

THE GERMAN CANARY

STRONGER AND MORE MELODIOUS THAN ANY OTHER VARIETY.

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Nearly all the canaries imported into America are from Germany. A Green-wich street bird dealer of New York imports from 60,000 to 70,000 canaries a year, and estimates the total American importations of the melodious little creature at about 200,000 annually.

Everything considered the German canary birds are more satisfactory to most people than those bred anywhere else. They are not so hardy in this country, perhaps, as the American birds; they are not so large and good looking as the English or Scotch varieties, nor so friskily showy as those raised in Belgium.

The canary was first found wild in the islands of the same name, though whether the islands were named from the bird or the bird from the islands nobody knows. Today, though canary birds still fly about in freedom among the tree branches of the Canary and the Madeira islands, many thousands more are bred in Germany than any where, probably than everywhere, else.

For some reason most German canaries are bred in that part of Germany known as the Harz mountains. Perhaps there is a climatic reason for Harz mountain birds to be stronger and more melodious than others; perhaps the breeders there learned the business better than other breeders 250 years ago when the birds were first taken to Europe; perhaps it just happened so. At all events, there are not only more Harz mountain canaries than any others, but they are the best in everything but size, color and friskiness. St. Andreassenberg, whose name the famous full roller possesses is in the Harz mountains.

Inasmuch as the Harz mountain breeders have to supply the demand for canaries in all parts of Germany and some other European countries as well as the chief part of the American demand, it is probable that nearly a million birds are bred there every year. Oddly enough, while the raising of canaries is one of the leading industries of the region, no one is understood to be devoted exclusively to canary breeding. Nearly all classes of people breed canaries: the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker, the farmer, the blacksmith, the miller and all. The most extensive breeder known to the Green-wich street importer breeds only 700 or 800 a year, while many breed only a few each, so there must be thousands and thousands of breeders.

The German canaries begin to reach this country early in August, and the shipments continue all through the fall and winter, the heaviest of them coming in November and December. Just in time for the birds to be useful as holiday presents. Importation stops in March for the year.

The birds reach this country at ages ranging from a few months to a year. The younger ones have not been taught to sing of course, and really are not wanted by American dealers as a rule, for teaching them to sing is a tedious process. No importer likes to refuse a consistent lot of young birds with the demand as great as it is, however, for fear some other dealer will get them.

As practically every bird breeder in the Harz mountains has some other way of making a living besides hatching, rearing and selling canaries, which are thus a by-product, they are generally bred just under the roofs, in the attics, and there kept till they have learned to sing. Different breeders adopt different methods of teaching the birds.

Many a breeder keeps in his possession as long as it lives one especially good singing bird; the young birds hear his song and imitate it. Others prefer the canary organ, a queer whistling instrument whose motive power is a stream of water from a pipe acting on a little water wheel. This mechanical melody producer is kept going continuously when birds are being taught to sing, and the fact that it never gets tired or falls asleep gives it one value not possessed by the living bird.

Some breeders use both the living bird and the canary organ, only running the latter when the former refuses to sing. Canaries are bred in every country of Europe, but mostly for domestic consumption. English canaries are much larger than the German birds, one rich orange colored cayenne pepper bred English canary being twice or thrice the size of the average little St. Andreassenberg roller. Not only do English bred canaries, for some unexplained reason tend to grow larger than the German birds, but, and for an equally little understood reason, their song, though loud and melodious, is not nearly so melodious as the German birds' song.

A famous English variety is the Manchester bird, a canary with a crest of topknot. The feather foot canary is another variety and those who fancy any of these will pay a high price for a good specimen the range being from \$4 to \$10 for ordinary birds and \$10 to \$30 for top class birds. The German singers are worth much less, \$2 to \$2.50 being a fair price for a fairly good Harz mountain canary, and \$50 a top notch price for a first class St. Andreassenberg roller.

Most bird lovers think, but to the great admiration of the Belgians. The Scotch fancy canaries develop a graceful curve between the tip of the tail and the top of the head that has almost the exact sweep of the crescent. There are other fancy varieties of canaries, none of which are bred in great numbers or valued much except by a few specialists, but all of which are held at higher figures by those who like them than the singing birds generally are by anybody.

