

Troubles of Bird Housekeeping



If the average small boy knew what a hard time birds have to rear their families under the best conditions he would hesitate to disturb their nests, even if there was no law to threaten him with punishment if he did so.

There was a patient pair of robins, for instance, who built their first nest more than six weeks ago in a low apple tree in the orchard. Presently there were two blue eggs in the nest. Then came the first catastrophe. Next morning the nest was empty. On the ground under the tree lay one of the eggs with two holes picked in its shell. That was the work of a big, sneaking bluejay, if one may judge by the fact that the same afternoon the robins were seen chasing a scolding jay about the orchard and that the picture of the jay has long been in the birds' rogue gallery.

Immediately after the destruction of their eggs the robins set about building a second nest on another limb of the same tree. They got so far as to have three blue eggs in this prospective cradle when a red squirrel came down one afternoon from the oaks adjoining the orchard and made a robins' egg omelet of what he found there.

Then a third nest was built and on that the old mother bird has now been sitting for two weeks. Perhaps she will succeed this time in rearing an in-

ten two cowbird eggs are found in the same nest, but rarely if ever have four been found.

The greed of the cowbird in thus completely occupying the warbler's nest brought its own punishment with it. The warbler, disgusted, abandoned



COWBIRDS STOLE THE WHOLE NEST.

the nest completely. A day or two later something—boy or beast—had discovered the deserted nest and stolen all four of the eggs.

If the yellow warbler builds another nest and succeeds in raising its brood where the cowbirds cannot find it the first catastrophe may be all for the best. Even when only one cowbird's egg is laid in a nest and is hatched out with three or four young warblers the latter are likely to get far the worst of it. The young cowbird from the moment it breaks the shell is bigger and greedier than its foster brothers and sisters. It will crowd them to the side and insists on eating much more than its share of the food which the yellow warblers bring for their young.

Across the barbed wire and rail fence from the warbler's nest is a big woods pasture. Close to the fence grow thick clumps of hazel brush and wild crab and plum trees. In some places the thicket is so dense that a man has hard work in forcing his way through it. High up in these tangles, six or eight feet from the ground, two pairs of catbirds have built their nests. They are apparently safe from all but other bird enemies, for the long, sharp thorns and the interlacing branches protect them from attack from the ground. This is evi-



MOURNING DOVE BROODS ON THE GROUND.

dently a favorite nesting place of theirs, for in the branches there are the ruins of nests evidently two or three years old.

Close to the catbird's tangle and lying on the ground in a poor apology for a nest were found a recently hatched mourning dove and a white egg from which the little bird had not yet picked its way. This nest was close to the stalks of some close growing bushes and would never have been discovered if the old mother bird had not gotten up and flown away in a terrible fright when the nestseeker was four or five feet away.

With the instinct of most of the ground building kind the old bird went off with an apparently broken wing and did her best to decoy danger away from her helpless little ones. It is a wonder how these little doves escape the prowling cats which hunt in the

meadows and woods all about, but so far they have done finely, and on Saturday last the elder of the two was already able to use his wings in a flight of three or four feet.

Out in an old telephone pole which stands at the corner of two country roads is a regular birds' flat building. About fifteen feet up from the ground, just high enough up to be the despair of small boys, is a small hole leading down to a circular chamber. Here a bluebird family has its home. Five feet up is another and larger hole. This is the front door to the residence of a redheaded woodpecker. At present the young woodpeckers are just getting ready to try their wings and at almost any time one of the youngsters may be seen looking out of the hole at what must seem a strange world. Still higher up, in the third story of the flat building, is another opening evidently made by a flicker, who changed his mind and left before he completed the work. There is likely to be an English sparrow's nest in that cavity before the summer is over, for the "avian rats" are going out into the country for the summer in great numbers and bid fair as soon to be as big a nuisance there as they are now in the city and nearby suburbs.

There seem to be other birds beside the bluejay which sometimes eat or at least destroy the eggs of their fellows. Thus the other day a horrible suspicion was aroused in regard to that symbol of innocence and gentleness, the robin redbreast. The robin flew from a tree down into the grass of a swamp meadow. There he disappeared for a moment. When he came into sight again he was flying for dear life with a red-winged blackbird close behind it, shrieking "stop thief" at the top of its voice. Of course the robin's



IN THE BIRD'S FLAT BUILDING.

intentions may have been perfectly honorable, but why should the redwing be roused to such a sudden pitch of fury at the sight of him asks a writer in the Chicago Tribune.

