

A Melodious Rattler.

A queer story comes from the mountains about Mineral King. If true, and no one perhaps will doubt it, it shows the existence of a remarkable musical instinct in the make up of a reptile which is not generally given credit for possessing a single redeeming quality.

One day a party of three or four persons left the regular camp, and went out for a climb through the canyons. Finally becoming weary they sat down to rest on a little flat, and one of them to while away the time took from his pocket a mouth organ and began playing. He had run through one or two pieces, and started off on some old favorites which had a rather quick movement, when all hands were started by hearing a sound as of some one keeping time on the bones.

It seemed to be very near, and yet it was not loud enough for even a pair of wooden imitation bones, unless they were very small indeed. The music ceased, and almost instantaneously the accompaniment stopped. The boys supposed that some one from the camp had followed them and was having a little fun, and they walked in the direction from which the sound had come. They found no one, and decided to try it again. After the first few notes of a lively air had been played the strange accompaniment began again, keeping most excellent time, and while the musician played one of the party stealthily made his way toward the spot where the toy bones seemed to be clattering together.

Glancing toward a rock just over the edge of the flat he saw something moving very rapidly, which at first he was unable to make out. After a few moments, however, he perceived that it was the tail of an immense rattlesnake. The tail was pointed upward and quivering and curving at a great rate. The animal was rattling off the time with wonderful correctness, making the more emphatic notes by striking his rattle against the rock. The gentlemen were paralyzed with wonder and stood with his eyes riveted on the strange sight until the musician, becoming impatient, stopped and wanted to know what the matter was.

The snake's tail dropped, he coiled himself instantly, and as he was slipping up his head saw the man standing near. In a moment he had uncoiled himself and glided into a hole under the rock. An exclamation from the witness of this marvel called the others up and things were hurriedly explained. Every effort was made to capture the snake. They had no means of digging after him, even by the seductive tones of the mouth organ. It is a great misfortune that the reptile was not secured.—Tulare (Cal.) Register.

Historic Expression.

The mace is an emblem of authority and use in our congress as well as in the English parliament, and though it is merely a symbol it commands respect; but it was never so insulted as when Oliver Cromwell stalked into the English house to disperse the members and dissolve the parliament. The mace lay in its regular place, and when Cromwell saw it he must have sneered at the petty symbol, for he called one of his soldiers and ordered, "Take away that bubble." So, as the mace was carried out, the doors were locked and parliament effectually dissolved.

The message of Commodore Perry is better known. The battle of Lake Erie had taken place, and the British fleet were defeated. Then the commodore sent to General Harrison, grandfather of the present president, his famous dispatch, "We have met the enemy, and they are ours." It was but a little longer than Caesar's, "I came, I saw, I conquered."

An English general, however, made the record for brevity when, after he had conquered the province of Scinde, in India, he sent a punning dispatch in the one word, Peccavi, which, as our young Latin students know, means, "I have sinned."—Harper's Young People.

A Definition of Poetry.

Whether sung, spoken or written, poetry is still the vital form of human expression. One who essays to analyze its constituents is an explorer undertaking a quest in which many have failed. Doubtless he, too, may fall, but he sets forth in the simplicity of a good knight, who does not fear his fate too much, whether his desert be great or small.

In this mood, seeking a definition of that poetic utterance which is or may become a record—a definition both defensible and inclusive, yet compressed into a single phrase—I have put together the following statement:

Poetry is rhythmical imaginative language, expressing the invention, taste, thought, passion and insight of the human soul.—Edmund C. Steadman in Century.

Nearly Killed by a Rooster.

A four-year-old son of William T. Burns, of Lancaster, is lying in a serious condition through an attack made on him by a rooster. While fondling a pet hen the rooster flew upon him inflicting a number of ugly blows on his left temple, which bled profusely. The child became seriously ill, and is now threatened with blood poisoning.—Cor. Philadelphia Ledger.

Romance of the War.

About the middle of the Franco-Prussian war two German soldiers—one named Andrew Ahrens and the other Jacobs—belonging to Company 2, Battalion 4, Regiment 82 of the German army of occupation, were stationed in a village in France along with some others, and instructed to subsist on the enemy. These two were quartered with a Frenchman and his family, whose name J. A. Kinnear, who was made acquainted with the narrative, has forgotten.

It did not take Ahrens and Jacobs long to learn that the family that was to subsist them could scarcely keep itself in food, for it wasn't to be had for either love or money, the contending armies having devoured everything digestible. The subject family was at first very fearful of its guests, but in comparing notes they found they had no necessary animosity toward each other, and would have been friends at sight but for the different color of their uniforms.

