

Deficiencies That Assume the Color and Shape of Trees.

A phase of animal life which attracts our attention and calls forth unending wonderment is that of protective resemblance. Nature has wisely endowed certain defenseless animals with their peculiar faculty, which makes them mimic their surroundings so that they may avoid their enemies. This is especially true of some insects. The katydid, with its gauzy green wings, will fall zigzagging from a tree to the ground in such a way that any feathered enemy seeing it would think it a leaf. The same method of protection is seen in our common butterflies and moths that mimic flowers and leaves. The moths mimic bits of wood and stone, so that when they alight on the ground they are at once invisible to their pursuers.

Traveling fakirs in India have a way of making use of their knowledge of this faculty in insects and by means of it perform what they call a miracle. The fakir thrusts into the ground a small tree with leaves about three inches long. He then takes from a box a dozen or more butterflies of rare beauty. When the onlookers have examined these to make sure that they are real he throws them one by one into the air, and they alight on the tree and immediately become invisible. The first supposition is that the onlookers have been hypnotized; but, the fakir catching the little tree and giving it a shake, the butterflies float into the air and again settle about the tree and disappear.

The fakir then points out the illusion. The butterflies were not three feet from the eyes and had so mimicked the leaves when their wings were folded that the deception was perfect, both in color and shape. There were even the delicate mold spots, the central or midrib of the leaf and the delicate lateral branches of it, while the stem of the leaf was closely imitated by the lower portion of the wings, which were pressed against the stem. This mimicry, known to science as "kallina," if followed by a bird simply alights on a bush or tree and becomes invisible.

Other interesting instances of mimicry are found among the butterflies in India. A naturalist noted a butterfly that was not only a remarkable mimic, but when followed it imitated the peculiar flight of a butterfly that was obnoxious to birds. In almost every group of insects we find this protective resemblance, but those among the walking sticks and walking leaves are most remarkable. In the latter we have an example of an insect so closely resembling a leaf that it bears close examination without discovery. The insect looks as if it were made up of several pieces of leaf. Still another cannot be taken for anything other than a dry brown twig or branch, so closely has it imitated the color and the sharp angles.

In all forms of life there is a tendency to adaptability to the similarity of its surroundings. Gayly tinted birds are not, as a rule, found on white, sandy wastes, but in forests where there is deep coloring and the contrast is not great. The lion, the giraffe, the ostrich, are forms which assimilate their surroundings. In California the horned toad is almost as invisible as the sand on which it lives. The little canyon toad mimics the rocks on which it rests, while the frog of the east is scarcely to be distinguished from the weeds among which it lives.—New York Herald.

A Sarcasm Inscription. "In New York," said an author, "there is a rich man whose hobby is autograph editions of books. His library is really remarkable. Take up in it a volume of Swinburne, of Rossetti, of Guy de Maupassant, of Kipling, of George Gissing, of Tolstoy, of Daudet, of any modern writer almost, and you find on the fly leaf an interesting and affectionate letter from the author to this man.

"Very valuable these autographs must be, and very extensive must be the New Yorker's acquaintance with the best writers of the age. Yet there are some who sneer at his autograph editions, claiming to detect an amazing similarity in the handwriting of the dedicatory notes.

"One night there was a party in the New York man's house. Among the guests was an actor who is very skeptical about the authenticity of the wonderful autographs. To him the book showed a new copy of Chaucer that he had recently bought, and the actor, when no one was looking, wrote on the book's fly leaf:

"To Jack, from his dear friend and schoolmaster, Geoff Chaucer."—Kansas City Independent.

Hired Relatives. One of the curious national branches of industry which have grown to enormous proportions in Bucharest, the capital of Roumania, is the noble profession of "hired relatives," which undertakes to furnish to everybody who wants of parents, brothers, sisters, aunts, etc., the necessary persons to represent them.

Persons who desire to get married, for instance, and have no parents to figure at their respective weddings or who are in possession of such who decline to give their consent to the marriage of their sons and daughters need do nothing more than station themselves near the entrance to the marriage license bureau. There they will soon find themselves accosted by some "gentleman" or "lady" who for a moderate sum of money is willing to take the place of the absent parent.

