolly Rivers, rising suddenly and pointing majestically at a square of cardboard which hung just over Julia's washstand. On the cardboard was the legend, "No swimming in this pool."

"Oh, that!" remarked Julia, blandly. "I put that up this morning as a warning to that Norton girl, who hangs out just across the hall. She's English, you know. Never saw such a scrubber in my life. She is all the time complaining that she can't get enough water for her 'cold bawthe in the morning, dontcherknow,' and she has acquired a nice little habit of dropping in here when I'm out to swipe my pitcherful. Sometimes she simply dives headfirst into the basin here, without taking the trouble to carry the water to her own room."

"I call that cheeky!" muttered Edna.

"The result is," went on Julia, "I usually have left about a cupful of the precious liquid when I come to wash and dress for dinner. Then I have the pleasure of carrying my own pitcher to the sink around by the long corridor, which is at the least two and one-half miles, more or less. Norton is a big, able-bodied girl, so if she wants a bigger supply of water she can do the Rebecca act for herself. That's my ultimatum as expressed in that sign. Savvy?"

Slang and practical jokes were Julia's failings. These were more than balanced

"OH, THAT SIGN," SAID JULIA BLANDLY, "THAT'S FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NORTON GIRL."

by as sweet a disposition and as true and loyal a heart as ever girl had.

Well, there weren't any in the village store. Any what, you ask? Just wait and you shall know.

Edna suddenly recollected that she owned a boy cousin who was attending school in New York and he was written to and instructed to send a box of "them" with all dispatch.

As fate would have it, the very day the express package was safely delivered into Edna's hands, the Misses Primrose were honored with a visit from a certain Judge prominent in the state and very much interested in educational matters.

The girls welcomed any little diversion of this sort, not so much because they cared to be on exhibition—that they voted a bore—but because they were sure of an unusually generous dinner, with ice cream and cake—a luxury ordinarily occurring only on every other Sunday.

Now, Professor Marsh's class in zoology was the first hour right after lunch, and the three inseparables had fixed on that time for the perpetration of their joke on the unsuspecting man.

Edna with a mysterious package, Julia with a bottle of mucilage, and Dolly with a long pointer from the blackboard, met in the lecture-room immediately after the noon meal, having hurried through before the others.

It was at this juncture that the Judge was announced. The girls heard a strange voice in the hall, and the oily, gracious tones of Miss Tabitha Primrose raised in cordial greeting.

It did not occur to the girls that he was come to inspect them or that he might attend classes, but nevertheless they felt a bit uneasy somehow, and it was the careful Edna who remarked, "I wonder, girls, hadn't we better postpone our little game. If there was any chance of a visitor now—"

"Rats!" blurted the slangy Julia, "let's see this thing through now we are worked up to it; we may never have such a good chance again."

"He's a big, fat man with white hair, and he's gone into the parlor—and he's left his bag in the hall!" announced Dolly, who as picket had kept watch from the half-open door.

"There, that's done!" announced Julia, as she rose and gingerly put the pointer in its place, standing end up against the blackboard. Then she carefully wiped her gluey fingers on the under side of a desk and put the remainder of the package in her pocket.

"I do hope it's a good one," she added, regarding the pointer with a speculative eye. "Some of 'em don't work, you know."

"They are not very large ones," put in Edna. "I was afraid to order the largest size—our dear old professor might have discovered it before—before it was time. Cousin Jack wrote they were very powerful for small ones—and did I tell you?—he said he'd give $5 to come on and see the fun.

"Girls," came a warning whisper from the doorway, "I hear Professor Marsh coming along the hall upstairs. It would never do for him to find us here before the recitation hour. He might remember the fact after it happens."

"Right you are, me hearty," muttered Julia, with a little chuckle, and stealthily the girls crept out and into the study room across the hall. The three inseparables occupied seats well down front in Professor Marsh's "zoo" class, and you can imagine with what a fever of impatience they awaited the outcome of the little comedy that had been so carefully planned. With a strange mixture of joy and terror they beheld the principal leading the portly Judge to a place up front, where he was welcomed with Old World courtesy by the German.