When Ahrens and Jacobs found their French host could not feed them they decided to feed him and his family. One day they came home after a busy day laden with provisions, which they threw into the common stock and distrust vanished at once. Their German guests had robbed a Prussian provision train. The act was unauthorized, but as the robbers belonged to the invading army they were not suspected, and they carried to the Frenchman's house bread, hams, bologna sausage, coffee and sugar sufficient to last a month.

Though they could not understand each other's tongue they were all hungry and sign language went a great way. The Frenchman's wife was a good cuisinier and all soon became the best of friends. The two Germans continued their raids until they had laid in a supply of provisions sufficient for all for six months. None had any money, but all had plenty to eat. In less than a month there came an order for a forward movement on the part of the Germans, and hosts and guests parted with fervent protestations of undying friendship. The members of the French family had exerted themselves to the utmost to make the two Germans comfortable, and as the weather was bad Ahrens and Jacobs found their wardrobe in such good condition that they got along with comparative comfort until the end of the war. Before leaving Ahrens made the family a present of a watch.

After the war was over Ahrens, Jacobs and four companions came to this country, and they have been for considerable time and are at present working in a mill at Braddock, Pa. Some days ago Ahrens happened to be at Munkhull station and noticed a man approaching who appeared to be making the most violent demonstrations of a friendly character. Ahrens not knowing exactly how to receive the overtures, the man began asking him if he were not a Prussian, if he had not been in the army, etc., until pretty well satisfied with the result of the catechism he drew a watch out of his pocket and asked Ahrens if he had ever seen it before. Ahrens recognized it at once, and then the two men embraced as ardently as two schoolgirls after forty-eight hours' separation.

The French family came to this country several years ago, and the parties have been living in sight of each other for years without knowing it.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Garfield Killed the Rat.

Rev. Mr. Wakefield, of Warren, O., has secured the house formerly occupied by the Garfields as a residence. Among the numerous things therein is a little hole in the wainscot in the library. The story thereof is that home on a furlough Garfield was writing late at night, when he went to his wife's bedside and asked, "Crete, are you awake?" She said she was a little, and he told her not to be frightened when she heard the report of a pistol, for he was going to fire at a confounded rat that was gnawing at the woodwork at his feet. He got the rat located by the sound, and fired through the board and killed it.—Exchange.

Invalide of All Nations.

According to the clerk of the Good Samaritan dispensary is at Broome and Essex streets, New York, the polyglot character of city life is there well illustrated. His tasks is to assign hundreds of patients to the various departments of the dispensary. Many of the patients having been treated often before, know that it is their first duty to sit on the benches and await their turn. But scores do not know so much, and when the ignorant ones come, crowding to the busy clerk's desk, he simply repeats "sit down" in all the languages at his command. If English has no effect German is pretty sure to thin the tanks of applicants, and after that Polish and Russian usually suffice.

Two Years Between Meals.

Two years ago Mrs. Adam Wucher of Whitehall, ate her last hearty meal. Then she rapidly lost all desire for food and finally she could not eat a morsel. For more than a year she has fasted, not being able to eat at all. Hers is the most wonderful case of the kind physicians have any record of, she is growing weaker.—Cor. Philadelphia Record.

The Advantage of Old Customs.

We should like to call attention not only to the picturesque, but to the convenience of the male costume during the first twenty-five years of the sixteenth century. Many of our doctors are assuring us that an extraordinary amount of pulmonary disease is due to the fact that men are in the habit of going about in an evening much more lightly dressed than during the daytime, wearing waistcoats of a thinner material and open in front upon the chest, precisely the part of the body which should be most protected.

Now the doublet screens the chest from every wind, and can be made of the lightest material in summer and of the heaviest in winter. It is quite true that the legs were not exposed then as they are at present; but at the same time if we study minutely the drawings and engravings of the sixteenth century we observe that in winter men are represented as either wearing worsted stockings, garters, or long boots.—London Saturday Review.

Good Roads Increase Land Values.

In England the highest ambition of majority of well to do men is to have a "place" in the country. They don't hanker after the city living the year around; indeed, they don't hanker after it at all, except as it may be forced upon them in order that they may live near their business. But the minute their business reaches such a point as to afford them some leisure or the minute they acquire sufficient means to retire, they seek a home in the country.

England has good roads, and these country residents are never beyond the reach of good markets and of the supplies which good markets offer. A country house ten miles from a market town, but connected with it by a good road—a road good at all seasons and in all weather—isn't real so difficult of access as some country houses within a mile of New York city limits.—Norwich (Conn.) Bulletin.

