

WISE BILLY

by Edward B. Clark

WISE BILLY," they called him up Bow-manville way. He was called this in derision, for Wise Billy was witless. There were some of the Bowmanville people who wouldn't have it that Billy was entirely witless, and it was in the expression of this belief these people showed that they were to be classed with the wiser ones.

Wise Billy had been hit on the head when he was nothing more than a toddler and it was the blow that set his mind groping for things that it could never fully grasp. Bowmanville, while it is a part of a great city, has green fields and great forests yet untouched by the ax of nature's tyrant. Billy roamed the fields and threaded the forests. Like Little Hiawatha he learned of the birds and the squirrels their secrets. They were playmates that never made sport of his mental shortcomings. He loved them and they loved him. The streams beyond the little stream which farther on in its course becomes the Chicago river, were the haunts of bobolinks. It was there that the Italian bird catchers hired by the big city dealers were in the habit of setting their traps to catch rollicking Robert of Lincoln that he might be caged up in a 7 by 5 cage to pine away a few brief summer months for the supposed pleasure of someone whose ideas of liberty did not include bird and beast.

One afternoon the Italians set their traps all over the meadow with a captive bird in the lower compartment. The men went to a hedge by the roadside to watch results. They saw a boy start on a keen jump across the meadow. His feet were winged. Before the trappers could realize what was up the lower door of the first trap in line was open, a bobolink was freed and the trap itself was a crushed mass of wire and sticks. They tried, but they could not catch this greyhound of a lad. He liberated twelve birds and smashed twelve traps, and then shot into the Budlong woods. It was Wise Billy who had done this turn for his bobolink friends.

Wise Billy's father and mother sent him to school. The teachers did not want to receive him, but he was quiet and he showed shortly that impression could be made upon his disordered mind. He knew more about the pictures than he did about the words, but in the course of a year or two he wrote sentences disjointedly. It was poetry that Wise Billy loved, especially the poetry in which the words sang of birds and trees and flowers. It was an inspiration to hear Billy repeat Bryant's "Bobolink" and the "Lines to a Waterfowl." There was a place in his heart seemed to speak to some little sound section of his muddled mind.

Wise Billy reported at the school one morning that he was going to be a poet. He stood at his desk and made the announcement out loud. The pupils laughed and laughed. The teacher tried to look kindly, but there was a bit of merriment in her face. "I'll bring some verses and show you," cried Billy. He was keenly alive to ridicule, witless though he was.

Wise Billy had found a friend. He was a man who tramped the field with a round box in which he put leaves and flowers and with an opera glass through which he stared at birds. Billy had come across the stranger near the river's edge just west of the Budlong wood. The man was picking marsh marigolds. Billy told him he would show him where there were some prettier ones if the man would promise not to pick them. The stranger seemed struck by this appeal from the boy with halting tongue and vacant



eye. "You're a second edition of Ralph Waldo Emerson, my boy," said he a little quizzically. "They're pretty by the water," said Billy, "and the wind whispers to them and they tell me what the wind says."

"You're a poet," said the man with the box. "I wouldn't pick your flowers now I were after the real gold they seem to be, but I'm after birds, too."

"Hang 'em and put 'em in a box?"

"I'll show you lots," said Billy.

The man came to the meadows often after this and met Billy. The lad knew where the lark finch, where the vireo placed its paper-lined home and where the oriole swung its cradle. He showed all his treasures to the man who was willing to look and to spare. One day Billy brought some papers to his botanical-ornithological acquaintance. "They're poems," he said, "like what the man with the gray beard wrote about bobolinks and like what the man Shakespeare said about the yellow swamp flowers."

Billy's naturalist friend took the manuscript. Rhythm there was none; the spelling would make a lexicographer weep, but there was poetry. The boy said in essence that the marigold didn't die because he thought of it all the year through, and thinking of things "makes 'em live."

One of Billy's schoolmates had trapped a shore lark. The bird sings as it soars, and in that respect is like unto the lark that "at heaven's gate sings." Billy had fought a good fight for the trapped lark when the trapper was taking it homeward, but a crowd of schoolmates who re-

garded the lark as fair prey made numbers carry the day.

One day Billy and the stroller afield were tramping the meadow that edges the Bowmanville road that runs along and crosses the rustic bridge over the north branch of the river. They heard shouts and turning saw that a building facing the road was on fire. It was a frame structure with the two upper stories occupied by families. It was on the ledge of the front window of the upper apartment that the caged lark which Billy had tried to save had been imprisoned for several days. The man and boy started for the scene of the fire. The building was a furnace. "Everybody's out," called a man in the crowd that had gathered.

