

My Lady's Plumes

You observed the hat of the lady who walked in front of you down the fashionable part of the main street the other day. . . . You have not noticed, perhaps, that on my lady's hat are some tall, pliant plumes, long as those of the ostrich, but far more beautiful, with delicate filaments as light as frost work on a winter window.

These long, filmy plumes on my lady's hat are the plumes of the white egret. Naturally, they are pure white. . . . But pure white not being barbaric enough for the use of civilization—though it used to serve Southern Indians who wore these plumes—they are dyed any color of the rainbow, losing thereby none of their gracefulness and only some of their beauty.

My lady's hat, if worn too long, will lose its purpose and cease to attract. She must therefore change it. The plumes in the new hat must be of different color. For these new plumes she looks to her milliner. The milliner looks to the great wholesale supply houses of the metropolis. The wholesale supply house looks—and with much anxiety, these days—to Thomas Jones, market shooter, or technically speaking, plume hunter.

Thomas Jones knows where there is an egret roost, or as he will call it, a "white crane roost." Really, he does not mean a roost so much as a nesting-ground, where thousands of birds nest in a small tract of the isolated wet forest or "dead-tree swamp." Such rookeries were once common in Florida, but are so no longer. Thomas Jones may know of one in Mississippi, Louisiana or Texas, and holds himself fortunate if he does, for they are scarce enough to-day.

Miss you, the plume hunter does not go into the roost until spring has well advanced. When he reaches the roost the low trees, bushes and grassy brush clumps are full of nests, and the nests are or soon will be full of young birds. The busy life of the colony goes on. The parents come and go, traveling no one knows how far to get food for the gaping young birds in the nest. Thomas Jones notes the high, projecting snag of the tallest tree near the edge of the colony. There is a white crane on that limb. It seems to him there always is one there. In short, it is a habit of the bird to alight on the highest branch offering itself.

Out of the thousands of nests in the vast colony, how can the parent egret pick his own nest, since all look so much alike? Thomas Jones often wonders about that, and sometimes laughs a little to himself. The parent egret has been out after food, and returns to the colony. Without a second's hesitation he picks out his own nest, and pauses for an instant directly above it, high up in the air. Then he lets his long legs drop straight down and throwing his wings up, just falls down through the air, feet first, in the most comical and awkward-looking way in the world, though he never misses his nest by an inch, but lands just where he wanted to. As he thus backs downstairs out of the air, his long plumes, attached in a little clump at his shoulders and spreading out over his back as far down as the longest tail feathers, flare up in the air, reversed and standing up over his head as he drops, as a white garment would in the resistance of the air.

On these plumes Thomas Jones fixes his eye. He shoots an egret and satisfies himself that the plumes are "ripe," i. e., in their prime condition. Then he builds his camp on the best ground he can find near by, and the next day is ready to go to work.

Surely Thomas Jones is not going to kill these birds right in the nesting season when the helpless young are in the nest and must die also if their parents die! That cannot be possible, he will tell you. It is not his fault, he will tell you, that the plumes are not good in the fall, winter, or early spring, and are not prime until the height of the breeding season. Here are the plumes, found at much labor reached at much danger, says Thomas Jones, blind and deaf—further than that, and there is the price offered me for them, so much an ounce, perhaps \$40 an ounce, or perhaps as low as \$140 a pound. Is this right to kill these birds at this time? I am not clear that we should ask this question any more of Thomas Jones than of the wholesale milliners' supply house, or of the retail milliner, or of every lady on the street. Only the fact remains, horrible, unspeakable, that the gathering of the plumes is a harvest of death, a harvest untimely, disastrous, because it is reaped at the sowing time of life. Every egret killed for its plumes is killed when it is helpless through its blind, natural love for its offspring, and when its death means the death of all its helpless young. Does the wholesale man know this? Does he care? Does anybody know or care? Is it not the one thing to be remembered, that my lady must have her plumes?