Miss Tabitha herself took a seat close by, and waited with that set smile of hers for the recitation to begin.

Professor Marsh, who was quite a draftsman, had previously chalked upon the board an outline of various animals similar in appearance, such as the shepherd dog, the wolf, the fox, the hyena, the lynx, and so on. He delivered his short lecture on their characteristics, their habits, how they differed from one another, and finally he wound up by testing his pupils' memory by pointing to the various pictures on the board, saying in each case, "An' thees one, Miss Edna—eet is what? A fox, that ees right."

The girls were remarkably accurate, and as right answers followed one after the other, the poor old German waxed enthusiastic over the credit done him before the honored visitor.

He came to the last picture. "An' theese, Miss Dolly!" he cried, dramatically bringing the pointer down on the board with a sturdy tap.

Immediately there was a loud bang like a pistol shot and a tiny cloud of dust or smoke rose lazily in the air.

"Ach, I am shot!" cried Professor Marsh.

Miss Tabitha uttered a shrill scream and the whole room was in an uproar of screams and laughter.

And the Judge? He sat in his chair laughing silently till the tears ran down his red cheeks.

It was the professor's voice raised in accents of pained surprise that was first to make itself heard above the tumult.

"Somewun has put a torpy-do on ze pointer-ead!"

"A torpedo?" said Miss Tabitha, the dawning light of comprehension lifting her eyebrows and a sudden grim resolve bringing them down again.

"Young ladies!" she said in an awful voice. "You are dismissed. Go to your rooms and stay there till I send for you individually."

The Judge in the meantime, weak from his efforts to choke down a womanly desire to go into hysterics, struggled to his feet and followed his hostess into the parlor.

"My dear Judge," began Miss Tabitha, her voice trembling with rage and mortification. "I can't begin to tell you how deeply I regret that your visit should have been marred by such unseemly—such unmaidenly conduct."

"Marred!" broke in the Judge in his big voice. "Why, my dear madame, I haven't had so much fun since I left college. I—I wouldn't have missed that little scene for a hundred dollars. Of course, you understand officially I disapprove of such goings on; but, gad! wasn't it rich?"

Here the old gentleman, who was still a boy at heart, went off into silent laughter again.

"I do hope," he added, presently, noting the wareloud on Miss Tabitha'e brow, "that you won't find it necessary to impose very severe punishments on the young scamps. Bless my heart, it does me good to feel there are a few fun-loving girls left who think of something beside dress and parties and beaux. In fact, strange as it may seem, that little episode has impressed me with the fact that a girl can enjoy life here as well as learn. I shall be glad to recommend your school whenever opportunity offers."

It was because of the Judge's decision, no doubt, that justice was in this case tempered with mercy. So the three inseparables, who 'fessed up when asked point blank, were let off with nothing worse than four Saturdays to be spent indoors for extra studying.

Poor Professor Marsh! He never uses a pointer now without previously inspecting it through his near-sighted eyes.

DOUGLAS CAMERON.

ANDIRON TALES, BY J. KENDRICK BANGS

ADVENTURES OF RIGHTY, LEFTY AND TOM COME TO AN END

"AND now," said the Lefthandiron, as the Flamingo flew off and left them to themselves, "it strikes me that it is time we set about having some supper. I'm getting hungry, what with the excitement of that ride and the fact that I haven't eaten anything but a bowlful of kindling wood since yesterday morning."

"I'm with you there," said Tom. "I've been hungry ever since we started, and that snow on the moon whetted my appetite."

"Never knew a boy who wasn't hungry on all occasions," puffed the Bellows. "Fact is, a boy wouldn't be a real boy unless he was hungry. Did you ever know a boy that would confess he'd had enough to eat, Pokey?"

"Once," said Poker. "I wrote a poem about him, but I never could get it published. Want to hear it?"

"Very much," said Tom.