Nobody else loves the canary as the German does; nobody else rears or teaches the bird so skillfully and lovingly as he, and a very large proportion of the canaries imported to this country are bought by German-Americans.

Both here and in the old world the Germans form bird clubs and carry them on with great enthusiasm, studying the peculiarities of their favorites assiduously, listening critically to their songs and discussing them with all the seriousness that is given to criticism of the opera.

Such clubs are to be found in all cities with a large German population. In Chicago, St. Louis and New York for instance, and in many of the smaller Pennsylvania towns. The Green-wich street dealer says the Keystone State is fairly well supplied with them, the number of bird clubs within its boundaries being greater than in any other state. Contests between canary birds—or at least the holding of comparative exhibitions of their power as singers—are not at all uncommon wherever there are German canary enthusiasts, and it is from the members of such clubs that the importers and the breeders get fancy prices for fancy birds.

Americans sometimes work up a degree of enthusiasm for canaries, but their devotion to the melodious birds never compares with that shown by the Germans. Either in degree, persistence, or, if the truth must be told, in intelligence. The American's interest in the canary, to put the case flatly, is always faddish and fleeting, while the German's is serious, lasting, and, with regard to the bird's song, of the nature of the much worshiped New York Telegraph.

SPEED SWIMMING.

The Different Side Stroke and How It is Accomplished.

Whether a man be a swimmer or not, in taking up a new stroke he should begin with the leg movement only. In the side stroke it is called the scissors kick. To acquire it find a place with water at least three feet in depth, where you can use either a stationary or a floating support. Take hold of this support and let your body rest on the water on its side, with legs straight and well together and feet as if standing on tiptoe. Choose the side that feels most comfortable. Now proceed to open the legs very slowly, not frog fashion, but front and back, as in walking. The upper should be brought forward almost straight, the under, bent to a kneeling position. When they are about two feet apart snap sharply together.

The position of the body is unchanged. Lie on your side, with body and legs in a straight line; both arms perpendicularly over your head, and the palms turned slightly away from the face. Bring upper arm down smartly, keeping it rigid at elbow and wrist, palm of hand open, fingers well together. Carry it through the water just below the surface, describing a semicircle to end at the thigh, then bend arm at the elbow and bring it forward well above water, until it is straight before you in the original position. The under arm should be started when the upper one is just about through with its stroke, and should be brought down with force, almost parallel to it, so that at the finish it brushes the lower thigh; then it is bent at the elbow like the other and brought forward just below the surface. The upper arm should rest on the water, at full reach, while the under one recovers, until it is at the height of the head.

The action of the arms in the side stroke entails a rolling motion of the body which buries the face at every stroke. This necessitates an artificial way of breathing, which has to be learned before the stroke can be swum properly. It is advisable to make a special study of it. Air should be inhaled through the mouth as the upper arm is being brought down and should be exhaled through the nostrils, under water, while the under arm goes forward. Some find this impossible even after long practice, and breathe in and out through the mouth during the short period that the face is above water, but if one can acquire the other way it is far the best.

The legs should be opened very slowly just as the under arm starts its recovery; they should be snapped together when the upper arm is in the middle of its stroke. If properly timed the side-stroke gives a clean, even progress, without a break or a check. L. de B. Handley in Outing Magazine.

The Talleries Gardens. Early in the month of Louis XVI, the author of a book entitled "Le Partenaire Geographique et Historique" suggested that these gardens should be laid out to represent the provinces of France. On Sept. 4, 1783, a deputation came to the national convention, and the spokesman, Anaxagoras (Bau-motte), said that "the eyes of republicans would rest with more pleasure on that former domain of the crown when it produced objects of prime necessity. Would it not be better to grow plants than to leave there statues, fountains, box trees and other stupor which ministered to the luxury and pride of kings?" Notes and Queries.

HIVE IN AN AQUARIUM.

Good Way of Seeing How the Little Busy Bee Works.

Everybody is curious to see bees actually at work. Take a rectangular glass aquarium and place it on a window sill, elevated slightly at the side nearest the window, so that when the latter is raised an inch the bees may pass in and out. If desired, the bees may be kept for some time in confinement by raising the aquarium an inch on blocks and using a strip of wire screen cloth to prevent the bees from escaping.

