

A SINGING MOUSE.

When "Pigeon and Pets" was published, I wrote the true story of a Singing Mouse, but as this paper reached but few of the readers of the REVIEW, I will add my yarn to the "Twice Told Tales":—

One evening while sitting in my library, I thought that I heard birds chirping and singing sweetly, and as the sounds came from the direction of the window, I supposed the birds to be outside. For some days I continued to hear the piping and at last decided that birds were to be excluded from the question, as the sounds appeared to come from different parts of the room, and if the walls had not ears they certainly seemed to be possessed of vocal organs. There was a mystery and the first thing to be done was to examine into my mental condition to see if a "bee in my bonnet" would not account for the singing. This point satisfactorily settled in the negative, I suddenly remembered that last winter a dancing (jumping) mouse had paid us a visit and would it not be a proper thing for this season's programme to include a singing mouse. Just as this thought struck me the mysterious vocalist commenced his concert behind a hot water coil. Still having a faint fear of the bee in the bonnet theory I called one of the servants to listen to the sounds, and she at once said "why that is the noise I heard moving about my room for weeks." To my mind this settled the mouse theory satisfactorily, but remembering that this is the age of hard facts and being a little curious to meet the musical prodigy in the flesh, a "Delusion" trap was placed in the neighborhood of the coil. Next day I observed that the enterprising pussy of our establishment was also bent on the study of the singing mouse, her enthusiasm evi-

dently having a physiological rather than a psychological basis. It was a very dangerous situation for the mouse, but while he avoided Tabby's claws he fell a victim to the seductive charms of toasted cheese. Five minutes after the little fellow was captured the mystery of the invisible singer was solved, for the prisoner ran up and down the scale in a delightful manner, and when placed in a cage sang frequently. To all appearances he was nothing more than a common house mouse, although when I came to think over the chief points of the common mouse I found them more difficult to enumerate than those of the Almond Tumbler. Mousie sang early and late and when devoting himself to song alone, sat on his hind legs and produced a great variety of sweet notes that could be heard fifteen to twenty feet away. The song varied greatly and is difficult of description, but it resembled the twittering and singing of birds at a distance more than anything else I can think of. Anyone who has watched a red squirrel "winding up the clock" can easily imagine the appearance of the mouse when engaged in singing.

Apparently he sang at times for amusement, and when frightened made a musical chattering. One night some one allowed the prisoner to escape in the pigeon loft and he celebrated the event by singing a merry ditty behind the eam shell box. Next day my nimble left assistant captured the grey coated tenor in a handful of cotton wool, and alas! fright or asphyxia (the doctors could not settle the point) finished the vocalist's song of life.

A friend who sat in the library one evening and heard our little prodigy trying over a few low notes said that last winter his hearth had been invaded by singing mice, but their tones were high pitched and