For 20 lei (\$4) quite a respectable looking father can be hired. Fifteen lei is paid for a brother, and a fashionably dressed mother costs the same amount. Investigation has disclosed the fact that some of these professional mothers have figured at weddings fifty times a year.

Indirect Action. Hix—Did that trip to Europe relieve four kind of your family troubles? Dix—Indirectly, yes; it emptied my pocketbook so successfully that I was obliged to take my mind off my family for a while to replenish it.—Detroit Free Press.

POLLY LARKIN

What is the matter with old Mother Earth that she should treat the infant year 1905, yet in its swaddling clothes, so unmercifully? Such vicious shakes it has received, one after the other, sometimes six chastisements in one night. The residents of this vicinity are all in sympathy with 1905. I have yet to find a single person who confesses to being fond of earthquakes. The old year tried to die hard, and for a few hours wailed, shrieked and moaned round the houses, turned umbrellas wrong side out, and shed tears enough to almost flood the city, then its better nature got the best of its tempest tossed soul, and it went sunnily on to radiant in sunshine for its last day. Possibly it was taking a savage delight at the idea of how old Mother Earth was going to show her partiality for 1904 by giving 1905 such a disagreeable reception, that San Francisco and the coast towns would not soon forget. The streets were crowded, packed and jammed by a rollicking, happy, good-natured people who buried strangers and friends alike in confetti; and rung cow bells, blew horns and made a noise and racket with every blood curdling instrument they could get hold of, as they waited to bid adieu to the old year, and then with deafening cries of "Happy New Year," and a conglomeration of noises heralded the new year—1905. Steam whistles and bells from different buildings joined in the jubilee of proclaiming the advent of the year which contains promises of better things, success achieved where failures were met with last year, the turning over of new leaves, to be blackened by back-sliding within the next twenty-four hours. Even though the better thoughts for a pure and more blameless life only lasted a few minutes, who will say they were not better for having them take possession of their hearts for the moment. The incense arising from purer and better thoughts left a memory of something sweet in their lives.

I heard one young boy say, "My, but I won't do anything to the old year, but help ring it out of existence, and I will pound tin cans and blow whistles for two hours before it goes out, to try and hurry it up. I have a grudge against 1904, for it has been a hard year on me. It robbed me of my mother, the only living relative I had on earth. Took her just when I was able to make it easier for her, and she would not have to work so hard. I had studied and kept up with my school work while I tried to do some little outside work, but that was very little help to her. She insisted on my attending school until I graduated from the Grammar school. I did that and was not ashamed of my record when I handed it to my mother. Then I got a position at a good salary for a beginner, and before I had an opportunity of handing her my first wages, which I had been counting on with so much pleasure for years, mother took pneumonia and died in less than a week. I tell you there is not much to live and work for when a fellow loses his mother and she is all he's got. It makes you bitter and cross with the whole world. It would not have been so bad even if I could have seen her enjoying a little rest and taking it easy while I took care of her. Yes, I'm glad the old year is gone, never to return."

The death angel has knocked at the door of many, and there are vacant chairs, and something gone out of our lives never to return. Yet, would we call them back if we could? They have passed out of the shadows and disappointments of life into the world beautiful. They have laid down many crosses to receive a crown and eternal life. It is just over there and it brings us nearer to the bright beyond, and when the angel of death summons us, they will stand waiting at the gates ajar to receive their own. It is a beautiful thought and one we like to dream of and will cherish it as a balm to soothe our aching hearts. It is a belief that the cynic cannot shake our confidence in, and if our friends have passed out with the old year, there will come a day when we shall meet and there shall be no more partings, no more tears.

The members of the Oakland High School have just paid a lovely tribute to the memory of a former teacher in the Oakland High School, Edward Rowland Sill. It is a monument located in Lafayette Square immediately south of the High School building. The memorial is in the shape of a bronze sun dial mounted on a base of Raymond granite standing three and a half feet high and being three feet square at the base, tapering toward the top in irregular lines reaching a minimum diameter of two feet, a large portion of the stone being left in the rough. On the side facing Eleventh street is a bronze plate bearing the following inscription: "Erected to the memory of Edward Rowland Sill by the Oakland High Classes of June '08, December '09, and December 1901." Another bronze plate on the side of the base and further removed from the street bears the following poem written by Mr. Sill on "Life":

"Forenoon and afternoon and night—Forenoon and afternoon and night—Forenoon and night—Forenoon and night—The empty song repeats itself. No more? Yes, that is life: Make this forenoon sublime, This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer. And time is conquered and thy crown is won."

