

# Her Heart's Secret

Or Under a Spell.

By JEAN WARNER.

## CHAPTER XXXII. (Continued.)

"'Tis the drug working now," whispered the listening woman to herself. "It can loosen even his proud, still tongue."

In a dreamy tone, her master coaxed: "I was watching at his bedside—I, his nephew, his heir. Aye, had not Basil Clive always taught me to believe myself his heir? Had he not tacitly accepted me as such, again and again? Grasping and greedy to all the rest of the world, he had been generous and lavish to me alone—to me alone."

"And, with the sunshine of fortune gilding my future, I asked Agnes Deau to be my wife. Her proud family would have scorned the penniless lawyer, but they smiled on the rich man's heir. We were betrothed, and my first and only dream of happiness begun."

"I was thinking of her as I watched by the dying man's pillow—thinking of her grace, her sweetness, her bright, gladness beauty. I was planning, even then, our future—the future colored with every gorgeous hue of happiness and hope."

"And even while the dream still floated before my enchanted eyes, the dying man's hoarse whisper called me close to his bedside, and I heard from his trembling lips that he was awaiting his son—the son whom he had never recognized or cared for—the son of a clandestine and unhappy marriage—the unknown son, who was to supplant me, his acknowledged heir. I must right his wrong, I must do him justice. I must ruin all my life, blight all my happiness, darken all my future, for the sake of a rude, uncultured stranger. The old man raved, aye, he only raved! With the thought of Agnes in my heart, I could face the pale, agonized madman, who forced himself into the dying man's chamber; with that thought in my heart I could hear my uncle breathe his last blessing to the son he had never known, and then, with his last breath, bid me 'do justice.' I could listen calmly to the wild upbraiding of the impostor who called himself Basil Clive."

"He defied me over his father's corpse; he demanded the justice that was his father's dying legacy to him. With his hand on the dead man's breast, he swore a fearful oath of hate and revenge to me, to mine, forever, if that justice were denied."

"Justice!—ha, ha!—justice! Justice! The word was echoing in my ears ever since. Justice! that would have robbed me of my fortune, of my bride, Justice! to an unknown, beggarly outcast, who could not even get a lawyer to take up his claim. Justice! Justice! when—the speaker's eyes flashed with unnatural fire, and he rose, gasping, from his chair—"when the proof, the only proof of my uncle's marriage—when the certificate he gave me on his dying bed, the paper that, armed with a scorpion's sting, has been hidden in my breast for five-and-twenty years—when old Basil Clive's marriage certificate was here!"

And, striking his hand on his breast, as if he would have crushed some monster clinging there, the master of Clive Towers, with a moan of pain, fell forward, senseless, on his own hearthstone."

And Mrs. Wyllys, stilling the cry of terror that rose to her lips, stooped down and, slipping her slender hand into the bosom of Robert Clive, drew forth the thin oil-skin packet concealed there, and thrust it into her own dress."

Then, ringing, with a deadly-pale countenance, trembling limbs and gleaming eyes, she shrieked loudly for help."

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### The Blood-Red Star.

"Herbert must come home," soliloquized the doctor as he rode homeward through the gray winter twilight, after a few moments' encouraging talk with Fannie as to her father's health. "It would be cruel to tell that poor little girl the truth; but Robert Clive is killing himself by inches. I saw it in his eyes, I smelled it in his breath, I heard it in his voice. And no friend dare approach him, for that she-cat mounts guard over him from morning till night. She is bent on mischief, and always has been, though she has hidden her claws skillfully for over twenty years. I suspect she knows as much about Robert Clive's affairs to-day as he does himself—aye, and as much about Basil Clive's, too! She had her eye on my poor little Sybil. The child shrank from her with instinctive dread. Hello! who have we here?" exclaimed the doctor, as his reverie was brought to an abrupt close by a start of his pony, that nearly flung the rider over his head—"who have we here?"

