

LOVE'S WAY.

Where Love builds his nest, dear
Where his steps incline,
Rosy east or west, dear,
That sweet way be thine.
That sweet way,
Where dwells the May—
That sweet way be thine.

Where Love reaps the blooms, dear,
Where his bright stars shine,
Sheltered from the glooms there,
That sweet way be thine.
That sweet way,
Until God's day—
That sweet way be thine.

And still for thee, the light, dear,
Though never light be mine;
And thank God for the night, dear,
If morning's rose be thine.
And Love's dear way,
Until God's day—
And Love's dear way be thine.

—Frank L. Stanton, in Atlanta Constitution.

MY OWN DECEASE.

ALTHOUGH undoubtedly I had been very ill, I am by no means certain of my fate at about this time; so whether I was the victim of a lively imagination, or of a hypnotic trance, I really cannot say. Any way, one morning I seemed to be conscious that I was talking with a demon, who sat by my bedside. He was a very pleasant sort of fellow and not bad looking, but somehow I knew he was a demon.

"Would you like to hear what they are saying about you and go to your own funeral?" he asked pleasantly.

"People generally do attend that ceremony personally," I suggested; then after a moment's reflection, I asked, "Am I dead, then?"

"Of course, did you not know it?"

"If I did it must have escaped my memory," I replied impudently.

"Well, you are dead, but I will give you the remarkable power of going among your family, in the spirit and invisible to them.

"That's very kind of you, but I've heard you people seldom perform services for nothing. What recompense do you require?"

"None. The penalty you will pay will be sufficient reward to me."

"What penalty?"

"To see yourself as others see you, and hear what they say of you."

My friend then dematerialized himself into thin air, and the next moment I was gliding noiselessly down the stairs.

I should explain to you that I am an orphan, without parents, but a member of a large family; sisters, brothers, and all the rest of it. I have been to have more money than any of the others, and have hitherto been much sought after on account of many excellent personal qualities. I am not married. Well, the fact is, I am of a rather retiring disposition, and not having yet come across a girl who would help me out with the preliminaries, I had not found courage to take the fatal plunge. My eldest sister, Priscilla, had therefore been keeping house for me.

I easily passed through the closed parlor door without opening it, which was very convenient, and found myself, unseen by them, in the midst of relatives from different parts of the country. They were waiting breakfast for some important person who had not yet made his appearance. I was foolish enough to think it might be myself and sat down to my customary seat at the foot of the table; but, of course, no one saw me. I had forgotten for the moment that I was a dematerialized spirit. Soon, however, the door opened, and the important individual entered the apartment. It was my eldest brother Tom. Now I began to understand. He was my executor and residuary legatee. He represented me, the late Crawley Slowgloker, Esq., deceased, hence all the court and deference paid to him. This was absurd, you know, for a bigger fool never lived.

Well, he made straight for my chair, and sat down where I was sitting! This was stepping into my shoes with a vengeance—actually usurping the same place occupied by my disembodied spirit. Tom was a bulky fellow, and I felt the affront. Besides, wishing better to watch the proceedings, I got up quickly and sat behind my chair.

Two things especially attracted my attention, and somewhat shocked me. In the first place, Priscilla's presiding seemed much more lavish than under my regime, and in the second I was struck by the happiness and gaiety of the whole company. This was calculated to take my fatuity down a few pegs; for I had fondly imagined that my death would plunge my entire family in the uttermost depths of despair. But it hadn't!

"I never like going into black," Priscilla was saying in her even tones to Aunt Gwen; "it's so very unlucky."

"I don't mind the change at all," said Aunt Gwen; "the color just suits me, you know. But I really can't tell what orders to give, not knowing how I am provided for."

"That's as good as asking," said Tom, with one of his horrible laughs, which I used to consider so hearty. "A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse. I suppose the regular thing is to read the will after the funeral; but as it's all among ourselves it does not matter, and I'll read it to all directly after breakfast."

Then they started talking about their late relation, Crawley Slowgloker, and the things I heard about myself positively astonished me.

They were all sadly deficient in the bump of reverence, and I found that

not one of them entertained that respect and affection for me of which I had imagined they were all possessed. Now I fully realized the truth of my friend, the demon's, words. It was a dreadful penalty to pay, a sad mortification to hear what they said of me, and to see myself as others saw me.

