TOILETS OF ANIMALS.

SAND BATHS AND WATER BATHS FOR BEASTS AND BIRDS.

Most of the Smaller Creatures Are More Particular with Their Appearance Than a Large Part of the Human Family. Methods of Some of the Birds.

Brushes and combs most animals carry with them. "Brilliantine" also is carried in a small and handy reservoir by all ducks and divers. Mud serves for cold cream and vaseline; dust for fuller's earth and pearl powder, and water, as with us, is perhaps the most important necessary. But birds especially are mighty particular about the quality of their "toilet dust," and equally nice as to the water in which they prefer to wash. Some use water only, some water or dust, others dust and no water. Partridges are a good example of the dusting birds, and are most careful in the selection of their dust baths. Dry loam suits them best.

But perhaps their favorite place is a meadow where a few turfs have been removed. There they scratch out the loam, and shuffle backward under the grass roots till their feathers are full of the cool earth. In wet weather they find, if possible, a heap of burnt ashes on the site of a weed fire, and dust there. Sparrows, on the contrary, always choose road dust, the dryest and finest possible. Larks also are fond of the road, and dust there in the early morning. But they, too, have their fancy, and choose the dry, gritty part where the horses' hoofs tread.

Wild ducks, though feeding by the salt water, prefer to wash in fresh water pools, and will fly long distances inland to running brooks and ponds, where they preen and wash themselves in the early morning. But though passing so much time on the water, ducks seem to prefer a shower bath to any other; and in heavy rain they may be seen opening their feathers and allowing the rain to soak in, after which they dress the whole surface with oil from the reservoir which we mentioned above. Swallows and martins are as nice in their choice of bath water as any "professional beauty:" nothing but newly fallen rain water thoroughly pleases them, and if tempted to bathe, it is generally by some shallow pool in the road which an hour's sun will evaporate.

A FALCON'S BATH.

We have never seen hawks or falcons bathing when wild. Trained birds in good health bathe almost daily, and the bath of a peregrine falcon is a very careful performance. But no nymph could be more jealous of a witness than these shy birds, and it is not until after many careful glances in every direction that the falcon descends from her block and wades into the shallow bath. Then, after more suspicious glances, she thrusts her broad head under the water and flings it on her back, at the same time raising the feathers and letting the drops thoroughly soak them.

After bathing head and back she spreads her wings and tail fan like on the water and rapidly opens and shuts them, after which she stoops down and splashes the drops in every direction. The bath over, she flies once more to the block, and turning her back to the sun, spreads every feather of the wing and tail, raises those on the body and assists the process of drying by a tremulous motion imparted to every quill, looking more like an old cormorant on a buoy than a peregrine.

Cats, large and small, make the most careful toilet of any class of animal, with the exception of some of the opossums. The lions and tigers wash themselves in exactly the same manner as the cat, wetting the dark, India rubber like ball of the fore foot and the inner toe, and passing it over the face and behind the ears.

CLEANLINESS OF A DOG.

One of the most charming pets we have kept, and the most particular as to washing and brushing its feet and fur, was a lovely brown opossum from Tasmania. "Sooty phalangist" was, we believe, its scientific name. It was covered with deep rich brown fur, had a face something like a fox, a pink nose, hands with a nailless thumb, and long claws on the fingers. It washed its feet every two or three minutes.

Water rats are very clean animals, and wash and brush their faces "like Christians." We saw one on a pond at Welling, in Kent, swim out to pick up the blossoms of an acacia tree which were falling on the water. After daintily eating each flower on the bank he licked his hands, wiped his mustaches and swam off for another. We also tried an acacia blossom, but except a slightly sweet flavor, could find nothing to account for the rat's taste for them.

Sporting dogs, which are used in mud, snow and wet, are strangely clever and quick in cleaning and drying their coats, and it is a sure sign that a dog has been over tired if he shows any trace of mud or dirt next morning. Most of their toilet is done with the tongue, but they are very clever at using a thick box bush or the side of a haystack as a rough towel. One small spaniel which we allowed to live in the house was well aware that if he returned dirty he would not be admitted indoors.

About an hour before the close of the day's shooting he used to strike work and begin to clean himself, and if urged to do more would slip off home and present himself neat and clean in the dining room. One day the dog had been left at home, and his master returned and seated himself, wet and with half frozen drops of ice sticking to his gaiters, by the fire. Pan ran up and carefully licked off the frozen ice and snow, stopping every now and then to give an anxious look, which said as plainly as possible, "Dear me, if I don't get him clean quickly he will be sent to lie in the stable."—Spectator.