"Have ye forgotten so soon, Harry Bond?" said a sepulchral voice; and the tall, thin form of Rizpah loomed up amid the gathering shadows. "Have ye so soon forgotten the bond-woman of Sybil Lee?"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the doctor, "you here again, Rizpah—exposed to weather like this? Come home with me at once; you are well-nigh perishing with cold."

"Neither the cold of winter nor the heat of summer—neither the frost nor the fire, the tempest nor the blast, can kill the purpose that lives in Rizpah's heart, and will live there until she sees the end! The end is near—the stars warned me of its coming—and I have turned my back on the sunny Southern land where my boy left me, and am here once more. Have you heard what they say of Robert Clive?"

"At the question, her eyes flamed up like coals of fire. "I have just left him," answered the doctor, gravely. "He is changed now, Rizpah, sadly changed—weak, and old and broken."

"Weak, and old, and broken!" she exclaimed, triumphantly. "It is well—

it is well! The curse of the dying is beginning to work. Weary and old, and broken; but 'tis not enough. He must be blamed, dishonored, crushed! The end is near—the end is near! The end is near!"

"Come home with me, Rizpah," said the doctor, soothingly. "You are ill yourself. This weather is too frosty for such old blood as yours."

"Cold, cold!" she repeated. "You know me—the old blood is boiling with fever heat in my veins. I must stay out amid the snows, beneath the stars. See, there is already gleaming, blood-red, in the heavens, that same star that brought me its message of evil five-and-twenty years ago. The red star of ill-omen to the Clives. Hark, hark!"

"Doctor, doctor!" cried an excited voice behind them, and one of the servants from the Towers ran up, breathlessly. "Come—quick, doctor, quick—the master's struck!"

"Struck! How? When?" asked the doctor, excitedly. "I left him not half an hour ago!"

"Aye, aye, sir! But the stroke came on him just afterwards. They told me to come quick, and I might catch you. For God's sake, hurry, sir, for he's lying like one dead in the study, and Miss Fannie is going on like one mad. Lord knows, 'twill be the dark night at Clive Towers unless you bring him to!"

"Aye, a dark night!" cried the shrill voice of old Rizpah, as the doctor hurried away with the man—"a dark night, indeed! But no darker than another night five-and-twenty years ago, when the blood-red star was telling of death and dishonor to the Clives. Aye, tremble, tremble, tremble, Robert Clive!—for tremble now, you may. Your day has been long and sunny, but the night has come at last—a dark, dark night, that is lit only by the blood-red star!"

It was, indeed, a dark night at Clive Towers. Mute and helpless its master lay on the cushioned lounge in his study, while Dr. Bond and two of his conferees, hastily summoned from the city, labored skillfully and earnestly to bring back the life-tide to its accustomed flow.

But the channels seemed clogged; the breath came in heavy, stertorous gasps; the swollen veins, that sluggish pulse—all seemed to make the doctors' efforts vain.

Shut in her own room, whither Dr. Bond's friendly firmness had banished her, Fannie passed the dragging hours of that wretched night! Alone, alone—so utterly alone!

Oh, for Herbert's strong and loving arm to lean on in this hour of trial—for Fenton's cheering whisper—for Sybil's tender sympathy!

All had left her, a cold the hot-house flower that had been sheltered from every blast, must bow its beautiful head to the storm of winter, and breast the keen wind of adversity alone—all alone!

The wing that had guarded her so tenderly was broken, the strength that had shielded her so faithfully laid low, and, sobbing in her darkened chamber through the weary hours of that awful night, Fannie felt that she was, indeed, an orphan.

It was nearly day when Dr. Bond tapped at her door and summoned her to her father's bedside.

"He is conscious, we think, my dear," said the old doctor, kindly; but there seems something on his mind that he cannot speak. Perhaps you may understand what he wishes to say."

Trembling in every limb, Fannie was led into her father's chamber, whither he had been conveyed an hour before.

The white curtains of his bed were looped aside, and supported in an almost upright position, amid the pillows, his features rigid and unaltered, and his lips livid and tremulous, his eyes bloodshot and glassy, wandering from side to side in a despairing unrest—was the stately master of Clive Towers—the stern, haughty, indomitable Robert Clive.