Billy, the witless, looked up. He saw the lark in the cage. The stairway was burning. He eluded a detaining hand and dashed into the entrance and up the stairs. A man jumped after him, but it was too late. He was driven back. In less than a minute the people with staring eyes saw the boy appear at the front upper window. His form was framed with smoke and flame. They saw him fairly tear apart the cage that held the lark. In an instant the bird was free and went soaring heavenward singing.

There was a crash; a floor had given way. A little later a crowd had gathered round the dead body of a boy. The school teacher and Billy's naturalist companion were looking down on the face that the flames had left untouched.

"He wanted to be a poet," said the teacher. "Wanted to be?" said the trapper of the fields. "Wanted to be?" His whole life was a poem and his death was a song."

BARN SWALLOW, CHIMNEY SWEEP AND KING BIRD

By JULIE ADAMS POWELL.

When the King bird arrives in the early spring with his bride from the south, he guards her most jealously, and fights most pugnaciously all others of his kind who come near.

Noted for his fighting nature, the King bird is entitled to his royal name, and is also called the tyrant Fly Catcher, and from his epicurean love of insects, he is known again as the Bee Martin, although far removed from the Martin family, being really one of the Fly Catchers.

He possesses no noble qualities, as without provocation he often allows "his angry passions" to rise, and makes bold and aggressive attacks on the crow, and often chases away from his field the less offensive small birds. Very like the Indians of the western plains, the King bird never likes to meet a foe in open warfare, preferring to swoop down upon some unoffending neighbor, giving him a

parts are grayish slate color; on his head is a concealed orange red crest. The under parts are white, washed with gray on the breast. The tail is black, tipped with white. The nest is built at the end of a branch of some low tree, several feet from the ground, and is a compact structure, composed of leaves, string, weeds, grass, fine rootlets, bark and hair. The number of eggs are generally five, and they are creamy white, spotted with dark brown and purple gray.

I suppose that every boy who reads this paper has seen the Barn Swallow, but how many have seen the bird at work building her nest? Some day if you hide away inside the barn, and keep very quiet, you can witness this very interesting performance.

One day last summer I was out on a farm, and in the barn I heard a great chattering and chirping, and discovered the Barn Swallow were building. As the male of most bird families does not assist his mate in this work, I concluded that it was "he" who was doing the chattering, while the little housewife carried the mud and straw of which the walls of the house were built. Most of the time he was inside the half-finished nest giving advice, while she worked.

There were three nests under way, and they were round in form and the mud and straw were firmly and smoothly plastered together, and the inside of a finished one was lined with soft feathers from the chicken yard. These birds are very graceful, and they go about in colonies, flying low over the meadows and fields while on the lookout for the insects on which they feed.

The male and the female Barn Swallow are marked alike. The upper parts are steel blue throat, upper breast and forehead are chestnut rufous in color, and the under parts are washed with the same, shading to a buff. The tail is very slender, and deeply forked. The female is slightly smaller than the male, and her coloring is paler. She raises two broods of young in a season, from the four to six eggs at a sitting, which are white with spots of purplish brown.

The Chimney Swift is more commonly called "The Chimney Swallow,"

whereas it is no swallow at all, being more nearly related to the humming birds than to the swallows.

These birds congregate about my home in small flocks, and in early morning and late afternoon may be seen rapidly sailing over the house-tops, where they build their nests in unused chimneys. Their nests are composed of twigs glued together with



The Splashed and Sprawled Eggs of the Purple Grackle.

a gummy secretion of the birds' salivary glands. When the Swift flies, his movements are more suggestive of the bat

than those of a bird, as he darts hither and thither, and it is often perplexing, at dusk, to distinguish the two.

These odd birds cling to the sides of the chimney, and to rough places, assisted by their spine-like tails, and are never seen to alight on the ground, because they would be unable to arise again, on account of their long wings and short feet. Their song consists of a rolling twitter, which is quite pleasant to hear.

The Chimney Swift is about an inch shorter than the English Sparrow, but its long wings make it appear larger. The male and female are marked alike, being of a deep, sooty gray. The tail is even, and has very elastic and sharply pointed quills, beyond which the wings extend an inch and a half. The feet have exceedingly sharp claws.

In country houses, during the summer, I have heard the roar, like distant thunder, of a flock of these birds rising from one of the large chimneys, in the early morning.

The Swift lays from four to six pure white eggs.

Point of View. The Poet—How gracefully Mrs. Jones sweeps out a parlor. The Housekeeper—Yes, but does she take the dirt out of the corners?



