

What fixed this somewhat trivial occurrence, in my mind, was that on the afternoon of the same day, in another swamp at least three miles from the first one, the very same thing was repeated by another Water Thrush, in almost exactly the same way. At another time one of a little knot of Meadowlarks I was scrutinizing with the glass, thought he would like to see what I looked like behind, so, making a long *detour*, he flew up as near as he dared behind me to have a look. By turning my head I followed his flight, and when he alighted and saw that I was still watching him, he hurried back by the way he came in a great state of excitement, and reported to his comrades that I could look both ways at once with my big goggle eyes. Of course they knew better and laughed at him.

Of all the birds, one would think the big blustering bully known as the Crow Blackbird, the least likely to imitate the acrobatic feats of human beings. And yet I was told by a young man, whose veracity up to that time I had had no reason to doubt, that he had a short time before witnessed the spectacle of several of these birds turning somersets on the grass. He further went on to say that one of them was as far superior to the others in acrobatic proficiency as the bespangled king of the circus arena is to the common tumblers in the pink tights. These less favored birds, he averred, made a dismal failure of it, or as he put it "fell all over themselves," whenever they tried to follow the leader in his graceful evolutions. I gravely listened to this touching narrative giving no hint of my mental resolve to enquire the price of yarn at the first opportunity, a resolve I never carried out, for just six days later I surprised two of these Blackbirds sitting on a pasture fence, acting in the double capacity of spectators and sentinels, at a similar acrobatic performance given by half a dozen of their cousins, the Cowbirds. They were not just exactly turning somersets, but their actions were sufficiently unbirdlike, and bore a strong enough resemblance to the tumbling of the circus ring, to make me very glad I had expressed no open doubt of my informant's truthfulness, and when I afterwards saw two Robins playing hide and seek over the shelving edge of a railway cutting, with all the dainty tip-toeing to the edge of the bank, the springing out from the hiding place, the screams, and the laughter, that would have characterized the game had it been played by children, I was still