

THE GRAY PARROT.

By W. W. JACOBS.

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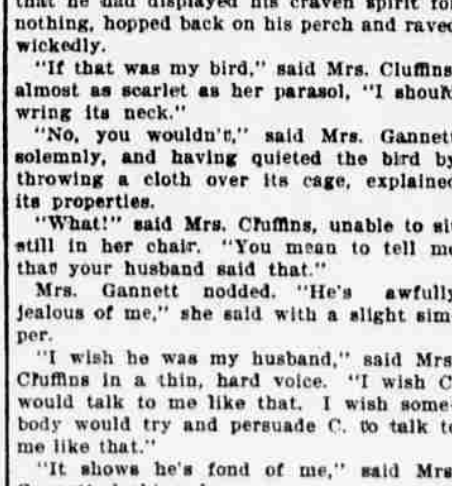
The chief engineer and the third sat at tea on the steamship Curlew in the East India docks. The small and clean steward having placed everything he could think of upon the table, and then added everything the chief could think of, had assiduously poured out two cups of tea and withdrawn by request. The two men ate steadily, conversing between bites and interrupted occasionally by a hoarse and sepulchral voice, the owner of which being much exercised by the sight of the food, asked for it, prettily at first, and afterward in a way which at least compelled attention.



SHE WALKED ALL AROUND THE CAGE ADMIRING IT.

pretend that I know through the parrot. What do you think of it? "Think of it," said the Third, staring at him. "Think of it? Fancy a man telling a grown-up woman a yarn like that!" "She believes in warnings and death watches and all that sort of thing," said the chief, "so why shouldn't she?" "Well, you'll know whether she believes in it or not when you come back," said Rogers, "and it'll be a great pity because it's a beautiful talker and the best swearer ever heard."

five times, he got sick of it, and, in a simple, sailorly fashion, said so. "O, Jim!" said his wife, "it's a beautiful talker," said Gannett, "and it's so clever that it picks up everything it hears, but it'll soon forget it." "It looks as though it knows what you are saying," said his wife. "Just look at it, the artful thing!" The opportunity was too good to be missed, and in a few straightforward lines the engineer acquainted Mrs. Gannett of the miraculous powers with which he had chosen to endow it.



"SHE IS VERY LIGHT-HEARTED," SAID HIS WIFE.

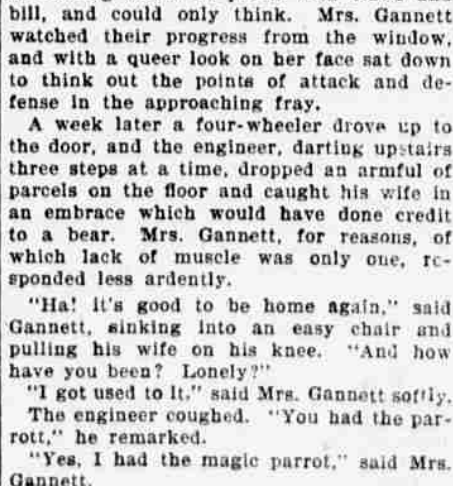
Left to herself, Mrs. Gannett dusted the room until, coming to the parrot's cage, she put down the duster and eyed its occupant. "When I think of it I go hot all over—boiling hot." "That won't last," said the other reassuringly. "You won't care twopence this time next year." "We're not all alike," growled the chief, "some of us have got fine feelings, but others have. I saw the chap next door looking at her as we passed him this morning."

suppose she's ever seen him before," said the engineer. "Four young things," said Mrs. Cluffins solemnly, as she cast up to them. "You're you worry, Mr. Gannett. I'll look after her and keep her from moping." "You're very kind," said the engineer slowly.



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wondering when the days were going to lengthen a bit. Mrs. Cluffins suggested selling it, but her friend refused the suggestion with horror, and repelled to entertain it at any price, even that of the parrot's command of language and was bent upon buying it.



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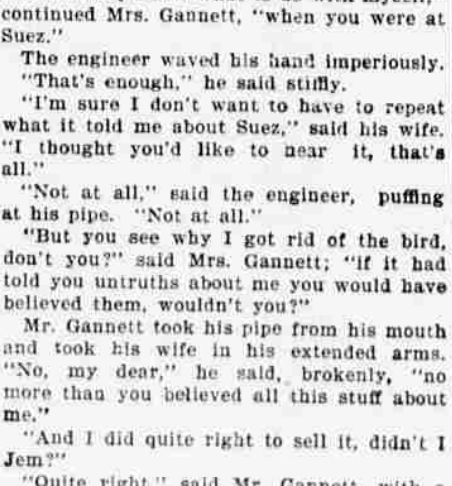
Mr. Gannett, having looked his pipe, lit it slowly and carefully, and with precision, got up and deposited the match in the fireplace. "It used to frighten me so with its stories that I hardly knew what to do with myself," continued Mrs. Gannett, "when you were at Suez."

into his seat and staring at his wife with very natural amazement. "Tell lies about me. Nonsense. How could I?" "I suppose it could tell me about you as easily as it could you about me," said Mrs. Gannett. "There was more magic in that bird than you thought, Jim. It used to say shocking things about you; I couldn't bear it."



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"I don't suppose there ever was a ship called the Pursuit," continued Mrs. Gannett. "Doesn't sound like a ship's name," murmured Mr. Gannett. "Well, then a few days later it said the Curlew was at Naples."



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PIERRE S. D., Sept. 30.—(Special.)—The action of the fusion convention at Blunt in nominating John Sutherland for the state senate finally puts him squarely on record instead of so far in the campaign making a fight under the name of republican. Before all the delegates to the fusion convention could be brought into line for him he was compelled to express himself in a speech as being with the fusion forces in their work and on that statement he gave up all his pretense of being a republican.

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getting to expose some of the senator's rank fallacies. The speech was a veritable cyclone of good things and presented to the audience so clearly and forcibly that the effect will be beneficial to the republican cause. Holcomb, C. H. Laberteaux, William Sinclair, George Barnes, W. W. Cleveland, all of whom lost lay, grain, etc. Some farm buildings were also burned.