"Well, here goes," said the Poker, anxiously, and he recited the following lines:

THE WONDROUS STRIKE OF SAMMY DIKE

Young Sammy Dike was a likely boy
Who lived somewhere in Illinois;
His father was a blacksmith, and
His Ma made pies for all the land.
The pies were all so very fine
That folks who sought them stood in line
Before the shop of Dike & Co.,
'Mid passing rain, in drifting snow,
For fear they'd loss the tasty prize
Of Dike's new patent home-made pies."
One day, alas! poor Mrs. Dike,
Who with her pies had made the strike,
By overwork fell very ill,
And all her orders could not fill,
So ill was she she could not bake
One-half the pastry folks would take;
And so her loving husband said
He'd take her place and cook, instead
Of making horse-shoes. Kindly Joe,
To help his wife in time of woe!
He worked by night, he worked by day—
Yet worked, alas! in his own way
And made such pies, I've understood,
As but a simple blacksmith could.
He made them hard as iron bars;
He made them tough as trolley-cars.
He seemed to think a pie's estate
Was to be used as armor plate,
And not a pie would he let go
That had not stood the sledge's blow
Upon the anvil in his sanctum.
Whence naught went out until he'd spanked 'em.
Result? With many alas and 'lack
The pies' Joe made they all came back
From folks who claimed they could not go
The latest pies of Dike & Co.
And here it was that Sammy came
To help his parents in the game.
"Can't eat 'em?" cried indignant Joe.
"Can't eat 'em? Well, I want to know!
Here, Sammy, show these people here
How most unjust their plaint, my dear.
Come, lad, and eat the luscious pies
That I have made and they despise."
Poor loyal Sammy then began
Upon those stodgy pies—the plan
Was very pleasing in his eyes,
For Sammy loved his mother's pies.
He nibbled one, he bit another,
And then began to think of mother.
He chewed and gnawed, he munched and bit,
But no—he could not swallow it;
And then, poor child, it was so tough,
He had to say he'd had enough,
Though never in the world before
Was lad who had not wanted more.

. . . . .

And what became of Sammy's ma?
And what became of Sammy's pa?
Their profits gone, how could they eke
A living good from week to week?
They took the recipe for pies
That mother made and—oh! so wise—
Let Father make them in his way
In form elliptical, they say.
And when the football season came
Won fortune great, and wondrous fame,
Beyond the wildest hope of dreams
By selling them to football teams,
And those by whom this game is played
Called them the finest ever made,
"The Suregood football," made of mince,
Has never been quite equaled since;
And few who kick them with their feet
Know they're the pies Sam couldn't eat—
The only pies upon this orb
A healthy boy could not absorb.

"A great poem, that, eh?" said the Bellows, poking Tom in the ribs, and grinning broadly.

"Splendid," said Tom. "New use for pies, that."

"It's beautifully long," said Lefty.

"But why couldn't it be published?" asked Righty. "Wasn't it long enough?"

"The editor said it wasn't true," sighed the Poker. "He had three boys of his own, you know, and he said there never was a boy who couldn't eat a pie, even if it was made of crowbars and rubber, as long as it was pie."

"I guess he was right," observed Righty. "I knew a boy once who ate soft coal just because somebody told him it was rock candy."

"Did he like it?" asked Tom.

"I don't think he did," replied Righty, "but he never let on that he didn't."

"Well, anyhow," put in Lefty, "it's time we had something to eat, and we'd better set out for the Lobster shop, or the Candydike—I don't care which."

"Or the what?" asked Tom.

"The Candydike," said the Lefthandiron. "Didn't you ever hear of the Candydike?"

"Never," responded Tom. "What is it?"

"It's a candy Klondike," explained the Lefthandiron. "There are gumdrop mines and marshmallow lodes and deposits of chocolate creams beyond the dreams of avarice. Remember 'em, Righty?"

"Oom, mh, mh, mh!" murmured Righty, smacking his lips with joy. "Do I remember them! Oh, my! don't I just! Why, I never wanted to come back from there. I had to be pulled out of the peppermint mine with a derrick. And the river—oh, the river! Was there anything ever like it?"