"Well, of course," my cousin Vernon said, responding to some remark in a virtuously deprecatory tone. "Of course, de mortuis nil nisi bonum, and all that sort of thing, you know, but I can't help saying that Crawley was always mean—horribly mean!"

Confound the fellow! And this was a man to whom I had left \$500, forgiving him all the money he owed me, which was as good as doubling the legacy!

"No, no; not mean," Tom answered, and I blessed him for those words, but he spoiled it all by adding, "A bit careful, you know."

"Ah, I should think so," says Priscilla. "You will hardly believe it, but it's a fact he never allowed me money enough to keep house decently."

Of course, this was not true, as you may imagine. She was always waiting more money, and yet never succeeded in purchasing anything remarkable. And this was my sister Priscilla, whom I had always thought so affectionate, so entirely devoted to me. Oh, it was too horrible.

These three were my principal legates. If I had only known sooner! But how was that possible?

I knew what I would do. I had made up my mind—and having no body, I was all mind now—I would go at once to my solicitor's, and have a codicil drawn up while there was yet time. But stay, there was no time; it was too late. I had quite forgotten that I was only a poor ghost, a dematerialized spirit, and that old idiot, Sharpshill, was so wedded to routine and old-fashioned custom that he would certainly regard a posthumous testament as informal, and as I was invisible he would treat my signature as null and decidedly void.

When next I turned toward my amiable and disinterested family circle, I perceived that the breakfast things had been removed, and Tom Slowgloker sat in the armchair with my will spread out before him.

"There's some one missing," he said, looking around him magisterially; "who is it?"

"Only my sister Minnie," Vernon remarked casually. "I went to her this morning, but she's so upset about his death that she feels quite ill, and could not come down to breakfast."

"Don't be absurd," said Priscilla; "why she never gave him so much as a civil word." Then, sotto voce to her brother: "And that's what has upset her. I expect, she is afraid she has spoiled her chances of a legacy."

Oh, that spiteful Priscilla! If I could only alter my will! But it was too late, for here was my executor standing, or rather sitting in my place. At least there was one thing I could do; I would find my friend the demon, and see if arrangements could not be made for haunting them!

But these precious words about Minnie had sent him into my tortured spirit, so that he incorporated heart throbbed, shaking the venetians, and Tom asked where the draught came from. I would go to her at once, so I traversed the closed door again, passing them all as the sigh of a summer breeze, which is we know not what, or whence it comes, or whether it goes—a breath from—well, no matter where; I don't exactly know myself.

Thus I went upstairs and into Minnie's room, where I found the poor girl still in bed, her cheeks pale, her eyes red with weeping, all the signs upon her of a sleepless night of sorrow, and pressed close to her soft bosom she held a likeness of my unworthy self, which I had given her once upon a time. And this was the girl who never spoke save to ridicule and poke fun at me, whose dislike for me was almost proverbial in the family; and yet the girl whose love—with usual human perversity—I would have given all the world to win.

Ah, this knowledge of her heart's secret was sweet to me! It gave me courage. I would comfort her. I would pour forth my love. I would tell her—stay! what could I tell her? Was I not forgetting again that I was only a poor ghost—merely the shadow of a shade? Was I not unseen by her? And even were it possible for me to make myself visible for a few moments, I should only succeed in terrifying my poor love out of her senses. Alas! was this the realization of a hereafter? The punishment of early vanities and sins? To see things just as they are, and yet to be so miserably impotent to alter them; to see, too, what might have been, and to beat out my weary spirit on into eternity in vain longing for a fruition that can never come.

My funeral was appointed to take place the next day. It was a very grand affair altogether, and cake and tea had been laid in the parlor to entertain the guests upon this festive occasion.

As I accompanied the mourners down the steps, I suddenly perceived my friend the demon by my side. Vainly I sought a coach, but could find no room. I turned to him somewhat angrily and remarked:

"I say, you promised I should go to my own funeral, but I don't seem to have been considered in the arrangement at all."

"You forget that corporeally you hold the place of honor at the head of the procession but in the spirit you can get in here. There's only the doctor and the clergyman."

"Between the doctor and the parson! Really my dear demon, you are remarkable for a most sardonic humor."