Russia's White City.
White, too, it is in other ways. All the chief buildings glare with white paint and blink with white blinds. The churches—and in a Russian city they are but few—are also of pure white; only the cupolas are green, and the crosses on their summits gold. And white are the private houses of the better sort—except where Norwegians and Germans live, for buff and blue and red then streak and diaper the pine walls and edge the gable ends. But street-posts, gates, pillars, walls, fences—these are all white. And in the summer, for every official you see in a blue or gray tunic, you see ten in white caps and white uniforms. Bright color alone is left to the women and children; pink blouses, green skirts, scarlet petticoats, orange aprons, and blue kerchiefs are common enough; while a group of children will always look like a cluster of old English flowers. But otherwise, in summer as in winter, this old city of Archangel, now destined to be the capital of a new Russia in the near west, is a White City, indeed.

Her Legal Privileges.
The following allegation in a bill for divorce against a wife was held by the Supreme court at Washington not to state any legal ground for divorce: "She was quarrelsome, vicious in disposition, murderous in threats against the plaintiff and his parents, hysterical and ungovernable in temper, crazy in her actions, and by her causeless and unprovoked boisterousness, screaming, hallooing, and other wild conduct, by day and night, an intolerable nuisance to all her neighbors."

of time been destroyed and rebuilt repeatedly. It has not been so much a question of building them as it has been of maintaining them and keeping them where they were. Besides protecting the country from the invasions of both fresh and salt waters, the dikes have served to reclaim no less than 210,000 acres, nearly all of which are good, fertile land.—National Geographic Magazine.

The man who has never written a foolish love letter has not yet taken all the degrees.

WU'S PREDECESSORS.

One Gave Reception at Which Amari- cans Were Dis-respectful.

There had been Chinese ministers before—all of them men of good ability; all of them men of high standing at home; and all of them so little in touch with the affairs of the country to which they were accredited, that they were regarded popularly as objects of curiosity—it is to be feared, sometimes as objects of derision by the unthinking. The first of the list, Chen Lan Pin, was accredited to the United States in the administration of President Hayes, and then followed, in succession, Cheng Tsao Ju, Chang Yen-hoon, Taul Kwo-yn and Yang-yu. So far as the public was concerned, one of these gentlemen was the same as another. Few, except the clerks in the State Department, could remember one of them without consulting the record. It was known in a general way that there was a Chinese legation in Washington, that there was a minister, presumably a heathen, that he had attendants patterned after himself, that their ways were not our ways, and that their god was not our God. One of the earlier in the list—which one does not matter now—thought to enter into the social life of the capital, and gave a reception. Invitations were issued, all in due form. Preparations were made on a generous and hospitable scale, and when the night came the well-bred Christians of Washington poured down on the old Stewart Castle which was then occupied as the legation, and swarmed over it like an untamed horde of Boxers. Some came by invitation, more without. They crushed and crowded through the rooms; they battered the furniture; they assaulted the supper-tables in columns and squares, seized the champagne bottles from the hands of the helpless waiters, smashed the necks of the bottles to get at the wine more quickly, and altogether showed as little consideration for their host as if he had been a freak in a museum. They did not mean to be rude, and many of them were heartily ashamed of themselves afterward; but for years it never occurred to most people that the minister from China should be treated with as distinguished consideration as the representative of any other power.—L. A. Coolidge in *Ainslee's*.

JAPANESE CURIOSITY.

Natives of Japan Regularly Stare at American Residents.

The foreigner traveling in Japan is soon made aware of the quality of curiosity. On every railroad platform he is surrounded by a crowd of people who, with their mouths as wide open as their eyes in their effort to lose no detail of interest, regard him slowly from head to foot and comment upon him among themselves the while. These people may have seen hundreds of foreigners—they may see them every day—but they continue to act as if they had never seen one before. I visited some Americans in Tokyo who had lived in the same house with the same Japanese neighbors for about a year. Yet each time that we went out to drive the people in the little Japanese house near by would rush to their windows and stand watching as eagerly as a small Yankee at the circus. This happened every day. It is always possible to tell whether a foreigner happens to be in his garden, for a goodsized crowd of Japanese gathered about the gate announces the important fact. I gave several talks and lectures to school children and young men and women in Japan. They were interpreted, I, of course, speaking in English, so that half of the address was understood by only a few. Yet I have never seen audiences more absolutely attentive. Not a word was lost and the same concentration was shown while I was speaking as when the interpreter was turning it into Japanese. Little school children—boys and girls—sat drinking everything in, with their eyes popping out of their heads until I had finished. I never flattered myself that this was due to the fascination of my discourse, but merely to the great curiosity of my audience, their power of concentration and their receptivity.—*Ainslee's Magazine*.

