

### THE FIRST SONG-SPARROW.

Sunshine set to music!  
Hear the sparrow sing!  
In his note is freshness  
Of the now-born spring  
In his trill delicious  
Summer overflows—  
Whiteness of the lily,  
Sweetness of the rose,  
Splendor of the sunrise,  
Fragrance of the breeze,  
Crystal of the brooklet  
Trickling under trees,  
Over moss and pebbles—  
Hark! you have them all  
I prophesied and chanted  
In the sparrow's call.  
Pilgrim of the tree-tops,  
Burdened with a song  
That he drops among us  
As he flies along,  
Promises and blessings  
Scattering at our feet,  
Till we sing together,  
"Oh, but life is sweet!"  
Listen! the song-sparrow!  
Spirit! or a bird?—  
Simple joy of singing  
In his song is heard.  
Somewhere, far in glory,  
Love our life has kissed;  
He renews the rapture,  
Heavenly optimist!  
Resurrection-singer!  
Gladdens of the year!  
In thine Easter-carol  
Bringing heaven so near  
That we scarcely know it  
From the earth apart—  
Sing immortal summer  
To the wintry heart!  
Waft us down faith's message  
From behind the sky,  
Till our aspirations  
With thee sing and fly!  
"God is good forever!  
Nothing shall go wrong;  
Sunshine set to music—  
'Tis the sparrow's song!"  
—Lucy Larcom, in Youth's Companion.

### A LITTLE TEACHER.

BY EMMA A. OPPER.

ARCIA REMSEN was putting Monday's spelling lesson on the blackboard when David Leach came in, in his heavily-stepping, important way. Marcia could not wholly conceal her displeasure at his appearance. "I'm awfully busy just now, Mr. Leach," she remarked, unceremoniously—she had almost finished. But David sat down. He was clumsy in feature, in manner and in mind; but he had a very substantial opinion of himself. He wore patent-leather shoes in all weathers, and ponderous watch chains. "Father's been talking it over with the other directors," he observed, with fascinated eyes on Marcia's coiled brown braids—she would not face "and they're going to introduce some kind of a chart system here—I don't know how—like they have in the city schools, you know. Thought maybe you'd like to know it." "I should have known it when your father and the other directors got ready to tell me," said Marcia, crisply. "You're spunky," said David. "Yes, I am," the little teacher responded, turning about; "and while I am at it I might as well say something else, Mr. Leach. I don't like to have you coming here after school this way. I'm busy generally, and—I don't like it, anyhow. You'd do me a great favor," said Marcia, writing "accommodation" on the board in large characters, "if you'd stop coming." "Harmon Lester comes all he wants to," said Mr. Leach, sullenly. "That is an entirely different matter," Marcia retorted. Her blue eyes flashed at him. "All right," said the director's son, leisurely rising. He was not seriously decomposed; his admiration of himself did not admit of that. He was convinced that Marcia Remsen was secretly proud of his attentions, but that she had "taken a fit," as girls were prone to do. "Maybe I'll call around at the house some evening," he said. She made no answer, and he took his slow departure. Marcia dusted her chalky fingers, and put on her hat in the cloak-room and ran down stairs. At the door she almost bumped into a tall young fellow just coming in. "Harmon!" she said. Her lips parted in a glad smile, and she flushed beautifully. "Well!" said Harmon Lester. There was a look on his handsome, dark-eyed face that made his sweet-heart look at him again. "I met Dave Leach," he said, significantly. "Yes," said Marcia, with humorous emphasis. "Yes, he came—"