Boys and girls may be saved for the agricultural districts by teaching them to love the country and to look upon farming as a noble and profitable occupation.

GIVES HELP WHERE NEEDED

Unique New York Institution That Provides Clothing for Actors Make an "Appearance."

How many actresses, after a long period of idleness, when they at last secured an engagement—in stock, let us say—have been at their wits' end to know how they were going to provide themselves with tea gowns or evening dresses necessary for the

play? And how many actors when, in straitened circumstances, they have had an important engagement with a manager, have despaired of securing the place because they could not make a "prosperous" appearance? The number is discouragingly large.

Is it not true that when a person is out of work he is most anxious to make a correct impression, and generally at the precise moment is in a position the least favorable for doing so? There must be thousands of actors and actresses in New York who

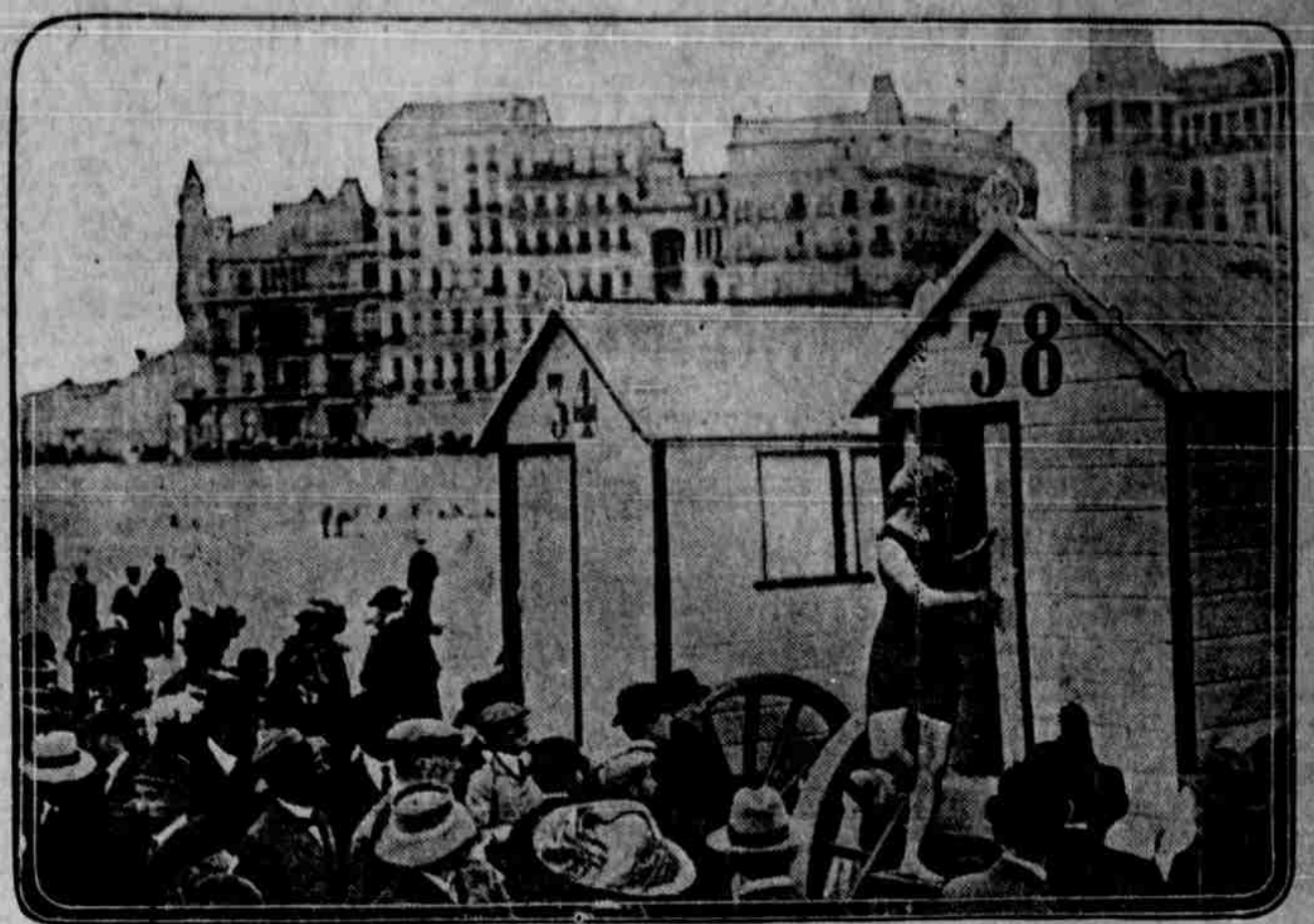
feel keenly the disadvantages of a lack of clothes.