Sunlight at Different Localities.

Instruments are set up at various meteorological observatories that automatically register the periods during which the sun is unobscured by clouds during the daylight hours, and tables are printed giving the actual number of hours of sunlight during each year. By comparing the actual number of sunlight hours with the number of hours during which the sun is above the horizon at each place a percentage number is obtained, as in the following small table. In New York city, for instance, 64 per cent of the daylight hours, on the average are sunny.

St. Petersburg, 34 per cent;	Hamburg, 28 per cent;
Dublin, 33 per cent;	Berlin, 39 per cent;
Oxford, 30 per cent;	London, 23 per cent;
Ventnor, 37 per cent;	Vienna, 33 per cent;
Zurich, 42 per cent;	Lagano, 56 per cent;
Padua, 46 per cent;	Rome, 55 per cent;
New York, 64 per cent;	Madrid, 45 per cent.

Derby Winner and We'll be Supreme.

America will be supreme when one of her citizens breeds a Derby winner and, without letting anyone else own so much as a hair of his tail, races him in his own colors. There is nothing to buying an English horse to win an English race. With such magnificent breeding establishments as Woe-burn, Belle Meade, Elmendorf, McGrath's, Runnymede, Dixiana, Rancho del Paso, the Nursery, Castleton, Beaumont, Meadowthorpe, La Belle, Brookdale and Ranocoras, in which millions are invested, the prediction is ventured that within five years we shall have the horse we are looking for—and the man too.—*New York Press*.

Carried Off the Beer Mugs.

At the recent Commers, at Boun, in honor of the German crown prince, at which the Kaiser was present, an unpleasant incident arose. The guests thought that the beer mugs were keepsakes, and carried off 650 of them. The "Bourussia" corps, which acted as host, instead of settling for the mugs, has asked the guests who carried them away either to return them or to send 30 cents to the proprietor of the restaurant where the Commers was held.

Ladies Can Wear Shoes.

One size smaller after using Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder. It makes tight or new shoes easy. Cures swollen feet, sweating, itching feet, ingrowing nails, corns and bunions. All drug stores and shoe stores, 25c. Trial package FREE by mail. Address Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

The man who begrudges himself an occasional hearty laugh is the worst kind of a miser.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup. For children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, cures pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

Pain's Cure is the best medicine we ever used for all affections of the throat and lungs.—Wm. O. KENDRICK, Vanburen, Ind., Feb. 10, 1900.

Interest sometimes assumes the role of disinterestedness for a purpose.

No family, shop, camp or person should be without Wizard Oil for every painful accident or emergency.

It is more blessed to give a bill than it is to pay one.

DO YOUR CLOTHES LOOK YELLOW? If so, use Red Cross Ball Blue. It will make them white as snow. 2 oz. package 5 cents.

Double your investment in sixty days. Conditions warrant higher prices. Send for our book, "SUCCESSFUL SPECULATION," sent free. J. K. COMSTOCK & CO., Traders' Bldg., CHICAGO.

BUY CORN AND OATS!!

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DO YOU SHOOT?

If you do you should send your name and address on a postal card for a

WINCHESTER

GUN CATALOGUE. IT'S FREE. It illustrates and describes all the different Winchester Rifles, Shotguns and Ammunition, and contains much valuable information. Send at once to the Winchester Repeating Arms Co., New Haven, Conn.

BABY'S

Double your investment in sixty days. Conditions warrant higher prices. Send for our book, "SUCCESSFUL SPECULATION," sent free. J. K. COMSTOCK & CO., Traders' Bldg., CHICAGO.

BATH

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COMPLETE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL TREATMENT FOR EVERY HUMOR.

Consisting of CUTICURA SOAP, to cleanse the skin of crusts and scales and soften thickened cuticle, CUTICURA OINTMENT, to instantly allay itching, inflammation, and irritation, and soothe the head, and CUTICURA RESOLVENT, to cool and soothe the blood. A SINGLE SET is often sufficient to cure the most torturing, disgusting, itching, burning, and scaly skin, scalp, and blood humors, with loss of hair, when all else fails. Sold throughout the world. British Depot: 27, NEWBURY & BORN, 27-29, CHARTEHOUSE SQ., LONDON. FOREIGN DEPOT AND CORRESPONDENTS: Sole Traders, Boston, U.S.A.

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