"I know how often he comes, and everybody knows it." "Harmon!" said Marcia. "Why, Harmon, dear, you know—" She tried to meet his frowning eyes, but he looked straight ahead. "It's like this, Marcia," said the young man. "I can't play second-fiddle to anybody—that isn't my style. You're engaged to me, but half the town thinks you're engaged to Dave Leach, I presume. Everybody sees him tagging after you, and sees you encouraging him." Encouraging him! Marcia could have laughed had she not been too amazed and indignant. She could not speak. "It's unfair to me and you know it," went on her lover. "I didn't think you'd be capable of it, but seeing you are, I don't think, to put it to you plainly, that you are the girl for me, after all. I like a girl that's constant and faithful and single-minded. I don't like a flirt." The poor little teacher! The outrageous injustice of it stunned her; nor did any thought of her lover's natural ignorance of the real facts soften her indignation. "Do you think I like David Leach?" she demanded. "I don't think that you do," Harmon Lester responded. "I don't pretend to know what your motive is in leading him on so. But if you want to know what I think—well, he's well off, for one thing, and the Leaches are supposed to be 'way up, and his father is school director. Together, I think you're rather afraid of him. That's why you're so—so sweet to him, I suppose," said Harmon, in the recklessness of his warm resentment. Marcia gazed at him. David Leach had thought her "spunky." Now, stung by the wrongful cruelty of her lover's accusations, she turned squarely upon him, her cheeks hotly flushed and her lips for an instant pressed together with ominous tightness. "Of course, Mr. Lester," she said, "I can't consider myself engaged to you after this. You will be glad to hear it, since you don't want me. I am very glad we hadn't told anybody of our engagement. It prevents all sort of complications, doesn't it? You hadn't even given me a ring. It's so fortunate!" She cast at him a coolly-mocking smile, and turned down a side street abruptly. It was not her street, but she could not walk longer with Harmon Lester. There were snowballs in white bloom, and red roses and pink, and whole fields of daisies. Marcia stared at the flowery beauty of the view without seeing it. All her happiness was gone. She had cared for him so much, so dearly, and—yes, yes, he had cared for her! They had been so happy in their love that they had kept it a secret, with a tender sort of jealousy. Now it was all over. They were not even friends. Her heart was heavy with a wretchedness which she would not, in her pride, admit to herself; and then in the midst of her misery came the comparatively frivolous thought, as frivolous thoughts will intrude themselves, should she go to the picnic to-morrow? Would Harmon go? What did she care whether he went or not? Her caramel cake was already made and in the ice-box, and her cucumber pickles were already packed in a glass jar. Go she would, she determined, with some of the "spunk" which had awed David Leach. Evidently Harmon Lester had reached the same decision along the same line of reasoning. His was the first face she saw when the old band-wagon, filled with the picknickers, drew up at her gate at ten o'clock the next morning. Marcia smiled coldly, and Harmon helped her in with chill politeness, and disposed of her cake and pickle jar, and even held her jacket and parasol till she got settled. Between them they managed to give forth the impression that nothing was the matter. "Though I don't know why they shouldn't know it now; it's got to be known," Marcia thought. "I'd like to stand up in this band-wagon and tell them all that it's all over between us, because Harmon was jealous of David Leach. David Leach! Think of it!" The sole speck of brightness on her gloomy sky was that David Leach had had to go out of town that day, and had not been able to go to the picnic. That was a comfort. Otherwise the day was abominable. It showered once; there were thousands of mosquitoes; Kitty Sanford's biscuits were heavy and Gertrude Cooper's chicken salad was a caution. Marcia realized with astonishment that everybody else was having a delightful time, with the possible exception of Harmon Lester, but she was miserable. Mabel Watson and Fred Granby, who were in an incipient stage of fondness for each other, had changed their minds at the outset and deserted the "load" and driven to the pierce grounds in Fred's new side-bar buggy, with red wheels.