Water a Fifty Cents Drink in Maine.

A Lewistown gentleman driving in the country found the watering places by the roadside dry as herring bones. Seeing a farmer in a yard by the roadside he drove up to the door and asked for water for his horse. The man looked at him interrogatively and said, "Water I should say not. I shouldn't agree to give your horse what water he might want under half a dollar. It's worth that."

The Lewistown gentleman paid it and the horse was watered, and the farmer said in explanation that all the water they had was brought a long distance laboriously, by hand, and that it cost nearly that amount in time, hard work to get it. Water at fifty cents a bucket in Maine is a novelty.—Lewistown Journal.

A Queer Silver Wedding Performance.

Thursday was the twenty-fifth anniversary of an Augusta couple's marriage. On that morning the husband, upon awakening, asked his wife how they should celebrate their silver wedding. The wife did not suggest any particular observance of the day. The husband then said: "Shall we remarry or separate?" The wife said it was immaterial to her either way, and what suited him would satisfy her. He then said he would just as leave part as not. The wife acquiesced, and she packed up her trappings and left the house, and they have remained apart ever since, and neither have sought the other or proposed reunion or any other sort of celebration.—A. Gustav News.

Swell Thieves.

The other evening two dapper "dudes" walked into the writing room of a fashionable uptown hotel, which it is just now the fad to review, and looking around to see "who wasn't looking," they deliberately pocketed all the stationery there was in sight. Surreptitiously taking handsome paper embossed with the silver crest of a famous house may not be manly, but it is fine to use to impress friends out of town that their relatives and acquaintances are magnates living in swifdom. There are pennies saved, too by stealing note paper from a swell hotel that might buy an extra package of cigarettos.

A Mirror's Your Gloves.

Without merely desiring to remind herself of her good looks, a woman has often need of as much looking-glass as she can see her face in. In the street, at a ball, at a theater, in the shops, all sorts of little disarrangements may occur, and to set them right with a mirror is an absolute necessity. The very handiest form of portable mirrors is the new "mirror-gloves." A little flap is buttoned into the palm of the glove; when it is let down a small circular mirror is disclosed.

A Wedding on Wheels.

In order to assist George J. Defoy and Miss Mary Ellen Simpson to be married and catch the Victoria boat Justice Sharp this morning made them man and wife in back while the horses were being driven at a rapid pace to the wharf. A minister refused to marry the couple, and only ten minutes remained before the departure of the boat when the justice was found.—Tosoma Cor. Boston Post-Intelligencer

Cutting Glass With Shears.

A sheet of glass—a window pane for example—can be cut as easily as a sheet of card board. The secret consists in keeping the glass, the shears and the hands under water during the operation. The glass can be cut in straight or curved lines without a break or crack. This is because the water deadens the vibrations of the shears and the glass. If the least part of the shears comes out of the water the vibrations will be sufficient to mar the success.

Wedding Rings.

The wedding ring in olden times was blessed and sprinkled with holy water before it was used, and a special service was prepared for this purpose. The appearance of the ring varied according to the fancy of the maker. Thus some rings were adorned with gems, some were plain, and others were engraved. The serpent with its tail in its mouth as indicating endless affection was a frequent symbol used in early Christian times, and the clasped hands or fides was another.

The wedding ring under the lower empire usually contained a stone on which was engraved the heads of the bride and bridegroom, but among the Christians the head of some favorite saint was a most favorite ornament. The likeness of St. Margaret, the protectress of woman through the perils of childbirth, was frequently used and the motto, attached to this representation was usually "Be of good cheer." The name of the wedding pair were as a rule engraved in the ring.

The practice of placing mottoes upon rings was nearly universal less than two centuries ago says the Jeweller's Review, and it is strange to say that so pretty a custom should have been allowed to fall completely out of use. The Greeks and Romans engraved mottoes on their rings such as "May you live long," "Live happy," "I bring good fortune to the wearer," "I give this love pledge." The word "Remember" has been found engraved on a stone above the representation of a hand pulling the lobe of an ear. This action was a sign of affection, and Napoleon I, when he was in a particularly good humor with any one about him would pull him by the ear.

Sapphires.

One famous sapphire was found in Bengal by a poor man who sold wooden spoons. It was taken to Europe and bought by the house of Raspoli, at Rome. Later it became the property of a German prince, who sold it to Berret, a Parisian jeweler, for \$31,020. It was absolutely without a blemish and weighed 126 carats.