Tom's mouth began to water, he knew not why.

"What about the river?" he asked.

"Soda water flowing from mountain to the sea," returned the Righthandiron, smacking his lips again, ecstatically. "Just imagine it, Tom—a great stream of soda water, fed by little rivulets of vanilla and strawberry and chocolate syrup, with here and there a cream brook feeding the combination, until all you had to do to get a glass of the finest nectar ever mixed was to dip your cup into the river, and there you were!"

Tom closed his eyes with very joy at the mere idea.

"Oh! Where is this river?" he cried, when he was able to find words to speak.

"In the Candydike, of course. Where else?" said the Poker. "But, of course, we can go to the Lobster shop, if you prefer."

"Not I," said Tom. "I don't care for any Lobster shop with a Candydike in sight."

"Don't be rash," said the Bellows, who apparently had a strong liking for the Lobster shop. "Of course, we all love the Candydike because it is so sweet, but for real pleasure the Lobster shop is not to be despised. I don't think you ought to make up your mind as to where you'll go next in too much of a hurry."

"What's the fun in the Lobster shop?" asked Tom.

"Purely intellectual, if you know what that means," said the Bellows. "You get your mind filled there instead of your stomach. You meet the wittiest oysters and the most poetic clams and the most literary lobsters at the Lobster shop you ever saw. For my part, I love the Lobster shop. I can get something to eat anywhere. I can get a stake at any lumber yard in town. I can get a chop at an ax factory in the country, and if I want sweets I can find a cakery——"

"Bakery, you mean," said Tom.

"No, I don't, at all," said the Bellows. "I mean cakery. A cakery is a place where they sell cake, and when I say cakery I mean what I say. Just because you call it bakery doesn't prove anything."

"We're out for pleasure, not for argument," growled the Lefthandiron. "Go on and say what you've got to say."

"Well," said the Bellows, "what I was trying to say when interrupted was that you can get your stomach filled almost anywhere, but your mind—that is different. I'm hungrier in my mind than in my stomach, and I'd rather be fed now on the jests of an oyster, the good stories of a clam and the anecdotes of a lobster than have the freedom of the richest marshmallow mine in creation."

"Well, I'm sure I don't know what to do," said Tom, very much perplexed. The Candydike was glorious, but the Lobster shop, too, had its attractions, for Tom was fond of witty jokes and good anecdotes. The idea of having them from the lips of lobsters and oysters was very appealing.

"I say," he said, in a minute, "why isn't the Lobster shop the best place for us to go, after all, if we are really hungry? We could sit down at the table, you know, and listen to the lobster's anecdotes and then eat him afterward. In that way we could hear the stories and fill up besides."

"Well—I de-clare!" cried the Bellows. "What an idea! You most ungrateful boy!"

"Not at all," said the Poker. "Not at all. It's merely the habit of his kind. Many's the time when I've heard of men and women devouring their favorite authors. Tom couldn't better show his liking for the lobster than by eating him. On the other hand, if he goes there and turns his back on the Candydike, he'll miss the most wonderful sight in all creation, and that is the Nesselrode Cataract on the Soda Water River. It is located at the point where the Vanilla Glacier comes down from the Cream Mountains on the one side, and the famous Marrons orchards line the other bank for a distance of seven miles. It's a perfectly gorgeous sight."

"Mercy, me!" cried Tom. "Indeed, I should like to see that!"

"No doubt," put in the Bellows. "Nevertheless, you can see Nesselrode pudding at home at any time, but did you ever see there a Turtle that can recite a fairy story of his own composition, or a Crab capable or narrating the most thrilling story of the American Revolutionary War that anybody ever dreamed of?"

"O dear, O dear, O dear!" said Tom. "What shall I do?"

As he spoke from far down in the valley there seemed to come a crash and a roar, following close upon which the barking of a dog made itself heard.

"The ice is slipping," cried the Poker as the mountain trembled beneath them. "There's going to be an avalanche, and we're on it!"

