

half-grown rabbit, and normally weighs from a pound and a half to a pound and three-quarters; but breakfast, at which he gorges himself with bananas and boiled carrots, increases his weight by some sixty percent. At noon he is ready for lunch, but he reserves his chief effort for supper.

SOME EVER-HUNGRY BATS.

These winged gluttons infest the eastern archipelago from Sumatra to Luzon, and would be a worse plague than the Egyptian locusts if their habitat were not a region of inexhaustible fertility. A Philippine banana-planter can work one day a week and get more food from an acre of ground than a hard-working American wheat farmer could possibly raise on twenty acres; but it has been proved that even that enormous harvest could be doubled if it were possible to keep bats and monkeys away.

As it is, the depredations never cease, night or day, and by way of getting even, the Filipinos cage and sell as many of the marauders as they can trap. In San Francisco tame kalong bats cost about five dollars apiece, but in Manila the gardeners bring them to market in home-made cages, and are glad to sell a pair, cage and all, for two reals—about twenty-five cents.

Fishermen sell jars full of porcupine fish, and there is no end of bird-dealers, peddling winged curiosities of all sorts, from a silk finch to a fire pheasant.

Of parrots alone Luzon boasts some twenty different species, besides a variety of pretty parrakeets, including the 'spike-tail,' a grayish green pet with a passion for nest-building, and ready to begin operations at short notice. A swarm let loose in a vacant room, with a row of nest-boxes, will waste one day fighting for building lots, and after that they will almost forget eating and drinking in their eagerness to forage for material.

Ready-made nests would spoil half their fun, and they are never happier than in a tussle with an old cotton bedquilt or a little bale of hay. Picking out shreds of bedding, a billful at a time, is just what suits their idea of a picnic, and they never stop screeching while daylight lasts.

A family with a spare attic might find it a profitable investment to raise the little creatures for the pet-market. They hatch twice a year, from three to five eggs, and are not especially fastidious boarders. Grain, canary-seed, breadcrumbs—it is all the same to housekeepers who are too busy to waste much time on meals. For the sake of their nestlings, however, their crumbs should now and then be mixed with a hash of meat scraps and hard-boiled eggs.

They are about the most restless of all feathered creatures, but in the matter of noisiness they are far surpassed by another feathered Filipino—the great hornbill, a creature with a head a foot and a half long, and a voice that has been described as something between the bray of a donkey and the screech of a locomotive.

Captive hornbills are rather subdued, perhaps because their keepers have learned the trick of drowning every screech with a dash of cold water.

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[For the 'Messenger.'

Baby Nellie's Adventure.

(By M. H. Coyne.)

An event in the life of one of the early settlers on the north shore of Lake Erie has been called by the small folk to whom I related it, 'Baby Nellie's Adventure,' which I will now relate:—

Baby Nellie danced like a fairy changeling across her father's cabin floor the while she sang at the top of her small voice, 'I have black eyes and black hair and skin of a piece, and so I am Harding's Indian baby.'

True, Nellie did look oddly out of place among the settler's blonde brood, for her numerous brothers and sisters were tall and straight as Lombardy poplars, with blue eyes and hair of varying shades from brown to auburn and sandy, but all had complexions so clear and white they seemed to defy the sun and wind to darken them. For that they were the wondering envy of their suntanned neighbors, until 'fair as a Harding' had among them become a descriptive term for a fair complexion. Then, several years after any other little strangers were looked for in this well-filled family circle, came this little dark-haired Nellie. Her eyes were large and dark, beautiful as those of a deer, but there the truth of the song her youngest brother had taught the child to sing about herself ended. Roses and cream were a nearer description of her complexion, for the petal of a rose was scarcely smoother or softer than her lovely skin, which, faintly tinged with olive, deepened to a rosy tinge on the cheeks to match the crimson of her lips.

Light of foot, graceful, ever merry and happy, Baby Nell was the delight, of not her father and mother only, but of her sisters and brothers also. The youngest brother, especially, petted and loved her, but boy-like, while doing so, taught her much that mother hardly approved of.