Miss Sadie Drinkwater, Miss Fannie French and Edgar M. Sanborn had

WASHINGTON LETTER

(Special Correspondence.) Serious thought is being given by prominent members of congress who are interested in the Panama canal to the introduction of a bill reducing the number of members of the isthmian canal commission, and no surprise would be occasioned among them, it is said, if the president should agree that such a bill would be wise.

There has been talk for many months that the large membership of the commission was resulting in lack of harmony in the management of affairs. Representative Hepburn, chairman of the house committee on interstate and foreign commerce, and others seem to think that the chief engineer of the commission ought to be given wider authority and held to greater accountability, without too much interference and suggestion from the commission. The charge is made that the chief engineer has little opportunity to carry out his own views as matters now stand and that there are too many bosses over him.

Gold Plated Medals. The sentimental announcement that the protest of the army officers against exchanging their old medals of honor for the gold plated medals recently ordered for them came too late has not stopped the flood of criticism from military circles. The army officers did not fault with the mere fact that a change was made because many private organizations were imitating the government's insignia of military honor. What they contend is that the government should be ashamed to ask them to wear a cheap gold plated medal. They would be satisfied with a substitute of iron or copper even, just so the medals were "solid."

Searched the Clerk. The government clerks of Washington have been suffering from a frightful scourge which, it now appears, was without cause. The story was circulated that Representative Gillett of Massachusetts was going to introduce a bill fixing their hours from 8 to 3. The story was believed by the clerks, because it was Mr. Gillett who engineered the fixing of the closing hour at 4:30. It had always been 4 o'clock until he took a hand. Gillett was feared by the clerks ever since that time.

Chief Red Cloud. Officers of the Indian bureau have been gratified by the report from Altoning Agent Bates that Chief Red Cloud, the noted Ogallala Sioux, had decided to take an allotment on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. This is regarded as a move in the direction of breaking up the tribal relations of that band, since many of Red Cloud's followers have doubtless been prevented from taking allotments by his failure to avail himself heretofore of the privilege accorded him by the treaty of 1880.

Public Land Matters. No general legislation amendatory of the land laws will be enacted at this session of congress, according to persons who have followed the subject for the last two winters. This will mean that efforts looking to the repeal of the timber and stone act and of other acts under which gross frauds have been perpetrated in taking up public lands will have to be renewed next year, when the Fifty-ninth congress assembles for its long session.

Spooner Well Placed. The senator who always considered that four committees are of the first rank in that body—finance, appropriations, foreign relations and judiciary. Usually when a senator secures a place on any two of these four committees he is considered well placed, and consequently it is interesting to note that Senator Spooner of Wisconsin, by reason of a late assignment, has a place on finance, foreign relations and judiciary.

A Wonderful Lake. Senator Fulton of Oregon recently gave the president a photograph and history of Crater lake, which is described as one of the great wonders of the world. The lake occupies the crater of an extinct volcano. It is 1 1/2 miles and a half miles wide by six miles long. It is 2,000 feet deep in the center, and the water is 2,000 feet below the top of the crater. The banks of the lake are reached by a dangerous climb down a small path. The water is so cold that so far fish have not been able to exist there, but the fish commission is now making experiments with various varieties of the flannel tribe and believes it will succeed in installing several as permanent residents of the lake.

Senator Cockrell's Boots. With the coming retirement of Senator Cockrell of Missouri will go the last pair of white boots from the senate. When he first took his seat twenty-nine years ago he wore still a bellum footgear, and he still clings to it.

The National Zoo. The national zoo has just received the fourth consignment of animals and birds sent to that institution within the past thirty days, consisting, all told, of twenty-one specimens, the joint gift of United States Consul John N. Ruffin of Asuncion, Paraguay; the zoological gardens of Buenos Ayres, Argentine Republic; the national zoo of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Hon. H. N. Squires, the United States minister to Cuba, and parties living on the Rio Grande river, in Texas. This collection is quite as important as the one sent to this country by Emperor Menelik, for the reason that it contains at least six specimens that are in all probability the first of their kind to reach this country.

