

### The Mirror's Fault.

Let us not be afraid to speak the hearty, direct word of praise, when we can do so with entire truthfulness. Discriminating appreciation is a very different thing from flattery, and is worthy of cultivation.

I recall that the first week of a summer holiday was really marred for a sensitive and rather self-distrustful girl by the revelations of the small mirror in her room. Without actual distortion her face looked back at her with a most unattractive, greenish pallor. All the pretty ruffled gowns, fashioned by mother's loving fingers, proved alike unbecoming and a very great disappointment. 'That is such a pretty gown,' one of the older boarders remarked one day, 'and just your color.' And the girl found herself impulsively pouring out her disappointment in it, and breathing a faint hope that it might be partly the fault of her glass.

'Come into my room,' said this woman, with ready sympathy. 'I have a good, correct mirror.' And the young girl went in and was comforted. 'Come and use it whenever you feel like it,' continued her new-found and sympathetic friend.

A mere trifle? Yes, it was; but the kindly possessor of that correct mirror lived gracefully in the girl's memory long months afterward.—'Young People.'

### My Greatest Blunder.

In the Crerar Library, Chicago, is a book in which five hundred men, out of work, have written of 'the greatest blunder of their life.' It is a collection made by Dr. Earl Pratt. Here are some of them. They may prove a word in season to some erring reader.

'Didn't save what I earned.'

'Self-conceit, and not listening to my parents.'

'Did not as a boy realize the value of an education.'

'Spent my money foolishly when I was earning good wages.'

'My greatest blunder was when I left school in the fifth grade.'

'The greatest blunder of my life was when I took my first drink.'

'Was to fool away my time when at school.'

'The turning point in my life was when at fifteen I ran away from home.'

'Did not realize the importance of sticking to one kind of employment.'

'When I let myself be misled in thinking that I need not stick to one thing.'

'If I had taken better care of my money I would be in better health and morals.'

'One of the greatest blunders of my life was not to perfect myself in one of the lines of business I started out to learn.'—The 'Epworth Herald.'

### Constantinople Dogs.

How shall I describe them? I should call them brownish-yellow fox-hounds. I relieve my bosom of the indignant wrath which I have accumulated against their detractors. How much I have heard about the ferocity of these dogs! Some actually warn tourists to provide stout sticks to protect themselves against them. What a groundless calumny! Why, these dogs are as meek and quiet as a stout city man on Sunday morning! Either the writers of some books have drawn on their imaginary fear, or these dogs have recently acquired a moral reformation of character!

There they are, thousands of them; you see a pack in every street. They are the only scavengers of the dirtiest system in the world. All sorts of refuse is thrown into the streets at nightfall, and these dogs eat it before day-

break. Here is a strange problem for veterinary surgeons. These dogs have the most offensive food, and yet they have no sign of the diseases from which English dogs suffer. They are strong and vigorous. Is it that constant life in the open air, without muzzles or collars or leashes, is a panacea? They are everywhere; you are in constant danger of tumbling over them as they lie, with their eyes shut, in all sorts of attitudes on the sides of the streets. The metropolitan and the city police combined could not make sleepy, contented, amiable creatures 'move on.'

As important public officials everybody treats them with grave deference. Their puppies lie around them, or waddle slowly about, gazing at you with melancholy appealing eyes, but the idea of getting out of your way never appeals to them. They and the little Turkish babies tumble about in the gutters and on the narrow muddy walks. They are too good, or too lazy to chase a side cat. But—if any dog strays beyond the unmarked but well-known limit of his beat—ah! he never repeats that unpardonable offence, for he never returns! Before you realized what had happened, the barking and yelping are over, and the hapless intruder is a corpse. In this the dog of Constantinople is singularly like his master.—From the 'Morning Lands of History.'

### Pietro.

#### THE STORY OF A CANARY BIRD.

(Julia A. E. Buck, in the 'Christian Endeavor World'.)