His right hand kept straying ever and anon to his breast, as if he would make an effort to reach something there that pained him, and, when the effort failed, he would gaze around again with such pleading agony that even the physicians, accustomed to painful scenes of every description, felt indescribably moved.

"There is something that troubles him, my dear," said Dr. Bond, in a low voice, to Fannie. "Try and understand, my child, something your father wishes to say."

"Papa, papa!" the poor girl burst forth, piteously—"oh, papa, can you not speak, and tell me what you wish me to do?"

Oh, the dumb appeal of those quivering lips, those wandering eyes—the despairing energy with which the trembling hand tore at the uncovered breast—the agony of remorse that forced at length the husky whisper:

"Herbert, in God's name do justice—justice!"

Even as the words passed his livid lips Robert Clive fell back on his pillows, and, with a last despairing gesture, as if he would tear a veil from his heart, the master of Clive Towers lay a corpse.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

It was late one winter evening, that a sun-browned traveler stopped at a little inn that lay in one of those lovely valleys sheltered by the mighty fastnesses of the Alps.

So sheltered, indeed, that, even at this advanced season, this little oasis, deep-sunken in the heart of the hills and hemmed by a miniature lake, smiled with something of the freshness and beauty of perennial spring.

It was a secluded place, far removed from the ordinary line of tourists, and as the traveler reined in his horse at the little hostelry that looked, with its quaint style and appointments, like

some German toy, and gazed around him at the placid lake, the modest hamlet, the church and a few villas dotting the slopes beyond, and then afar to the white, shining circle of the everlasting hills, clad in their spotless mantles of eternal snow, he felt that he had entered into one of those quiet nooks where Nature bids her weary children come and rest.

The invitation, in this case, fell on a responsive heart. Weary and worn, footsore and heartsick, Herbert Clive had just returned from aimless wanderings in the East. He had followed no route, being guided by no purpose. His only idea was to escape from the bitterness of his sorrow alone—to forget, if possible, amid strange scenes and distant climes, the folly of his love, the madness of his pursuit and the agony of his loss.

But the spell was upon him still. Spite of every effort to put this beautiful, mysterious from his mind, Sybil reigned still in his heart its sovereign mistress, its crowned queen. He had sworn to himself never again to seek her. He had resolved to pluck from his breast the mad hope that, like some sweet yet poisonous flower, was blighting all the energy of his life. He had determined, once for all, to turn his back upon the dead past and leave it, buried in oblivion forever—to face the future bravely and manfully, and live out his life as nobly as he could, dreary and loveless though it should be.

And it was in pursuance of this resolution that had come to him that he was going home, after months of purposeless wandering, that seemed, as he looked back upon them, like the phases of a fever-dream, before he was going home—the home he had almost learned to think of as an unreal vision of the past—the home where all his duty and his life-work lay.

But he knew nothing of the dark cloud that lowered on Clive Towers. It had been months since tidings from America had reached him, and he felt as if there were no need of haste. He could yield to the whim of the moment that prompted him to enter into this quiet valley and rest—rest, before he had turned his back upon the dreary, forgotten past, before he had climbed the cold, dreary heights of a future that seemed typified by the snow-clad peaks that lifted their barren summits in his path.

The little inn was a very model of tidiness and comfort; the hostess was brisk and loquacious; and as Herbert trifled over the bountiful repast she set before him, he was soon made acquainted with all the points of interest in the neighborhood of St. Gothard, for the little hamlet took its name from the celebrated pass that was near by.

"Monsieur was American? Ah, many—very many Americans had stopped there the past year! One, two—ah, as many as three! Perhaps monsieur was a friend of his Col. Laponte, who had taken the Ville du Lac, which monsieur could see from his windows. Ah, such a beautiful place! 'Twas a pity to have it left vacant so long."

Herbert listened with vague interest. And then good Dame Marguerite, delighted to have so attentive a listener, when the moonlight was silvering the beauty of the villa, the loveliness of mademoiselle, and the generosity of the brave monsieur, her father.