Nobody but Mabel would have done anything so eccentric, and nobody but Mabel would have rushed up to Marcia, as the young men were putting the horses into the band-wagon for the return trip, and detailed a fresh scheme of her own and Fred's. "What do you think Fred and I are going to do?" she demanded. "Going to walk over to the Engleburg station—it's only a mile—and take the train home. We'll get home as soon as the rest of you, and it will be jolly for a change. And we want you and Harmon to drive home in Fred's buggy; it's got to be got home somehow, you know. You will, won't you?" "You're a goose—a perfect goose!" said Marcia, in hot vexation. She felt an almost uncontrollable wish to shake her. But Harmon was near enough to hear her, and so were several others. "If it will accommodate you, certainly," said Harmon, after a noticeable pause. "He waited for me to make some excuse," Marcia told herself, with burning cheeks. "Why didn't I?" And when Fred's pretty chestnut horse had been put into his shining buggy, and Harmon offered her his hand with frigid politeness, she looked a charming statue of Dignity or of Wrath as she stepped into the vehicle. "After all," she said, buttoning her jacket, "it is ridiculous to try to keep it from people that—that—you understand, Mr. Lester. It's absurd. I shan't keep it up, if you do." "I agree with you exactly," said Harmon. "I shall tell people plainly that there is nothing between us," said Marcia. She turned up the collar of her jacket, and spoke no more. It was getting dark; the picknickers had departed lothly. The scent of roses and of new-cut grass was sweet on the air. Fred Granby's horse was a good traveler; he covered the miles rapidly. It being accustomed of late to Mabel Watson's ceaseless chatter, he was astonished at the unbroken silence of the pair behind him, he gave no sign, but trotted on evenly. They left the band-wagon far behind them. As they turned from the traveled road into a narrower cross-road, Harmon slackened the lines and let the horse walk. It was quite dark by that time; but Marcia, looking down the shadowy road, made out the figures of two men standing together in the middle of it a few rods ahead. There were no houses within sight. Marcia glanced at Harmon. He was staring at the trees on his side of the drive, apparently oblivious of all else. The men were not talking; they were watching the approaching buggy. Marcia felt a chill of fear. What were the men waiting there for? Did not Harmon see them? She would have spoken to him had not that benumbing anger closed her lips. She was silly to be afraid, she supposed. Then her heart gave a stifling, great leap, and stood still. They were close upon the two men. One stood back a little; but the other, a heavily built fellow, whose ragged clothes and coarse face made themselves visible through the dimness, took a swaggering step forward and caught the horse's bit. "Hold on here!" he uttered, in a threatening voice. "Got any money about you, you fellows? If you have, w'y we want it?" Marcia had grasped the whip. She gave the fellow a cut across his face—and another. She aimed a third blow at him. The other man was coming to his aid, she saw with fright, and she raised the whip again. But the spirited little horse, with an excited whinny, jumped forward, tore loose from the clutching hand, and was off down the road at a wild pace. They heard angered shouts and oaths. But they were safe. Marcia was shaking like a leaf. She could not control herself—she began to cry. She felt Harmon's arm around her, and even in that confused moment she drew away from him. But he pulled her closer. "There, Marcia!" he said. "Dear little girl! There, don't be frightened. We're safe. They won't dare to go near the picnic wagon, with fifteen fellows in it. They were tramps, and don't know much about highway robbery. I could have done a better job myself. Don't cry, dear!" His face was close to hers, nor could she free herself. They were tearing on hard and fast. "You'd better tend to the horse," Marcia faltered, tearfully. "He's all right. He's trying to get away from the ruffians. Marcia, what a bright little girl you are! What said you've got! I'd like to see the girl that would have done that as you did. I never saw them till we were close up to them, and it you hadn't done just what you did—I'm proud of you, dear!" He kissed her. "What are you doing?" said Marcia. "You ought to know," Harmon answered, coolly. "Dear girl, I said to you yesterday that you were afraid of Dave Leach, and that that was why you encouraged him. And I really thought it. But I know better now."

I know more about it. You aren't afraid of anything. Tell me—why did you let him hang around you so? Oh, Marcia, you don't like him better than me? I love you—I always shall—and I can't bear it; I can't!" "Like him?" said Marcia, gently. In her regained happiness she could be nothing but gentle. "Harmon, I dialike him terribly. I'll tell you all about it—about all the bother he has made me. I should have told you last night. You were hasty, and I was angry. We are sorry, aren't we?" "I don't know," Harmon responded. "It's almost worth while to have twenty-eight hours of misery, and then to get back to such perfect happiness as I'm feeling just now." "We had such a lovely drive home!" the little teacher said, next day, to Mabel Watson. "We were glad you and Fred went home the way you did." And Mabel, who had heard the rumor that two tramps had "held them up" and demanded their money down on the lonely cross-road, and who had a score of excited questions on the end of her tongue—Mabel stared at her in dazed astonishment.—Saturday Night.