Well, the men of medicine and religion talked politics all the way, which I thought inappropriate; but as they were both conservatives they did not disagree. I am a Liberal myself, and

began vociferously expounding Mr. Gladstone's policy, quite oblivious that my gesticulations were unseen, my words unheard by them.

"Good job for yourself you are dead," said the demon. "You're just the sort to get into a jolly row with red hot politicians!"

The cemetery was soon reached, and I looked down and saw my coffin lowered into the open grave.

"Earth to earth—"

A few lids were thrown, and fell upon the lid with a gressive rattle, and—

I awoke with a start, and my eyes met those of my brother Tom, who asked cheerily, "Well, how do you do now, old fellow?" But I turned from him—for I could not help thinking of him as I had seen him last, reading my will down in the parlor—turned away and encountered my darling little Minnie, who sat unobserved in a remote corner of the room, and I felt, oh! so grateful and happy at seeing her there. I felt then that it was not all a dream.

I have used feigned names in this veracious tale, because I think she would not like to know the strange experience which led me to take courage to woo, and by and by, wed her—Spare Moments.

Facts About Sponges.

Some of the finest kinds of sponges are found in Florida waters, and the culturist would find profit in raising such species as the "sheep wool," the "velvet," the "hard head" and the "grass" sponge. Some of the kinds recognized as quite distinct are, nevertheless, so much alike in appearance that only an expert can tell them apart. The sheep's wool sponges are best of all for the bath.

It is a fact worth knowing that it pays very much better to buy unbleached sponges. The bleached ones look much prettier, but the chloride of lime employed in the process injures the skeleton, and lessens its strength so that it soon comes to pieces. When you find sand in a sponge, you may know that you are indebted to trade dishonesty. Sponges never grow on a sandy bottom. The sand is added in the bales to make them weigh more.

The sponges are gathered by small boats. In each boat are two men; one sculls, while the other leans over the bow. When he sees a sponge, he spears it and drags it aboard. If the water is rough, he uses a "water glass," which is simply an ordinary pail with a glass bottom. The pail is hung around the neck of the fisherman, who sinks it below the surface when he wishes to see. In this way he can get a perfect view of the bottom. In the Mediterranean sponges are collected usually by dredges, but sometimes by naked divers.

The sponges of commerce are warm water animals. They come chiefly from the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Bahamas, and Florida.

The Stair Cure Now.

A new form of regular daily exercise that is being prescribed by more than one London physician is stair climbing. It is recommended for strengthening the heart.

This can only be done by taking regular, systematic and sufficient muscular exercise. Let a person who finds his pulse increased fifty to sixty beats in a minute after mounting a staircase, climb a hundred staircases day after day for a month or more, and it is said, he will find that the exertion does not add ten beats to the normal number of his heart throbs.

The exercise has acted upon this vital organ just as it does on the biceps of a prizefighter or a blacksmith, and strength and the capacity for endurance have been the result. But this is not all the good to be gained by climbing a hundred staircases a day, my fifty in the morning and fifty in the afternoon. Doubtless the person with a weak heart has suffered more or less from what is called nervous dyspepsia. His food, instead of being properly digested, has been mainly fermented in his stomach, and has caused him various uncomfortable feelings, which he has been in the habit of attributing to everything but their proper cause.

It is claimed that not only have the hundred minutes so spent in climbing staircases put strength into his legs, expanded his chest, and saved his heart from fatty degeneration, but that they have given tone to his abdominal muscles and to his digestive organs.—New York Journal.

Freaks for the Paris Exposition.

The freak exhibitors are just now besieging the managers of the coming Paris Exposition for space to exhibit their wonders. One man has a pair of hairless horses, each of which has a horn in its forehead and skin of the color of a ripe banana. Another waits to exhibit a woman who has two faces and three tongues, but who is perfectly dumb. Another writes for space in which to exhibit a winged sheep, which only has two legs, and a horse which has eight perfect hoofs in four legs. An Austrian war, a particular young lady was rudely awakened by her bike striking a stone. When she realized her situation she showed herself a perfect lady by immediately fainting away.—Boston Transcript.

A Bicycle Somnambulist.

"La Somnambule" up to date was seen at Bath Beach, N. Y., Sunday morning, when a young lady, beautiful, of course, was discovered riding a bicycle, and yet sound asleep. This particular young lady was rudely awakened by her bike striking a stone. When she realized her situation she showed herself a perfect lady by immediately fainting away.—Boston Transcript.