But such people need no longer despair absolutely. There is in New York city a "Clothing Bureau" that has a professional department devoted entirely to the needs of actresses and actors in exactly this or a similarly embarrassing position. On the first Friday of each month the bureau is set aside wholly for their use, and a sympathetic lady, with an intimate knowledge of the members of the profession—both men and women—and

their need, is in charge of the bureau for the day in order to help and advise them. Almost any kind of dress suit, hat or coat can be procured there; it is not immediately, at least within a reasonable length of time. The sole object of the bureau is to perform a kindness to those immediately in need of it.—Dramatic Mirror.

Fine Product of Copper. It is now possible to produce cast copper of high electrical conductivity that is mechanically sound.

ONE-PIECE BATHING SUIT AT OSTEND STARTLES AMERICANS



A group of American tourists at Ostend, Belgium, the most famous watering place in Europe, gathered around an individual bathing house from which is emerging a fair creation in a one-piece bathing suit. Blase as the Americans are, their curiosity and perhaps their admiration is aroused by the fair Venus on her way to the bath. Much discussion has been aroused by the wearing of these one-piece garments, both here and abroad, and many communities have forbidden the wearing of the one-piece garment. The house from which the bather is emerging is an individual bathing closet on wheels which is carted down to the water's edge, where the bather has but to step out and plunge in.

"ENOCH ARDEN" IN REAL LIFE

Daughter Finds Father, After Fifty-Three Years, Who Failed to Claim Remarried Wife.

Tarrytown, N. Y.—As the last chapter in a dramatic story which closely parallels Tennyson's "Enoch Arden," Capt. Lewis B. Hunt of Tarrytown, N. Y., now eighty-four years old and quite feeble, has started for Oregon with his daughter, who has just seen him for the first time in fifty-three years. He left his wife to another man she had married in the belief that he was dead.

When Captain Hunt came home to Buffalo, N. Y., in 1865, after being discharged from his regiment at the close of the war, amazed friends met him at the station and told him they had believed for several years that he had died in battle.

They told him that his wife had believed the reports of his death and had married again. Like Enoch Arden, he turned his back on the world, leaving his wife in ignorance and to the new happiness she had found.

When he went to the war his daughter was two years old. When he returned to Buffalo he wanted to see the child, but he dared not, because the knowledge that he was alive would ruin his wife's happiness. Therefore he dropped out of sight of all who had known him.

This daughter grew to womanhood, was married to a man named Miller French and moved to Clatskanie, Oregon. Mr. Hunt's wife and her new husband moved to Wisconsin. As the daughter of a Civil war veteran Mrs. French recently wrote to the pension bureau to see if she could not obtain a pension. The bureau informed her that her father was alive and living at Tarrytown, where he was receiving a pension.

Mrs. French hurried here and then for the first time in fifty-three years met her father.

WINS BIG ENGLISH TROPHY

Canadian Lands King's Gold Medal for Shooting at the Bisley Meet.

London.—Great interest marked the final day of the shooting meet at Bisley when, after close competition with Sergeants Ommundson and Fenby, Private W. Hawkins, a Canadian of the 48th Highlanders at Toronto, won



Carry Victor From Field.

the King's gold medal. Hawkins (seen with the maple leaf, the Canadian emblem), acted as a substitute on the official team, having taken the place of an absent man. This is the second time the King's gold medal was won by a Canadian.

HELD ON A MURDER CHARGE

Man Charged With Killing Wife and Daughter Is Engaged to Young Woman.

Wichita, Kan.—W. A. Borah, who is in jail at Ardmore, Okla., in connection with the death of his wife and twelve-year-old daughter at Tishomingo, Okla., when his house was burned, was engaged to marry the daughter of a wealthy citizen of this city, according to an announcement here.

ASH HEAP IN PANAMA

Chiriqui Mountain Peak Formed by Crater Eruptions.

is 11,000 Feet High and Has Been Dead for 175,000 Years—Geologist McDonald Tells Results of Recent Expedition.

New York.—Dr. D. F. McDonald, the geologist of the Panama canal commission, has just completed a tour of western Panama, and in the last issue of the Canal Record, the official bulletin of the commission, which reached New York the other day, Dr. McDonald tells some of the results of his trip. The trip lasted two months, and was made under the auspices of the Smithsonian institution, the Panama canal commission and the United States geological survey.

