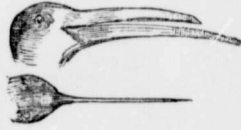


A BIRD THAT HELPS ITSELF TO OYSTERS.

This wonderful fellow, I'm told, opens oysters with his bill. The longer mandible is thrust between the valves, and then turned so as to wedge open the shell; in fact, it is used as an oysterman uses his knife. The oyster is then cut away with the upper blade and swallowed. Sometimes the oyster closes upon the whole beak, in which case the bird bangs the



SIDE-VIEW AND TOP-VIEW OF THE BEAK OF THE SCISSOR-BILL.

shell against a stone so as to break the hinge and expose the inhabitant, which is immediately scooped out. He also skims along just over the surface of the sea, picking up whatever he can find to eat. While thus darting about, the bird utters loud and exultant cries, as if proud of its skill.—*St. Nicholas.*

BABIES IN SCANDINAVIA.

The peasants like grand names for their little ones, such as Adolph, Adricin, Gotfried, Gustavus, for boys; and Josephina, Thora, Ingeborg for girls; and if they have no name prepared they seek one in the almanac for the particular day of baby's birth. It is "baptized" the next Sunday and taken to church by the god-mother, who provides the christening garments, which are often trimmed with colored bows, while the infant has beads around its neck and wears a cap with very little border. The clergyman holds it well over the font and pours water over the back of the head three times, and then wipes with a towel. As the baby is swathed in six-inch-wide bandages so that it cannot move its legs and sometimes not even its arms, it is obliged to lie very passive during this ceremonial. The peasants have their reasons for this swathing, the first of which is that they think it makes the limbs grow straight; the second that it turns baby into a compact bundle to carry. When swathed thus, infants have been said to resemble the tail of a lobster, or even its whole body. In the north they are often hung from a long, springy pole stuck in the wall, to be out of the way; and, being by nature quiet, they are supposed not to mind it. Their cradles, which are very primitive, are also frequently suspended by a spiral spring from the roof, which must be more comfortable than the pole. Both in Sweden and Norwegian Lapland people take these "swaddings" to

church. But instead of carrying them into church they make a hole in the snow outside in the churchyard and bury them in it, leaving a small aperture for breathing purposes. The babies are kept splendidly warm, while their friends within the sacred building have their beards frozen to their fur coats by the freezing of their own breaths. As soon as a peasant boy can walk, he is put into trousers, buttoned inside his jacket; and these are so baggy behind that it is often amusing to see him. This bagginess is frequently due to the fact that the trousers originally belonged to his father, but were cut off at the legs and simply drawn round the boy's waist without reducing their size. Add to this that the feet are shod either with little jack-boots or wooden shoes, and we have a strange picture. Their stockings either have leather heels or no heels at all, so that the mother is spared the trouble of mending them. Neither has she much la-



HELPING HIMSELF TO OYSTERS.

bor with their heads, the hair of which is cropped as close as a convict's. The girls also wear wooden shoes, but they have gingham kerchiefs or caps on their heads, frocks down to their heels and quaint pinafores—*Little Folk's Magazine.*

NO WEIGHTS.

"Let us lay aside every weight."—*Heb. 12: 1.*
If you were going to run a race, you would first put down all the parcels you might have been carrying. And if you had a heavy little parcel in your pocket, you would take that out and lay it down too, because it would hinder you in running. You would know better than to say, "I will put down the parcels which I have in my hands, but nobody can see the one in my pocket, so that one won't matter!" You would "lay aside every weight."
You have a race to run to-day, a little piece of the great race that is set before you. God has set a splendid prize before you, "the

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," a crown that is incorruptible.

Now what are you going to do about the weights, the things that hinder you from running this race? you know some things do seem to hinder you; will you keep them or lay them aside? Will you only lay aside something that every one can see is hindering you, so that you will get a little credit for putting it down, and keep something that your own little conscience knows is a real hinderance, though no one else knows anything at all about it? Oh, take St. Paul's wise and holy advice, and make up your mind to lay aside every weight.

Different persons have different weights; we must find out what ours are, and give them up. One finds that if she does not get up directly she is called, the time slips by, and there is not enough left for quiet prayer and Bible reading. Then here is a little weight that must be laid aside. Another

describes the manner in which this industry is carried on. The surroundings are certainly picturesque. An encampment has been formed in the beech woods, and suitable trees are selected and felled. Each will probably give six dozen pairs of wooden shoes. Other kinds of wood are spongy and soon penetrated with damp, but the beech sabots are light, of close grain, and keep the feet dry in spite of snow and mud, and in this respect are greatly superior to leather.

All is animation. The men cut down the tree; the trunk is sawn into lengths, and if the pieces prove too large they are divided into quarters. The first workman fashions the *sabots* roughly with the hatchet, taking care to give the bend for right and left; the second takes it in hand, pierces the hole for the interior, scoops the wood out with an instrument called the *culler*.

The third is the artist of the company; it is his work to finish and polish it, carving a rose or primrose upon the top if it be for the fair sex. Sometimes he cuts an open border around the edge, so that a blue or white stocking may be shown by a coquettish girl. As they are finished they are placed in rows under the white shavings; twice a week the apprentice exposes them to a fire, which smokes and hardens the wood, giving it a warm golden hue. The largest sizes are cut from the lowest part of the bole, to cover the workman's feet who is out in rain from morning to night. The middle part is for the busy house-wife who is treading the washhouse, the dairy, or stands beside the village fountain. Next come those of the little shepherd, who wanders all day long with his flock, and still smaller ones for the school boy. Those for the babies have the happiest lot; they are seldom worn out. As the foot grows the mother keeps the little sabots in a corner of her cupboard beside the baptismal robe.

A CELEBRATED GERMAN writer mentions "an antique, the whole size of which is but one inch in length, and one-third of an inch in breadth, and yet it contains in mosaic the picture of a Mallard duck, which, in brilliancy of coloring, and in distinct representation of parts, even of wings and feathers, equals a miniature painting. And what is most wonderful, on being turned, it presents the same picture without a discoverable variation on the opposite side."

HOW WOODEN SHOES ARE MADE.

An industry that cannot last many years more, thanks to the rapid cheapening of leather shoes by means of machinery, is the manufacture of wooden shoes, still the only wear of thousands of French peasantry. A writer in *Chambers's Journal* pleasantly de-

NEVER ENTER upon the duties of the day without "casting all your care" upon God and seeking His guidance and blessing upon all things. In answer to this prayer many minutes, nay, hours, may be given you, and thus you may find "a minute to spare."

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—J. G. Holland.