

LARGEST EGG IN THE WORLD

The Aepyornis Surpassed the Ostrich, the King of Modern Birds

The largest egg in the world has recently been exhibited in the Museums of Natural History of New York and some other cities. It is the egg of the gigantic extinct bird called Aepyornis, which formerly lived in considerable numbers on the Island of Madagascar. This was a huge wingless creature, the largest and most formidable bird of prey that ever trod the earth. In life it has been variously estimated to have stood from seven to twelve feet in height, possessing massive and powerful limbs. This great bird surpassed the ostrich, the king of modern birds, both in size, herculean strength and build. The Aepyornis egg is six times larger than that of the ostrich, having a capacity of 150 hen eggs. Here are some of the astounding dimensions of the big egg: The shell is about one-eighth of an inch thick, the lengthwise circumference is two feet eight inches, and two feet two inches around the middle. Though termed a fossil egg, it is not petrified or turned to hard stone as in the case of dinosaur bones. It is in a surprisingly perfect condition, unbroken, and has a yellow color, although finely pitted in places. The contents have not been removed as they have turned to fine dust, which comes out when handled through a natural perforation on one side. The Aepyornis that laid this colossal egg has not been seen in the life of the present generation of the inhabitants of Madagascar. In former times, several centuries ago, they were quite abundant. Several incomplete fossil remains of the bird have been discovered, but no complete skeleton has yet been found. These show that the bird was not only of massive proportions, but short winged, and has been classed as a distant relative of the Moas and the Apteryx, fossil birds of New Zealand. The natives of Madagascar have for many years used the great eggshells for various domestic purposes, for carrying water and as jars for storing and holding food. Only two or three of these huge eggs have been obtained by Europeans and these were usually found in the sand beds of torrents. The present egg is said to be one of the largest and most perfect ever brought into civilization.

DON'T WASH YOUR HORSE

It Removes the Natural Oil From the Outer Skin

The practice of washing horses, as a rule, is injurious because it removes the natural oil from the outer skin and predisposes the animal to chill, writes a practical man in the Kentucky Stock Farm. The application of water to a horse's skin increases the heat conducting power of his coat and lowers the temperature of the surface by evaporation and also by conduction. In the event of the temperature of the water being cooler than that of the skin. Even in the tropics, washing a horse always takes the gloss off his coat, no matter how vigorously the subsequent grooming may be performed. This fact is certainly a strong argument against the practice in question. If it is imperative to wash, and there is not sufficient help to have the horse rubbed dry, without loss of time, we may, after scraping and going over him with two or three dry rubbers, take him out and exercise him at a brisk pace until he gets dry. We should then walk him about until his circulation regains its normal condition before taking him in. If we can not give this exercise, we may, after scraping and driving him, put on him a good supply of warm clothing, bandage his legs, and leave him thus to dry under his rugs, which he will do in an hour or less. He should after that be exercised and well rubbed down, so as to prevent his getting chilled. A good plan for getting horses to dry quickly and safely under clothing is to cover the animal's back and loins with straw before putting on a rug, so as to utilize the low heat conducting power of air and to give as little impediment as possible for the escape of moisture.

First British Woman to Fly

The distinction of being the first woman of purely British nationality to fly belongs to Miss Gertrude Bacon, daughter of the famous aeronaut who was really one of the pioneers of ballooning. Miss Bacon went up with Mr. Sommer in a Farman biplane during the Rheims aviation meeting of 1909, and in her book, "How Men Fly," which has recently been published, she provided a fascinating narrative of the sensations of flying. She quotes the unfortunate Mr. Rolls as saying that his "first impression of flying was like trying to drive a motor-car which was skidding in all directions at once."

WOMEN STEEPLEJACKS

Instances of Where They Have Climbed to Perilous Heights

Lady Constance Foljambe, whose failure to put in an appearance at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, where she was due to be married to the vicar of Whitwell-on-the-Hill, Yorkshire, created such a sensation, is an intrepid steeple-climber. In September, 1909, she, accompanied by two lady friends, climbed the spire of Whitwell Church, which was then undergoing repair.