White—they are white, these plumes. It is mockery. They should be the blackest sable, and they should stain black the white fingers that caress them. But Thomas Jones cannot stop to argue. The next day he pushes quietly into the edge of the nesting ground. He sees his boat firmly within easy range of the tall snag he saw the day before. He takes out his rifle—the 28 shot will make no noise, and it will serve his purpose perfectly. There is an egret on the tall snag. Taking a steady aim, Thomas Jones fires, and the bird whirrs down, dead. One or two other birds start on their perches in the same tree, but settle back. One by one they, too, whirl out and lie in

a white tangled mass at the foot of the tree. An egret raises herself up above the rim of the nest on which she sits, and the tiny bullet pierces her. She whirls down, built white and motionless. The little ones crape and cry, but no food comes. The father was killed on the tree near by. One by one, out of the nests, off from the limbs of the trees, here, there, anywhere—for the birds are all about, and so stupid with the breeding fever that they will not leave—the slender white birds meet their doom. That tall snag has yielded twenty victims. Thomas Jones has not moved from his boat. He has over 200 birds down. He can tell by his cartridge boxes, for he rarely misses a shot. It is easy shooting.

After noon Thomas Jones goes out and gathers up his spoils. A cut of the knife and the clump of plumes is off. The carcass of the egret is left lying. Two hundred carcasses of egrets are left lying. That many more to-morrow. Many more than that the next day, for by that time the waiting of the young of the first day's victims will have ceased. From then on, day by day, increasing in three-fold ratio, the harvest of death goes on, steadily, pitilessly, on the sowing grounds of life, out in the silent wilderness where the birds have tried to hide their homes.

In less than a month it is over. The long white lines no longer cross the country going to and from the feeding grounds. The white forms no longer appear on the naked trees. Doubly naked the forest stands in silent desolation. Sudden and discolored the once white forms below the trees are sinking into the slime. From beneath the trees and from the nests up in the trees a great stench goes up. Not a bird young or old is left alive. The old ones stayed till death came, bound by the great instinct of nature to remain with their young.

Jones, a little yellow, but not sick, for he is a healthy man, packs up his feathers carefully and hires him to the railway for a swift and secret journey out of the country. He wonders where he can find another roost next year. Behind him is desolation. —E. GOUGE.

A MILLIONAIRE'S FREAK.

How the Founder of Monte Carlo Gambled Once and Once Only.

Mons. Blanc, the founder of the Casino at Monte Carlo, which really means Monte Carlo itself, was very eccentric. If he had ever been young there is no record of the fact, for he is always described as a little old gentleman, clad in a long coat, and walking with the aid of a yellow cane, without which he was never seen during his waking hours.

Though enormously wealthy, says the London Mail, he was excessively thrifty in trifling matters, and would haggle like an old clothes man to save a franc on articles for his personal use, though he thought nothing of expending hundreds of francs in beautifying the Casino and the miniature city.

He was never known to play at the tables, excepting on one occasion, and then it was a somewhat costly experience.

While on a visit to the Wiesbaden Casino, with Mme. Blanc, he was in the habit of accompanying her on a morning stroll each day. During one of these walks madame complained of the heat of the sun, and requested her husband to buy her a parasol. Accordingly the two entered the shop, where madame selected a very pretty article, worth eighty francs—about £34s.—which M. Blanc, with a scowl and a muttered grumble, paid.

When the casino opened at noon great was the astonishment of the croupiers and the visitors to see M. Blanc place two louis on the red at one of the trente et quarante tables. The attendants hastened to get him a chair, and this he declined, saying he was only going to remain a few minutes. When the cards were dealt he won, and taking up his winnings, left the original stake on the table. For a second time he won, and had now got back the price of the umbrella. But not content he ventured another two louis which this time he lost. Somewhat annoyed at this the founder of the place doubled the stake and won, thus getting back the cost of the umbrella again.

Determined, however, to regain his two louis, he staked them again, only to see them raked in by the bank. Thus he kept on winning and losing, but never able to recover the two louis, till at last he found himself twenty-five louis out, all the gold his pocket book contained. A thousand franc note he had was quickly changed and swallowed up. Then, becoming exasperated, he cashed his check for a large sum, and, sitting down, commenced the battle in earnest. Hour after hour passed, but M. Blanc, his eyes fixed on the treacherous pasteboards, never budged from his post. He kept on planking down heavy stakes until the last deal was declared, when, calmly rising, he seized his yellow cane and made his way through the gaping onlookers into the open air.

On reaching home he found Mme. Blanc playing "patience" with a pack of cards, the offending parasol being on the table. "Madame," said the old gentleman, "do you know what that thing has cost me?" "Mais oui, mon ami. It cost you eighty francs." "Madame," rejoined he, "you are mistaken I have just paid the bill—91,000 francs." Madame's sunshade had cost no less than £3640.