When confined the bees should be fed a sirup of equal parts of sugar and water. A frame or two of bees may be purchased for a trifling sum.

Put within this glass aquarium some rustic supports to represent projecting, undecayed portions of the inside of the hollow trunk. Keep all covered by an opaque cloth when not observing what is going on within this glass bee home. Then the bees will be free to work and to adapt themselves to the environment. They can suit their own fancy about attaching combs to the sticks; they may build diagonally or in any other form that they may prefer, and they may attach the comb to sides or ends just when and where they think it is necessary.

In the artificial hives the combs are attached only at the edges, but in natural conditions within the tree or in its counterpart, as represented by the old-fashioned box hive with opaque sides and in our transparent inverted aquarium, the bees can build combs and attach them in any way that they see fit.

One of the most interesting objects for study is to note when the bees think it necessary to put out a side support from a long comb. They seem to believe that they are really within a hollow tree and that it is likely to be swayed by the gales. Of course when so swayed long combs laden with honey or with young bees would be too much for the unyielding rigidity of the upper part of the combs. These, if they have no side stays, would bend, crack and be crushed against each other.

The bees have learned this and give the combs a fine support whenever it is necessary. They do this, it is true to a certain extent, in the regular eight or ten frame hive, but not with the naturiveness with which they do it in a large, unobstructed space.

Not long ago a veteran beekeeper took a colony of bees from an attic, where they had been for many years. "Well," said he, "you should have seen the funny forms of those combs—most interesting thing I ever saw. There was one pillar almost round a solid center right and several feet long—and these combs around that; the most fantastic shape you ever saw." Suburban Life.

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A philanthropist said of a banker: "Brown is a mean man. Once I made him shell out, though. Listen. "Two ladies, representatives of a children's fresh air fund—a noble charity—called on Brown and asked him to contribute. He gave a dollar. With all his millions, he gave \$1 exactly.

"It's all I can afford," he whined. "My office is in the same building as Brown's bank, and a few minutes later the two ladies came to me. When I saw Brown's name down for only a dollar I was mad. "He says it's all he can afford, eh?" I began. "Well, ladies, just wait here a minute.

"And I called my head clerk, ascertained my balance in Brown's bank, and wrote a check then and there in the clerk's name for \$273,640—the entire amount. "Draw this at once," I said. "The clerk departed, and a minute or two later Brown himself rushed in breathlessly, the check in his hand. "Harry," he said, "what is the meaning of this?" "I pointed to the ladies' subscription list. "I have just learned," I said, "that you could only afford to give a dollar to the children's fresh air fund. This made me think that things were looking pretty fishy at the bank. I decided I had better draw out."

"Brown had to add two ciphers to his subscription before I would consent to tear up the check."

Diarelli's Keen Business Instinct. When the Hon. Mr. Ward wrote his novel "Tremaine," he was fearful of acknowledging himself the author, until its fate should have been ascertained. He accordingly, sent the manuscript copy by the wife of his attorney to Mr. Colburn. The work, although accepted, was not considered likely to pay extremely well, and consequently a trifling sum was given for it. Contrary, however, to Mr. Colburn's expectations, it ran to three editions.

The ingenious author of "Vivian Grey," then twenty-two years old, having heard of the circumstances, determined to use it to advantage, and accordingly arranged his work for publication, he proceeded to find out the honorable gentleman's fair messenger. This he quickly effected, and upon a promise of giving her £20 inclined her to be the bearer of his novel to the same publisher.

The woman was instantly recognized by Mr. Colburn as the same person who brought him "Tremaine," and recollecting the great sale of that novel, he leaped at the manuscript presented to him with the utmost eagerness. It was quickly read, and a handsome sum given for the copyright. A short time, however, enabled Mr. Colburn to find out his error, but too late to remedy himself. The work was not successful, and a considerable sum was lost by its publication.

PIXIES OF CORNWALL

A TRIBE OF ELVES WITH THE SOULS OF ANCIENT CELTS.

They Are Trickier Spirits, Well-Skilled In Glamour and Illusion—The Good and Bad That Are Charged to These Frankish Little People.