"The full results," Dr. McDonald says in the Canal Record, "of the journey, which lasted about two months, will be published later by the Smithsonian institution. In this issue the so-called Chiriqui volcano will be briefly treated."

"Perhaps the most interesting new thing discovered about the extinct volcano was the evidence that indicated about the number of centuries that have elapsed since the last volcanic outburst. It will be remembered that about a year ago the newspapers told how an eruption of Chiriqui volcano had lunged death and destruction far over western Panama. This proved to be a newspaper 'story' for the last explosive outburst of the mountain did not occur in 1912, but many hundred centuries earlier.

"The majestic Chiriqui peak stands as a king among mountains. Towering over 11,000 feet above sea level, it overlooks all the other rugged crests of western Panama. From its summit, on a clear day, one can see the wide coastal plain of David meeting the low lying shore of the Pacific, forty miles away. Streams, like loose lying silvery threads flung oceanward, tie the mountains to the sea, and on their banks here and there are distant spots of little native villages. Scattered grazing herds dot the nearer plains, and a tiny dust cloud, barely visible in the blue haze of the distant valley, tells of a train of bull carts toiling from David out to the coffee plantations, near the foot of the mountain.

"Turning then to the northward, one may behold lessening waves of mountains dimming in the distance, where they meet the wide embayments of the Caribbean shore. In the bays and beyond the headlands dark island spots are scattered along the landward margin of the sunlit sea. These remnants of a submerged mountain group stand like a struggling rear guard protecting the main shore line against the foam created by wind waves.

"Gazing out over this pleasing picture one's aesthetic sense may be slightly shocked when he realizes that he is only on the top of an ash heap, for this mighty peak was built up by emanations of volcanic ash and debris blown out during long centuries from a crater or group of craters. The last explosion, or series of explosions, was more violent than the rest, for it blew the top off the mountain and scattered the debris far and wide, burying the surrounding country under some hundreds of feet of volcanic ash and ejectamenta. Later streams formed on the new surface, and these slowly entrenched themselves in the new volcanic formation. The Caldera river thus excavated for itself a canon that is 350 feet deep and about half a mile wide—a vaster trench by far than Culebra cut, and all done by a river, without drill, powder or steam shovel. In the flat, wide bottom of this canon,

close to the bank of the stream, are some old Indian graves, and near by are some carved stones or "pedras pintadas."

"From the weathering of these and from the pottery and other objects, remnants of an ancient Indian culture, buried in them it is known that they are at least 1,000 years old and probably considerably more. Since these graves were made the Caldera river has not cut its channel more than ten feet deeper over about one-tenth of the total width of its valley bottom. This is equivalent to a deepening of the whole width of the valley one foot.

"From these data it is seen that the minimum rate of excavation of the Caldera valley, under, approximately, present conditions, would be one foot per thousand years. At this rate the present valley, which is 350 feet deep, would require 350,000 years for excavation. However, during the first few centuries excavation of it went on much more rapidly than now. This is due to the fact that in falling through the atmosphere the coarser rocks of the volcanic debris dropped faster and are more concentrated in the lower part, while the upper parts of this formation are chiefly of fine ash."

MRS. ASTOR SOCIAL LEADER

Mother of Vincent Astor and Two Society Friends at Big Lawn Tennis Match.

Newport.—The elite of society turned out en masse to watch the National tennis match held at Newport, in which the winners of the Davis Tennis cup took part. The most prominent figure present was Mrs. Ava Willing



Mrs. Astor and a Friend.

Astor (left), mother of Vincent Astor, and acknowledged by "Who's Who" in Newport, to be the social leader of that exclusive society center. With Mrs. Astor is Miss Elizabeth Sands.

Slit Skirt Not Immoral. Kansas City.—"There is nothing immoral in the slit skirt, the diaphanous gown, or any other present form of women's attire," declared Judge Ralph Latschaw of the Criminal court here when asked for his opinion by persons furthering a campaign against extreme styles in woman's dress.

Was Father of 29 Children. Noblesville, Ind.—Riley Shepard, ninety-four, father of 29 children, died here. He is survived by 20 children, 126 grandchildren, 68 great-grandchildren, and 4 great-great-grandchildren. Shepard had been married three times.

Flames were quenched, Williams said, before they reached the bodies. The woman to whom Borah was engaged, she told the sheriff that she had planned to marry Borah September 15 and showed him her wedding gown.

Well Described. Small Sadie was walking along the street with her mother when a ferocious looking, but friendly looking dog approached. With a little scream she clung to her mother, crying: "Oh, mamma, look at the dog with the tangled face!"