

PELICANTOWN

A Science Report Inhabited by Several Thousand Birds

I think Mr. Chapman tells the readers of the Sept. 2nd issue of the Herald how and where the pelicans of Florida build their nests and brood.

How is it, he asks, that all the new swallows in a village place their roosts in certain localities? In one locality a nest could be built in a cavity in the clay apartments—not one is to be seen, still, none of the birds seem to think of building under the equally favorable roof of the neighboring barn. Their combs, the bank swallows, show the same strange localities, and from miles around they gather to nest in some particular sandbank, the face of which will be thickly pitted with the entrances to their burrows.

It is not because the place chosen is the only one available that the birds nest in localities. There may be hundreds of barns and banks just as good as the ones selected. It is not a question of food, for these are abundant everywhere, and those straggling birds can hunt them over miles of country. It is not because they find "safety in numbers," rather do they make themselves conspicuous by gathering in such large numbers. As a rule, it is sociability—the desire for companionship—that offers the only reasonable explanation for the great colonies which may be observed at nesting-time.

Certainly, no other theory will explain the origin of Pelicantown. The site, like those often selected by human colonists, seems poorly chosen; its natural advantages are few, but so attached to their home are its inhabitants that even the most cruel persecution by their human foes has failed to drive them from the land of their ancestors.

But where is Pelicantown? In spite of its population of nearly three thousand, few maps show it. Hence with me, therefore, at a map of Florida. Find the Indian River, that long, narrow lagoon on its east coast, divided from the sea by only a ribbon of land. Pelicantown is situated about midway between its northern and southern extremities, near the eastern shore of a bay which here makes the river about three miles wide. It is an island, triangular in shape, containing about three acres of ground. A few bushes and low palm-trees grow on it, and there are great patches of tangled grass, but at least one-fourth of its surface is bare sand.

During the nesting season this barren island is the home of probably all the pelicans of Indian River. Here they come to build their nests, lay their eggs, and rear their young, and from January to May life in Pelicantown presents many novel scenes and picturesque incidents.

In March, 1898, I visited this city of birds. As my boat approached I saw signs of life. Files of birds were returning from fishing expeditions; platoons were resting on the sandy points; some were in bathing, others were sailing about in broad circles high overhead, and soon one could hear the sound of many voices—a medley of strange cries in an unknown tongue.

It being quite impossible to count the birds, I determined to count their nests, of which the census showed there were no less than 845, but only 251 were occupied, though all had been built that spring.

The death-rate is high in Pelicantown. Doubtless many young birds die through injury received while trying to escape from tourists who visit the island and thoughtlessly chase the young birds are destroyed in hundreds by fish-crows, that daily come over from the mainland and devour every bird. It is probable, therefore, that in many families three young pelicans live to leave the nest together; hence we may reckon about one and a half pelicans to each of the deserted nests. Add to these two parent pelicans, and each nest, and there are 2,651 birds on the wing or on foot. But this number is to be increased by the 154 young that were still in the nests, making the population of Pelicantown 2,795.

This calculation, however, does not take into account the eggs found, from which almost hourly come new inhabitants of the island; and it is with those eggs, or rather in what they were placed, that we may begin our study of a pelican's life.

CATHOLICS AND THE SECULAR PRESS

The Halifax correspondent of the Toronto Printer and Publisher, writes: "Over a year ago The Herald began the publication of a series of letters over the non-doctrine of 'Pecunia'." The editor in question was credited to a well-known politician of literary inclinations, and sometimes treated on theological matters. Their orthodoxy was not sound, so the editor of the Antigonish Gazette discovered. The Casco is the organ of the Bishop of Antigonish, and when it speaks on such matters it does so with authority and in language unmistakable. An editorial in that paper some months ago plainly indicated to The Herald that it must cease publishing the offending letters, intimating at the same time that if The Herald did not do so, effective measures would be used to protect the Catholics of that diocese from the influence of the letters. But The Herald took no notice of The Casco's warning, and his letters continued to appear. Now, The Herald is a good (Conservative) party paper, and many of the priests of Antigonish, and many of the prominent of the letters of 'Pecunia,' have strong sympathies with The Herald's politics. So the publisher received many letters from the clergy, asking him to kindly drop the offending letters. At last, a letter came from the good bishop, so it is said. The letter stated the fate of 'Pecunia.' The bishop drew attention to the matter contained in the letter, and one letter only, and asked the publisher if he could justify it in the sight of his readers. The publisher of The Herald read the letter complained of by the bishop, and at once came to the conclusion that his text-

...had not come. The letter could not be justified, and 'Pecunia' went the way of all unfortunates by ill-fated writers. They, peace is once more restored between The Herald and the diocese of Antigonish. This is the first time the Catholic Church has undertaken to regulate the moral tone of the Halifax Standard, and it has won. The Herald has nothing to drop the letters of 'Pecunia.' They were hapless and egoistical."