Pixies, pixies or pigies are a tribe of elves peculiar to old Cornwall, a territory once extending to the eastern edge of Dartmoor, which is still included in the duchy. They are not the same as the goblin spirits, but in material life were those of the Celtic tribes who refused to give up their ancient religion for Christianity, but otherwise lived humbly, knew their sympathy with humanity. Not good enough for heaven nor bad enough for hell, their wandering souls were permitted to remain on earth, haunting their own familiar moorlands, wooded coombes and waste seachas.

In early May and during the reign of the harvest moon they are active in revel, but their chief festival of the year is held on midsummer eve. With the passing of many centuries they have greatly shrunken in size and are now indistinguishable by daylight from ants, moths or butterflies, except by those intimately acquainted with their appearance. A troop of these sprites was beheld of late years by one who had the gift of such sight on a sunny hillside one brilliant summer afternoon. They were dancing amid the heather bells, climbing tall foxgloves, tumbling queer somersaults, cutting fantastic capers and, as the Cornish saying runs, "laughing like a plisky."

This shows them to be a merry race. Apparently they are gradually becoming converted to Christianity, for on Christmas eve they assemble in the deepest silence to celebrate the holy season, when solemn, entrancing music may be heard and choirs of unearthly voices chanting, "Nowell, Nowell."

They are tricky elves, skilled in glamour and illusion. A favorite deceit of theirs is enticing the lonely night traveler into logs by appearing like the light in a cottage window, or a man waiting with a lantern across a road where no human foot can tread in safety. They steal pretty babies from their cradles, leaving ugly changelings in their places.

If spoken of disrespectfully, or even mentioned by name, they take violent offense. Hence they are called "the others," "the small people in green" or "the good folks." At Gernoll is a green lane well known as a resort of fairies. Once on midsummer eve two tinkers who worked at Croft Gochal, a mine hard by, were returning late down this "fairy lane" and as they found it full from end to end of the little people holding high festival. Among the crowd one of the men recognized his own child, for one evening the boy had been as beautiful as could be seen and next morning was ugly, wasted and stunted. Therefor "the others" must have changed him. When relating this tale next day at Croft Gochal he was suddenly thrown into a deep pit and almost killed. When carried home his wife, furious at the cause of his misfortune, exclaimed that the pixies were "trixin', tricky devils." Instantly she felt backward into the fire and was burned severely, a convincing proof that these elves must not be trifled with.

At Tremaine, a small hamlet in St. Austell parish, a boy was once beguiled away from his home, lost for many days, and finally, after all hope of finding him had been given up, he was one morning discovered fast asleep on a tuft of bracken, hard by his father's cottage door. His own story ran that he had been playing near that spot on the day of his disappearance, when he heard most exquisite music in the air.

At first he mistook this for bird songs, but soon realized that the little people must be the unseen musicians. Following the sounds, he easily penetrated a thicket whose depths he had never before succeeded in entering, for some invisible guide smoothed the undergrowth in his path, while causing thorns and briars to spring up, closer and more matted than formerly, behind him on either hand. Also the music became more and more ravishing.

At last he found himself upon the shore of a small lake, which, to his surprise, reflected the sky thick with stars, though it had been full moonlight on the common but a short time earlier. Then a lovely lady came through the darkness, took him by the hand and led him about underground palaces with crystal arches, glowing with changeful tints, far finer than any caverns in the deepest mine.

There he saw many marvelous sights, feasted on dainties he had never tasted in his life before, gambled or conversed with troops of merry playmates, all beautifully dressed in green. At last he fell asleep from sheer weariness, and awoke in the spot where he had first heard the pisky minstrels.

The Gump, a knoll near St. Just, is a noted spot for plisky revels. Many worthy folks have been privileged to witness their feasts, in a spirit of friendliness, and often were given valuable presents.—London Globe.

France and Her Sailors. France owes the greater part of her past glory and her present power to her sailors. There has been no discovery of geographical importance to which the name of a Frenchman has not been attached.—Paris Eclair.

More Ben-Hur. "Do I look daggery at the villain?" asked the heroine. "No," answered the author of the melodrama, "you look happy."—Town and Country.