The number of children who have decayed teeth, and in many cases a part of the first set gone and the second set badly broken down, is too great.

Grim Consciences.

"That fellow's a tough!"

"Yes."

"He'd hold you up at night!"

"I believe it."

"He'd rob your house!"

"I think he would."

"Then why did you give him a quarter?"

The above conversation occurred between two gentlemen standing on the corner of Broadway and Fourteenth street.

"I'll tell you why," said the one who had promptly handed out the piece of silver when "struck" for lodgings money. "One day two or three years ago I was down on Canal street. A tough looking chap asked me for money, and I not only refused, but threatened to have him arrested. I didn't exactly mean it, but he thought that I did, and in his hurry to get away he ran in front of a big truck team and was knocked down and run over. The wheel crushed his hips, and he didn't live over ten minutes. I helped carry him to the walk, and I'm telling you straight when I say that he kept his eyes straight on mine until they closed in death.

"There was that in his look which made me feel contemptible compared to a worm, and for the next month it seemed to me that everybody in New York looked upon me as worse than a murderer. That man died blaming me for his death, and I'd have given five hundred to see him live. That's why I come down whenever I'm struck, and if I hadn't but half a dollar on earth I'd divide it if called upon."—New York Sun.

A Lively Fly Trap.

In passing a drug store I noticed an oil painting placed in the window for exhibition. While looking at it I suddenly saw a small dark object spring out from a crevice near the window, leap high into the air, make a quick movement and drop back to the floor.

So quick was the motion that it was all over before it reached my brain that what I had seen was a mouse. The little creature now sat looking intently at me, as if to say, "What did you think of that?" while at the same time I observed that by its cat like movement it had secured something which it was chewing with great relish.

Presently the mouse stealthily concealed itself in an opening and left only its pointed nose visible. It remained perfectly still; not a muscle moved. Then a fly flew past. Quick as lightning the mouse sprang into the air, caught the insect in its mouth, devoured it greedily and resumed its former position.

This was repeated several times within a few minutes. In every movement the mouse showed cunning and quickness similar to that of its much dreaded enemy the cat. I wondered if it had profited by the lessons its old enemy had taught it. It never failed to catch its prey as it flew within reach or chanced to light upon the plate glass.—Cor. Youth's Companion.

The Frenchman Gave Up the Seats.

"An interesting little incident occurred at the Theatre de Varieties," writes a New Yorker traveling in France to an acquaintance in this city. A young Missourian, accompanied by a lady, found to his annoyance that his seats had been appropriated by a military looking individual. He explained the situation to the attendant, but that functionary was too frightened to do anything in the affair, and the American learned from bystanders that the intruder was Capt. C——, a famous duelist and bully of the Cuirassiers.

"I am sorry to disturb you, monsieur," he said, walking to the captain, "but you have my seats."

The reply of the captain translated into Fourth ward patois would be, "What are you going to do about it?"

"Nothing now," quietly replied the son of the States. "I have a lady with me. But as you leave the theatre tonight I shall shoot you through the head. Good evening."

While the American was returning to the hotel with the lady the cavalryman left the theatre and took the express train for Munich.—New York Tribune.

Political Ways Are Mysterious.

First City Father—Here's a fine looking street.

Second Ditto—You are right there. What's best to be done with it?

"Let's have it dug up for a sewer."

"But wouldn't it be proper to pave it first?"

"Of course. I supposed you understood that. Then after it is paved and a sewer put in, we'll have it repaved."

"All in readiness to be dug up again for the gas pipe? I see you understand the principles of municipal economy. And after we have repaved a second time, then what?"

"Well, then it will be in order for widening. There's nothing I admire so much as system in the care and improvement of our roadways."—Boston Transcript.

French Pensions.

The cost of the French revolutions to the French government of today is recorded in this little list of pensioned persons and families: Senators of the empire, 48,000 francs; in consequence of Vienna peace, 434,211; men of the times of Louis XVIII and Charles X, 15,000; families of Louis Philippe's time, 41,225; wounded in June, 1848, 134,955; persons of the Second Empire, 132,000; wounded in February, 1848, 198,000; victims of Dec. 2, 6,553,266. Each government has respected the pension obligation of its predecessor as to this growing list, and has paid every item with scrupulous regularity.—Paris Letter.

A Slight Error.