### SELECT SIFTINGS.

Napoleon's coronation robes cost \$4000.  
The Chinese kill 10,000,000 dogs annually for food purposes.  
"Orts" are the stubs of straw left by cattle in feeding from the manger.  
In England it is difficult to enumerate the number of clergymen who are tutors.  
A Chicago man is the proud owner of a parrot that speaks both English and German.  
In India the native will shave you while asleep without awakening you, so light is his touch.  
Greenland was so called because in summer its hills were covered with a beautiful green moss.  
A German match manufacturer has invented a machine capable of making 15,000,000 splints a day.  
Queen Victoria's will is engrossed on vellum, quarto size, and is bound as a volume and secured by a private lock.  
Since the organization of our mint, in 1793, it has coined, of gold, \$1,612,405,375.50, and of silver, \$669,299,323.  
Mr. Gladstone has become a subscriber to the fund for providing a memorial to "Llewellyn, the last Prince of Wales."  
Cicero, it is said, had a theory that any disease could be overcome by fasting, and often abstained from food for days at a time, drinking only water.  
Steelyards dug up in Herculaneum are like those of to-day, with a pan, and a bar with graduated scale and a weight molded into the head of Mercury.  
It is said that one company operating several London cafes consumed last year 53,000 pounds of tea, 830,000 pounds of beef and 328,000 pounds of sugar.  
Stanley found tobacco perfectly acclimated among the African tribes that had never seen a white man. The use of the weed is universal in the dark continent.  
J. W. Jones, of Robertson, Ky., has found a pearl on which is the perfect outline of a man's head. Seen through a microscope even the veins appear. It is valued by experts at \$150.  
About the year 1400, the Queen of France astonished the kingdom by driving about in a swinging chariot mounted with gold and gems. It was the only wheeled vehicle for pleasure purposes in France.  
A runaway horse in Canton N. Y., recently, after two miles of good sleighing, turned down a railroad track and crossed a high and long bridge, carefully picking its way over the ties without accident.  
Sixty thousand dollars in gold was found recently by Jesse J. Drew, at his sawmill, near Hollandale, Washington County, Mo. The treasure is supposed to have been buried during the Civil War by a Captain Barfield.

### Cotton Wool in the Nostrils.

Says Dr. E. P. Mann in the Pacific Medical Journal: "Abundant experiment long ago demonstrated that cotton wool was capable of arresting germinal matter with which the air is filled. By placing within the nostrils, out of sight, a thin pledget of cotton, not sufficiently dense to interfere with free inspiration, the air may be greatly purified. The cotton immediately becomes moistened during expiration, which adds materially to its efficiency as a filter. That, thus placed, it will arrest dust, particles of soot, etc., may be easily shown by introducing the pledgets, and then, after an hour's walk through the streets, removing them, when they will be found blackened and soiled. Microscopical examination discloses quite a museum of germinal matter. Prominent among the displays are found various forms of catarrhal and bronchial secretion that have been desiccated and pulverized by passing feet, thus liberating the germs which, planted upon a congenial soil, will produce catarrh or other."

### TRAPPING WILY MUSKRATS

MORE THAN 100,000 FELTS USED IN NEW YORK ANNUALLY.

They Do Duty as a Cheap Substitute for Sealskin—Wisdom of the Muskrat as a House Builder.

FURRIERS of New York City," said one of them in the New York Sun, "buy more than 100,000 muskrat skins every winter, and that isn't more than they need to supply the demand for imitation sealskin gloves, caps, muffs, coats, trimmings and other articles in that line. If the muskrat was as big as the fur seal its pelt would be readily worth \$25 to the trapper, instead of fifteen or twenty cents, as now.

