



A Myriad Host.

ted with red or brown or black; in every nest. As it was now the middle of June and these birds begin to lay on the 5th; averaging year by year. Did we? No. Almost every egg had been stolen. Instead of finding four thousand five hundred eggs, allowing each nesting bird a full set of three, we found not more than fifty gulls' eggs on the entire island. Red man, white man, crow; all had daily visited this lonely island and taken of the harvest of fresh eggs.

We, therefore, turned our attention to the few birds that were nesting. On the summit of an excrement stained cliff one watchful female stood over her eggs. By daily adding a rock to a pile we finally got the camera close enough to connect the discharge line. None of these birds approach the visitor, nor do they defend the eggs nor even the young. In the next picture we show you the typical position of the nesting female and her timorous guardian male, another nesting female just popped her head up as Fritz cried exultantly "We got them that time." Now imagine this position. Here we were in the very heart of the breeding grounds, on the best island. We had yet many days to stay; but so persistently was the island robbed (the crows could be seen at all times sitting near the nests, just waiting until hunger or alarm drove the female off, then the greedy bird flew down and pecked a hole in every egg or; if in a hurry, drove its bill into the large end of the egg, tipped its head back and flew away with the egg impaled upon its bill) that I asked the lad "Do you think we will have to be nature fakirs and collect an egg from three nests for a picture of a full set." Imagine this occurring on the far off Gulf of Georgia, in the Southern Pacific. Bestir yourselves all ye men that have the love of the birds in your hearts. I tell you that in all my years of work; in all parts of this continent; all or nearly all of the nests I have seen were fully or partly robbed.

Well, we finally found the nest pictured. It had the full clutch; three. Just a grass and weed circle and three eggs that matched as well as do the buttons on my lady's tailor made. Where are the other four thousand four hundred and fifty eggs? Look and I will show you a few of them in this Indian's basket. He was of the Coast Indians, the Salish, of the village of the Siammons. His forefathers had for generations gathered the eggs, why not he? Any day it was possible to scan the heights and see some active klootchman; with her baby hanging by a hair, so it seemed to us, from the roughly knotted shawl that hung over her shoulder. Up and down the broken ledges, where even

a careful, unladen boy took watchful glance at the friable edge that led to death on the fallen, crushed boulders below, along the narrow nesting shelves these lithe mothers with their young went, with never an inch to turn in, forward they must go, and all for a few strong, red yolked, harsh tasting gulls' eggs. I am speaking of the white man's taste. These tribes eat these when they are partially incubated.

Everywhere we went broken egg shells proclaimed the bird robbers. At one shell-fish formed beach, where the tides of centuries had thrown up a connecting neck between the two great steppes, we saw a party of Indians at breakfast. All the men were away for the salmon fishing. Here were just the women folks and the youngsters. Gulls' eggs, raw sea urchins, cod fish boiled; exactly as it came out of the water and some flap-jacks of the most untearable consistency—as we saw a babe try to tear a bit off for a young crow they had captured. Another captured crow lay dead in the lap of another widely staring youngster—mayhaps a bit had been torn off for it. This party soon crept into the big war canoe, put up the tattered sail and scudded away over



Fritz coralling young gulls.

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