

the names of human beings. Thus, in English-speaking countries, Tom and Tabby are applied to the cat; Jack and Jenny to the ass; Billy and Nanny to the goat; Neddy to the donkey; Dobbin to the horse; and doubtless, the same is the case with several other names which at present do not occur to the Cynic. So, also, in the case of birds. The sparrow, (which in French is *pierrot*,) used at one time to be called *Philipp*. English scholars will probably call to mind John Skelton's "Boke of Philipp Sparrowe," which Coleridge speaks of as "an exquisite and original poem." The magpie, (Fr. *margot*,) is so named from *Marg*, dim. of *Margaret*; and Lat., *pica*, i.e., *picta*, the painted one; and the children's sweet friend,

"The household bird with the red stomacher"

is known by the name of *Robin*-redbreast. In like manner, we have the *Jack*-daw, the *Tom*-tit, and the *Jenny*-wren. The parrot is also humanized, as it were, by being called "Pretty *Poll*," and DIOGENES calls attention to the life-like portrait of the bird, that Tennyson has drawn in his Prologue to the *Princess*. Lilia, it will be remembered, is replying to the affectionate banter of her brother, Walter:

"O yes, you miss'd us much,
I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did.
She held it out; and as a parrot turns
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,
And takes a lady's finger with all care,
And bites it for true heart and not for harm,
So he with Lilia's."

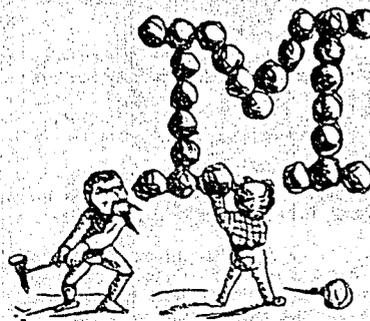
A bird that behaves in so gentlemanly a manner might well be called *Periquito* after a gentleman's name, and the analogies above quoted are strongly in favor of this supposition. But DIOGENES believes that in spite of these analogies, the derivation from *Periquito* is unsound. A very different account of the word may be found in a valuable French work, Auguste Scheler's *Dictionnaire d'Etymologie Française*. M. Scheler considers *perroquet* to be a dim. of *perruche*, the French word for the parrot. This latter he derives from *perruque*, (the original of the English *peruwig*,) and says: "*C'est donc proprement l'oiseau à perruque*." It is evident that this name, "the bird with the wig" applies more strictly to a cockatoo, or some other bird with a top-knot, than to a parrot. M. Scheler of course sees this, and accordingly writes: "*Je sais bien que la huppe n'est pas précisément un caractère distinctif du perroquet, mais les noms vulgaires des animaux ne sont pas fondés sur les définitions scientifiques bien rigoureuses*." DIOGENES, while acknowledging the ingenuity of this conjecture, is loth to admit its correctness. In the same way, he rejects as improbable a derivation mentioned in Charnock's "*Verba Nominalia*." (London, 1866.) It is there suggested that "*perroquet* is a dim. of *parrot*, from Lat. *parra*, a bird whose cry was esteemed an ill omen; perhaps, a jay." The bird *parra*, it is true, is mentioned in Horace and in Pliny, and the word has been variously translated, as lap-wing, screech-owl, wheat-ear and jay. But the identity of the first syllable in the two words proves nothing, and is probably a mere accident of language. There now remains to be mentioned, that which DIOGENES considers to be the genuine original of the word *parroquet*. *Parrochetto* in Italian, (a diminutive formed from *parochus*, the cure of the parish) is literally "priestling" or "little priest;" and as the *parroquet* was in olden times a well-known pet of the solitary ecclesiastic, it was from the priest that it derived its name. If this Etymology be admitted to be sound, *parroquet* is the correct spelling, and *parrot* may be regarded as simply a shortened form of the same word.