The whole top of the mountain shook as if it had been in an earthquake, and then it began to crash rapidly downward.

"Dear me! How annoying," observed the Bellows. "As if we haven't had enough coasting this trip without taking a turn on an avalanche."

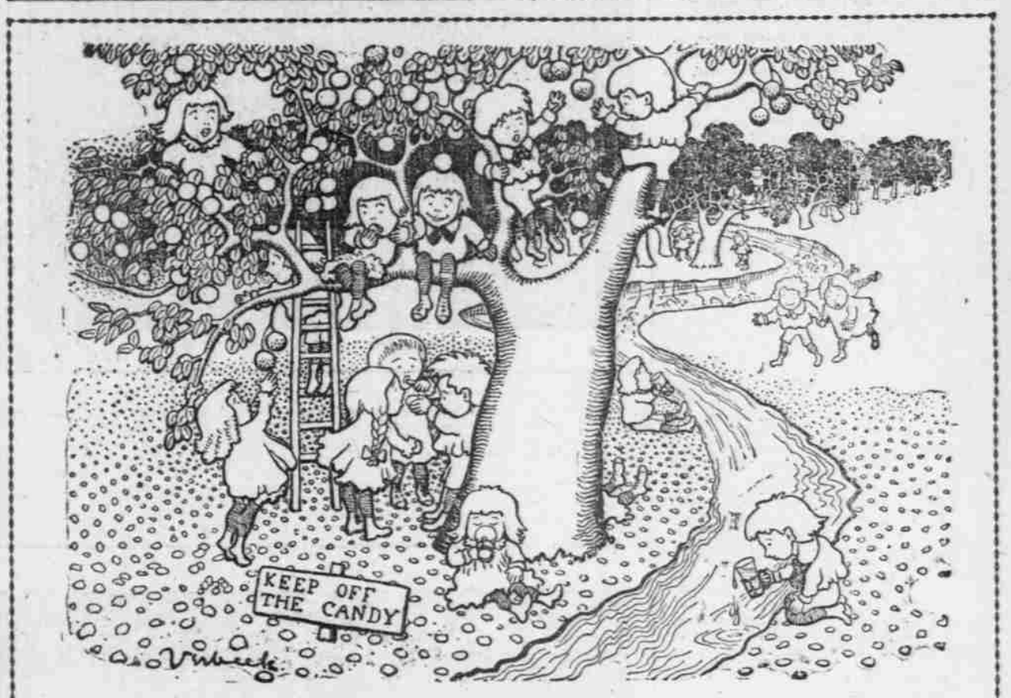
"But what shall we do?" roared the Andirons excitedly. "I never foresaw this."

"Slide, I guess," said the Poker calmly. "It's all we can do."

The barking of the dog approached closer.

"Good!" cried Righty, clapping his claws together gleefully, as an idea flashed across his mind. "It's one of those famous St. Bernards; he'll take care of Tom, and as for us"—

The thunderous roar of the descending avalanche drowned the sounds of Righty's voice, and all that could now serve as a means of conveying their thoughts to each other was the making of wild motions with the hands. The Poker stood erect and stiff looking grimly ahead of him, as if resolved to meet his fate bravely; the Bellows threw himself flat upon the glacier and panted; while the two Andirons, standing guard on either side of Tom, peered anxiously about for the rescuer of their little guest, nor did they look in vain, for in a few moments the huge figure of a St. Bernard appeared below them, rushing with all his might and main to their side. For some reason or other, the St. Bernard seemed to have something familiar about him, but Tom couldn't quite say what it was.



ON THE BANKS OF THE SODA WATER RIVER.

"Bow-wow-wow!" the dog barked, gleefully, for this was just the sort of work he most enjoyed.

Strangely enough, Tom seemed to understand dog language for the first time in his life, for the bark said to him as plainly as you please: "Climb on my back, sonny, and I'll have you out of this in a jiffy."