A BIBLE OFFERED FOR A NAME

New York, Sept. 1.—The Herald states that a strong temptation has been offered Sir Thomas Lipton to change the name of the challenger. The proprietor of an advertising weekly has submitted the proposition to Sir Thomas that he will pay him \$1,000—seven thousand good American dollars—if he will change the name of the challenger from Shamrock to the name of the Yankee's periodical.

He telegraphed to that effect to Sir Thomas Lipton on Friday, and enclosed a copy of his message to the President of the Herald. The President, however, does not believe that Sir Thomas will yield to the temptation, nor do his colleagues on the committee, but in case the scheme should go through, what then would become of the race.

We have been challenged for the cup by the Shamrock, the Herald says. The deed of gift naturally calls first for the name of the challenger, which was given as Shamrock. We have built a boat to beat the Shamrock. Our plans have all been made to race the Shamrock, a warm welcome has been given to the Shamrock, and that name appears in gilt letters on the graceful stern of the Shamrock, by which name she was entered at the custom house, and under which name she had her port done.

We cannot take all this back now and race a newly named boat. Suppose her name was changed under this pressure. Is there not good reason to believe that some other and still more cup-winning adventurer would come along and offer twice four thousand pounds to have Sir Thomas' boat named after his patent soap or hair wash, or liver cure?

Oh, no! Commodore Kane is quite right not to attach any importance to the latest development in the contest, a plea of international yacht racing. Shamrock who was baptized by the fair hand of Lady Russell, who said, "Oh! bless you, Shamrock; good luck to you! May you bring back the cup."

THEY SYMPATHIZED WITH AQUINO

Cincinnati, Sept. 1.—Editor Murat Halstead received last night by invitation before the economic club. Mr. Halstead's subject was the Philippines. After the lecture, according to the rule of the club, Mr. Halstead was piled with questions. One of the questioners with decided sympathy for Aquino, after his lecture had been answered, added the remark: "I hope this will be kept in and will keep on blundering till he and the whole army are driven into the sea or captured."

Mr. Halstead said that a man with those sentiments is a traitor to his country.

Several men jumped up and remarked: "Two-thirds of this audience think that way."

Mr. Halstead replied: "Whoever thinks that way is a traitor." Then there was a roar from the hall with raised fists towards Mr. Halstead, but a great number of men stepped in between Mr. Halstead and those who were rushing at him.

There was a great noise and uproar which died away when the audience was composed of men on both sides of that question.

THE LATE BISHOP BECKER'S WILL

Savannah, Aug. 8.—The will of the late Bishop Becker was filed in the Court of Ordinary yesterday. Fifteen thousand dollars is left in trust for the education of worthy and deserving young men for the priesthood. The trust provides that they shall be either total abstainers from all intoxicating beverages and drugs or of such high character and fitness for the vocation as to command them to the consideration of the then Bishop and to continue being strict in his regard to a credit to the Church and to the clergy.

They must have been born and raised in the United States and must have received from some reputable Catholic college or university a classical education, and must be able to agree to devote their energies to the parishes of Savannah. Only the income is to be used for this purpose, and at the end of twenty-five years the principal and any interest that may remain unexpended are to be applied to wiping out any debt that may exist on the cathedral. If there is no debt, the money is to be used at the discretion of the Bishop of Savannah for the benefit of the Cathedral parish.

MARQUIS OF BUTE DYING

London, Aug. 29.—The Marquis of Bute, the original of Disraeli's "Lothian" in the article with paralysis at one of his Scotch mansions. He is only 52 years old, and his conversion to Catholicism was the beginning of a steady inflow from the Anglican community, which still continues. He was in London yesterday, his income from his Cardiff estates alone being estimated to be worth \$1,000,000 a year; but he is a disappointed man, never having come to the front in public life, despite his undoubted abilities, owing to his impetuous and fiery character. His son, the Earl of Dunfermline, will be one of England's wealthiest noblemen.