This derivation is approved of by Diez in his "Etymological Dictionary of the Romance Languages," (London Edit., 1864,) and has been adopted by Dr. Scadding, of Toronto, in his interesting series of papers, "On Errata Recepta, Written and Spoken." (cf. "Canadian Journal" for January 1865, p. 39.) The probability of its being correct is increased if we analyse a cognate Spanish word *papagayo*, which also means a parrot. This term according to the best authorities, Diez, Mahn and others, is from *papa*, a father or priest, and *gayo*, a jay, (a bird with gay plumage,) because the parrot was first and principally kept as a favourite by clergymen. The English *popinjay*, which originally meant a parrot, is derived from the Spanish, *papagayo*; and it may be remembered that Shakspeare uses the word in Henry IV, to denote a prating coxcomb, all noise and finery, "fuss and feathers." As Dr. Scadding has observed in another of his papers: (Canadian Journal, November, 1865, p. 395.) "The gay costumes of mingled orange and scarlet, distinguishing the Swiss guards who lounge in the porticos of the Vatican, are strangely suggestive of this bird and its plumage. Many an Italian Hotspur has possibly found "popinjay" rising to his lips, as he eyed them."

The names of several other birds have a quasi-religious origin. The *martin* is said to have been named after a Saint, and the sea-fowl, known as the stormy *petrel*, (*petrillo*, "Little Peter,") is so called because he walks the water like the Apostle of old. English sailors call these petrels, *Mother Carey's chickens*; and the apparently meaningless name *Mother Carey*, is probably a corruption of *Mater Caru*, ("Dear Mother,") the title given by Italian seamen to their special patroness, the Virgin Mary, who, they believe, sends the petrels to forewarn them of a storm.

DIOGENES here concludes his rambling gossip about "Words and Birds;" and, tired with writing, retires "from labour to refreshment."

ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN.



AYORS, Aldermen and Councillors are, generally speaking, not distinguished for literary attainments. If they possessed them, they would only be cumbered by them, like knights of old by the weight of their armour. In addition to business habits, honesty and common-sense are the main qualities that are wanted (and alas! often wanting) in the Council-room. There, a trope in a speech is deemed an impertinence, and flowers of rhetoric are as much out of place as roses in the desert. The Cynic was therefore somewhat surprised to read the following report in the *Witness* of May 19:—

Coun. Doure spoke in favour of the gallery, and went on to criticise the idea of a Public Park, when there were no funds for new side-walks. *It was like wanting to clothe the city in silk, when it was in want of a shirt.*

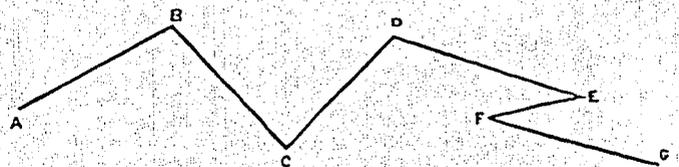
If the reader will refer to Goldsmith's Poems, he will find the following couplet in "*The Haunch of Venison*:"

"Such dainties to them—their health it might hurt—
It's like sending them ruffles, when wanting a shirt."

It is strange that the same illustration should have been used by the Poet and by the Councillor—for the Councillor probably never read a line of the Poet. *Accidents will happen!*

RAILWAY ENGINEERING.

The advantages of popular government are especially evident in the construction of great public works. The tyrants of the old world, with that brutal disregard for the rights of private citizens which is the result of their effete system, have constructed their railways by the shortest routes from city to city. Our government, based on popular rights, always displays proper tenderness for the interest of the private citizen. Here, for instance, is a sketch of the Grand Logrolling Railway between Slowtown and Mackerelville.



A.—Slowtown.

B.—Frogdown; residence of Hon. Mr. Frog, distinguished member of Government.

C.—Notown; so called because nobody lives there; important for way traffic.

D.—Codtown; residence of Hon. Mr. Cod, another distinguished member of Government. He wanted the railway near his house.

E,—F.—These are the residences of leading Government supporters. Some embarrassment was caused by their peculiar position, but by giving the route a slight turn backwards, both were got into the line.

G.—Mackerelville.

What could be better—wiser—more considerate? By adopting so circuitous a route, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" has been obtained. A few villages have not been reached, but branch lines will be built to them. Happy are those who live in a free country!