Laponte? Laponte? The name was familiar to him. Where had he seen it before? It seemed to belong to that dreamy, half-remembered past—the past he had put behind him forever.

And partly from this dim memory lingering in his mind—partly because it was the only spot of interest near—Herbert strolled out that evening, when the moonlight was silvering the brows of the distant mountains, and bent his steps toward the Ville du Lac.

It was a lovely spot, the deep mountain lake mirroring in its pellucid waves the cloud, the sky and shore; the tiny island, that seemed almost to float upon the dark-blue waters, bearing the beautiful little villa, that, with its points and turrets, and cupolas, glistening in the moonlight, looked like some quaint German toy, and the great white peaks beyond, framing the whole, formed a picture fair to look upon, even in a dream.

He sat down on the fir-clad shore, and was taking in the beautiful scene as one of those

"To hang on memory's walls,"

when a little boat shot out from the villa, and floated out on the bosom of the lake, impelled by a young girl—a girl whose slender form was draped in a white cashmere mantle, and veiled in a glory of golden hair.

Herbert's eyes were riveted on the boat, and he put his hand to his head, as if to clear the mists from his brain. His pulse seemed to throb simultaneously; his breath came quick and short.

Was he mad, dreaming, or bound, indeed by some fearful spell?—a spell from which he could not escape?

For the golden-haired chatelaine of Ville du Lac—the Mademoiselle Laponte of Dame Marguerite—had the eyes and the hair, and the form and the voice, of his lost love, Sybil Wraye!

She was singing softly to herself—singing as Sybil was ever wont to sing, the thoughts that were denied prosaic speech.

Herbert held his breath and listened, as the song came borne over the moonlit waters, to the musical accompaniment of her oars:

"Hast thou left me, love, forever? No, ah, no, love! no, no, no! Life indeed would be too dreary. Could I believe that thou wouldst go. By me still thy spirit lingers. Ne'er to part, love—ne'er to part. Rainbows link 'em e'er to heaven; So may Hope link heart to heart."

Hope! hope! When had the word ever echoed before in Sybil's song? Hope! What siren was it thus deluding him with her false, cruel strains? Had he not sworn to pluck hope from his breast?

And yet Herbert lingered, spell-bound, watching the fairy skiff with a strained and fascinated gaze.

It crossed the placid bosom of the lake, and, urged by a few light strokes of the oars, then drifted on, past the very spot where he stood.

Herbert was unseemly, but at the sight of that exquisite profile, shaded by the snowy folds of the Capuchian hood, the stern resolve of months melted away like mists before the sun.

"Sybil!"—the word seemed almost forced from his quivering lips—"Sybil again—again!"

She turned, with a nervous start, and let the oars drop from her trembling hands.

"Herbert!"

Even in the pale moonlight he could see the crimson life-tide flushing brow and cheek, as she spoke the name.

"Is it Sybil, indeed? Or only some mocking vision?" he asked—"some cruel spirit, luring me on to destruction and despair? In God's name, if he brings such as you have a God, speak to me! Tell me who and what you are! Free me from the spell that holds me, despite myself and all my efforts! Tell me why you haunt me—by what mysterious power you control my fate!"

"Is it Herbert Clive who speaks?" she asked, with a touch of scorn—"Herbert Clive? or some weak creature whom some juggler could delude? Spell and charm! Alas, it is only woman who bends a willing victim to her power—it is only woman who acknowledges the one mighty spell that enthralles heart, and soul, and mind, and strength—the spell of Love! It is only woman who can suffer and die, smiling in her fetters, yet never ask to be set free!"

"Sybil, Sybil! do you speak to me in these accents of reproach?" was his bitter exclamation. "You, whom I have loved with such folly, such madness, that reason, judgment and wisdom have weighed as nothing against the power that drew me to your side? You have denied my suit, refused my prayers, perplexed me with doubts, tortured me by mysteries, well-nigh maddened me with masks and disguises. I loved you as purely and devotedly as man can love, and yet that love, based though it was, on honor, faith and truth, has been well-nigh my ruin. My life is still before me, serene and bright—the true, but I cannot cast it untried away. Sweet and lovely though the flower may be, when its perfume poisons and bewilders us, that flower must be plucked from our breasts, Sybil, I have loved you—I must love you to the bitter end—but I must fly from you. I dream, I hope, I suffer all the agonies of doubt and suspense at your side. My firmest resolutions fall me. I am again a madman!"