"There is no other fur that resembles the sealskin so closely, and there lies its value to the furrier, for it makes a handsome but cheap substitute for that costly fur in many ways. The fur is always sold for what it is, but purchasers of articles made from it usually refer to them as their seal-skin so-and-so.

"The beaver alone excels the muskrat in ingenuity and system in its domestic arrangements. In building its house the muskrat selects a spot in the low marsh land which will be flooded at high tide. The site for its house selected, the muskrat tunnels from the bank of the stream or lagoon, beginning below the edge of the water at ebb tide, a passage underground to the spot where its house is to be. Then the busy animal cuts with its teeth the broad, strong stalks and leaves of the flag and the long, coarse grass which form the principal vegetation of the marshes. Dragging them to the building site the muskrat braids and twists the flags and grasses together in circular form, and builds them layer upon layer, gradually narrowing the structure until a firm, cone-shaped house is the result. This is further strengthened and made comfortable by the liberal intermixture of mortar made from the marsh mud, with which the muskrat plasters its house inside and out. The only entrance to the house is the subterranean passage from the bank of the stream, the ground floor being on a level with that tunnel.

"The interior of a muskrat's house is always divided into two floors or studies. Sometimes it will have as many as four. These are led to by a chamber built around the inner edge of the house, and rising like a spiral stairway. The number of stairs to the house are regulated by the height to which the tide rises. The muskrat expects and wants the ground floor to be flooded, but there must always be a dry room at the top of the house to which the occupants may retire in time of high water. Dwellers near streams that are not affected by the tide, but are liable to heavy freshets, often look for warning of high water to the way the muskrats build their houses in the fall. If the houses are made high above the level, it is a sure sign that there are to be floods some time during the season.

"The interior of the muskrat's dwelling is warmly lined with dry grasses and leaves, and frequently as many as half a dozen muskrats will inhabit one house. The reason that this wily little animal in constructing its dwelling engineers so that its ground floor and the tunnel are always under water is that thereby it has an exit in case an enemy assail its house, and an entrance if an enemy pursue, which is hidden from sight, and lends greatly to the safety of the muskrat in either case. But the instinct of the animal does not warn it against the traps that its greatest and most persistent enemy places at this hidden entrance and exit, changing it from a way to liberty and safety to a pathway to certain death.

"During the day the muskrat remains hidden in its house, unless the day is cloudy and dark. At night it goes forth to feed on the juicy roots of water grasses and plants. The muskrat is dainty at its meals, and will not put its mouth to a root until it washes away every particle of mud from it. A great many muskrats are killed on moonlight nights by hunters who hide on the banks and lie in wait for the little fur bearers as they come out of the water and prepare for feeding. But the wooden traps are what reap the biggest crop of muskrats. The traps are placed at the tunnel entrances of the animals' dwellings, and whether the muskrat is going out to feed or has been out and is coming home, it swims into the trap just the same. If this animal when caught had time, it could easily gnaw its way out of the trap, but before that can be accomplished the muskrat drowns. A whole colony of muskrats may be taken in a single trap in one night, and the trapper who has out many of the traps is sure to gather a rich yield every night. It is not an uncommon thing for a Maryland muskrat to capture 100 pelts of a night.

"On windy days a great many of these animals are killed by spearing. The muskrat has a most acute sense of hearing, and the cracking of a dry flag leaf a hundred yards away on a still day is sufficient to alarm a household of the rats and send them scampering out into the water for safety. When the wind blows strong and at

high tide the muskrat arms himself with a gig, the long iron tires of which will reach from top to bottom of the muskrat's nest. Approaching a nest with great caution, against the wind, the hunter jabs his spear into it. Cuddled together in the upper part of the house may be half a dozen muskrats. Leaving the spear sticking in the nest, the muskrat knocks the roof off. Frequently he will find three or more muskrats impaled on his spear.