The lad lost not a moment in obeying. Aided by the affectionate boosts of the Andirons he soon found himself lying face downward upon the broad, shaggy back of the faithful beast.

He closed his eyes to shut out the blinding snow for a moment, and then—Tom sat up and rubbed them, for there was no snow, no avalanche, no Alp, no St. Bernard dog in sight. Only a friendly pair of andirons staring fixidly at him out of the fireplace of his father's library; the poker standing like a grenadier at one side, and the bellows, hanging from a brass-headed nail on the other. Besides these, lying on the rug beside him his head cocked to one side, his eyes fixed intently upon Tom's face, and his tail wagging furiously, was Jeff—no not a St. Bernard, but a shaggy little Scotch terrior.

"Hello, Jeffy!" said Tom, as he rubbed his eyes a second time. "Where have you been all this time?"

"Woof!" barked Jeff, and cocking his eye knowingly.

"And was it you who rescued me from the avalanche?" Tom asked.

"Woof!" replied Jeff, as much as to say he wouldn't tell.

"Well, it was mighty good of you, if you did, Jeff," Tom said, gratefully. "Only I wish you could have taken me to the Candydike or the Lobster shop instead of straight home—because I'm not only hungry Jeff, but I should very much have liked to visit those wonderful places."

"Woof!" said Jeff.

Which Tom took to be a promise that his rescuer would do better next time.

The little party has not been off again since, but the other night some pieces of newspaper were thrown into the fireplace and all but one of them were burned. Rightly held this one under his claw and Tom, while trying to get a word out of his friend, caught sight of it.

"Hello," said Tom, as he read what was printed on the clipping. "The astronomers at Lick Observatory have discovered a new constellation in the southeastern heavens. It is of huge dimensions and resembles in its outlines the figure of a rhinoceros or some such pachydermatous creature."

"Well, I never!" he cried, as he read. "I say, Rightly, do you believe that's the old Hippopotamus?"

And Rightly said never a word, but the look in his eye indicated that he thought there was something in the notion.

(THE END.)

How to Look for Birds.

First—Go alone and you'll see more; because you won't be talking and you may listen to nothing but birds.

Second—Go in the early morning or in the evening; birds rest at noon.

Third—Wear old clothes and overshoes or boots, for then you may go everywhere.

Fourth—Don't forget your field glasses, then the birds will be tamer.

Fifth—Take a notebook and pencil so that you may write down your impressions on the spot. Your memory might fail you.

Sixth—Make a list of all the birds you see and your next tramp will be more exciting.

Seventh—When you see an unknown bird don't fail to see what shape its bill is. Bills differ more than noses. Sketch bills; that's the only way to see.

Eighth—To arouse a bird's curiosity, kiss your hand; the dullest bird will crane his neck.

Ninth—Move slowly; quick movements excite things.

Tenth—Keep off of dry twigs—they are noisy.

Eleventh—Go under low branches, instead of brushing past them. A waving branch means wind; a tarred one means life—and every bird knows it.

Twelfth—If the mosquitoes will permit it, sit down somewhere and keep "perfectly" still for half an hour (to begin with); then you may see a bird before he sees you.

Thirteenth—Think about what you see.

Fourteenth—Don't feel discouraged after your walk if you don't see much. The walk was good for you.

Fifteenth—Don't wear a white waist. The snow is all gone. Now things are green, brown or gray.—Robert J. Sim, in Primary Education.

ODD WAYS AND HABITS OF BIRDS

HUMAN MANNERS THAT NO ONE CAN EXPLAIN—METHODS OF FOOD GETTING

IT IS not without significance that the Sphinx is represented with wings, for the bird, with the marvels and mysteries of his life, is still a wonder to us. Early in any really close study of his life and habits one is struck with this fact. Years of careful observation and study "without a gun" will be necessary before we shall be familiar with his many extraordinary ways, and still more before we shall be able to understand the eccentricities of a life which appears at a casual glance as simple.

The whole subject of migration, for example, is wonderful and full of problems which have furnished material for miles of manuscripts and bushels of books, and is still unsolved. And Herr Gatka has added one more, having discovered that the birds always travel with perfectly empty stomachs.

