

The Flight of Birds,

The course of flight is a distinguishing character of many birds. The grouse rises gradually while flying in a straight course; the woodcock rises to a height of several feet, or even yards, then flies straight away; the cuckoo's flight is also in a straight line, but peculiarly arrow-like, being graceful and silent, the long slender tail and body of the bird still further suggesting an arrow. A number of the birds, notably the brown thrasher, and the song sparrow, progress in short flights, as from bush to bush, with a queer eccentric or bobbing motion as if their flapping tails were a great hindrance. A Wilson snipe flies in a zig-zag line; a goldfinch in long undulations or bounds. All of these and many other ways of flying can be indicated by dotted lines in the notebook, supplemented by such words as "sailing," "rapid," "slow," "heavy," or "graceful" flight, and "rapid," "slow," "silent" or "clattering" wing-beats; the wings of the grouse hum, those of the woodcock and the mourning dove whistle.—*From Nature and Science in June St. Nicholas.*

In most human brains there seems to be one black corner, like the blind spot on the retina of the eye. There are words that one never can spell aright, numbers that are blundered over, items of knowledge, familiar to most, which some peculiar idiosyncrasy can never attain. An old schoolfellow once suffered constant punishment and degradation because he never could remember how much nine times seven made. Universal sympathy would be felt for the poor lad—except on the part of the dominie—when after hours of "keeping in," he would stammer in reply to the fatal arithmetical question: "Nine times seven's fifty-six." One of our present-day writers confessed recently that from his earliest boyhood he has never been able to count anything in threes. All mental calculations he makes either in twos or fours, and he experiences the greatest difficulty in repeating the three-times multiplication table correctly from memory.—*Household Words.*

President Schurman, of Cornell University, suggesting how to induce men of ability to enter and remain in the profession of teaching, lays down five principles as follows: 1. Appointment upon merit alone; 2. Appointment without limit as to time; 3. Freedom from meddlesome interference; 4. Increased remuneration; 5. Pensions for old age.

CURRENT EVENTS.

The inquiry into the cause of the collapse of the Quebec bridge is not yet finished, but it appears that the accident was due to the attempt to build the bridge as cheaply as possible. The light and flexible plates of which it was built are being contrasted with the great rigid tubes used in the construction of the Forth bridge in Scotland, where no cost was spared to ensure strength and durability.

While airships of different sorts have been claiming the attention of everybody who reads the newspapers, and their comparative merits were discussed freely on both sides the Atlantic, the British government has had one built in secret which is said to put Great Britain well ahead of other powers in the matter of dirigible balloons. This new army airship, on a recent trial, moved rapidly under complete control. If it will do all that is reported of it, the war balloon is now a dread reality for other purposes than those of observation.

The population of London now exceeds seven million.

More than twenty thousand immigrants came into Canada in August, and the total immigration for this year to date is upwards of two hundred and thirty thousand. The revenue of the dominion for the six months ending with September was over fifty million dollars.

Two and a half million cords of pulp wood, it is estimated, go to the United States to be made into pulp every year; yet our spruce, it is said, would be six times as valuable to us if it were made into paper here. The Ontario government has decided to require, in all future pulpwood concessions made by them, that the product be made into paper in the province.

The Marconi wireless telegraph across the ocean came into actual use for the general public on the seventeenth of October—a date that the schoolboy of the future may be expected to memorize. As yet, the service, though cheaper, is not so reliable as the submarine cable service.

It is announced that the Canadian government will have the largest and most powerful ice breaker in the world for the winter service on Northumberland Straits. Tenders for her construction will be called for.

The deputy minister of labor, after studying the question on the spot, says that Orientals are employed in British Columbia not because their work is cheaper, but because they are more sober and reliable than whites.

The Japanese claims for damages during the riot in Vancouver amount to something over thirteen thousand dollars, and are accompanied by a remarkably careful statement of the details of losses. The dominion government will pay the claims as speedily as possible. In the meantime, the premier has expressed to the Japanese government the deep regret of our government for the occurrence, with an assurance that every effort will be made to pre-