

agreeable to that desiccated mortal called the "closet naturalist," but for my own part the closet naturalist is a person with whom I have very little sympathy.

He is about the most wearisome and profitless creature in existence. With his piles of skins, his cases of eggs, his laborious feather-splitting, and his outlandish nomenclature, he is not only the enemy of the birds, but the enemy of all those who would know them rightly.

10 Not the collectors alone are to blame for the diminishing numbers of our wild birds, but a large share of the responsibility rests upon quite a different class of persons; namely, the milliners. False taste in dress is as destructive to our feathered friends as are
15 false aims in science. It is said that the traffic in the skins of our brighter plumaged birds, arising from their use by the milliners, reaches to hundreds of thousands annually. I am told of one middleman who collected from the shooters in one district, in four
20 months, seventy thousand skins. It is a barbarous taste that craves this kind of ornamentation. Think of a woman or girl of real refinement appearing upon the street with her head-gear adorned with the scalps of our songsters!

25 It is probably true that the number of our birds destroyed by man is but a small percentage of the number cut off by their natural enemies; but it is to be remembered that those he destroys are in addition to those thus cut off, and that it is this extra or artificial destruction that disturbs the balance of nature. The operation of natural causes keeps the birds in check, but the greed of the collectors and milliners tends to their extinction.

I can pardon a man who wishes to make a collec-