"Another profitable method of taking the muskrat, and one that has many elements of good sport in it, is the shooting of the animals at night. The hunters course in boats slowly along the streams or bayous, sometimes throwing a light ahead of them from a jack, but generally trusting to their own trained eyes and the light of the stars and moon. They detect instantly the ripple on the water that betrays the swimming muskrat, and it is seldom that the report of a gun does not mean a muskrat less.

"Seasons of unusual tides and floods are best for the hunters and trappers, for then the muskrats are forced to leave their dwellings in spite of the instinct they are alleged to have in guarding against just such a calamity, and they are compelled to seek safety in the open country. Their hiding places are easily found, and they are slaughtered by day and night."

### Apartment Houses of Ancient Origin.

The architect should not forget that the modern system of hotels and apartment houses on a vast scale is mere child's play compared with the practice of the ancients in the same direction, says Illustrated Carpenter and Builder. Recently excavations at Pompeii have unearthed some enormous buildings of such beauty and solidity in architecture, such perfect drainage and such provisions for health and comfort as to all all who have seen them with astonishment. These newly discovered buildings contain thirty or forty immense spacious apartments on the first floor and as many on the second. The rooms looked out on a rotunda nearly forty feet long; courts supported by columns surrounded the bedrooms, which opened upon large, ornamental gardens with fountains. Provision for light and air was made upon the most extensive scale. On the second floor were found evidences that there were suites of rooms built upon the flat plan of to-day. In fact, the revelations made by the excavations at Pompeii show that place to have been one of the most wonderful watering places for splendor, comfort, health and enjoyment, and gave every evidence that floor renting, like many other modern improvements, is not a new thing under the sun.

Several curious golden objects have been unearthed from Etruscan tombs. It was finally decided that they had been used as the heads of walking canes.

### ACUTE DYSPEPSIA.

#### SYMPATHETIC HEART DISEASE OFTEN ATTENDS IT.

The Modern Treatment Consists in Removing the Cause.

(From the *Republican, Cedar Rapids, Iowa*.)  
Mrs. V. Curley, who has resided in Clarence, Iowa, for the past twenty-two years, tells an interesting story of what she considers rescue from premature death. Her narrative is as follows:  
"For ten years prior to 1894, I was a constant sufferer from acute stomach trouble. I had all the manifold symptoms of acute dyspepsia, and at times other troubles were present in complication—I did not know what it was to enjoy a meal. No matter how careful I might be as to the quality, quantity and preparation of my food, distress always followed eating. I was despondent and blue. Almost to the point of insanity at times, and would have been glad to die. Often and often I could not sleep. Sympathetic heart trouble set in and time and again I was obliged to call a doctor in the night to relieve sudden attacks of suffocation which would come on without a moment's warning.  
"My troubles increased as time wore on and I spent large sums in doctor bills, being compelled to have medical attendants almost constantly. During 1892 and 1893, it was impossible for me to retain food, and water brushes plagued me. I was reduced to a skeleton. A consultation of physicians was unable to determine just what did all me. The doctors gave us as their opinion that the probable trouble was ulceration of the coats of the stomach and held out no hope of recovery. One doctor said, 'All I can do to relieve your suffering is by the use of opium.'  
"About this time a friend of mine, Mrs. Synantha Smith, of Glidden, Iowa, told me about the case of Mrs. Thurston, of Oxford Junction, Iowa. This lady said she had been afflicted much the same as I had. She had consulted local physicians without relief, and had gone to Des Moines for treatment. Giving up all hope of recovery, she was persuaded by a friend to take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. The result was almost magical.  
"I was led to try them from her experience, and before many months I felt better than I had for a dozen years. I am now almost free from trouble, and if through some error of diet I feel badly, this splendid remedy sets me right again. I have regained my strength and am once more in my usual health. I sleep well and can eat without distress. I have no doubt that I owe my recovery to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I only wish that I had heard of them years ago, thereby saving myself ten years of suffering and much money."  
Dr. Williams' Pink Pills contain all the elements necessary to give new life and richness to the blood and restore shattered nerves. They are for sale by all druggists, or may be had by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Schenectady, N. Y., for 50¢ per box, or six boxes for \$2.50.