This stone eventually found its way into the Museum of Natural History at Paris. A beautiful star sapphire is owned in New York, and two magnificent specimens of this jewel in possession of Burdett-Coutess are valued at \$139,500. Another in the collection of Mr. Hope is called the "Marvelous Sapphire," being blue by daylight and amethystine by night.

Among the crown jewels of Russia is a magnificent sapphire representing a female figure enveloped in drapery. The stone represents two tints, a circumstance of which the artist has skillfully taken advantage to make the woman dark and the drapery light. The most remarkable stone of this kind is an engraved sapphire representing a profile of a young Hercules, executed by Cneus. It is in the Strozzi cabinet at Rome.—Jeweller's Review.

The Record of the Fair Typewriter.

One evening recently Miss Katherine V. Curry, of Syracuse, beat the record for fast typewriting making 182 perfect words in a minute. Miss Curry has been operating a typewriter for five years. Last summer she commenced to try speed work, and the other night succeeded in breaking the world's record. The highest sworn speed heretofore has been 172 words per minute. At the first trial Miss Curry wrote 172 words, but some of them were not quite perfect. Then she tried to get 180 words in a minute. The first trial showed 176 words, with but one imperfect one among them. The second trial showed the requisite number, but with some imperfections. The third trial, however she managed to get 180 perfect words on the paper inside of sixty seconds. Then she attempted to beat her own record, and on the third trial made the unprecedented speed of 182 perfect words in a minute. The speed was sworn by the judges and timekeepers.—Utica (N. Y.) Observer.

A Telephone Marvel.

An interesting and amusing instance of the efficacy of the London-Paris telephone occurred the other day which is worth recording. The Salvation Army band were marching from the Royal Exchange playing the "Marseillaise," when an idea struck the men present in the telephone room. The windows and doors were all thrown open and the attendant at the Paris end was asked if he could hear anything. The response (in French) was immediate, "Yes, I can hear a band playing the 'Marseillaise.'" That a band of music playing in the streets of London could be plainly distinguished in Paris is, we think, a sufficiently striking marvel of the nineteenth century science.

Plays the Piano.

It is not more than 50 years ago that they say, they are now fingers are too stiff to play. But people who pass by the street house, it is reported that music from a piano played by Matilda Sewell, who is old, plays with the skill of a girl.—Kennebec Journal

A Maiden Woman's Regret.

"I would never have been an old maid," said a lady of 40, "if I had known as much twenty years ago as I know now. When I was at a marriageable time of life I heard so much about unhappy couples that I was afraid to become a wife. But I have looked around in later times and have changed my mind on the subject. Last year I took my up a list of twenty wives of my acquaintance whom I had known before their wedlock, and to whom I spoke about their experience in life. I found that fifteen of the twenty were happily married, that four of them got along tolerably well with their husbands, and that only one of them bewailed her matrimonial lot. The fifteen happy wives are amiable women, fond of their children and helpful to their husbands. About the unhappy one of them I can only say that she is a grumbler married to a growler, and would be unhappy any way now, and as to the other four the fault is not all on one side. I suspect that the twenty married women I have spoken of are fair specimens of wives in general, most of whom find by experience that it is marriage that makes life worth living. As I myself am the soul of amiability, I believe that I would have made a happy marriage if I had not been frightened by the stories that I heard twenty years ago."—New York Sun.

How People Say Good-By.

"When I'm on the road," said a traveling man at the Sherman house, "I make a study of the different manners in which different people bid their friends good-by. A business man comes on the car with his wife, gets a seat for her, puts her bundles in the rack, presses her hand, and perchance gives her a matter of a fact kiss and is gone, and the whole has been done so quietly that no one has taken any notice of it. A young lady accompanies her young lady friend to the train. After going from one end of the car to other and back again they find a seat that will answer. The young lady is going up the road ten miles and will be gone till the next day. 'Well, good-by, I'll say one. I do hate to say good-by,' says the other. 'I wish you were going with me.' 'Oh, so do I.' 'Well, good-by.' 'Good-by.'

Then they kiss. 'Hope you'll have a nice trip.' 'So do I.' 'I shall be lonesome till you come back.' 'Oh, phaw! What's wrong, dear?' 'I forgot the novel I was going to read on the train.' 'Too bad, but you can get another. What a pretty dress that lady at the end of the car has.' 'I think the stripe is too narrow.' 'Well, I guess the train is starting, so good-by.' Another kiss. 'Good-by.' And thus they go on as long as the train will wait for them.