The little boat rocked like a lily leaf on the moonlit waves. The fair occupant was trembling now—trembling at the weight of emotions pride could not control.

"Alas, alas!" she faltered, "it has been a cruel, cruel fate that has brought our lives together. I have flung a dark and poisoned shadow in your path. I have blighted where I would have blessed, embittered where I would have sweetened and cheered. It is right that you should forget me, and yet—yet—"

She paused and buried her face in her hands.

"You would not be forgotten?" he inquired—"It is so, my darling, and tell me it is so? Oh, my love—my only love—it is only from a deluding dream that I would escape; it is only from a glittering mirage that I would turn away. I cannot wreck my life in following an illusive phantom. The echoes of your voice, glimpses of your presence, snatches of your songs, have lured me on from land to land, from clime to clime. Have been too long an idle wanderer, a worthless dreamer. Sybil, you yourself would scorn the man who could waste his manhood in the vain pursuit of a shadow, a vision, a beautiful but evanescent dream!"

"I know," she whispered—"know you are right. The web of my life has been woven so strangely, so darkly, that you may well look upon me with doubt and fear. And yet—yet I am no being of different mould from those around me. Sorrow and injustice, mortal's hate and mortal vengeance, have warped my life and made me what I am—a woman, with all a woman's loves and hopes denied. Forgive me the unwilling wrong I have done you. Alas! I suffer enough without the thought that we have parted in anger or fear. Let us part in sorrow, Herbert, as those part whom the death angel severs for time alone, not eternally. I would have died, indeed, rather than have lived to cause you a moment's anguish, a moment's fear. Let us part here, beneath the moonlit skies—in sorrow and in peace."

"And in love?" he added, eagerly. "Say in love and in hope, Sybil, and the future, however cold, will gleam as brightly as those snow-capped heights above us. I will wait and trust through the moonlit night for the coming day. The clouds and darkness have been heavy and bewildering, darling. Lighten them with one pale beam of hope?"

"Hope!" she whispered, rising in the boat and holding out her hand to him. "Alas! the word is one I dare not utter. But love—even the sorrowing, the hopeless may speak of love—love that can reach even unto heaven! Ah, yes, we may part in love!"

He lifted the little hand to his lips. "Love, love! Henceforth that word shall be my talisman," he murmured. "We part in love. Aye, darling and in love—I know, I feel it—we shall meet again!"

## (To be Continued.)

**Luck at Cards.** Several men were discussing the subject of big luck, when one remarked: "All this talk about thirteen being an unlucky number is sheer nonsense. What, for instance, is luckier than holding thirteen trumps at whist?"

"Humph!" replied another gentleman. "I held a thirteen-trump hand once, and didn't make more than one trick with it."

"How could that be?" "Well, you see, my partner was somewhat hot-tempered, and when I trumped his ace he jumped up and kicked me out of the room."—Waverly Magazine.

**The Meeting of the Ends.** We found him in his wretched garret. He had eaten his last candle and was writing furiously by the light of the stars.

"You seem scarcely able to make both ends meet," we said. "I am a poet, not a contortionist," he replied, without the slightest trace of impatience.

And we felt ourselves rebuked, and slunk away.—Detroit Journal.

**Not the Regular Thing.** "And do you call that a patriotic song?" said the publisher, handing back the manuscript.

"Certainly. Why not?" asked the other, in surprise. "Why, you don't rhyme 'soldier boy' with 'mother's joy' anywhere."—Philadelphia Press.