Clerks Will Combine. The bank clerks of England are planning the formation of a union in order to secure an increase of wages, which virtually condemn the clerks to "celibacy, lodgings and sixpenny lunches" for life.

Making Glass Bricks. Glass houses of a very substantial kind can be built now. Silesian glass-makers are turning out glass bricks for all sorts of building purposes.

Andrew Carnegie's gifts are said to aggregate \$40,000,000 to 1290 libraries. Of this number 779 are in the United States and they absorbed almost \$30,000,000.

NEW SHORT STORIES

Realism in the Theater. The Duchess of St. Albans used to relate an anecdote of herself when she was the unknown Miss Mellon. "When I was a poor girl," she wrote "working very hard for my 20 shilling a week, I went down to Liverpool during my holidays, where I was always well received. I was to perform in a new piece, one of those affecting little dramas, and in my character I represented a poor, friendless orphan girl reduced to the utmost poverty. A heartless tradesman prosecutes the sad heroine for a heavy debt and insists upon putting her in prison unless some one will be bail for her. The girl replies: "Then I have no hope, for I haven't a friend in the world."

"What! Will no one be bail for you to save you from going to prison?" asked the stern creditor. "I have told you I have not a friend on earth," was the reply, but just as I

"I saw a sailor in the upper gallery," was uttering the words I saw a sailor in the upper gallery springing over the railings, let himself down from tier to tier until he bounded clear over the orchestra and the footlights and placed himself beside me in a moment.

"Yes, you shall have at least one friend, my poor young woman," said he, with great earnestness. "I'll go bail for you to any amount. And as for you," turning to the frightened actor, "if you don't shift your moorings, you lubber, it will be the worse for you."

"The scene in the theater was indescribable, and the sailor refused to budge or to understand anything until the manager persuaded him to relinquish his care of me by pretending to arrive and rescue me with a profusion of theatrical bank notes."

Proof Wanted. The late Senator Hoar, being learned himself, had a great respect for learned men. Mark Pattison in particular was to him an object of revered study, and in speechmaking Senator Hoar would often illustrate some point with an appropriate incident from Pattison's life.

Thus in condemnation of youthful perversity and forwardness he said one day in Concord: "Mark Pattison, with all his knowledge, was perhaps a difficult man to get along with. If you talked small talk to him, he snubbed you. If you flung into deep and weighty matters, he exposed your ignorance."

A youth once took an afternoon's walk with Pattison. The latter was silent. The youth talked of the birds, the trees and the flowers, but he got no reply. Then quite irrelevantly he said, with a pompous air, that Euripides was richer in human interest than Aeschylus.

"Pattison glanced at him impatiently. "Quote, sir, quote," he said.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Groom's Argument. The late ex-Senator Ransom of North Carolina was in early life a famous plucker. His plucking was a model one, and from all over the state visitors came to inspect it.

After the war he reduced his plucking operations considerably, but he still kept up a handsome estate. He would often talk of the dissatisfaction of the reconstruction period and of the naive views about salary that the freedmen of the time held.

"In my stable, for instance," he once said, "I employed a skilled coachman and an unskilled groom. To the coachman, of course, I paid the largest wages. The groom as soon as he found this out complained to me about it.

"What for," he said, "do you pay Henry more than me, sir?" "Because," I answered, "Henry is a skilled, experienced hand."

"But then the work," said the groom, "should come to him a good deal easier than it does to me."—Kansas City Journal.

A Pertinent Query. Henry White of the United States embassy at London is said to have become very much an Englishman. One day he was correcting some lately arrived fellow countrymen over some trivial breach of etiquette. "Say, White," said one, "what a wonderful knowledge of English manners you have!" "Well, I flatter myself I have," said White, much pleased. "Why in thunder don't you get naturalized?" asked the other.—Chicago News.

Anecdote of Lewis Carroll. Canon Liddon wrote this in his diary concerning an incident of a holiday tour he took with his friend, Charles L. Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll: "Dodgson was overcome by the beauty of Cologne cathedral. I found him leaning against the rails of the choir and sobbing like a child. When the verger came to show us over the chapels he got out of the way. He said that he could not bear the harsh beauty of the man in the presence of so much beauty."