THE FIELD OF ADVENTURE.

THRILLING INCIDENTS AND DARING DEEDS ON LAND AND SEA.

Desperate Battle Between Hunters and Bears—Immersed in a Sea of Fire—A Frightful Slide.

FRANK AND ENOS CLARK, of Olympia, Wash., their cousin, Henry Walker, and Elsen Hoffman, of Astoria, Or., had a fight with two large brown bears which they are not likely to forget.

They went down the Columbia River and put in a few days shooting big game. For miles back of Oak Point the country is pretty densely timbered with a somewhat heavy undergrowth. That section has the reputation of abounding with deer, and that is all the sportsmen were looking for.

In the forenoon they were fortunate enough to bring a buck to grass. After cleaning and skinning the game they left and went in pursuit of more deer. After hunting a couple of hours without getting another glimpse of a deer, Henry Walker remarked that some one had better look after the slain animal to guard against its being carried off by a bear, as bruisa also thrives down there. Enos Clark and Hoffman volunteered to see to the carcass, but it had disappeared. They instigated a search in the underbrush and found their venison in the possession of two cinnamon cubs, which were feasting upon it. Clark dispatched one of the cubs with a rifle ball in its head. The report had not died away when two huge cinnamon bears rushed upon them.

Hoffman, whose back was turned to the brutes, was knocked down with one stroke of a paw, landing on his right side and fracturing four of his ribs. The brute turned from the prostrate man, who was rendered unconscious, and the two bears centered attention upon Clark, who, being armed with a magazine rifle, shot the animals every time he had a chance to shoot. Both were wounded in several places when Mr. Clark's magazine gun was empty.

Young Clark's rapid firing attracted the attention of his brother and his cousin. They reached Enos not a moment too soon. At the same instant that Frank and Henry appeared the female bear had caught up with Enos and, rising upon her haunches, she threw her whole weight upon him. She was on the fallen man, chewing away on the clothing covering his right shoulder. While Frank was keeping the huge male bear at bay Henry, in rapid succession, sent two rifle balls through the head of the brute covering his cousin, thus saving his life. Enos, however, suffered a broken collar bone and the loss of the tip of his nose, which greatly disfigures him.

Meanwhile Frank also had the left side of his face crushed and his right arm broken by a stroke of the remaining bear's paw and his fall from the blow. At this stage of the proceedings bruisa was frightened away from the scene by the two volleys from Henry's rifle and disappeared in the brush.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Immersed in a Sea of Fire.

One of the strangest accidents that could happen a gasoline launch caused the wreck of the launch Henrietta at San Francisco.

Her owners, Frank Darling, Charles Darling and John Durney, had just secured a contract with a grocery firm and a laundry company to do their shipping, and Frank Darling rowed out to the launch where she lay off Long Bridge to see that she was in good order. He made fast his boat and stepped below, but as he opened the cabin door there came an explosion that blew him backward into the water and wrecked the launch.

Darling, though badly shaken up by the explosion, rose to the surface almost immediately, only to find that the surface of the water had been covered with burning gasoline, and that he was swimming about in the midst of it. He dove at once and swam under water for some distance, but he had to come to the surface twice before he got outside the circle of flaming oil. Then a boat, which attracted by the explosion had put off from shore, picked him up.

In the meantime the launch had been burning merrily and to save her the rescuing boat came alongside and knocked a hole in her.

The explosion without doubt was caused by the gasoline tank. It was situated in the bow of the boat and had been filled only the day before. It is supposed that some leak allowed the oil to escape, and this, generating gas in the cabin, caused an explosion when the door was opened. Or it may be, the sun shining through the cabin windows had heated the gas, generated to such a degree that it was exploded in time to catch the boatman as he opened the door.

The cabin was blown to atoms and the launch was set on fire. The oil from the tank had been scattered through a radius of twenty feet and being slowly borne by the tide toward some valuable yachts lying near by, the little patches of greasy fluid blazing merrily as they danced along. The yachts were quickly moved out of harm's way, however, and the flaming oil burned harmlessly until it went out.

A Boy's Frightful Slide.