This song, for instance, she disliked to hear the child sing, but could hardly give reasons therefor. All attempts to draw attention from it, the rebuke the parents gave the grinning brother, seemed only to deepen the little one's liking for the doggerel.

One day the home was very quiet, the elder children were off to the distant school, the father had gone to the no less distant store for some needed supplies, and Nellie at home played at working for the latter. At last, knowing it was near time for the father to return, her mother bade the little one to run to a certain tall stump and there play while she waited for him.

When she had tied on the little white sun bonnet, and kissed the rosy lips, the mother resumed her household duties and was soon so busy trying to get some extra tasks finished during the unusual quiet, that she gave no heed to the child until startled by the appearance of Harding at the kitchen door and his quick demand, 'Where's Nellie? See what I brought her!' and he held up a gay toy the while he glanced around for the tiny form.

'She was at the stump, your usual tryst. You came the other way?' she answered.

'But I did not. I passed the stump because I thought she would be there,' he cried in some anxiety, and going to the gate he shrilled a whistle, then called loudly, 'Nellie! Nellie!' Receiving no answer, he searched the yard and woods, calling her name, but no baby cry responded, and wild with alarm he rushed to meet the other

children returning from school in hopes that she might have preceded him there. The mother, father and the elder children hurried to the neighbors, all, of course, at quite a distance, but alas! no one had seen her, no one had heard anything, but soon all who could were out on the hunt. That night the wild beasts and birds had a disturbed time, for lanterns gleamed and loud calls rang through the forest. A lost child will anywhere rouse pity and anxiety in the coldest heart, but for one lost in the woods there are so many dangers, so little hope of safety, that anxiety is increased ten-fold.

Little Nellie had gone to the usual waiting place, and had amused herself with the playthings, bits of broken crockery, bright pebbles, moss, odds and ends from home or the woods, which she had gathered there, when Chief Jack, an Indian, head of a small band encamped near by, came and sat on a log beside her. The child did not fear him, had, indeed, often seen him at her father's house. When he was sober he was quite a fine, intelligent fellow, and, though now befuddled with the bad whiskey from the settlement store, he merely sat watching the child, greatly amused in a silly way as she brought to him her toys and explained in her baby language about them. Soon she began to sing, 'I have black eyes and black hair, and skin of a piece, and I am a little Indian baby.' 'Ugh! ugh!' grunted Jack, and he listened more intently. Yes! it was surely true, the baby's eyes were black, and dark were the soft little rings of hair peeping from under the white sun bonnet; and there she was herself telling him, she was a little Indian. 'Ugh,' said he, 'You sure you Indian baby?' She nodded most emphatically as she assured him, 'Yes! I little Indian baby.' 'Well,' said Jack, 'I did think Harding one good pale face,' and with a dejected air, he drunkenly rose to his feet, steadied himself to pick Nellie up, saying 'Come, see little Injin babies; lots of them.' 'Good! good!' laughed Nellie, 'you got babies and we meet my papa?' 'Yes,' promised Jack, gravely lying, and the child, nestled into his arms, talking in her baby fashion and playing with the beaded pouch he had put in her hands to amuse her until the motion and the warm day produced their effect, and she slept soundly, slept as babies will, for hours.

Meanwhile, when Jack appeared with the stolen child, his people became alarmed. Vague fears of the white man's laws, of the vengeance he might take, overcame even their sympathy for the bereaved parents. One woman did offer to carry the child back to its home, but Jack sternly forbade that. She had lost a child a short time before, and he told her she might have the care of this one, and soon selfishness was struggling in her mind with pity for the other mother. The band had been about to move to another place for better fishing, and now it was resolved to move at once, and soon with the celerity with which Indians can change quarters, they were miles away. So it chanced that when one of those who sought the child hastened to enlist the friendly aid of the Indians, their camp was found deserted. No one thought of blaming them for her disappearance, however, for was not Harding a special friend to the Indians, and they would not harm him, even in case of a rising against the whites.

In a few days, the neighbors, sorry as they were for the Hardings, gave the search up and resumed their usual daily duties,