"Then there is the lovers' good-by—it is very different from any other. In many good-bys there is much more said than is meant, but the lovers mean much more than they say. The sly look that flashes from eye to eye has a whole world of meaning in it for them. And the good-by clasp of their hands telegraphs whole volumes of affection from heart to heart. And when they kiss—well, there isn't a person in the car but would like to steal a taste of their bliss. And sometimes there are amusing things occur in the hurry attending the good-by salutations. A train I was on stopped at an Iowa town one day and an honest country couple entered the car. Their appearance and manner indicated that they were unaccustomed to traveling.

"The wife was provided with a seat, and the husband, who was to be left alone, went outside and talked through the open window to her. She was giving him detailed instructions how to look after the household during her absence. The engine began blowing off steam and it was necessary for her to speak very loud to make her husband here. The noise suddenly ceased just when she was in the middle of one of her sentences, but she did not seem to be aware of it, and the passengers all smiled as she shouted on the still air. 'And don't forget to change your under clothes every Sunday.' I don't know of anything more mixed with tears and smiles than are the good-bys spoken at the railway stations."—Chicago Herald.

Henry Clay's Daughters.

Says a gossip in the Cincinnati Times-Star: "Henry Clay has a daughter buried at Lebanon, Ohio. She died while Henry Clay and his family were on his way to Washington by stage coach many years ago. She was a girl twelve years of age and her loss was a sad blow to her father, who at the time was so pressed with business cares that he was compelled to bury the body and go on to Washington, intending some day to return and move it to Lexington Ky. But he never did so, and the grave may yet be seen in the old burial ground, surrounded by a wire fence. The tombstone is one of the flat tablet style and relic hunters have so marred it that it now presents a dilapidated appearance. To such an extent was this spirit of relic-seeking carried on that the graveyard authorities at last set posts every two feet apart around the grave and wrapped them around with wire strands to the extent of twenty or more, so that it was almost impossible for anybody to climb over and chip off a piece of the gravestone. As the old burial ground is being rapidly abandoned it is only a question of a few years until Henry Clay's daughter will be the only occupant."

Spilled the Milk.

A murderous neighborly quarrel between boards at Jacobs' restaurant. There was a sprinkling of ever, through the third evening that set the hero of the play to the soubrette how the boys had been down at "shoeing" geese. He cracked a joke in explaining how he had crept round a pool of water, and how the boys saved themselves by shaking their shoes shouting "Shoo, shoo!" boys caught on at once, and the villain unfolded one of the plots on the lives of the line the "gods" completely out with their "shoes."

It was at a very serious performance. The protected heiress was shown by the unscrupulous. The sea rolled heavily and raged fiercely; while the awaited execution. "If she'll never see him again within arm's reach of his held a bloody knife in his hand in a moment he would pierce her body, but in the twinkling of an eye he was himself, and looked her derider straight in the face at the thought of a breakdown course didn't see him. An act of providence to save from his nervous plight, or effect of inclement weather wires, every light went out instantly. Righted after a time.—N. Y. Gram.

Plays the Piano.

It is not more than 50 years ago that they say, they are now fingers are too stiff to play. But people who pass by the street house, it is reported that music from a piano played by Matilda Sewell, who is old, plays with the skill of a girl.—Kennebec Journal

Freaks of Nature.

Sudden forgetfulness is an usual thing in the pages of a freshman at college he has a person, bishop of Liberia for this work. "Nine of science," break down in the Lord's prayer.

The great French once stopped in the middle of a defeat of memory himself recorded that happened through extension to two other preachers went to hear at different the same day. A preacher stopped in the sermon and was unable. The pause was, however, ingeniously.

"Friends," said he, "to say that a person recommended to prayers."

He ment himself. He knees, and before he covered the thread of which he concluded with memory being perceived. Bits.

New York's Small.

A park policeman the pet enemy of his howling wind and the said, "have no terror tursoe small boy. He kinds of weather. He coating of ice begins to lake he wants to test across the lawn, chucks to no end of mischief course we are constantly out to prevent the boys from coming to the pranks, but they are as foot, and can usually get. They are like larks. He over the park at one and chief as easily as they other day a little chap wanders around in the at the managerie and ball bat to Tip, the elephant a fancy to it, and in three hours getting it. He narrowly escaped at that."—New York Sun.

Old Shoes of a.

In Dresden there is a number of books, once worn by emperors and princes, which interest to relic hunters. A citizen of Dresden to have in his possession a sandal which were Elizabeth were that. The shoe is in a wonderful preservation. Americans a weakness for royalty to learn that from one of our princesses robe a couple of pairs of every dress, and a lot of leather, morocco and Chambers Journal.

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