

Remarkable Intelligence

About the time when the papers were full of the controversy growing out of the stories of the "nature fakirs," two negroes in Washington were overheard discussing the intelligence of birds in general.

"Birds is shore sensible," observed one darky to the other. "Yo' kin learn them anything. Iuster work for a lady that had one in a clock, an' when it was time to tell de time it uster come out an' say cuckoo jest as many times as de time was!"

"Yo' doan' say so?" asked the other negro, incredulously.

"Shore thing!" responded the first darky. "But de most wonderful part was dat it was only a wooden bird, too!"

Crushed, to Rise Again

The Rev. Dr. David Gregg recently confessed, in his letter read at the fiftieth anniversary of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church and afterward printed in the Brooklyn *Eagle*, that all the books in his library are marked. The marks are mainly reminiscent, but some are educational, as Doctor Gregg amusingly demonstrates.

It was my privilege once, he states, to entertain the celebrated Dr. John Blank and his wife, while the doctor was preaching for us. Doctor Blank is the pastor of a historic church in England. He is also a noted biographer.

One of those marked books of mine was innocently lying on the sitting-room table. It was "The Christian World Pulpit." I had read the book through and marked it. Sermons that were good I had marked "G," that is, "Good." Sermons that were no better than I could preach myself I had marked "N. G.," "No good." The "G" sermons I might possibly give a second reading.

Doctor Blank picked up the book, and was at once interested in it. He said to me:

"And pray, what is the meaning of these marks opposite the sermons?"

When I had explained the meanings of the marks he threw himself back in a convulsion of laughter and shouted:

"You have my friend Black marked 'N. G.!'"

I knew that Mr. Black would hear of that. I could imagine Doctor Blank in a clerical circle at home telling the good story on Black. But what surprised me was that he did not show the book to his wife and share the joke with her. She would have been a good witness to the truth of the story.

I saw the doctor's face suddenly mantled by a blush. He began to make apologies to his friend Black, and explain:

"O Doctor Gregg, it is not fair to judge a man by the sermons in this book. When we preach in London the editor sends his reporter, who takes down our sermons and prints them without our revision. It is not fair at all."

I became suspicious of that man's generosity, and instinctively asked myself the question, "I wonder if Doctor Blank himself has a sermon in that book? Black and Blank come pretty close together alphabetically."

When the doctor went to his room I hastened to the book and looked the matter up. There was Black marked "N. G." and John Blank ditto!

But I must finish the story. Doctor Blank went again to London and preached upon the same subject, "Saving One's Soul." The sermon was reported in full in one of my British papers. When I compared it with the sermon in the marked book I found it a vast improvement, and immediately marked it "G.!"

I claim all the credit for that improved sermon.

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