TWO POSSIBILITIES.

That young man stays late! he must be in love with you, Julia. I don't know, papa; perhaps he is only hoping that you will make him a present of a match.

PRACTICAL FARMING.

WINTER PROTECTION FOR STOCK.

The writer has lived where 30 degrees below zero might be expected with pre-existing rain, snow and mud. In his present home, 10 degrees below may be expected, but the accommodations are seldom anything but strong, dry wind.

The conditions as effecting stock are seen to be very different, but the changes are relatively as great from one temperature to another and are as sudden, but the changes are not so severe on stock here for there is seldom an excess of moisture.

With practical experience with stock in both sections and knowing the effects on the human system, I know that close, tight buildings are needed in the one, and shelter against the wind in the other is absolutely essential.

Acquired education is not necessary to teach the farmer that a certain amount of feed under all conditions is necessary to keep up the heat of the body. It is natural for heat to pass outward and upward and if the surroundings are cold this is done too rapidly, cold takes its place and an excessive amount of food is required to keep up the animal heat, and if the cold is severe, the animal becomes chilled and loses in flesh, and in extreme cases, perishes.

An animal has stored up much surplus flesh during the warm months and this is valuable. It will pay to save it. Food that produces heat, like the fuel we burn, is expensive. It will pay to be economical with it.

Buildings can be made so warm, that even in the most severe weather, stock in them will be comfortable and there need not be a particle of waste of the animal heat. Are not boards that will last a lifetime cheaper than food that lasts but a day? But single boards are not sufficient in severe climates. There must be such a surrounding wall that will absolutely keep out the cold air; then there is no reason why stock may not gain as well as during the summer season.

Some may say that they not only can keep stock in good condition, but can put them in the best of flesh, in the open field. That may be. You can build a large enough fire in the open field to keep yourself from freezing, but would it not be more comfortable and cheaper to have a smaller fire in your house? So it would be with your stock to have them in close stables.

In very mild climates with dry weather as we usually have it here, that which will keep out the wind and shelter them from the occasional storms is all that is necessary. The need is not so great and the expense not so much, but just as profitable to provide the shelter.

There are no sections of our country but what have some kind of material out of which these buildings or shelters can be built and at a cost that can well be afforded.

STRINGHALT.

When a horse jerks up one or both of his hind legs on being moved over in his stall or backed out of it, he is said to be "stringhalted," but a horse may be affected, yet not show this evidence. It may be necessary to take him out of the stable and make him move from right to left and left to right several times before he will show the jerk of stringhalt. At times only one leg may be jerked, and when this is so the hock needs careful manipulation over the seat of bone spavin because, when spavin is in process of development, the pain occasioned by moving the horse causes the hock to be jerked up. At times there is no evidence of spavin either by feeling or by sight yet the spavin is in process of development. Such cases are termed latent spavin. These cases should be separated from true cases of stringhalt, which at times puzzle the veterinary surgeon not a little. Spavin will yield to treatment, but stringhalt will not yield; in other words is an incurable disease.

Although this is so, thousands of dollars are annually spent by farmers, breeders and owners on quack remedies.

Stringhalt is classed in the list of nervous disorders, it being an involuntary convulsive action in the muscles of the extremities, which, when healthy, are governed by voluntary nerve influence.

Considerable discussion has taken place from time to time among leading veterinarians and scientists in regard to the true nature of "stringhalt," but nothing further than that the disease is of nervo-muscular origin has been discovered. It has also been entered on the list of hereditary diseases. It is beyond doubt an unsoundness, for it is a progressive disease, increasing in severity with age. In a legal sense it is held that "any disease or impediment which does at this present or in its near future development interfere with an animal's usefulness" is an unsoundness. Thus if the seller of a horse affected even in the slightest degree with stringhalt tells the intending purchaser that the jerks are nothing, he warrants the horse sound and all right. Unsoundness is legally defined thus:

"If at the time of sale the horse has any disease, which either actively does diminish the natural usefulness of the animal so as to make him less capable of work of any description, or which in its ordinary progress will diminish the natural usefulness of the animal,

this is unsoundness; or if the horse has, either from disease, or accident, undergone any alteration of structure that either actually does at the time or in its ordinary effects will diminish the natural usefulness."

