

YOUNG FOLKS.

Some Remarkable Parrots.

History and tradition tell us of some most remarkable parrots. In the seventeenth century, during the government of Prince Maurice in Brazil, he had heard of an old parrot that was much celebrated for answering like a rational creature many common questions. The parrot was at a great distance from his residence, but so much had been said about it that the prince's curiosity was aroused, and he directed the bird to be sent for. When pretty Polly was introduced into the room where the prince was sitting in company with several Dutchmen, the bird immediately exclaimed in the Brazilian language, "What a company of white men are here!"

They asked, "Who is that man?" pointing to the prince.

The parrot answered, "Some general or other."

The prince was ignorant of the language, and when the attendants carried the bird to him, he asked it through the medium of an interpreter,

"To whom do you belong?"

The parrot answered, "To a Portuguese."

He asked again, "What do you there?"

The bird answered, "I look after chickens."

The prince laughed, and exclaimed, "You look after chickens?"

The parrot in answer said, "Yes, I, and I know well enough how to do it!" clucking at the same time in imitation of the hen to call together her young.

Early in the present century, there died the celebrated parrot of Colonel O'Kelly, who lived in Half Moon Street, Ploosdilly, London. This wonderful parrot sang a number of songs in perfect time and tune. She could express her wants and give her orders very much like a human being. She could repeat a number of sentences and answer many questions put to her. When singing she beat time with all the appearance of science, and she would often correct her mistakes in singing. This parrot died at the age of thirty years. Parrots frequently live to the age of one hundred.

In a bird-store once upon a time, the keeper of the shop taught his birds to say out things, and when a young lady called to buy a parrot he brought out a green parrot that was small and meek-looking. The dealer asked the bird to "Say something sweet to the pretty lady." The bird, to the surprise of all, rolled one eye knowingly and croaked out, "I ain't as green as I look."

A common gray parrot having been brought from Guinea by a sailor with a coarse, rough voice, and afflicted with a cough, the parrot learned to imitate the exact tones of his master, even to the cough, so closely that the sound of his voice was often mistaken for that of the sailor. The bird was afterward taken in hand by another instructor and taught a softer tone, but it never forgot the harsh voice of its former master, and often amused by-standers by relapsing into sea-slang, interspersed with the cough of the sailor.

While Dean Stanley was a canon at Canterbury, a gentleman who had been invited to breakfast with him found all the servants assembled in the garden, where the master's parrot was at large in a tree. The master came out at that moment. The parrot looked down at him, and said, in a low but distinct voice—exactly like the dean's—"Let us not pray." The bird was eventually captured by the aid of a fishing-rod.

A gray parrot was stationed in a nursery, where his greatest delight was to see the baby bathed. The child becoming ill, the parrot was removed to the kitchen. There after a time he set up a terrible cry: "The baby! the dear baby!" All the family rushed down to find the parrot in a state of the wildest excitement watching the rearing of a sucking pig.

A gentleman in Yorkshire was attacked with a fever about Christmas time, and his parrot was removed from the dining-room to the kitchen, where its voice was less likely to disturb its master. It remained there for several weeks, during which time it stole the raisins intended for a plum pudding. The cook in anger threw some hot grease at it, and scalded its head. When the gentleman got better the parrot was removed to the dining-room. The master came in with his head newly shaved, whereupon the parrot turned one eye upon him, and slowly said, "You bald-headed ruffian! So you stole the cook's plums, did you?"

A parrot belonging to a hotel in Philadelphia walked about on the window ledge one night. The window was open and the bird lost her balance and fell on the pavement below. A policeman picked up the bird, and as he carried Polly into the hotel, she said,

"Polly's sick."

Blood trickled from its green feathered head, and as the officer handed it to the clerk the bird said again, as it closed its eyes,

"Polly's sick."

While its wounded head was being washed and bathed, the parrot repeated several times,

"Polly's sick."

For an hour it lay perfectly quiet with its eyes closed, and then suddenly repeated again,

"Polly's sick."

A moment later the parrot fell over dead.

For stuffing purposes pine shavings are now largely used, there being at Pesth, in Hungary, an extensive factory devoted exclusively to the production of such shavings, and these, by the aid of machinery, are reduced to such a degree of fineness that the product closely resembles wool. Shavings of this kind are superior, it is asserted, to every other substitute for horse hair in connection with upholstering purposes, alike as regards elasticity, softness, and durability; for bedding they are recommended on account of the resin contained in the wood being an effectual preventive of vermin, the utility of the material in this line, especially for hospital and barracks purposes, having been satisfactorily tested by the German Government. After having been used as stuffing for some five or six years, the shavings can be renovated by being exposed to the sun or a heightened temperature.

Don't use any more noxious purgatives such as Pills, Salts, &c., when you can get in Dr. Carson's Stomach Bitters, a medicine that moves the bowels gently, cleansing all impurities from the system and rendering the blood pure and cool. Great Spring Medicine Bottles.