Irma Crum, a Western boy, has just had a terrible experience that nearly resulted in his death. With a party of men and women, the boy was climbing Mount Lassen, a steep and dangerous mountain in California. They had got to the top in safety when a member of the party lost his hat, the wind carrying it along on the snow to the edge of the mountain.

Young Ira thought he could get the hat, and started out. The snow on such a high mountain is deep and very slippery, and Ira had scarcely started after the hat before his feet slipped from under him, and away he went down the mountain with the speed of a toboggan slide. On he went, quite unable to stop himself, to the very edge of a deep precipice, when he had the good fortune to get struck in the snow. Had he gone six feet further he would have fallen 2000 feet on the rocks below, to meet with a terrible death.

His friends on top of the mountain could see him clinging to the snow for dear life. His two sisters, Alles and Vila Crum, were in the party and were terribly frightened. His friends at once began thinking of some way to save him. At first they thought of returning to camp for a rope long enough to reach down from the top of the mountain, but it was feared that Crum could not hold on in his perilous position for the length of time it would take to make such a long journey.

At last E. B. Collins, of Chico, and Dr. De Haven, of Red Bluff, conceived an idea. This was to take a couple of short sticks, and by starting on a level with the clinging boy, dig a trail along the banks of the precipice to where he was. This was an exceedingly slow and dangerous undertaking, as one mistake would have hurled them to instant death. When the rescuers reached Crum they found him nearly unconscious from the cold and his hands and feet were nearly frozen. Ira was finally released from his perilous position, but Collins and the doctor almost had to carry him out, so badly was he used up by his rough experience.

A Fight With a Fish.

The 110-pound blue channel catfish that has been one of the many attractions in the fisheries building of the State fair was removed against his vigorous protest to the hatcheries Sunday afternoon, and John Meredith, of the hatchery, has three broken ribs, State Fish Commissioner Lewis May carries several bruises, and Superintendent O'Brien a study in Superintending coloring under his left eye.

The ponderous fish has been confined in a narrow tank at the exhibit. He is a wicked fellow, and a cloth was pretty well known, so a cloth was folded about his head before an attempt was made to remove him from his tank. In lifting him out he struggled loose, and then began an exciting three-round fight as has been seen hereabouts for many months.

The fisheries men labored with the big fish and the big fish labored with the fisheries men, and for a while it looked as though the reserves of the metropolitan police would have to be called out to quell the disturbance. The men and the fish rolled over on the floor, and every now and then the monster would swing his tail with the viciousness of Corbett's right. Whenever he "landed" one of the men went down. He used his mouth, too, and Mr. May says that it looked like the entrance to the Sub-Treasury vault, so large was it.

Meredith, during the melee, was struck by the tail and crushed against the side of the building, breaking three ribs, and was removed to town for medical attention. O'Brien got a corner of the tail in the face that gave him a souvenir decoration, while the others were more or less bruised in the struggle.

The fish was finally conquered and rolled into his tank and sent to the fisheries. The blue in the building caused by the exclamations of the gentlemen will have faded in the course of a couple of days. This is the first time that the fish has ever given any serious trouble, although he is always more or less difficult to handle.—Omaha World-Herald.

Two Brothers United.

S. J. Elsey, a veteran of the Mexican and Civil Wars, who for the past decade has lived at the Soldiers' Home in Leavenworth, Kan., and for the best part of a lifetime, was re-united himself alone in the world, was rejoined the other day when a brother who he thought had been killed in the war found him and offered him a home. He and his father and two brothers had entered the Mexican War. He had helped to bury the father and one brother after a battle and he had heard that the other brother also was killed.

After the Civil War he lived only for himself and brought up at the Soldiers' Home; but the brother, who had not been killed, married, toiled, and prospered at Hilliard Station, Ohio, and at last came to Leavenworth.—New York Sun.

A Dog's Expensive Appetite.

A dog who has eaten up a farm and a set of buildings has been found in Eastern Maine. This dog killed a neighbor's sheep. The neighbor offered to call it square if the dog was killed. The dog's master refused to agree to this, and a lawsuit came next. To pay the costs and damages assessed by the Court the owner of the dog had to mortgage his farm for \$100. The mortgage had a bigger appetite than the dog, and soon his farm was gone and the owner had to move away. The dog is now dead.

Fine Wire.