A new Catholic Prayer Book has been issued in Welsh. It contains the principal devotions of the Church, including the entire office of "No Mass," which now appears. It is said, in Welsh for the first time in history.

THE SEA-GULL.

The woods are full of merry minstrelsy,
Glad are the bushes with the notes of spring,
But o'er the sea and unaccompanied
No love-born voices ring.

Gray marlin of every ocean clime,
If I could wander on as sure a wing,
Or bat with yellow web thy pathless sea,
I too might cease to sing.

Would I could share thy silver-flashing
Swamp,
Thy steady poise above the bounding
steep,
Or buoyant float with thine instinctive
trust,
Rocked in a dre mess sleep.

Thine is the heritage of simple things,
The untutted liberty of sea and air,
Some tender yearning for the peopled
nest,
Thy only freight of care

Thou hast no forecast of the morrow's
need,
No bitter memory of yesterday;
Nor aught that thought that airy sea
Cordoned,
Nor ocean's soundless ways.

Thou silent ruler of the boundless sea,
Intact and resolute, ah, who may
gaze
What primal notes of gladness thou
hast lost
In this vast loneliness!

Where hides thy mate? On some torn
ocean rock
Seaward she watches. Hark! the
one shrill cry,
Strident and harsh across the wave
shall be
Her welcome—thy reply.

Whom first thy aires, with joy-discovered
flight,
Hast thou exultant plumes sped afar,
Hast thou no cry of gladness or of love,
No bugle note of war?

What gallant song their happy treasury
hold,
Such as the pleasant woodland folk
employ.
The lone sea tundra quailed. Thou
one note
For love, for hate, for joy.

Yet who that hears this stormy organ
voiced
Would not, like them, at last be
hushed and stilled,
Were all his days through endless ages
passed
With this storm music filled?

What matters it? Ah, not alone are
loved
Leaf-cluttered poets who can woo
these sentiments is a traitor to his
country.
Home to the wide-eyed! Home! She
will not miss
The music lost so long.

Home! for the night wind signals
"Get thee home";
Home, hardy admiral of the rolling
deep;
Home from the foray! Home! That
cleansed song
Lovers and school-boys keep.
—Walt Mitchell, in the Sept. Century.

MR. WILLIAM T. STODD.

Editor William T. Stoddard, of the "Review of Reviews," writes the leading article for the September Forum. In "The Conference at the Hague," Mr. Stoddard discusses the important questions that it was called upon to deliberate, every vital act has received a candid review in this timely paper. After a searching survey of what was actually accomplished, he says, that we stand to reap the Conference to adequately appreciate the magnitude of the labors of the international union, and the visible beginning of the great work of the federation of mankind. Owing to the many conversations that Mr. Stoddard has had with the Czar of Russia, touching the original ideas that resulted in the best of the assembly, he is especially adapted to speak on this great and momentous topic.

No family living in a billowy country should be without Parmelee's Vegetable Pills. A few doses taken now and then will keep the liver active, cleanse the stomach and bowels from all bilious matters and prevent Ague. Mr. J. L. Rice, Shoshone, Martin Co., Ind., writes: "I have tried a box of Parmelee's Pills and find them the best medicine for Fever and Ague I have ever used."

A WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE.

A man from Pine Knob stood watching a performance on a slide trombone. Suddenly seizing a companion's arm, the Pine Knob man excitedly exclaimed: "Look thar, Lige."
"What's the matter?"
"Look thar, he done it agin."
"Done what?"
"Why, crowded mo'n half that blamed ho'n inter his mouth. Did you see that?"—Short Stories.

COLO AND KIDNEY DIFFICULTY.—Mr. J. W. Wilder, J. P., Lafayetteville, N. Y., writes: "I am subject to severe attacks of Colic and Kidney Difficulty, and find Parmelee's Pills afford me great relief, while all other remedies have failed. They are the best medicine I have ever used." In fact so great is the power of this medicine to cleanse and purify, that diseases of almost every name and nature are driven from the body.



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