The story of Pietro, or Peter, as he was commonly called, is true; and the dear little ball of down and feathers was a real bird, given to me in my childhood.

Peter was a full-blooded German, though his name is Italian. His education was entirely in the English language, and he came nearer to actually speaking than any other little bird I have known or have ever heard of. It often seemed as if he were trying in his quaint way to scold, reprove, or praise us, as the case might be.

He was a delicately formed little fellow, with light lemon-colored cap and vest, white wings and tail, and a much deeper shade of yellow on his back between his wings.

He possessed a wonderfully clear, sweet voice, and, if you were in another room you would often think there were several birds singing instead of one.

Peter was given to me at a time when I was to some extent an invalid in the home of my grandparents, and so I had many hours to spend in teaching him.

His education was not brought about by harsh measures, but always by kindness and gentleness.

When night came on, I would bring out his small willow cage; and as soon as he saw it he would enter it. In it were always to be found a dish of seed and a cup of water for his lunch during the night or in the early morning, should he need it. His cage was then placed on the foot of my bed and securely fastened there.

If I was late in rising, he reminded me that it was time to get up, by his constant calling, which sounded to all who heard him very much as if he said, 'Pretty quick, pretty Peter.'

Grandma was accustomed to taking a nap in her rocking-chair every day after dinner. Peter had been taught that during this time silence was to reign in the bird-cage as well as outside. So, when the time came, he made preparations as if he were going to sleep—though I think he never did go to sleep. If

the nap was usually long, and he became hungry or thirsty, he dropped quietly to his lower perch, and refreshed himself, and then as quietly returned to his former position.

One day, while sewing, I accidentally dropped the shears, which, of course, made no small noise. Immediately Peter left his perch and, coming over to the side of the cage nearest to me with drooping wings and snapping eyes scolded me soundly, as if saying: 'I am surprised at you; I am obliged to keep still, and so ought you. Now don't let this happen again.'

He was accustomed to being out of his cage as much as he was in it, or even more; and often on entering the room, if I did not see him, I said, 'Where is Peter?' and he would fly near me, and answer with a cheerful little chirp. If I pretended that I did not see him, and said, 'Where can Peter be?' he flew up on a chair or table by my side, and, standing very straight, sang one of his sweetest songs. Still looking in another direction, I said, 'Where do you suppose Peter is?' He would then fly to my shoulder and sing an ear-splitting tune. Still not noticing him, I said, 'Where can that bird be?' Then he always flew up, and perched on top of my head, singing, if possible, louder than ever. After that I always took him down and petted him to his heart's content.

Whenever I held him close to my cheek, and told him to kiss me, he touched my cheek lightly with tip of his tongue.

I often took my little pet out into the yard, and set him on a rose-bush, on the ground, or on the walk, where he enjoyed picking up bits of gravel. But, if I went many yards away from him, he came very anxious, and, giving a little nervous chirp, flew to me at once, lighting on my shoulder or hand apparently afraid of losing me.

On several occasions I carried him in my hand to the homes of our neighbors, who always looked astonished at what they thought imprudence in me, thinking the little creature would betake himself to flight and be seen by me no more.

Twice when I was absent from home some one by accident left his cage door open in a room where the windows were up; and he went out to try his wings, or possibly to search for me.

One one of these occasions he was gone more than an hour before my grandmother knew of his absence. When she made the discovery, she was greatly alarmed, and, going out into the garden, began calling 'Peter, Peter, Peter.' Then she listened and heard a canary-singing far off among the trees. Again she called, and as she listened the singing seemed to be nearer. So she continued calling, and in a little while Peter flew down and lighted on a plant at her feet; and she took him up and carried him back to the house. He shook his feathers, and seemed delighted to be home again.

The other time he was not gone so long, and my grandmother found him standing on the fence at the side of the yard in the shade of a grape-vine, singing lustily, and again he was made a willing captive.

(To be continued.)

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