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Martins and Sparrows.

Two martin houses located in Warrenboro were taken possession of by a colony of English sparrows last fall when the martins vacated them for their winter sojourn in the sunny South. The martins returned on Saturday last and engaged in a pitched battle for possession of their former nesting place. Although the martins were outnumbered they made up the deficiency in avian prowess, and this made the fight all the more interesting. The conflict not only waxed warm in body blows but the noise made was almost deafening at times and attracted many persons in the neighborhood to the scene of trouble. The martins won out in the contention and retained possession of their homes.—Philadelphia Record.

Going Back on His Colors.

A Harvard football player after the recent unfortunate encounter with Yale thought he would escape the public eye by putting across the fields. A big bull, which looked as if it could do good work in a mass play, bobbed up and cast an evil eye upon the jersey of the Harvard crimson.

"Why didn't I take my father's advice," the young man reflected, "and go to Yale! This is no place for a Harvard man."—Success Magazine.

Some of the wisest of men have what Dr. Holmes described as idiotic areas in their brains.

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SCENE IN THE ISLAND OF MAURITIUS, THE LAST HOME OF THE DODO.

The average student of geography knows that the island of Mauritius lies in the Indian Ocean, about 600 miles east of Madagascar, and that it belongs to England, but he might not be able to tell whether Mauritius is notably distinguished from a score of other islands lying in the southern hemisphere, although the name Mauritius calls up before two classes of minds pictures almost as vivid as does the fateful names of Elba or St. Helena.

One of these classes consists of the lovers of romantic literature all over the world, to whom the name Mauritius suggests the tender and pathetic idyl of "Paul and Virginia," of which this island was the theatre.

The second, and much smaller class, are the paleontologists, or students of extinct animal forms, to whom Mauritius is memorable as the last home of the dodo, a grotesque and clumsy bird, with only rudimentary wings, which appears to have been extirpated about the year 1650.

In an elaborate and costly work on the dodo, published in London in 1845, under the patronage of Prince Albert, is found the following quaint description of the dodo, taken from Sir Thomas Herbert's journal of his visit to Mauritius in 1629:

"The dodo comes first to our description. Here (and nowhere else that ever I could see or hear of) is generated the dodo (a Portuguese name it is, and has reference to her simplicity), a bird which for shape and rareness might be called a Phoenix (wer't in Arabia); her body is



THE DODO. Facsimile of a drawing supposed to have made from life by Zanen.

round and extremely fat, her slow pace begets that corpulence; few of them weigh less than fifty pounds; better to the eye than stomach; greasy appetites may perhaps commend them, but to the indifferently curious, nourishment but prove offensive.

"Let's take her picture; her visage darts forth melancholy, a sensible as nature's injure in framing so great and massie a body to be directed by such small and complementall wings as are unable to hoise her from the ground, serving only to prove her a bird; which otherwise might be doubted of; her head is variously drest, the one half hooded with downy blackish feathers; the other perfectly naked; of a whitish hue, as if a transparent lawne had covered it; her bill is very hoked, and bends downwards, the thrill or breathing place is in the midst of it; from which part to the end, the colour is a light greene mixt with a pale yellow; her eyes be round and small, and bright as diamonds; her cloathing is of finest downe, such as you see in gulls; her trayne is (like a Chynese beard) of three or foure short feathers; her legs thfick, and black, and strong; her tallons sharp, her stomack fiery hot, so as stones and iron

are easily digested in it; in that and shape not a little resembling the Afric ostriches."

But one living specimen of the dodo was ever known to have been seen outside of Mauritius. This one was brought alive to Europe by a Dutch navigator, and exhibited in London in 1639. The evidence of this is contained in a manuscript in the British Museum by Hamon L'Estrange, and is as follows:

"About 1628, as I walked London streets, I saw the picture of a strange fowle hong out upon a cloth and myselfe with one or two more then in company went in to see it. It was kept in a chamber, and was a great fowle somewhat bigger than the largest turkey cock, and so legged and footed, but shorter and thicker and of a more erect shape, coloured before like the breast of a young cock fesan, and on the back of dunn or deare colour. The keeper called it a dodo, and in the ende of a chymney in the chamber there lay a heape of large pebble stones, whereof hee save it many in our sight, some as bigge as nutmegs, and the keeper told us shee eats them (conducting to digestion)."

A distinctly plaintive note in all the literature extant concerning the dodo excites curiosity and compassion. In his introduction to the dodo book, from which these extracts are taken, this feeling is appealed to by the author as follows: "We cannot see without regret the extinction of the last individual of any race of organic beings whose progenitors colonized the preadamite earth."

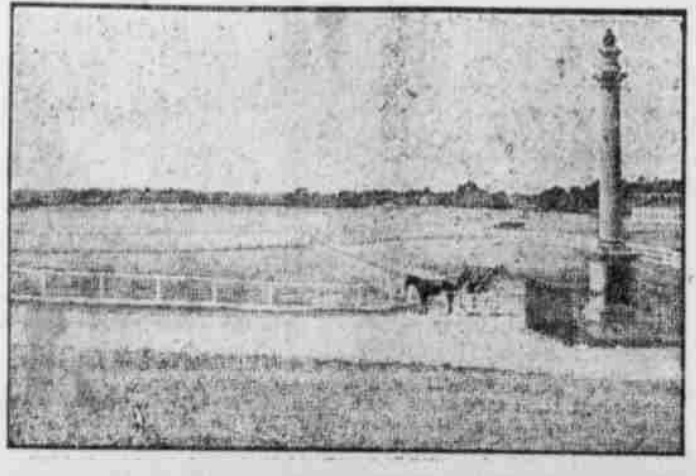
An analysis of the reason for a specially compassionate interest in the dodo would seem to show that it is founded on the strikingly grotesque character of the bird, taken with the fact that nature had been cruelly unkind to her in the matter of equipment for self-defense. She could neither run nor fly, but was, as one traveler expressed it, "a specimen of gigantic immaturity, a permanent nestling clothed with down instead of feathers, and with wings and tail so short and feeble as to be utterly unsuited to flight."