When Sir John Herschell was defending the science of astronomy in view of a mistake of nearly 4,000,000 of miles in estimating the distance of the sun the correction was shown to apply to an error of observation so small as to be equivalent to the apparent breadth of a human hair at a distance of 125 feet.—St. Louis Republic.

MAMMA'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

A Holiday Story by a Twelve-Year-Old Girl.

A little incident connected with buying Christmas presents happened in an Eighth avenue store that made quite a little romance. The store was packed with people hunting for Christmas gifts. Two little girls, the eldest barely 9, standing outside, were noticed by a lady who had her carriage to enter the store. The little girls were poorly dressed. The little ones wanted to go into the store, but seemed afraid to enter. A rush came and they were caught in the crowd and whirled into the store. There they appeared enraptured with the beautiful things they saw.

The lady had entirely forgotten her own errand and kept near the little girls. Finally they began a whispered conversation and kept pointing to an article on a counter; then the oldest reached the counter and timidly asked the saleswoman the price of a red worsted hood. The answer was, "Two dollars and twenty-five cents." The little girl's countenance fell, and opening her hand she began to count some pennies she held. The open hand showed the lady just nine cents.

The little one joined her sister. She was disappointed, and the two girls counted their money over and over, then took another look at the hood and walked away. The lady made her way to the counter, and, making a confidant of the saleswoman, told her she wanted the little ones to have the hood, for which she would pay herself, but did not intend that the girls should know that it was not their own money that bought the hood.

The saleswoman became interested at once, and leaning forward she beckoned to the girls and said, "How much money can you pay for this beautiful red hood?" The eyes of both brightened, and without answering the child put forward all she had in the world—her nine pennies.

"What are you going to do with this hood?" the saleswoman asked.

"Give it to mamma for her Christmas," exclaimed both at once.

The lady turned away and placed her handkerchief to her face to hide the tears that filled her eyes. Another question made her turn toward the children again.

"Did you save all this money for Christmas?"

"Yes," answered both.

"How long have you been saving this money?"

This answer was a long time coming and finally the oldest one replied that she did not know, but part was Bessie's and part her own.

"Well," said the saleswoman, who received a knowing nod from the lady, "since you have been saving so long I'll let you have this hood for the nine cents."

The money was handed over, the package done up, and the little ones went away happy, both wanting to carry the precious bundle, and both laughing and crying with delight about the present for mamma.

The following morning just as the store was opened a poor woman entered with a small bundle and two little girls. After looking around the older girl pointed to the hood counter and was at once recognized by the friendly saleswoman. The party walked toward the counter and the older girl, pointing to the saleswoman, said, "That's her."

The little ones were trembling; the mother looked anxious, and could hardly ask, "Did this hood come from here, miss?"

The saleswoman noticed the bundle, and answered, "Yes."

"Well," said the mother, "that hood is marked $2.25, and my little girls tell me they bought it for nine cents. I have never known them to lie to me, but I am sorry to say I could not believe them this time. I was so afraid to come into the store and ask, but I must know the truth; please tell me about it, for I haven't slept a wink all night, though the little girls said it was a Christmas present, and I was afraid—I was afraid"—the tears now stopped the mother's words.

The saleswoman could stand it no longer and leaning over the counter she whispered the whole story to the mother.

The oldest girl could not understand why her mother took her in her arms and kissed her. Then all three went home.—Sadie Loraine Handy, 12 years old, in New York Telegram.

The Prayer Wheel of India.

The prayer wheel consists of a metal box about as big around as one which holds boot blacking, and about twice as deep. Through it a wire is stuck, and is fastened into a handle a foot long. Inside the box there is a roll of prayers written in Thibetan characters, and the worshiper rattles off prayers at the rate of 100 a minute by giving the handle a twist and setting the box to rolling. Each roll records a prayer. Every prayer does away with one or more sins and puts a brick in the pavement which leads toward heaven.—Frank G. Carpenter's Letter.

Composite Landscapes.

A suggestive use of photography has been recently made. Landscape features are photographed here and there, figures being posed to fit the theme. The different parts are then collected into an effective group, and the assembled groups are rephotographed to form one complete picture. Something of this kind has been done by artists in cyclorama painting, the different views being grouped together in sections and painted on the canvas in connected groups to form a complete representation of a vast stretch of landscape.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Pine and Oak Wedded.

A curiosity can be seen near Tarpon Springs, Hillsborough county, where a pine and oak have linked their fortunes in strange wedlock. They are known far and near as the pine and oak, and many an artist has carried away their counterfeit presentment.—Sanford Journal.