The Dread of Man by Animals.

Anthropophobia, the dread of man, has reached such a degree in some fellow-creatures of "God's Vice-regent on Earth" that they seem to fear the risks of captivity more than the certainty of annihilation. The stories about the mountain sheep breaking the force of a fall by dropping on their horns are totally fabulous; the shock would react on their necks and break their vertebrae at any distance exceeding forty feet of perpendicular fall. But it is true that their cloven hoofs and stout feet break the speed of a descent from anything but an overhanging cliff; a troop of big-horns will scramble down the steepest slopes as a bear slides down a tree, and reach the bottom amidst a cloud of dust and tumbling stones, but with unbroken limbs. The Otago Indians have a curious tradition about the dimmaron; at the time of the great flood (which, after all, must have been something more than a freshet of the Indus), when the pouring rains drove all other animals to the shelter of the caves, the big-horn sheep took refuge among the clouds and guided the Indian Adam to a place of safety. The mountain sheep has certainly a marvelous faculty for roughing out bad weather. Even in midwinter they stick to their highest haunts. In 1849 a caravan of Mormon refugees attempted to cross the Wahsatch range in a snow-storm, and were on the point of perishing with cold, when they were saved by the discovery of a "dimmaron camp," a snug cove in the pine woods, where a herd of wild sheep had stamped down the snow and browsed off the branches as high as they could reach—"A tabernacle in the wilderness," as Elder Millard described it, and in stress of storms, perhaps, a more desirable shelter than the dreary pens of an Indian wigwam could have offered to the necessitous saints. Now and then, though, the dimmaron may be deemed to share the experience of the Swiss chamois, that occasionally find their graves in such winter-quarters by remaining snow-bound till they succumb to frost and hunger. Ordinary storms the American mountain sheep weather as easily as a frog would survive a flood. No whirlstorm short of a tornado can dislodge them from a vantage-ground in the rocks, and their thick fur-coats ward off blasts that knock the mercury a good way below zero.

Anglicized Ohili.

The Ohilians call their country the "England of South America." If a native makes a promise, and wishes it to appear unusually binding, he says, "On the word of an Englishman." Should he desire an appointment to be kept on the minute, he says, "Be as punctual as an Englishman."

The traveller discovers that wherever he goes in Ohili the highest respect and warmest friendship are entertained towards England. The explanation of these feelings is to be found in the fact that when the young republic was struggling to throw off the Spanish yoke, many Englishmen served her with as much ardor as they would have served their native country.

The upper classes of Ohili imitate the English aristocracy. Like them, they are reserved, fond of a good joke, appreciate wit, cherish family pride, and make "society" strict and exclusive.

The women of this class imitate the better sort of English women, and never dress for church as if they expected to go from it to a "reception." They dress in plain black, with a black mantilla over the head, and their example is followed by the women of all classes.

This custom of wearing a plain dress for church is such an excellent one that it might be adopted in this country with advantage to purse and piety. The following story, which narrates a fact, illustrates that the poorest women among us are not disposed to imitate the richest women of Ohili in respect to dress.

A pastor in a New England town, whose congregation was made up from the "common people," noticed that one woman, a church member, had absented herself from the meeting house for several Sundays.

Calling upon her to learn the cause, he found her at the wash-tub—she supported herself by washing. Her answer to his question was,

"Well, sir, I have not a dress fit to go to church in, and I'm waiting until I lay by money enough to buy a black silk. When I get it, you'll find me at church every Sunday, if I am well, and it don't rain."

On the West Coast of Africa.

My voyage along the coast and visits to all the principal places have astonished me profoundly. I looked forward with pleasure to a study of the influence which a century of contact with civilization has effected in the barbarous tribes of the seaboard. The result has been unexpectably disappointing. Leaving out of consideration the towns of Sierra Leone and Lagos, where the conditions have been abnormal, the tendency has been everywhere in the line of deterioration. There is absolutely not a single place, where the natives are left to their own free will, in which there is the slightest evidence of a desire for better things. The worst vices and diseases of Europe have found a congenial soil, and the taste for spirits has risen out of all proportion to their desire for clothes—the criterion with many of growth in grace. . . . In these villages men, women, and children, with scarcely a rag upon their persons, follow you about beseeching for a little gin or tobacco. Eternally gin, tobacco, or gunpowder! These are the sole wants aroused by a century of trade and of contact with Europeans! And yet how is this region represented in England? Why, as a field "white unto harvest." The African is described as looking to our Government for a mere settled rule; as crying to the Churches, "Come over and help us;" to our merchants, "We have oil, and rubber, and ivory; give us in exchange your cloth and your outery." "Ye see us naked, and ye clothe us not;" to the philanthropist, "We are able and willing to work, only come and show us the way." Pray banish all such rubbish from your minds. It is simply myth.—Joseph Thomson, F. R. G. S.

A Wedding Present

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