DANCING IN VIENNA.

The Men Never Sing, and People Wait All the Time.

When the fashion is in full and orthodox swing in Vienna, balls take place every evening in the dozen or so of big and small halls available for societies and charities. The favorite hall is the Sofensal, which is a swimming bath in summer. For the occasion it is floored with parquet and decked with palms.

There are always two when not three bands, and as soon as one leaves off the other takes up the waltz. If it does not, the public wants to know the reason why and immediately begins to demonstrate with hand and voice.

The chaperons sit around in solemn state, and the men congregate in the middle of the floor, forming what is technically called the heeren aneel, or men's island. From this position of vantage they swoop down on any partner who weakens for a moment and carry her off. There is no such thing as being engaged for a dance indeed, there is scarcely such a thing as a dance, the whole evening being one large dance, except for the supper break. At the charity ball or frauen-ball, for instance, there will be about 2,000 present, and as the music is a good training none of them is long without a waltz.

The crush is tremendous, of course, but the Vienna dancer, male or female, cares little for hard knocks and, being determined to get around the room, manages to do it somehow or other, though to a stranger the task looks impossible.

There is not much ceremony about introductions. Two strange men will come up and with grave politeness introduce each other to a lady whom neither of them knows. The lady may please herself, of course, as to whether she dances with him or not. In any case, the acquaintance begins, and often ends, with a turn. It is not even necessary to be two. One dancer sometimes makes bold to approach, and with a deep bow he says that his name is Norval and that he is a lawyer, or something else, and may be have the honor of a waltz? Since the idea is simply to have a partner and nothing is further from his thoughts than to be unwell, he generally gets his way.

In a ballroom there is no lady, and the prettiest and smartest girls are not much better off than their less attractive sisters. While the dancers are in splendid robes, the dancing contingent are, as a rule, rather simply dressed and short skirted, or else they have an arrangement whereby they gather up all their drapery in one hand, so that they may succeed in keeping it on their persons. Nevertheless toward the small hours the damage is universal.

The Vienna belle may not go to many balls, perhaps, as her English sister, but she certainly dances a good many more kilometers in the course of her season. The Vienna balls begin, as a rule, pretty sharply at 9, and with an hour or so for supper, the waltzing goes on till 3. The most enthusiastic will not go away much before 5, but the others cannot often stay to the end, and when the lightnings depart the glory departs with them. Six hours, almost without a pause, is a very respectable athletic performance, and many of the ladies will nevertheless be seen on the ice the next afternoon still waltzing.—London Telegraph.

Stuttering. Of the etymology of stuttering we know nothing definite. Direct inheritance is rare, and possibly imitation is the chief factor when father and son are affected. There is usually a well marked neurotic inheritance, others in the family having various forms of nervous complaints. But I have not been able to confirm Charcot's statement that stuttering and ordinary facial paralysis frequently occur in the same family. Shocks, frights and debility after some acute illness are the causes to which the onset is most frequently attributed by parents. Imitation is undoubtedly an occasional cause, children having often been known to start the habit when put in charge of a stuttering nursemaid. A friend of mine who was extremely fond of horses and was hardly to be kept out of the stables acquired a most obstinate stutter from the groom. Adenoid vegetations are often met with and are important as a predisposing cause, since they tend to prevent the proper filling of the chest with air. When present they should be removed as a preliminary measure, although it must not be expected that their removal will lead to a prompt cessation of the stutter.—London Lancet.

A Wonderful Prodigy. The king of prodigies died on June 27, 1726, at the age of five, after having astonished the whole world. His story is the most remarkable in human annals and is attested by evidence which has satisfied all the learned inquirers who have written about him. The infant, Christian Heinecken, was born of respectable parents in Lubek, 1721. A few hours after his birth he began a conversation, at ten months there was scarcely a subject on which he could not express an opinion and at a year and a month he had mastered both the Old and New Testaments. He was only two and a half when he was able to answer questions concerning anything in ancient and modern history, and he was also at this time an expert geographer. He spoke Latin and French, and at the age of four was speaking in the French language at the court of Denmark. All this time he was being nursed by his mother. At the age of five it became necessary for him to be weaned, and in consequence of this change of diet he died, leaving psychologists an insoluble problem.—Westminster Gazette.