The remarkable feat of sinking the body in water to any desired depth, and holding it there without motion, and without clinging to anything is another unexplained secret. Geese, ducks, sandpipers and cormorants are all experts in this maneuver.

The air would paturally appear to be the domain of winged creatures, yet many of them are almost equally at home in the water. A fish itself might envy the speed and ease with which the penguin and ouzel dash about in its native element. Hardly more than a fish does that strange creature, the petrel, need to come to land; eating and sleeping on the waves, his only tie to earth is the necessity of a cradle for the helpless young. Whole families of sea birds pass their lives in and on the ocean, and come to the shore only for the nesting season.

We smile at the idea of a sea bird who is as much at home on water as on land, needing or wishing to ride, yet the tropic bird is said occasionally to vary his wing exercises by alighting for a sail on the back of a tortoise which he finds lazily floating on the surface. And Major Bendire tells of a little owl at the West, caught riding on the back of an unwilling gopher, with an air of such composure that the observer was convinced that it was a common exploit of the bird.

If it seems strange to think of birds spending their lives on the water, it is almost as odd to know of whole families who spend theirs in the air and never come to the ground. In some of the tropical forests where trees are between 200 and 300 feet in height, the upper branches and the air above them are the home of countless birds and insects and monkeys. More than 200 feet from the earth below they find not only light and air, but food in plenty, and even water in the various reservoirs of the giant plants and creepers.

Birds have many extraordinary habits with which we are so familiar that we fail to realize their singularity. The strange habits of the European cuckoo, shirking the pains and pleasures of nest-making and rearing a family, and even in the cradle—it is said, evicting the rightful nestlings to secure exclusive care; of the hornbill, walling up his mate, with her assistance, during the process of brooding and feeding the young, and many others.

Some persons will perhaps scoff at the idea of a bird's polite manners, and we shall hear again the old complaint of those who have no real acquaintance with birds in their homes, that we make them too human, but let me present a few trustworthy facts—explain them who can. Many of our winged fellow-creatures welcome the approach of their mates by a sudden opening and closing of the wings. The several kingbirds whom I have studied first flew around in a circle of a few feet, added a note or two of greeting, then lifted the wings with an air that "spoke louder than words." The sea eagle, according to Audubon, answers the note of his mate by opening his broad wings, bending the body in a low bow, and uttering a cry. That we have not seen more of such things in bird life is probably because we have not studied them closely enough. The bows and genuflections of the burrowing owl of the West as one passes his mound, which gives him the name of "How-d'y-do owl," and the well-authenticated and oft-repeated account of the cedar bird's offering a delectable morsel to his neighbor, in some cases passing it back and forth among several—both call for explanation from the skeptical.

It is certainly a most peculiar thing for a creature with wings to go over the ground on "all fours," yet there are at least two well-known birds which progress in that way "on occasion." One is the common grebe, so ill-fitted for land travel that when there is occasion for haste he simply drops to the ground and uses the wings as a second pair of legs, quadruped fashion.

In association with one another, birds show as much individuality as men. There are birds of solitary tastes who are never found with their kind, excepting with a mate in nesting time, and others who mate for life and are always found in pairs. Again there are species who separate by sexes, each sex forming a flock of its own and remaining thus except during the period of nesting. Our red-winged blackbird is an example. Still others of the tribe live always in a crowd, not even in nesting time separating from their fellows. This is the habit of grackles, martins, swallows and others. They are not associated for mutual protection, for most of them are abundantly able to take care of themselves, but evidently for pure love of society. One of these communities is as sociable and talkative as a sewing society or an afternoon tea.

It would be most interesting if we had space to note the various ways of food-getting in the bird world. Some of the large sea birds get it by robbing other birds, and the English sparrow is rapidly becoming expert in the same business. He began, where I saw him, by taking food from young birds who were being fed by their parents, and now it is not uncommon to see him snatching from the robin the worm he has just drawn out of the ground. He is not so big as the native bird, but he is a good deal quicker.

