

Hints About Making Bird Skins.

Skin the head close down to the base of the beak, especially in front of the eyes. Otherwise the feathers may come out when the skin is relaxed for mounting, and even if they do not, whoever mounts the bird will find it necessary to separate the skin from the skull in order not to leave a ridge of feathers marking the boundary between the skinned and unskinned portions. Always leave in all but the head of the humerus in a good-sized bird. Never on any account detach the secondaries from the ulna in birds of the size of the red shouldered hawk and upward. True, the bird may never be mounted, but very likely, too, he may, and to do good work on a large bird the secondaries must be attached to the bone. Especially is this the case where the bird is to have the wings spread. You may clean the roots of the feathers and sew them carefully to the ulna, but you can not get them as solid as they were, while to give them the even spacing and regular spread that they have in nature is quite out of the question. You can remove the muscles and tendons by making a cut on the under side of the wing from the elbow to the wrist, and the taxidermist who mounts your skins will set you down as one of the few who know how to make up a large skin properly. Take out the tendon back of the leg in long legged birds of prey and waders, thereby rendering it possible for a leg to be wired readily, to say nothing of the fact that it is a great aid to keeping the scutellum of the tarsus intact. To do this make an incision back of the heel, i. e., tibio-tarsal joint, and a second in the fleshy part of the foot. Sever the tendon at the heel, get an awl under it at the cut in the foot and pull it down. Remove the part contained in the tibial portion from above when you skin the leg.

Remove blood-stains. Grease and dirt can be removed, but blood hard dried upon feathers is almost impossible to take off. Warm water and sugar will do something toward it, but not much.

Do not "bung out" a bird's eye by putting too much cotton in the orbits. Be particularly careful about this in hawks, who have deep set eyes, which should be pressed inward rather than distended.

Get off as much fat as possible from the inside of a skin, otherwise it will be very apt to crack when it comes to be mounted.

Don't be afraid of opening a bird too high up on the breast. If you ever mounted half-a-dozen dry skins you will know why. In the majority of skins the cut is too short for ready manipulation of the bird in mounting, and it is necessary to prolong it. Now the skin on the edge of the old cut will be shrunken and thickened, and a stitch taken in it holds and does not tear out; but in the new cut the edges are thin and weak, and a thread pulls easily through, thereby causing great annoyance to the individual who is at work thereon.

The above notes cover some of the most annoying mistakes that are made by collectors. We trust they may not be without some influence.

SAVE THE ICE. A good way to prevent ice from melting has been suggested by Dr. Gargee, in the *Lancet*. Instead of placing the broken ice in the ordinary bowl or tumbler, it should be suspended in a piece of coarse, open flannel stretched across the mouth of the bowl, and allowed to fall partially into it. The ice thus supported in the flannel pouch had better be covered over with another piece of the same material. Protected in this way from the light and the water formed by its own melting—which filters through to the bottom of the vessel—it can be kept for ten hours.

If you would succeed in life, rise early and and be an economist of time.

An Astronomical Weather Prophet

THE GREATEST STORM OF THE 19TH CENTURY.

Editor of the *CITIZEN*.

Sir,—The *Asia*, Her Majesty's steamship *Phœnix* and many others have been wrecked in the great storm which I announced two months ago would pass from east to west over this continent during the month of September, striking the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the 13th, and British Columbia on the 15th.

My warnings were unheeded, and hundreds of poor souls who know nothing of the great laws by which nature governs the world have gone down to the bottom of the sea.

Here we have another proof—if proof were needed—of the utter uselessness of our meteorological bureaus. On the principle that water run down hill, they pretend to announce the approach of storms. Owing to the fact, however, that they have no stations at Hudson's Bay or the middle of the Atlantic, their scope is exceedingly limited, and the storms they do indicate are of a purely local character, being short in duration, harmless in their effect, and local in their action. But how can the barometer indicate a storm that has not yet struck our planet? Was the great storm known to the observatory at Quebec or Toronto before it struck the Gulf of St. Lawrence? It was not, because it is impossible that it could have been known from atmospheric disturbances. Of what use was it, therefore, to the Captain of the *Phœnix* or the *Asia*, or the hundreds of poor creatures whose bodies are now floating in the great Canadian inland sea, to hoist the storm signals after those vessels, only a few hours before, had gone out into the jaws of death?