PERSONAL FAILURE.

People Who Are Always Deceiving Success Away From Them.

One of the strangest paradoxes in human nature is that men and women struggling, apparently with all their might, to succeed are yet constantly doing things which drive the very success they are after away from them. They are all the time counteracting their efforts by some foolishness or weakness or indiscretion. They are saying things which prejudice people against them and doing things which destroy confidence. Although they apparently try very hard to build a foundation, they are all the time undermining themselves.

Men work like Trojans to get a coveted position and then, by getting puffed up with conceit or by some foolish or weak act, knock the scaffolding, which they have been years in building, out from under them, and down they go. Their lives are a series of successive climbs and tumbles, so that they never get anywhere, never accomplish anything worth while. Always tripping themselves up, neutralizing their work this is their greatest stumbling block.

I know a powerful editorial writer who wields a strong, vigorous pen, but who at sixty years of age is just where he was at twenty. He has had scores of good positions, but he could not keep them because of his indiscretions, because of a hot temper and a sensitive nature which was always being wounded by trifles. There is no harder worker than he is. Every time he gets knocked down he begins at the bottom and starts planning and re-climbing, only to fall back again like the fabled frog trying to get out of the well.

Now if this man had taken an inventory of himself in his youth and strengthened two or three little weak points, he would have been a giant in the field of letters.

There are thousands of men who are working as clerks or in very ordinary salaried positions who might have been employers or proprietors themselves, but for some unfortunate weakness, some little deficiency in their nature or some peculiarity something which might have been remedied by a little discipline and self-study in youth. It is not an unusual thing to see a man in some subordinate situation who but for one of these little lacks would have been a bolder man than his employer. And so he has to submit to the humiliation of plodding through life in a mediocre position when he feels conscious that he has superior ability to those who are over him.

It is tragic to see thousands of people constantly pushing away from themselves through life the very success they are trying to achieve, pushing it away because they do not control a hot temper, because of some little indiscretion or other weakness or lack in their nature.

Others are always driving success away from them by their doubts, their fears, their lack of courage, their lack of confidence; driving it away by thought habits which repel success conditions. They never make themselves magnets to attract success, but keep so many enemies of achievement in their mind that there is no home for harmony there, no place for a strong purpose. They hold the failure thought, the doubt thought, the poverty thought, instead of clinging to the success thought, the thought of abundance, until they attract achievement and plenty.—Success Magazine.

Forests Work. The young fellow, who is "looking for a soft snap" need not apply, for the work of a student assistant is by no means easy. Nor will the government afford a pleasant vacation in the open air for young men in broken health. It is not a picnic in the cool woods that the student assistant will have. He will be in the cool woods in summer and the cold woods in winter. He will live in a tent, keep his winter hours, as the somewhat discouraging official bulletin, entitled "Suggestions to Prospective Forest Students," reads. He will work with a "gang," get up at break of day, tramp the forest, swing an ax, measure with callipers, count "rings" on stumps and set finger marks so cold that the figures he makes look like chicken tracks. He will do this day in and day out. At night, perhaps too far away to return to his tent, he will build a fire, eat bacon and hard tack, wrap himself in the blanket which he has carried all day and dream of the folks at home. It is likely that he will do this the next day and perhaps several other days. So there is good reason for the none too-encouraging words of the bulletin. "Bodily soundness and endurance are absolutely essential for those who take up the work of a forest student."—Reader.

Force of Habit. An honest hog buyer started up in business and guaranteed the farmers a fair deal. He always weighed the porkers twice to guard against mistakes. Once in weighing a bunch of pigs the second time he found their weight had increased to the amount of 200 pounds. He was at a loss to account for the condition until an employee confessed that at the time of the first weighing he had inserted the toe of his boot under the scales and pried it up, thus cheating the farmer out of one hog. The buyer was indignant. "What did you do a trick like that for?" he asked. "You couldn't have pried it, I join."

"I know it, John," said the guilty man, "but I just couldn't help it." It had always been the custom to cheat the farmer and the man couldn't bear to see the old customs passing away.