The finest wire in the country is made at Taunton, Mass. This metal cobweb of minute diameter is exactly 1-5000 part of an inch in thickness—much finer than human hair. Ordinary wire, even though of small diameter, is drawn through holes in steel plates, but on account of the wear such plates cannot be used in making the hair wire. The Taunton factory uses drilled diamonds for the dye plates.—Industrial World.

WISE WORDS.

Our friends may overlook our faults, but they see them just the same.

It adds greatly to our comfort not to realize what an ass we make of ourselves.

Keep your eye on the man who selects his friends before he forms their personal acquaintance.

It is when a man has plenty of worries of his own that he is most inclined to borrow trouble.

The last infirmity of noble minds is ignorance of the difference between talking much and saying much.

When a woman becomes so sick that she doesn't care how she looks, it is high time to send for a doctor.

We are all likely to have sympathy with the under dog, but we keep our hands in our pockets so they won't be bitten.

Amateur theatrical performances will never be popular so long as performers insist upon having audiences attend them.

There are lots of people even now, who would not object to the burning of witches if they were allowed to select the witches.

Very often when we think we are impressing people with our smartness, we are only making a reputation for being disagreeable.

The needle is true to the pole; but that is only natural. That which has never been reached is always apt to be an object of desire.

The reputation of many men for truthfulness is due to their lack of imagination.—Truth.

Hazardous Employment.

A general impression prevails that mining is the most hazardous of all occupations, but an examination of statistics relating to the matter in the United States shows that railroading is in reality three times as dangerous as coal mining. The number of people employed by railroads in the United States in 1895, according to the report of the Interstate Commerce Commission, was 785,034, including officials, clerks, telegraph operators. Of this number 1811 were killed and 25,696 injured during the year. It, therefore, follows that one employee was killed for each 433 employed, and one employee injured for every thirty-one employed. If only the men actually employed on the trains be considered, known as the train hands, including engineers, conductors, brakemen and others, which are comparable with the actual miner, one employee was killed for each 155 in the service, and one injured for each eleven in the service.

For purposes of comparison the Pennsylvania anthracite regions may be taken, as they are admittedly the most dangerous mining districts in the world. The mine inspectors' statistics of Pennsylvania for 1895 report 148,910 employees. The fatalities numbered 422, and the number injured 1120. These figures show that there was one person killed for every 340 employed, and one injured for every 128 employees. In the bituminous fields of this State the fatalities numbered 155 and the injured 419, or one person killed for each 648 employees, and one injured for each 203 employees. Combining these figures will be seen that one miner lost his life for each 410 employed, and one person was injured for each 148. These ratios, as before stated, show that railroading is almost three times as dangerous as coal mining.—The Colliery Engineer.

Pockets That Lock.

A Chicago firm of wholesale clothiers has invented a locked pocket, to be put in trousers, coats and vests. The pad has captured male wearers of clothes and bids fair to become popular. It is an attachment by which pockets can be locked, and any attempt to go through them will be foredoomed to failure. The manufacturers say that they will prevent pocket picking, and that their universal use will force every criminal who practices the art to turn his attention to some other line of business.

There are no locks on the locked pocket, or, at all events, what might be called a lock is keyless. They work with a spring by a combination which is secret to all but the wearer. It locks with keys as desired they can be employed, but the danger in such an event would be that the key might be looked in the pocket, and a man would have to go to a locksmith if he wanted car fare.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Cool Water.

The Mexicans do not use ice, but, nevertheless, there is no other country in the world than Mexico where a man can get a sweet and at the same time cool glass of water. The water jars are made of porous pottery, which allows the water to ooze through the material of the tanks, and the evaporation keeps it always cold.

It is not cold like ice water, but it is all the better on that account, as a man can drink twice as much and never feel in the least injured, no matter how large his draughts.

Australian ranchmen frequently put water into skin bottles, which they suspend from the veranda, and the air sowing the skins backward and forward cools the water and renders it more palatable.—New York Journal.

London Assessments.

The rateable value of London has increased during the last five years by two and three-quarters millions, making a total of nearly \$180,000,000. While the rate remains the same the London County Council will get \$500,000 more than last year, the London School Board \$400,000, the police \$300,000 and the water companies \$325,000.

FLEET-WINGED CARRIERS.

