

UNCLE SETH'S ADVICE TO POETS.

The poets what write about nymps an them things. An drinks an goddesses hain't got no sense— An sylfs an angels what fly round 'th wings— 'thout ever a-stoppin' to light on the fense— They hain't got no idee Of what poetry sh'd be, An they don't tech a fellor like you an like me. For they talk about gods the old Greeks aster sing. An goddesses nobody b'lieves in no more. In a kin of a classical ting-a-ling-ling. They say the same things we have all hear'd afore In a large wide so gran. That we can't understand. An too stylish an swell for a workaday man. Why, bless ye, there's no poetry in flowers an birds An courtin an lov an young babies enough. They don't hev to hev long academy words To make a man yell. "That's the stuff, that's the stuff!" Yes, that's jest the stuff Of which any ole duff Like you an like me can't fill up with enough. Jest fix up yer songs so us plain folks can hear. An make 'em some sense for me an my wife. Make 'em jingle an gallup 'th everyday cheer. Wet 'em down 'th the joss of the winepress of life! Fetch 'em up from your heart. Where all songs orter start. Let your Pegasus go an climb into our cart! —Sam W. Foss in Yankee Blade.

Souvenir Spoons.

"Some people are born with silver spoons in their mouths." If it is only a plain, everyday sort of silver spoon, it doesn't count in these fin de siecle days. It must be a souvenir spoon, and no common one at that, or one had better not have been born. This is indeed a time, if not an age, of luxury, and even the poorest people are not contented with the plain usages and appointments of the past half century. It is an age of constant changes, where nothing lasts, and in which anything that is before the public more than a year is considered a matter of ancient history. The wonder is that with such an existing state of things a fad like that of collecting souvenir spoons should have lasted more than one season, and yet the interesting fact remains that the fancy or fad or whatever you choose to call it of souvenir spoons is just as eagerly followed now as it was five years ago, when first introduced. —Once a Week.

The Death of Cleopatra.

The story that Cleopatra killed herself by allowing an asp to bite her has long been believed, but probably has no better historical basis than the fanciful imagination of a gossip Roman historian. For some time before her death she made careful preparations for that event and tried many different kinds of poisons on her unfortunate slaves to see which would produce death with the least apparent agony. She probably died by one of these poisons, for she was as adept in such matters as any of the Borgias. No asp was found in her room, and the wound on her breast supposed to have been that of its bite probably had another origin, for her whole body was covered with bruises, where she, in Egyptian fashion, had struck herself with her fists and torn her flesh with her nails in her grief for the loss of Antony. —St. Louis Globe Democrat.

Golden Silence.

There are times when "silence is golden," but women have the reputation of always ignoring this fact. A minister's wife tells a good story at her own expense which illustrates man's incredulity of her ability to keep her mouth shut under any consideration. Her husband was recovering from a serious illness. The day when the worst was over the doctor smiled, with the remark that all he needed was quiet and spoke of a powder which he would leave. Rising to go, the wife reminded him of the powder "to keep her husband quiet," when to her amusement the doctor turned, and looking her in the face said: "The powder was not for your husband, but for you. He will be quiet enough if he only gets the chance." —Exchange.

The Deacon's Thoughts.

Good Boy—Here is that penny you gave me to put on the contribution plate. I made a mistake an put in a button instead. Father—Hum! What did Deacon Sharp say when he saw it? Good Boy—He didn't notice it. I guess the church is out of kindling wood, because I heard him mutter something about getting more chips from the ole block. —Good News.

Salt, a Sardinian city, has no police, no clergymen, no doctor, no chapel. Marriages are ratified by a priest or registrar at a parish many miles distant, to which brides and bridegrooms travel in batches to have the necessary ceremonial conducted.

The minute green bodies found on the fresh water polyp have been shown to be vegetable cells which furnish sugar for the animal, while the latter in turn provides them with nourishment.

The house of commons has met on Sunday 11 times, on various occasions when urgency demanded it. The first time was in the reign of Edward III, the last at the death of George II.

Mrs. Homespun, who has a terrible time every morning to get her young brood out of their beds, says she cannot understand why children are called the rising generation.

Be not affronted at a jest. If one throw ever so much salt at thee, thou wilt receive no harm unless thou art raw and ulcerous. —Junius.

MASTENED IT OVER NIGHT.

A Determined Mocking Bird That Succeeded In Imitating a Hard Cry.

A good story about a bird or any other animal is doubly interesting if the reader can be sure that it is not only true substantially, but has not been dressed out by the writer's imagination. Such a story is the following, told by Mr. William Brewster, one of the best known of American ornithologists. He was spending some weeks at the little village of St. Mary's on the coast of Georgia. Mocking birds were abundant, and being protected by every one were half domesticated, building their nests in the shrubbery that surrounded the houses and hopping about like robins upon the grass plots and gravelled walks. An orange tree in front of the window was appropriated by a particularly fine singer.

His repertory included the notes of nearly all the birds in the surrounding region, besides many of the characteristic village sounds, and most of the imitations were simply perfect. Moreover, he was continually adding to his accomplishments. An instance of this occurred one afternoon when several of us were sitting on the veranda.

