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You may be surprised at what it tells you. And if you discover that it is not all it might be, try the effect of making it cheery, hearty, alert. The family will come up under it like wilted flowers in summer shadows.—The Pacific.

### BIRDS ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

Our fathers used to tell us touching stories of the distress of the birds caused by the continual marching of great armies, till the poor creatures would fall upon the ground at their feet from pure exhaustion of wing in trying to fly away from the danger. Then there was that most impressive of all facts—the singing of the birds during the raging of all-day-long battles. During the prolonged fighting at Gettysburg there came a moment when not a gun was heard to sound. There was a terrible stillness for one brief spell; then it was noticed that the birds perched upon the tree-tops were busily pouring forth their melody of music, and so far as any one had known they had been singing all during the deafening roar of the cannon-fire. This seemed incredible at first, but here comes another witness from the awful battle-field of Europe. The account is given by Major Allen Brooks, who writes directly from the battle-field in Flanders. He was so startled by the anomaly that he lapsed into a "striking Hibernicism to express his wonders": "The effect of cannon fire on birds is amazing; almost without exception they absolutely disregard it." Oddly enough, the first birds to attract his attention were the symbols of peace. Wood pigeons and turtle doves are abundant everywhere along the firing-line, while thrushes, blackbirds and larks are fairly common. In early spring these birds begin to sing in the trees that line the Yser. "On a sudden, hundreds of guns burst into a terrific and continuous cannonading, when, after three hours, there was a sudden and complete cessation of gunfire, and the first thing that the reeling senses realized was that the blackbirds were still serenely fluting away. Apparently they had never ceased."

On another occasion Major Brooks was listening to the rich gurgling and chuckling of a nightingale which he had located with his glasses when the morning calm was shattered by a burst of rifle-fire close by. The retiring and seclusive bird paid no attention, nor did he seek a lower or less conspicuous perch. An unruffled cuckoo called continuously on a near-by willow, and crested larks rose, one after another, sometimes from the close vicinity of bursting shells, singing serenely in the azure as if there were nothing to mar the perfect day. The only bird perturbed was a green sandpiper, which was picking up a precarious living in the stagnant waters of a shell crater. "When shells burst too close to him, he sprang into the air and circled about; but he always returned a minute later, defying the dangers and the noise."

From Salonica comes the charming description of a stork that has made fast friends with the airplanes, and invariably flies forth to greet and accompany them when they return from their perilous journeys over the battle-fields of the enemy.

Poor things! Well is it that they can have no appreciation of the black horrors and deep anguish of the men who are waging the war. If they could, doubtless they would gladly add their little hearts' song to gladden the gloom of those who imperil all for their country. Of them we may say as Holland said of the flowers:—

"To tell the love of God they try;  
They do their little best and die."  
—C. H. Buchanan, in Christian Advocate.

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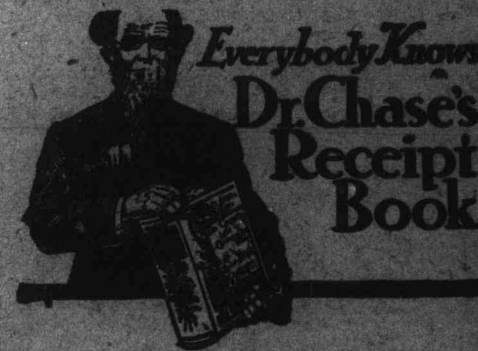


Scott & Bowne, Toronto, Ont.

### A MODERN SOLOMON.

All the Solomons are not dead. He was a magistrate who was used to dealing with negro boys. Two boys were brought up for stealing. Evidently one was guilty, but it was hard to tell which one. The magistrate placed them in separate cells, gave each one a leather string of equal length. "Now, boys, the string in the hands of the thief will grow," he said.

In two hours the boys were brought out. One showed his string; it had not been touched. The other had cut two inches off his string. "You are the thief," said the judge, and he was.—"Lutheran."



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