

you prefer, trace on to white tissue paper, and baste it upon your dress, then work over the out-line with beads, the smaller the beads the handsomer your design. It is a mistaken idea with some people that the pattern should be very open, for, to our fancy, at least, it looks far richer when rather close. Cashmeres are also handsome trimmed with moire (watered silk) or striped satin and moire.

Capes will be worn very much made of the same material as the dress; also of black or cream lace, row upon row. The hats and bonnets are mostly large, and are fashionable in straws, or made up of lace and satin, the rims to, many being shirred on wires. Feathers are exceedingly fashionable, as also flowers, which are shown in every conceivable variety, rich in color and texture. Very pretty and cheap hats can be made by covering a shape with any colored Indian mull, shir the rims and finish off with a twist of the mull around the crown, or a feather, if you chance to have one of a suitable color.

MINNIE MAY.

Answers to Inquirers.

RED HEAD.—Is there any way of safely dyeing the hair black? ANS.—Yes. But avoid all mineral dyes, which contain lead and cause sores on the scalp. Make the following: When the season comes for them, get a quantity of green black walnuts, crush them and squeeze the juice from them; dilute this with an equal quantity of olive oil; perfume agreeably, and use it as a hair dressing.

ELLEN.—1. Is it always necessary at the commencement of a meal for the host to put a portion of food on a plate for each guest, and pass it, and receive each empty plate in return? 2. Should the hostess wait on the table in that way in the absence of the host, in case there is no servant? ANS.—1. Should the host have a dish before him which should be served to each, he will do it in that way if the plates have been laid around; at dinner the plates are usually placed in piles before the carver and passed to each as helped, either by a servant or by the guests passing from one hand to another. 2. Of course, unless some gentleman should kindly relieve her of the task of carving.

FLORIST.—I have heard of drying flowers in sand; can you explain the process? ANS.—Process as follows: Procure some fine sand and wash it so clean that the water passes off quite pure and free from stain, dry it in an oven and heat it very hot then stir into six pounds of it one ounce of stearine very thoroughly until every grain is coated. Let it cool. Take a box and fit a wire gauze bottom to it, with a false bottom under that to hold the sand. Put an inch or two of sand in the box and set up the flowers in the sand. Then with a paper twisted into a small funnel, direct the sand into the box so as to bury the flowers without disturbing and quite cover them. Then put the box in a warm place until the flowers have completely dried. Then open the false bottom of the box and let the sand run out very slowly. Pick the flowers when quite free from moisture.

"You told me, sir, that the horse was entirely without fault, and yet he is blind." The dealer looked blandly into the irritated countenance of the loser by the transaction, and said with charming innocence: "I do not regard blindness as a fault, sir. It is a misfortune."—[Michigan Farmer.

Two-Story Birds' Nests.

BY DANIEL C. BEARD.

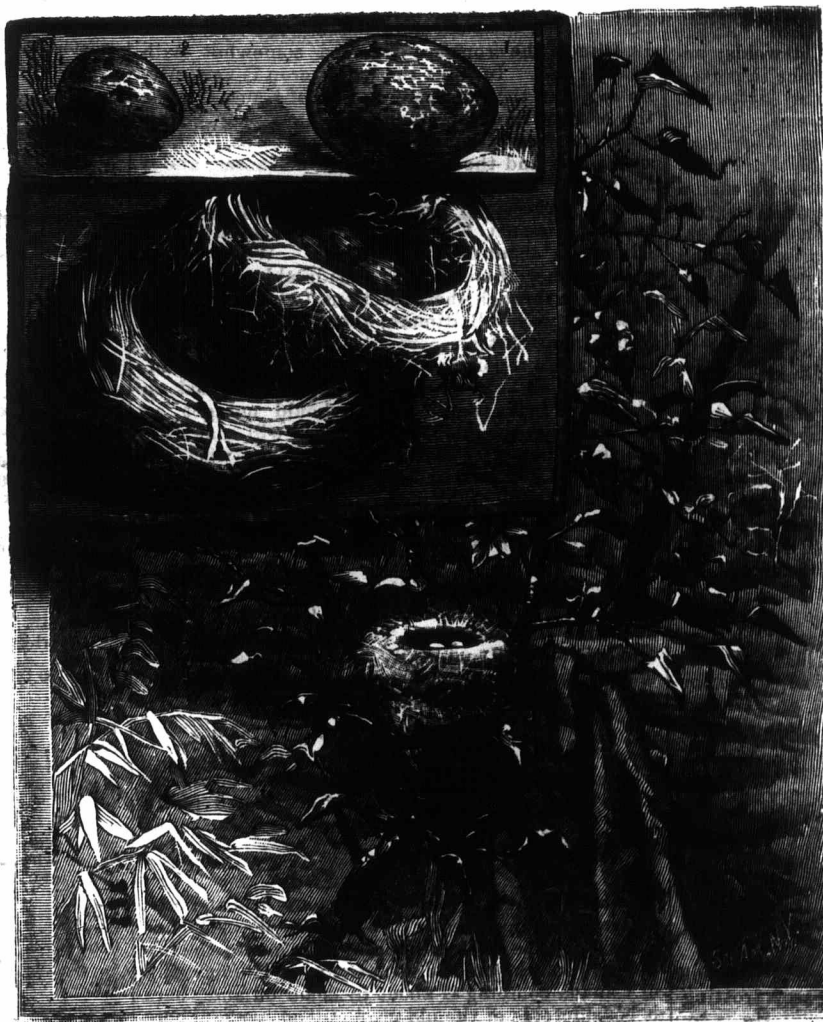
While the expanding leaves of tree and shrub retain the tender tints of pink, and the broad lily pads commence to mosaic the surface of the ponds with green, in perfect harmony with the bursting bud and opening flower comes the summer yellow-bird, and from hedge and bush may be heard his song, as simple and pleasing as the tasteful but modest plumage that covers his little person. Almost immediately after the first appearance of these industrious little birds they commence their preparations for housekeeping. The male bird flies busily about selecting such material as feathers, plants, fibers, the furze from ferns, the catkins from willows, and other similar objects, all of which he brings to his mate, who arranges and fashions their delicate nest. So quickly and deftly do this little couple labor that they build the greater part of their house in a single day.