## DAIRY AND POULTRY.

### INTERESTING CHAPTERS FOR OUR RURAL READERS.

#### How Successful Farmers Operate This Department of the Farm—A Few Hints as to the Care of Live Stock and Poultry.

##### Dairy Notes.

The feeding of whole corn to calves is recommended by a good many dairymen that have tried it. When skim milk is fed something will be useful to balance it up and increase the elements of energy and heat. Calves utilize whole corn more fully than do cows. Before they are a year old their digestive habits are such that none of the corn is passed whole. But while this is true, it is not advisable to feed corn without limit. In fact too large quantities of corn might destroy the possibilities of the future cow, by creating a tendency to lay on fat.

Some are now suggesting that the best way to control the sale of oleomargarine is to compel the manufacturers and retailers of it to put it up in one and two-pound packages. This is in line with the suggestion that Mr. J. H. Monrad has often made that oleomargarine be sold in packages of certain shape, as oval, as is done now in some foreign countries. Either of these methods might prove effective, but it is barely possible that the courts would declare them unconstitutional. It must be remembered that the foreign countries that have such laws are not governed by constitutions like the ones under which we live, and because a law is constitutional in Europe is no sign that it would be equally so here.

The more preservatives are investigated the more objectionable they are found. In England, as well as in America, they are being looked after. From things that have come to light, it cannot be doubted that during the last few years especially the use of preservatives in milk, cream and other food products has caused a very large amount of sickness and many deaths, especially among invalids and children. Last year the British parliament appointed a committee to investigate the use of preservatives in food. Its investigations have brought to light a good many things of interest. One distinguished physician said that he had been experimenting with boric acid on himself and friends. In small quantities the kidneys could dispose of it, but it had a tendency to accumulate. He used it in larger quantities on himself and it had the effect of causing a loss of appetite and lassitude. It should never be used in milk, as it especially affects the digestive powers of weak children and babies. Dr. Voelcker, consulting chemist to the Royal Agricultural Society of England, said that boric acid should not be used in milk and cream. Dr. Walford, health officer of Cardiff, said that boric acid is injurious in the quantities in which it is used in milk. Dr. Hill, health officer of Birmingham, said that the people that put boric acid in milk know nothing of its medicinal properties. It is a drug and requires regulation. The use of boric acid is being discarded and a more dangerous chemical put in its place—formaldehyde. This latter hardens the albuminous matter in the food. Dr. Cameron, health officer of Leeds, said that for some years diarrhoea among children had been on the increase in Leeds, and this was probably due to the use of chemicals in milk, as some of these preservatives have the property of inducing such a condition. Dr. Mann, health officer for Manchester, said that no preservatives of any kind should be permitted in milk. Readers of the Farmers' Review will remember that boric acid is one of the least objectionable preservatives. In England it has been found that several more injurious drugs are being employed. Investigations further showed that no matter how harmful the preservative might be, prosecutions are practically impossible under any law that prohibited injurious drugs, as the manufacturers could always find some physician that would go into court and say that such drugs are harmless.

**Poultry Notes.**

The cheapest food for poultry is not always the best. In fact on the ordinary American farm it is seldom the best. We remember one farmer that purchased a sitting of Buff Cochins eggs. He put them under a hen and in due time got two chicks from them, one a male and the other a female chick. The birds grew rapidly, though their only feed was corn. In due time the hen began to lay or tried to lay. She was so fat that the attempt to pass the first egg killed her. Without doubt if she had been fed on a nitrogenous ration all would have been well. The farmer that had that experience did not again try to raise Buff Cochins, as he believed the death of the hen was due to her breed rather than her feed.

Duck growers are inclined to believe that developing a breed of ducks till the size is greatly increased destroys to a certain extent the vitality of the breed in the way of producing hatchable eggs. They cite as an illustration the Pekin ducks, which have been bred for size in this country till they are nearly 50 per cent heavier than formerly. The fertility of the eggs was formerly very great, but this fertility has been correspondingly reduced. It is probably the case with all animal life, as we know it to be with plant life. The more we develop the plant the less is it able to reproduce itself from the seed. This is seen in plants in the potato, which

formerly produced great quantities of potato balls. This factor must be counted on in developing any breed of fowls in a certain direction away from that of reproduction.