PIGEONS THAT ARE TRAINED TO CARRY WAR DISPATCHES.

How the Birds Are Taught—Mystery of Their Unerring Flight—A Quick Trip From Chicago to New York.

EXPERIMENTS were tried by a signal corps at the recent State encampment in Michigan by sending carrier pigeons to Detroit with dispatches. In the four or five trials the birds brought the messages a distance of forty-two miles in the average of an hour and ten minutes, according to the Detroit Free Press.

It might seem to some to be a new departure in military work, but its origin is buried beyond the records of history. For centuries back the peaceful dove has played an important part in the wars and politics of the world. As long ago as the reign of Ramses III, King of Egypt, the carrier pigeon was used in conveying important dispatches from one point to another. It is even thought by some that Noah's "dove," which flew all day over the cheerless waters, was a carrier. Certain it is that the Egyptians made good use of this method of conveying intelligence from remote parts of the kingdom.

Frequent allusions to the carrier are made by the classic writers of Greece and Rome. A Roman of means, in going to the market place, took one of these birds with him in a basket, so that he might send home the names of the guests whom he invited to dinner. Messages were sent in this way to the Saracens in their wars with the Christians. Communication was thus kept up between the people in besieged cities and allies without. In China, Turkey, and, in fact, all Eastern countries, the use of the carrier is still one of the customs. During the war between France and Germany this was, in many cases, the only means of communication. In the siege of Paris, it is said that 25,000 of the birds were used. The Germans employed hawk, as the Saracens had falcons, to destroy them.

Now, however, it is more for amusement than as a means of useful communication that the carrier pigeon is cultivated. In Belgium, pigeon flying is one of the greatest of the National amusements. Races are held, at which from ten to twenty thousand of the birds are liberated, and great crowds of people assemble to see them start on their journey. The course is from fifty to 500 miles, according to the age of the birds, and the distance is sometimes covered remarkably fast time.

Very few persons know that there is, in this country, a National association, or league, of homing clubs. Nearly every large city, from New York to San Francisco, has one or more clubs that have for their object the raising and matching of fast birds. It is a wonderful power that the carrier has, of finding its home, though separated from it by hundreds of miles of unknown country. Some have called it instinct, and others say that it is a matter of sight and memory. It seems to be both. Certain it is, at any rate, that the carrier is very intelligent, and has a good memory and remarkable power of sight. On the other hand, it can see, at the most, a distance of seventy-five miles from its exalted position in midair, while 200 miles of countermarch unseen by the bird, is often given to it for a course.

The education of the carrier is begun when it is four months old. It is first taken just outside the loft and allowed to make its way back to its nest. It is then taken a distance of one or two blocks away and again liberated. It often happens that the bird will take a long time to find its home on this trial, but on the next at the same distance it will rise a little way in the air and then dart straight for the nest. The distance is gradually increased until the bird can find its way home from two or three miles away. Then begins a regular scale of flights until 500 miles is reached.

The carrier's flight is very swift, the average being over forty miles an hour. Several birds in this city have flown 300 miles at the rate of over sixty miles an hour, and there are well-authenticated cases in which a speed of ninety miles an hour has been attained. This, however, is with the help of a good breeze. As night comes on the pigeon rests on some tree or in some plowed furrow, but at the dawn it is away again on its swift career.

It sometimes happens that a pigeon misses the right direction in its flight. When it finds this to be the case, instead of flying around until it sees something familiar, the carrier goes directly back to the starting point and tries again.

The carrier is not fond of flying over water, perhaps because there are no guide marks and no resting places. A large number of New York homing pigeons were liberated at the World's Fair. All but one soared around for awhile and then started down Lake Michigan, following the shore. The one exception flew to the top of one of the high buildings, where it sat for fully ten minutes and then shot off eastward, directly across the lake. This bird made the flight to New York in thirty-six hours. Very often the pigeons lose their way and never reach home. The fanciers are desirous of getting rid of these birds, as either their flight is not strong or their instinct weak. Only the swift, strong birds are kept, and the greatest care is taken in breeding them.

"Willie Taddells," said the school-teacher firmly, "you have a piece of chewing-gum in your desk. Bring it to me instantly." "Yes'm," replied Willie, "but it ain't the flavor you use. Yours is orange, and this is wintergreen."—Harper's Bazar.