A greater yellow legs (a well known game bird of the snipe and sandpiper family) passing over the town was attracted by my answering whistle and circled several times above the house reiterating his mellow call.

The mocking bird up to this time had been singing almost uninterruptedly, but at the sound of these strange notes he relapsed into silence and retreated into the thickest foliage of his favorite tree. Then he heard him trying them in an undertone.

The first note came pretty readily, but the falling inflection of the succeeding three troubled him. Whenever I ventured to prompt, he would listen attentively, and at the next attempt show an evident improvement.

Finally he abandoned the task, as we thought, in despair, and at sunset that evening, for the first and only time during my stay, his voice was missing in the general chorus. But at daylight the next morning the garden rang with a perfect imitation of the yellow leg's whistle. He had mastered it during the night, and ever afterward it was his favorite part.

The discomforture of the rival males in the neighborhood was as amusing as it was unmistakable. Each in turn tried the new song, but not one succeeded.

Harry Edwards and His Specimen.

The late Harry Edwards was an enthusiastic amateur botanist. On one occasion he was accompanied by Mrs. Edwards and a friend of hers upon a short excursion into the country. As they were waiting at the station for the returning train, the two women lounging back in relaxed attitudes of utter fatigue, the actor strolled away for a little walk. Presently he came rushing back, his face full of excitement. "See here!" he cried, holding up to view a little wilted plant. "I've looked for this from Maine to Florida. It's an extremely rare specimen of the"—etc. The ladies turned their heads languidly in his direction. Mrs. Edwards said nothing. The other drawled, "It seems to me—a very—common—weed." The extinguished botanist stared in blank anger for a moment. Then he turned on his heel. All his rising fury could seize upon was a loudly uttered epithet. "You're two cads!" he flung back over his shoulder. —New York Times.

A Woman's Handkerchief.

A woman's handkerchief is so closely identified with her that it seems a part of her presence, and both in fact and fiction, particularly fiction, it frequently figures among the keepsakes of the ardent lover. We have all thrilled at its discovery upon the breast of the wounded hero. It is simply indispensable to every condition of woman. If she is nervous, she toys with it; enthusiastic, she applauds with it; tearful, it is her friend indeed. Moreover, in seeking either to stop a street car or beckon her lover, it is her signal. In the latter capacity it contributed largely toward bringing about one of the most renowned tragedies of our own times. —Philadelphia Times.

His Posthumous Fortification.

Stephen Langford, a wealthy farmer of Madison county, Ky., has just had completed for him here a stone coffin. It weighs about 1,500 pounds and is made of Kentucky limestone quarried from Langford's farm. He is 80 years old, but is apparently in the best of health. Mr. Langford says that the country around his home is overrun with polecats, minks and groundhogs, and he believes the only way to keep them from devouring his body is to have it buried in a stone coffin. —Cor. Pittsburg Dispatch.

His Offense.

The prisoner was a tramp arrested for chasing a watchdog all over the back yard and kicking him into a pulp.

"Guilty or not guilty?" asked the judge sternly. "I was only rushing the growler, your honor." "Sixty days." —Detroit Free Press.

The Powder of Projection.

The belief in transmutation and in the virtues of the "powder of projection" is to be found more clearly stated in the works of Zosimus of Panopolis, the earliest known writer on alchemy whose authentic works have come down to us, for in his first lesson he exclaims, "How beautiful it is to see the changes of the four metals—lead, copper, tin, silver—till they become perfect gold!" The idea had evidently been developed and the art assiduously cultivated in Egypt since the time of the spurious Democritus, for Zosimus quotes the opinions of many adepts, of whose writings, mostly apocryphal, nothing is known save from his pages.

Hermes Trismegistus and Democritus, Moses and Mary the Jewess, Agathodemon and Cleopatra, the prophet Chymes and the "divine" Sophar are quoted as authorities for the operations to be performed on various minerals, which, after being duly melted, calcined, refined and sublimated over and over, are declared to have become gold or silver.

To these more or less intelligible descriptions of chemical processes Zosimus adds his own commentaries, which he sometimes presents under the form of allegories or visions. —Edinburgh Review.

Narcotic Effects of a California Spring.

Superintendent Stout recently described a wonderful mineral spring that formerly flowed from the mountain side some miles above the Butte Creek House and near the Pluma county line.

This spring was first called to Mr. Stout's attention some years ago while camping in that vicinity by an old prospector, who called it the "chloroform spring." The water which flowed from it did not differ in appearance or taste from the water of other springs, except that it was slightly brackish. It was the effect that followed the drinking of its waters that was remarkable. A small cup would in the course of half an hour render the drinker totally insensible, and he would remain for hours as if dead. But few white men had ever tried the experiment of drinking from it, but those who have done so describe the effect as not unlike that resulting from a heavy narcotic.

To the Indians this spring has been known for generations. They call it the "heap sleep" spring, and it is said that more than one weary red man has entered the happy hunting grounds through the medium of its waters. —Oroville Mercury.