The man that breeds fowls year after year with the idea of selecting the best for future use as breeders must have in his mind's eye a standard. If he is breeding for flesh, he can form his opinions by the eye, and by the weight of the birds as determined by the scales. But if he is breeding for eggs, it would be a good idea to shut his eyes as to the form and symmetry and keep close watch of the egg returns and their source. The fact is that breeding for eggs will generally be away from the symmetry of form seen in the flesh-producing fowl, and the breeding for weight will mean a decreased number of eggs each year, or, at least, each generation.

**Barred Plymouth Rocks.**—I breed barred Plymouth Rocks exclusively. I think they are the best all-purpose fowls we have, but they are also the hardest to breed to perfection of any we have. This, however, lends a charm to the business. They are the most sought after by the fancier and the market breeder.—E. J. Gilbert, Whiteside County, Illinois.

**Know Your Hens.**—Most men keep some of their old hens over the second winter, and it is frequently the case that some of them are non-layers or practically so. When a hen is laying, a man can tell it by comb and other indications. It is not a difficult matter to mark the hens that seem to be laying well this year and keep only those for next year's operations.

The "shank" is the lower and scaly joint of the leg.

##### About Birds.

A contributor to Popular Science writes that year after year a discarded tin teapot hanging on a back porch of a house is occupied as a nest by wrens, who seem wholly indifferent to the constant movements of the family about the spot.

Another odd nesting place mentioned is a half coconut shell in a poplar tree in St. Paul, Minn. The lining was of white cotton string, and the nest was the home of a robin family. A less discreet robin built his nest on the top of a 2x4 rafter leaning against the side of a house. The family cat watched the nest with deep interest, and when the eggs were hatched and the young birds about to fly appropriated the entire brood with a relish.

Every lover of birds has wondered why they change their colors. Even ornithologists are unable to answer the questions why the tanager is scarlet in summer and green in winter, or why the bobolink is black and white in summer and buff in winter. The well-known fact that the brilliant orange color of some canaries can be artificially produced by adding red pepper to the diet may furnish a hint that the different foods procurable in the different seasons may be responsible for the change.

The feathers already covering the bird are not affected by the diet, but when molting occurs the new plumage comes in with a new tinting. In the case of the snow bunting, whose color is brownish buff in winter and black and white in summer, the change is said to be due to the abrasion of the terminal parts of the feathers, which are differently colored from the bases and much more brittle. A bird's body feathers, says the writer in Popular Science, are arranged like shingles on a roof, only the terminals being visible. As they give the color effect, it follows that, since the base of the plumage is differently colored, when the ends are rubbed off the entire tinting seems changed.

##### Spurious Butter in Massachusetts.

George M. Whitaker, acting executive officer of the Dairy Bureau of Massachusetts, says:

Natural butter has been higher in price during the past year than for a number of previous years, which has been a temptation to crowd the sales of the spurious article. Further than that, the number of manufacturers who have been pushing their goods in Massachusetts has increased. When the national supreme court rendered its now famous Plumley decision, sustaining the constitutionality of the anti-color law, the large Chicago manufacturers withdrew from Massachusetts. They said that, whatever might be their opinion of the law, they could not afford to stand before the community as lawbreakers. As a result of this decision, all of the counterfeit butter that came into Massachusetts for several years was made in Rhode Island, by companies bearing the names—some what peculiar for the business in which they were engaged—of "Vermont" and "Oakdale." During the past year the greed of gain has led two large Chicago manufacturers to climb sheepishly down from the pedestal of virtue on which they had been posing, and enter the scramble for dollars by defying the laws of the commonwealth. These large manufacturers have made cities and towns in other states near the Massachusetts line the base of their operations, and in many instances have resorted to tricks that would bring a blush of envy to the average kitchen barroom proprietor.

Dispepsy is the father or ill nature and morbid religiosity. The stomach is more powerful than the soul, physically speaking.

A good test of housekeeping is the quality of the coffee.