Of this cruelty of nature the dodo herself appeared to be sensible, and to show it in "her visage," according to the account of Sir Thomas Herbert. At any rate, it made the extinction of the dodo, after the discovery of the island of Mauritius by the Portuguese about 1505, so swift and complete as to give it, to one interested, a flavor of tragedy. The last of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth made an era of geographical discovery, when every sea was filled with the barkis of explorers and marauding buccaniers in search of new worlds. To these ruthless food hunters the dodo fell an easy prey, while the domestic animals which accompanied civilization wantonly devoured her eggs.

In the narrative of one of these explorers, William van Wert Zanen, who visited Mauritius in 1602, he speaks of killing fifty dodos and taking them on board his ship, where they were salted. Assailed thus, both in front and rear, what wonder that the dodo's visage "darted forth melancholy," or that it gave up the unequal struggle? The cut here shown accompanied Zanen's narrative, and is supposed to be from a drawing made by him.

The scanty relics of the dodo, amounting to little more than fragments of a head, a leg and a foot, can be found only in the treasured collections of nations, while the paintings made from life of this despised and martyred bird by Roelandt Savery are beyond price. — From Youth's Companion.

WOLFE'S MONUMENT ON THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM, QUEBEC.



The Lake Skipper.

By RALPH D. PAINE.

There was a salt water captain who, for reasons of his own, accepted a berth as first mate in a big passenger steamer on the great lakes. He was a capable seafaring man, but he did not know what "bustle" meant until he went aboard at Buffalo. The lake skipper to whom he reported for duty remarked in the most casual manner:

"Just give her a coat of paint this morning, and, if the sun stays hot and she dries in good shape, give her a second coat this afternoon."

The salt water mate staggered in his tracks and made amazed protest. This was a 5000-ton vessel, and giving her two coats of paint was several days' work by his reckoning. The lake skipper was a person of discernment, wherefore he had pity on his new mate and forebore to deal harshly with him, explaining with a tolerant grin:

"All right. I suppose you'll have to learn to move lively after snoozing around salt water all your life. You just pass that order along to the bo'an and tell him it's got to be done, and then you sit up and take notice."

The bo'an took the order calmly, as if it were in the day's work, and by nightfall the big steamer was spick and span with two coats of paint from her water line to her guard rail. The sailor from deep water had learned his first lesson in the ways of the great lakes during the navigation season, when the hard-driven shipping must be forced to do twelve months' work in half a year.—Ralph D. Paine, in Outing Magazine.

A HOUSE OF CEMENT.

How a Maine Man Has Made Himself a Good Home.

In Belfast, Me., there is a house, built by Frank Hoag, believed by the builder and citizens of that place to be the only one of the kind on earth. Aside from the blasting and digging for the cellar, the house was built by Mr. Hoag himself. The entire outside is of cement, the mixing of the component parts being undertaken after a long study of the subject. Mr. Hoag finished the inside of the house first. This being done, he lathed the whole outside with wire screen stuff, such as is used for fencing chicken pens. This was firmly fastened. The studding was close, and when the wire was on it gave a rigid surface on sides, ends and the slopes of the roof.

Over this layer of wire he spread a first coat of cement. It was well pressed on, so that it oozed through the meshes of the wire for a clinching hold. When this first coating was thoroughly set another and a heavier one was spread over the surface. Shingle effects were fashioned on the gables and on the roof the cement was shaped and lined, to give an appearance of slating. Then over the whole outside was laid a finishing veneer of cement paint.

The house is as tight as a bottle. It is impervious to heat or cold, or leak of rain; and, as its foundation is a solid ledge, it can defy the frost to wrestle with it. Mr. Hoag says the cost of building was about the same as wooden construction would have been, but he says there will be no great number of repairs.—Boston Globe.

Two "Green" Reporters.

The inexperienced reporter is likely to have an undeveloped "news sense." Every one will recall the story of the journalist who was sent to report a fashionable wedding. He returned an hour or so later empty-handed. When asked what happened, he said, "Nothing at all; the groom didn't come." A writer in Lippincott's Magazine recounts an incident not dissimilar.

At a certain school of journalism, a part of the practical work is to do regular reporting. One time a student was sent in haste to "cover" a railroad wreck at a town a few miles away.

It grew to be almost time for the paper to go to press, and still no word from the young man on the assignment. In desperation, the dean of the school telegraphed to ask why the story was not forthcoming. The reply was:

"Too much excitement. Wait till things quiet down."

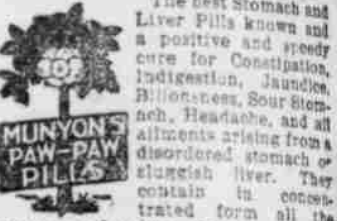
Her Red Hair Spoiled Elopement.

Her pretty red hair and the telephone proved the undoing of fourteen-year-old Grace Smith, who with Calvin Bodkins eloped from Bath County to Harrisonburg, where they expected to take the train for Hagers-town.

The girl's father, John M. Smith, telephoned Constable Revercomb to intercept the lovers and hold them until his arrival. The constable recognized the couple by the girl's hair and held them at his home until her papa arrived. Bodkins, who is eighteen years old, denied that they were the persons wanted, but Papa Smith arrived within an hour and took his daughter back to their Bath County home, fifty miles away.—Harrisburg Correspondence Baltimore Sun.

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