There is often a third party interested in the construction of this nest, a homeless, happy-go-

drop of one or more young cow blackbirds, considerable larger than the greenlets themselves.

The summer yellowbird, though confiding little creatures, are not readily duped or imposed upon. Their instinct is sufficiently near reason for them to detect the difference between their own little fragile, prettily-marked, greenish-colored eggs and the great dark-colored ones the vagabond cow blackbird has surreptitiously smuggled into the cozy nest. The domestic little couple cling to the spot selected for their house and will not leave it, neither will they hatch the obnoxious eggs, which they are apparently unable to throw out; but the difficulty is soon surmounted, and so are the gratuitous eggs, for the indefatigable workers proceed at once to cover up the cow blackbird's eggs, constructing a new nest on top of the old one, building a second story, as it were, to their house.

The accompanying illustration was drawn by the writer. The upper story or nest is partly lifted so as to show the cow blackbird's eggs in the nest below.



TWO-STORY BIRDS' NESTS.

lucky Bohemian bird, who has a sort of tramp's interest in the housekeeping arrangements of most of the smaller feathered denizens of copse and woods. This is the well-known cow blackbird, who disdains to shackle her freedom with the care of a family, and shifts a mother's responsibility by farming her progeny out, while she seeks the incongruous but apparently congenial companionship of the cattle, with whom she appears to be on the most intimate terms.

The cow blackbird deposits its eggs indiscriminately among the nests of smaller birds. The blackbird's eggs generally hatch out a day or two before the adopted mother's own eggs, so, when the legitimate members of the family do come, it is to find their nest already occupied by the strong, lusty interlopers, who, on account of their superior size and strength, come in for the lion's share of all the food brought to the nest. Thus the innocent parents rear the aliens, while their own young starve. It is really a pitiable sight to see a couple of little greenlets anxiously searching from day-break till evening for food to fill the capacious

The apple and pear trees wear beautiful crowns of beauty—delicate, rose-tinted flowers, pure white, and now and then a young tree sports a coronal of almost rosy red, while all breathe the sweetest perfume. The birds seem delighted at this gay reception, and sing their blithest strains. Morning concerts and daily matinees are the order of the day, while the distant hills, in their blue, smoky atmosphere, give the finishing touches to a landscape well befitting "the merry, merry month of May." Even the Unadilla seems to have caught the spirit of the scene, and glides slowly between violet-dotted meadow banks, while she mirrors the graceful, drooping willows in her depths of blue. And the glorious sunshine encircles all, the benignant flowers fall upon all, the love of the Great Father is as a crown of blessing upon all His works and upon all His creatures, in this beautiful month of May.

A good-natured spinster used to boast that she always had two good beaux; they were elbows.

Fig. 1 shows the cow blackbird's egg, and Fig. 2 the yellowbird's egg. These are drawn exactly the size of nature.

Mr. Nuttall was the first naturalist, I believe, to record the observation of these two-story nests. Baird mentions a three-story nest, each of the lower nests containing the eggs of the cow blackbird, the whole structure being seven inches high.

May Days.

MRS. E. J. RICHMOND.

June may be the queen of the circle of months, but, coming from the dampness and chill of the long, long winter into the balmy sunshine and beautiful pictures of this lovely May, one can desire nothing more delightful. It seems but yesterday we were eagerly searching over the brown, damp meadows for the first blade of grass; now great stretches of clover and waving grass cover all the meadows, and even the roadside, while blue violets and golden dandelions are peeping forth wherever we may turn. The Crocuses and Hyacinths have come and gone, but the Lily of the Valley holds her graceful, sweet-scented bells still, while the pretty Snow Drop nods approvingly. The Star of Bethlehem shines with steady lustre, while the Polyanthus and the dear old Pansies, though they have been here so long, seem to be holding daily receptions, at which great numbers of people in royal purple velvet and scarlet and gold suits appear. Tulips in gorgeous coloring flaunt proudly before great blooming wreaths of flowering Almond, while the modest Lilac, dear old-fashioned flower, fills the air with sweetness.—