It will be seen, therefore, that to warrant a colt or adult horse only slightly affected is a serious business for the seller, for it renders him liable to have the horse returned on his hands at any time. Horses affected with stringhalt have performed certain work very well, going forward on a level road, drawing a fair load, but in backing to unload difficulty comes about and in drawing a load up hill there is a great waste of nervous energy and resultant prostration.

CARE OF YOUNG HEIFERS.

If you keep the young heifers off in one corner of the stable, and feed and care for them after all the other animals have been attended to, and that in an indifferent manner, they are likely to prove poor property, when they become milkers. It is a popular fallacy, says Farmers' Home that young stock require only second-class feed and care, but heifers ought to be treated on equal terms with milch cows. All the future usefulness of a milk animal may depend on how she fares before her first pregnancy. True, she does not need a milk-forming diet, but she requires a tissue and bone-forming one for a uterine reserve force when she becomes a cow. The amount of flesh on a young animal's back does not necessarily represent physical force, vitality or sound tissue. It may be merely fat; without a relative development of sinew, bone and muscle. A heifer will stand more exercise than a cow, but she wants just as warm a stable, and should not be made to bow down and worship the straw stack. Plenty of good hay with a supplement of roots, or in the winter of hay scarcity, ensilage and cut straw, with a light grain addition, form excellent rations. The object should be to combine foods so as to get growth of a sound, permanent character. The worst enemy of tuberculosis is sunshine, and the average cow stable is an ideal place for the spread of this disease because it lacks the means of letting in the light. The Practical Dairyman says that "probably nine-tenths of the stables have been constructed with a view to the easy handling of the manure. This has been the chief aim, and convenience in feeding and the comfort of the cows, has too often been lost sight of. It is well enough to get the manure out of the stable with as little work as possible, but it would be more profitable if better care was taken of it than is usually the case." Owing to the location of some stables, it is impossible to get much sunlight in them, but in the greater number of barns where the cows stand in a row next to the side, it would be an easy matter to put in a few windows. One window for every two cows should be the rule and may be swung open to throw the manure out of them if necessary. If the sun can shine directly on the cows so much the better.

CREAMERY BUTTER.

Better butter and cheese can be made at the factory than in most farm dairies, and a large amount of hard work will be lifted from the housewife's shoulders. It is advisable to take the manufacture of butter and cheese out of the home and put it into the factory. There are some difficulties to overcome in co-operative creameries. One careless patron will make a great deal of trouble. He must be compelled to adopt better methods or to leave the organization. It is best to have the management vested in one person subject to a board of directors representing the creamery. It is not advisable to call a meeting of the stockholders except when officers are to be elected. Great care must be taken in the establishment of a creamery. Be sure that there are enough cows to support one and that the patrons have some knowledge of dairy work.

FRASER RIVER FISH.

Over 800,000 Cases of Salmon the Result of This Season's Catch.

During the past season over 800,000 cases of salmon—18 pounds to the case—have been packed on the Fraser River, British Columbia. Prices are depressed, yet new canneries are being erected at New Westminster and Steveston, at the mouth of the river. The bulk of the pack goes to England in sailing vessels, the voyage round Cape Horn occupying about five months, and the rate is from 25 to 35 shillings per ton. The Canadian Pacific carries that destined for the eastern provinces. Averaging the price at \$3.50 per case, this year's pack is worth \$3,000,000.

The salmon make their way along the shores of Boundary Bay, in United States territory, to the Fraser, and Americans at Blaine catch vast numbers in traps. They ship thousands to Steveston and New Westminster free of duty before the "run" begins at those places, as well as afterward. The Canadian canners profit by this traffic, which not only provides them with early fish but renders them independent of their employees and prevents strikes. On the other hand the employees regard it as injurious to their interests. Americans are freely allowed to take out licenses for fishing on the Fraser River. The Canadian alien labor question seems to have dropped out of notice there entirely.

CONSPICUOUS NOBS.

Gibbs—What nobby trousers young Mr. Burlington wears. Gidds—Yes, especially at the knees.

KHARTOUM WILL FALL.

KITCHENER WILL TAKE IT DE SPITE BRITISH ORDERS.