There are birds on the other hand who confer benefits by their way of feeding, relieving animals of their parasites. One in Africa attends to the camels, elephants and cattle, and it is very droll to see the business-like way in which he goes over the big creatures as a woodpecker goes over a tree, examining every part, hanging head down from ears or legs, while the knowing beasts stand perfectly still. Our own cowbirds are indefatigable in their attentions to cattle. Perhaps that is the reason they haven't time to make a nest and rear their own young.

Many birds feed their mates while sitting, but that bird of odd ways, the hornbill, has a unique way of presenting his offering done up in a neat package. He swallows the fruit as he finds it, but not for his own benefit, for when he comes to the nest he recovers it snugly wrapped up in the lining of his gizzard. This is so extraordinary that we might be excused for doubting it, if it were not abundantly confirmed by authentic witnesses.

Another African bird has what might be called dinner parties, where a number assemble, and by dancing about in a shallow lake stir up the inhabitants, fish, frogs, etc., and then dine upon them. We have often heard of the trick of carrying a hard shell to a height, and dropping it to break it and feast on the dweller therein, but one of the clever crow family has a gentler and quite as successful a way. He simply taps on the door of the recluse—often a hermit crab. Of course that brings him out to see what it means, with the usual result.

The shrike is the recipient of much abuse and undeserved persecution because he has the curious habit of hanging up his cold meat on thorns for future use. Thus in fact emulating our butchers whom we do not think of despising for the same offense.

There are many strange ways of administering food to the young, from the robin who drops it into the mouth to the flicker who rams and hammers it down till one is horrified at the sight, but the most curious is the way of the penguin. She comes in from the sea with a supply, then sticks her bill up into the air and delivers a long, noisy harangue as if calling the world to witness. Meanwhile the youngster creeps up to her, and waits till the speech is finished, and the mother bends her head down with mouth open. Then the infant thrusts his head into her mouth and appears to suck something from the throat.

It has long been known that Nature performs wonderful cures in the animal world; broken bones are joined, bullets encysted, the severest wounds healed and the patient able to live sometimes for years afterwards. But it remained for a modern naturalist to assert that the bird himself assumes the office of surgeon. Professor Fatio, who is indorsed by W. Warde Fowler as "one of the most distinguished of European naturalists," asserted before a scientific society of Geneva, Switzerland, that he had seen many cases of snipe dressing their wounds, even in one case applying splints to a broken leg. It would not surprise us that a species which has been food for powder for ages should have developed some surgical skill.

OLIVE THORNE MILLER.

The Family Meeting.

We are all here,
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
All who hold each other dear.
Each chair is fill'd; we're all at home!
Tonight let no cold stranger come.
It is not often thus around
Our old familiar hearth we're found.
Bless, then, the meeting and the spot;
For once be every care forgot;
Let gentle Peace assert her power,
And kind Affection rule the hour.
We're all—all here.

We're not all here!
Some are away—the dead ones dear,
Who thronged with us this ancient hearth
And gave the hour to guileless mirth.
Fate, with a stern, relentless hand,
Look'd in and thinn'd our little band;
Some like a night-flash passed away,
And some sank lingering day by day;
The quiet graveyard—some lie there—
And cruel Ocean has his share.
We're not all here.

We are all here!
Even they—the dead—though dead, so dear—
From Memory, to her duty true,
Brings back their faded forms to view.
How life-like, through the mist of years,
Each well-remembered face appears!
We see them, as in times long past;
From each to each kind looks are cast;
We hear their words, their smiles behold;
They're round us, as they were of old.
We are all here.

We are all here,
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
You that I love with love so dear.
This may not long of us be said;
Soon must we join the gather'd dead,
And by the hearth we now sit round
Some other circle will be found.
Oh, then, that wisdom may we know,
Which yields a life of peace below!
So, in the world to follow this,
May each repeat in words of bliss,
We're all—all here!

—Charles Sprague.