Cholly.—It was the first time I'd met Crabbe, mind you, and I actually called me a fool. Hadn't been talking to him ten minutes, don't you know. What sort of fellow is he, anyway? Miss Pepprey—Well, he's awfully slow, for one thing.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Profit on a Tun. A man who bought an old metal tub for 12 shillings at Winchester found it to be the borough bushel measure of the reign of George III, and sold it to an American for £60.—London Mail.

FACTS IN FEW LINES

It takes mail at least seven days to go from Chicago to London.

San Francisco is thinking of having a world's fair on the completion of the Panama canal.

The production of samovars (teakettles) in Russia amounts to over 4,000,000 rubles every year.

New blast furnaces are being erected on the island of Elba, in the Mediterranean. The Isle is famous for its wonderful iron ore.

A sarcophagus dating from the year 1000 and containing human remains has been discovered by some workmen while digging a well in the Rue des Gobelins, Paris.

Dowie refused to have pictures of himself made by a moving picture company. It was intended to use the pictures as an attraction for one of the side shows at the St. Louis fair.

The St. Louis fair has shown that the inventions and discoveries which are now doing the most to change things are radium, the submarine boat, wireless telegraphy, the aeroplane and automobile.

The public health committee of Cambridge, London, proposes to fit up the public baths in the borough for cricket practice during the winter months. Apparently the Cambridgeians do not bathe in winter.

Ten years ago in England and Wales there was one insane person to each 324 of the population. Now the ratio is one to each 288. The increase in lunacy is attributed to a considerable degree to the intense strain of modern life.

The Northeastern Railway company of England is experimenting with small motor freight cars in the agricultural districts. They distribute fertilizing materials and cattle feed to the farmers and return with farm produce to be shipped by rail.

It is benevolently suggested by the Car that the trouble caused by boys who climb upon the seats and accommodation of slow going motor cars in crowded thoroughfares might be effectively removed by a high tension wire controlled by the driver.

The navy department is after good watches for the men and officers who man our torpedo boats. It is said that from \$75 to \$150 is offered for an American watch which can stand the constant shaking which it must receive on these unstable little craft.

Robert Moffatt is about to give up Midneck farm, West Kirk, Dumfries, Scotland. The farm was originally granted to Thomas Moffatt by Robert Bruce in 1302. In 1670 the Moffatts sold it to the Duke of Buccleuch, but continued as tenants to this day.

The British Society for the Promotion of Kindness to Animals is going to make an effort to "secure for those who after a battle tended wounded animals the same protection as is now accorded under the Geneva convention to those who succor wounded men."

In Birmingham, England, resides one Tommy Tank, who has spent his life in alternate attempts to live up to and to escape the hoodlum of his name. He has signed the pledge forty times. Last week he made his one hundred and seventeenth appearance in the police court.

The Electrician announces that a congress for the purpose of discussing the production and application of Roentgen rays will be held in Berlin on April 30. The occasion is the tenth anniversary of the discovery, and Professor Roentgen will be present as the guest of honor.

The Indian bureau at Washington has decided that the Indian appropriations are made for the sole benefit of the Indians "of the United States proper," and therefore no more Alaskan Indians are to be accepted at any of its schools, and those already enrolled are to be gradually eliminated.

Though butterflies and moths are found widely distributed all over the globe, they are by far the most abundant in the tropics. For instance, Brazil can show to the collector not less than 700 different species within an hour's walk of Para. There are not half as many in all Europe.

OPERA GLASSES.

Poor Ones Are the Cause of a Host of Other Inconveniences.

The woman was not old, but she complained that her eyesight was falling fast. The oculist was a fatherly looking old gentleman; consequently he felt privileged to put a few questions decidedly personal and apparently non-professional.

"Do you go to the theater often?" he asked. "Once or twice a week." "In what part of the house do you sit?" "Usually in the top gallery," came the hesitating reply.

"And now what grade of opera glasses do you use?" "I'm afraid," said the woman, "that they are not good." "I thought so," said the doctor. "That's what's the matter with your eyes. Poor opera glasses are ruining them. If I had my way there wouldn't be a cheap pair of opera glasses on the market. They are death to the eyes. A couple of seasons of theater going in the top gallery with poor glasses for a steady companion are sure to damage the best pair of eyes in town. Better a hundred times let the glasses alone. If you have a good, strong pair, all right—go ahead and use them. If not, trust to the naked eye for making out the mysteries of the play. The sight will not suffer half so much.