Climax of a Conflict Between the Sirdar and Cromer and Grenfell—Egyptian Interests to Be Considered Above Questions of English Policy.

According to a dispatch to the London Daily Mail from Cairo, the advance of the Anglo-Egyptian expedition toward Omdurman, on the Nile, opposite the site of Khartoum, where the Khalifa has concentrated his troops for a final stand, will be resumed in January. The Egyptian troops will be used, as it is not practicable to spare the necessary British force.

The above announcement constitutes a climax of a conflict which has arisen between Gen. Sir Horatio Kitchener, the Sirdar, or Commander-in-chief, of the Egyptian army, on the one side, and on the other Lord Cromer, the British plenipotentiary at Cairo, and Gen. Sir Francis Grenfell, the commander of the British army of occupation in Egypt. The British Government, finding that, owing to the insurrection in India and the condition of affairs at the Cape, it would be impossible to spare any English regiments for a Nile expedition, and anxious at the same time that English troops should be the principal factor in the reconquest of the Sudan, so as to give to Great Britain a right to its possession against any other European power, gave orders to Gen. Kitchener that

NO FURTHER ADVANCE

should be made by him beyond Abou-Hamed.

In defiance of these orders the Sirdar, taking the ground that he is at the present moment an Egyptian officer, rather than an English one, and that Egyptian interests should be considered above mere questions of English policy, pushed on to Berber, which he captured without the slightest difficulty, to the huge delight of the English and Egyptian people at large, but to the dismay of the British Government. Berber is so short a distance from Khartoum, and there is so little impediment to the navigation of the Nile between the two places, that last week a great outcry was raised where when the English Government announced officially that orders had been given that there should be no further advance for some time to come beyond Berber, public indignation being all the more intense by reason of the fact that the dervishes have shown themselves so thoroughly cowed by the rapidity of Kitchener's advance that there is every reason to believe that Khartoum will fall as easily as Berber, providing the Mahdi is not allowed sufficient time to recover his strength and prestige.

During the course of last week, and since this announcement, reports have been reaching London from Cairo to the effect of strained relations existing between the Sirdar and Lord Cromer, owing to the Sirdar refusing to obey the orders of Lord Cromer against an advance, and likewise in consequence of the Sirdar's refusal to communicate his plans, or to give even the slightest information concerning his movements, either to Lord Cromer or to Gen. Sir Francis Grenfell. The Sirdar is determined to conduct the present campaign entirely

ON HIS OWN LINES.

with nothing but Egyptian troops, and to brook no interference or intervention which would diminish the glory of his reconquest of the Sudan. Although an English General, he is in the pay and service of the Khedive, to whom he has been loaned. His first duty is to the Khedive, and it is practically impossible for the British Government to stop from making a dash upon Khartoum, since, even were pressure to be brought on the Khedive, the Sirdar could easily create a momentary interruption of the telegraph line which alone connects him with Cairo.

So that, in spite of the announcement of the English Government to the contrary, made a week ago, in spite of its orders, and in spite of the absence of British troops, Khartoum will be taken by the Sirdar some time between this and January with his "Gypsies," as the native soldiers are called, and the blood of Gordon will be avenged; that Gordon whose spectre was so graphically portrayed by an English statesman some time ago as hovering over the ruins of Khartoum and beckoning his country men on to wipe out the national disgrace of his desertion and death by ridding the Sudan of the sanguinary and all-devastating despotism of the Mahdi.

SOME CURIOUS COMPLIMENTS.

The compliments paid by the English poor are often put in an amusing way. One old lady who was very fond of the rector said to Mr. Bernays: You know, sir, us likes the rector, 'is ears are so clean!—surely an odd reason for parochial affection. Another admirer once declared with regard to the whole staff of clergy: You are all so plain, a word of high recommendation, but as for the vicar, 'is beautiful! The greatest compliment, though at the same time the most curious Mr. Bernays ever heard, was paid by a working man to a certain bishop famous for his simple kindness: What I likes 'bout the bishop is 'e's not a gentleman.

OPTICAL DELUSION.

Meeting the proprietor of a large store, Judge Peterby said: I notice that ever so many of your shop-girls are cross-eyed. Why don't you get better looking ones? One cross-eyed girl is worth a dozen of the other sort. The rascally shoplifters can never tell where these girls are looking, so they give us store a wide berth.