In order to take some unique photographs, the sale of which was for the benefit of the church funds, the daughter of a well-known Leicester steeple-jack accomplished the hazardous feat of climbing the steeple of St. Mark's Church, which is 200 feet high. When at the top she daringly walked round the narrow, unprotected staging, whence she took some fine views. The steeple of All Saints', Hereford, which rises to the height of 260 feet, was two years back the scene of a daring exploit on the part of the parson's daughter of one of the churchwardens. Accompanied by the professional steeplejack, who was engaged upon some repairs, she ascended to the summit, the feat being watched by an immense crowd of townsfolk and farmers from the neighboring villages and farms, who had come into the town to attend the Wednesday market.

Equally daring was a Stoke Newington lady, who, in February, 1870, scaled the spire of St. Mary's Church, the summit of which is 245 feet above the pavement. The last part of the journey was especially dangerous, as it had to be accomplished by means of a couple of unprotected ladders, leading directly to the weathercock, which the lady, to signalize the achievement of her task, sent spinning round.

In 1781, shortly before it was rebuilt, the spire of St. Mary's Church, Leicester, was ascended by a steeplejack named Wright, accompanied by his wife, as expert a climber as himself. The woman, dressed for the occasion in male attire, rendered her husband efficient assistance in the repairs that he had in hand, and so greatly was her pluck admired that a number of the townsmen entertained her to a supper at the principal inn, when she was presented with a purse containing five guineas.

Two years later this same woman undertook, in the absence of her husband through illness, to ascend the spire of Trinity Church, Coventry, which stood in need of slight repair. She accomplished her task to the entire satisfaction of her employers. In more recent years the wife of a Bradford steeplejack has not only frequently accompanied her husband on his ascents, but at times has, unaided, completed work which he had in hand. She owed her ability to her father, who, himself a steeplejack, had taught her to climb from early girlhood.

During the rebuilding of the spire of Wakefield Cathedral, in the early years of the eighteenth century, a woman disguised in male attire, was among the most zealous of the workers, ascending to perilous heights and positions with the utmost intrepidity. Having met with an accident, her sex, until then unsuspected, was disclosed, and she was claimed by her relations, well-to-do people, whom, in the pure spirit of adventure, she had left in utter ignorance as to her whereabouts. Mme. Saqui, the funambulist, whose performance at Vauxhall drew all the town, made, in 1812, an ascent of the church spire at Harfleur. Her feat would seem to have partaken of the nature of "steeple-flying," for having successfully made her way to the summit, where she beat a drum and blew a trumpet which she had taken up with her, she descended by gliding down a rope to the street below.

Previous to Mme. Saqui's appearance, another woman athlete, named Rayner, had toured through England, alternating her performances on the tight-rope with acrobatic displays on church steeples. Among other spires which she climbed was that of Lichfield Cathedral, in the ascent of which she was accompanied by a younger sister. On arriving at the summit the couple played on various instruments, drank a glass of wine to the health of the spectators below, and fired off a gun. They then made a safe descent amid considerable applause.

HOW HORSES SLEEP

Many Sleep Standing—Others Lie Down—How They Get Up

Did you ever notice how horses sleep? Well, they don't all sleep one way, by any means. Some, in fact, a good many, sleep standing, and rarely lie down. Such a one you may approach and almost touch before he wakes up, if you come at the right time and without much noise. Others lie down, but not all one way. Usually they will settle back and drop over on one hip first. In rising they will put one front foot first and then the other, bringing up the hind parts last.

But some horses get up and down "cow fashion"—that is, they will get on their fore-nees first. Such a one may always be told by the dirty condition of his knees.

Matilda Moralizes

The best way to keep cool is to go around killing all the people who ask you if you can keep warm.

Always tell the truth, if you're bigger than he is.

The man who gets on says there isn't no such thing as luck.

You have to be very rich to be able to eat peas with your knife.

The man who's had his holidays says holidays are a nuisance.

A brown face and a peeled nose mean an empty pocket.

An old master is a picture, usually dirty, what'll fetch a jolly sight more than it's worth.

A philosopher is a man who tells lies to people in order to make them happy.

Three parts of the trouble in life is caused by life being three parts trouble.

A thief is an honest man compared with some honest men.

When the wicked man turns away from his wickedness and goes straight, he has a rotten time.

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Eggs, per dozen, 00 to 18
Hay, per ton, \$13 to \$14
Hides, \$8.00 to 9.00
Hogs, live, \$5.00 to \$6.25.
Beef, \$ 7.50 to \$8
Sheepskins, 50 to 80
Wool, 12 to 20
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Flour, Victoria, \$2.45 to \$2.65
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