An Anecdote of Thackeray.

On the last night of the year Thackeray was with the family of George Ticknor. The daughters of the house had gone to a party, and Thackeray was sitting for the evening with Mr. and Mrs. Ticknor. About 11 o'clock he arose, and his host inquired:

"You are not going to retire yet?" "No," was the answer, "for always at the birth of the new year I drink to the health and happiness of my daughters, but I do not wish to keep you up so late."

"Pray stay with us," urged the host, "and we will join you in a health to your absent ones."

When the hour arrived Thackeray took a glass of sherry in his hand, rose to his feet, and said in tremulous tones:

"God bless my motherless girls. God bless them and all who are good to them."

Drinking the wine, he bade his host good night and without another word he retired from the room, leaving his friends in tears. —Chicago Tribune.

A Cat That Put Out a Fire.

Some of our friends have a cat which they esteem very highly.

On a cold winter day Mr. and Mrs. B. went to church, some five miles away, and left the house in the possession of the cat, Tom, who upon their return home rushed out and buried his paws in the cold snow.

Wanting to find out the meaning of this behavior on Tom's part, they examined his paws and found them blistered and burned. They walked into the house and found to their surprise that the carpet around the grate was burned, but the fire had been extinguished. They now took in the situation. A coal had fallen out of the grate and set the carpet ablaze, which had been extinguished by Tom, who had burned his paws in the effort he made. —Cor. New York Recorder.

A Lamb's Ride on a Cowcatcher.

A rather singular incident occurred on the Savannah, Florida and Western railway the other day. It was about 40 miles from Waycross on a through train to Chattanooga. On the track just in front of the train the engineer, Mr. DuBose, saw a sheep with a young lamb. It was too late to stop the engine, and the train passed on, leaving mutton in its wake. Arrived at Waycross, the engineer descended from his engine and saw the lamb alive and unhurt on the cowcatcher. It had been carried 40 miles without a scratch. —Brunswick (Ga.) Times.

The Use of Shells In Medicine.

Carbonate and phosphate of lime prepared from crab shells, and various other calcareous substances derived from the animal kingdom, such as burned egg shells and oyster shells, were long employed in medicine to remove acidity of the digestive organs. —London Tit Bits.

A Selfish Bird.

The old fable of the selfish dog was admirably illustrated the other Sunday in the little "zoo" in Central park. Only it wasn't a dog. It was a thing which is commonly supposed to be a bird, and a remarkably funny looking bird at that. This ornithological specimen has a very long and flat bill, from which I suppose it derives its name, if, by the way, that is its name, of which fact I am not exactly sure, but it fits him anyway. To return to the story, this "spoon bill," or "pelican," or "dodo," or whatever it was, had taken its seat on the only box of food in one of the large aviaries.

The cage contained, besides this creature, half a dozen pheasants, a sea gull, and some other specimens of bird life, names unknown. The efforts of these to obtain some food without the spoonbill seeing them were ludicrous in the extreme. The spoonbill had a long, very long cork-screw neck, and no matter from which point the unfortunate occupants of the cage approached the box he always saw them and went for them with his enormous beak.

He didn't eat anything himself, nor did he appear to want to, but he sat steadily on the spot, and the others went hungry. I would have given something to have bundled him off, but he was too far from the edge of the cage, and there were no keepers to be seen. —New York Herald.

Presidents and Flowers.

Railroad presidents and bank presidents all seem to have an equal fondness for flowers, but some are enabled by circumstances to indulge that fondness to a larger extent than others. Samuel Sloan, for instance, has an extensive hothouse up the Hudson to draw upon, and the desk of the president of the Lackawanna road is seldom without its two or three vases of fragrant flowers, both winter and summer. Jay Gould used to have flowers sent down from Irvington daily for his office as well as his house. In the budding and blooming months of early summer Chauncey M. Depew always has a profusion of flowers about him. C. P. Huntington is another railroad magnate who is very fond of flowers. Almost invariably a bunch of bright hued blossoms is placed on his desk each morning. —New York Times.

A Natural Curiosity In Arizona.

In the extreme eastern edge of Arizona, some 40 miles west by south of that remote pueblo, Juni, N. M., there is a most remarkable natural phenomenon—a great, shallow salt lake in a bowl-like depression, the sink itself being some hundreds of feet deep and three miles across. The basin—all that portion of it not taken up by the lake—is dazzling white with millions upon millions of salt crystals. In the center of the lake rises what appears to be a cone shaped volcanic peak. Should you take the trouble to ford the lake and explore this peak—a task neither disagreeable nor dangerous—you will find instead of a crater of smoking, seething mud a miniature lake in the middle of the peak clear as crystal and as pure as any spring water. —St. Louis Republic.

Too Much of a Hunter.

It was one of the late Senator Kenna's ambitions to photograph a deer on the run. Finally he had some boys to go into the bushes to start up the deer, and he had his hand on the bulb which governed the camera, ready to press it when the animal should appear. As he heard it crashing through the brush, however, he dropped the bulb and picked up his gun. As the deer sprang forth he killed it. —Chicago Herald.



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