"Poor glasses will not focus properly, and any one who uses them frequently, especially at that distance from the stage, is sowing the seed of headaches, dancing lights and stars, wrinkles and a host of other ocular infirmities."—Chicago Tribune.

HISTORY OF SHEEP.

Associated With Mankind From the Earliest Known Days.

Of all domesticated animals the sheep has from time immemorial been most closely associated with mankind. writes R. Henry Rew in Outing. An erudite author sixty years ago, having laboriously collated an assortment of allusions to sheep made by sacred and profane writers, concluded that "the history of these animals is so interwoven with the history of man that they never existed in a wild state at all. Biblical history from the time of Abel is full of allusions to the flocks which formed the chief possessions of the Jewish people and their neighbors. The spoils of war and the tribute of vassal kings largely consisted of sheep. Thus we read that Meshah, king of Moab, was a sheep master and rendered unto the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs and a hundred thousand rams with the wool. Moses after his victory over the Midianites obtained as loot no less than 175,000 sheep, and long before the Christian era sheep were cultivated in western Europe.

Spain and Italy possessed them from an unknown period, although long after Rome was founded the inhabitants had not learned to shear the fleece, and until the time of Pliny the practice of plucking it from the skin was not wholly abandoned, so long that the humble shepherds of Syria preceded in their knowledge of necessary arts the future conquerors of their country.

SNOWSLIDES. They Are Fearful of Speed and a Magnificent Spectacle. Snowslides are most frequent on steep mountains that have a heavy snowfall. With a billowy train of snow dust boiling out behind and overturning or crushing almost everything before they make an awful and magnificent spectacle. Their speed is sometimes so great that trees alongside are overturned by the swamping force of the air which the slide has violently disturbed.

There are many well authenticated instances where miners have been caught on the surface of a slide and by dexterous use of their skis have kept on top of the engulfing surface of the slide and come out unharmed. John Muir once rode down from the high Sierra on a snowslide. He was swished back down in a minute over a distance that had taken all day to climb.

One day while climbing up a steep snowy slope a slide started beneath me, and for a time I was on the surface of its upper edge, where the snow was about two feet deep. Wading a torrent will give some idea of the sweep of the coasting snow. The snow dust steamed and boiled up around me, and each time I struggled to my feet the rushing snow simply jerked my feet from beneath me. At last, almost smothered, I was dropped off the back and upon bare ground.—Enos A. Mills in Harper's Weekly.

American Assurance. Americans are not the most impudent persons on the face of the earth. Nevertheless on occasion they can give points to those of some other nations. A traveler in Korea was discovered taking snapshots of Russian soldiers and promptly arrested. "Have you been photographing my soldiers?" inquired the officer. "Yes, and I should like to take yours. Permit me?"

Snap, and the thing was done. The Russian laughed, and the two men fell into conversation, whereupon the American said that he had recently been in Port Arthur. "Port Arthur?" exclaimed the Russian. "Impossible!"

"Oh, no; not impossible. Your compatriots escorted me in." And, pulling some photographs from his pocket, he added, "I took these snapshots of your torpedo destroyers as they scooped down upon the little boat I was in." The Russian looked from the man to the pictures with undisguised amazement. "Those are certainly our boats," he admitted.

"Perhaps you know their names and will oblige me by writing them on the backs of the pictures?"

Like the queen of Sheba before Solomon, there was no longer any spirit in the Russian. Meekly he took the proffered American pencil and upon the American's prints wrote the names of the Russian torpedo destroyers.

Not in the Pugilistic Line.

Bull—Yes, Miss Lang mentioned to me last night that she knew you. By the way, I never knew before that you were a pugilist. Cadley—I a pugilist? Bull—Yes; she told me you were a "lightweight."—Philadelphia Press.

Do I believe in putting a stop to swearing? No, I don't. If you prevent the workman from swearing, and thus relieving his feelings, what will happen? Why, he will go home and murder his family.—G. Bernard Shaw.

The Interest in It.

Pipson—I wonder what there was in the paper today about Masters? Grimes—Didn't know there was anything. Pipson—Oh, there must have been. Was saying to me that today's issue was usually interesting.