Owing to the advice of friends and to the fact that every man should feel an interest in his fellow, I now make the following announcement:—

A great storm will strike this planet on the 9th of March next. It will first be felt in the Northern Pacific, and will cross the meridian of Ottawa at noon (5 o'clock p.m. London time) of Sunday, March 11th, 1883. No vessel smaller than a Cunard will be able to live in the tempest. India, the South of Europe, England, and especially the North American Continent, will be the theatre of its ravages. As all the low lands on the Atlantic will be submerged, I advise shipbuilders to place their prospective vessels high upon the stocks, and farmers having loose valuables, as hay, cattle, etc., to remove them to a place of safety. I beg further most respectfully to appeal to the honourable Minister of Marine that he will peremptorily order up the storm drums on all the Canadian coast not later than the 20th of February, and thus permit no vessel to leave harbour. If this is not done, hundreds of lives will be lost, and millions' worth of property destroyed.

E. STONE WIGGINS, LL.D.,
Astronomer.

Ottawa, Sept. 22nd.

And if this Storm does not come, O!!! WIGGINS.

—"What is that in your wagon?" he asked of the ice-man, who had got his ice all cut in pieces of the regular size for delivery. "Why, that's ice." "Is it, though? Really, I thought you had been caught out in Vennor's hail storm."

—"Ma, will you play base ball with me?" inquired a little lad, hot with enthusiasm and breathless with running, as he burst into the parlor where his maternal parent was trying to cut a seven yard polonaise out of a four-and-three quarters piece of goods. "I will, my son," she replied with feeling. And she made five base hits before the boy could stop the bawl or reach the right field.—*Boned*.

How to Secure Vast Crops.

Send ten cents to A. Vogeler & Co., Baltimore, Md., with your name and address and receive a copy of the Vennor Almanac for 1883, which will so thoroughly post the farmer upon the state of the weather, that he can run his farm for profit, and not experience only.

How to preserve Birds.

The prairies of West Texas are literally alive with beautiful and rare birds of almost every variety, and of late years many have undertaken to secure and preserve collections of the different varieties. We give below some hints to amateurs from an exchange.

"It may be said that the first thing, and one of the greatest importance, is to remove the skin with extreme care, so as to avoid any injury, and then treat it with a good preserving preparation. One of the best of these is an arsenical soap, composed of, arsenic, 1 ounce; white soap, 1 ounce; carbonate of potash, 1 dram; distilled water, 6 drams; camphor, 2 drams. This prescription can be prepared at any drug store. It is an excellent preparation for softening the skin and keeping it pliable, free from insects and decay. There is a powder composed of arsenic, 1 pound; burnt alum, 1 pound; ground oak bark, 2 pounds; camphor, 1/2 pound, which is used a good deal to preserve the skins of larger birds and other animals. After all, pure pulverized arsenic, such as can be got by special order from the wholesale druggists of the principal cities, if not kept by home druggists, is one of the most effective and simplest preparations. Care should be taken in handling this poison, and it is best always to wear gloves in applying the powders. Plaster of Paris should be used in the skinning process, to absorb the blood and other fluids, and clean blood and grease from the feathers. It can be sprinkled on and rubbed off repeatedly, until the cleansing is perfect. The Illinois State Natural History society, at Bloomington, will furnish pamphlets giving full instructions to amateurs. There are many nice particulars to be observed to preserve skins and skeletons of birds in really fine condition.

The Number Seven.

On the 7th day of the 7th month a holy observance was ordained to the children of Israel, who feasted 7 days, and remained 7 days in tents—the 7th year was directed to be a sabbath of rest for all things; and at the end of 7 times 7 years commenced the grand Jubilee—every 7th year the land lay fallow, every 7th year there was a grand release from all debts, and bondsmen were set free. From this might have originated the custom of binding young women to seven years apprenticeship, and of punishing incorrigible offenders by transportation for 7, twice 7, or three times 7 years. Anciently a child was not named before seven days, not being accounted fully to have life before that periodical day—the teeth spring out on the 7th month, and are shed in the 7th year when infancy is changed into childhood. At thrice 7 years the faculties are developed, manhood commences, and a man becomes legally competent to perform civil acts—at four times 7 he is in full possession of his strength—at five times 7 he is fit for the business of the world—at six times 7 he becomes grave and wise, or never—at seven times 7 he is in apogee and from that time decays—at eight times 7 he is in his first climacteric—at nine times 7, or 53, he is in his grand climacteric or year of danger, and at ten times seven, or three score years and ten, has by the royal prophet, been pronounced the natural period of human life.

And, we would add, the most constant weather cycle is that of seven, or some multiple of this mythical number.—*Ed*.

Oscar Wilde ignored capitals at Saratoga, signing his name "oscar wilde, london." His sun-flower followers will follow his example. Bad spelling is already very fashionable in la-de-da society.—*New Orleans Picayune*.