

More than sixty years ago a bird of dazzling color flitted gaily through the wealth of foliage in the Wabash bottoms near Mt. Carmel, Illinois The sheen of its gay costuming caught the eye of a boy who loved birds more than he loved school work or even games. The bird loitered to pick seeds from a horseweed

That bird, a purple finch, brilliant and flashing, was gone in an instant. But, perhaps, no other bird ever passed a few brief moments more surcharged with importance to man. For that bird in that moment became a factor in developing a latent force in a boy that has given to the world many remarkable volumes of birdlore, vast scientific information about birds that aid man or are enemy to him and-strangely, it brought to the industrial world a standard color shart in which are segragated, by name and symbol, 4,000 colors and shade

And it gave to me, in that-see

For Fifty-Nine Years

for naming the variegated colortones here.

crowd in an hour, for twenty-one the year and have bloomed each years, with infinite pains, separating month except one month, January, color-shades. Sometimes a month on during the eleven years the Rirgways a single shade. He gave names to have lived at "Larchmound." Two 1,115 of them; the rest he recorded years ago that gap was filled. Here by symbol. The hues of Milady's are some of the growing things that sheer hose, and yours, find names in may surprise you: this color chart; all colors, sombre or Mimosa trees from the Holy Lands, gay, oppressing or glad, just dull-crepe myrtle and pome-granate from every color used in every industry the south, five varieties of yucca, that uses colors, they're there, all of Oriental bamboos, (a native bamboo them. It is the standard color chart grows in the Wabash bottoms) rhoused in all the industries of all the dendrons and Manchurian filberts. world.

How did the purple finch start all this? Listen. The boy who rambled the Wabash bottoms barefoot reconnoitering the armies of his feathered friends didn't know the name of the bird. So he carefully worked out a picture of it, in water-colors, and sent it to the man he most revered, Prof. Spencer F. Baird, of Washington, ornithologist, and founder of the United States National Museum.

Correspondence developed between the man who loved birds and the boy who loved birds. Other pictures went forward to Prof. Baird-for naming.

Story of Olney

This is a story of Olney, home of white squirrels, the red-top industry; center of rich orcharding, wholesale merchandising, abiding place of 6,500 people, the boy-a white-haired happy little man now-his wife and his

Dr. Robert Ridgway, that boy, has been curator of the division of birds, United States National Museum, since 1880. That's 46 years. Among his treasures in Olney is the original drawing of the purple finch!

Just a few months after that first drawing traveled to Washington young Robert, then 16 years old, was invited to join a government expedition into the then mysterious mountains of the Great West to study birds. Joy and \$50 a month besides! And right there he started on his journey among birds that has lasted for 59 years and is still unended. The expedition went to San Francisco via Panama for no rails went over the mountains then.

Dr. Ridgway has written nine volumes of a gigantic work called "The Birds of North and Middle America," many other works on birds and more than 500 papers. Long ago it was planned to make eleven volumes his life's work. He is writing the tenth and eleventh now. Oddly he has found approximately as many birds as he found color shades—about 4,000.

More about this boy who never went to school but who has degrees from universities and honors from na-



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tions; who has studied birds in moun- Mrs. Ridgway, studying birds, have ter of a large and profitable peach

Romance, Too

There ought to be romance someernment to make color-plates of the known as "herdsgrass." For 170 acre. bright-hued birds Dr. Ridgway paint- years it was merely native hay. ed pictures of and wrote about. The engraver's daughter found amazing derful young bird man.

plans, will be continued through eter- and Salem. nity as a spot apart for birds and plants; an oasis for scientific experi- be estimated better when it is said ment among them in southern Illi- that the seed houses in Olney in 1925

Bird Haven

years ago, utterly bald of foliage and ond generation in the business, might a good market—usually \$3.50 to \$4 wild things. Dr. Ridgway, gently perhaps be called the red-top seed a bushel. The yield is often 250 to standing at the elbow of the king. He is the man who gained 300 bushels to the acre. Farm land has 74 species and varieties of trees leadership by designing the first class stall be bought nearby. ing instant 60 years ago, this story on it, all native. That is more varie- orate machinery for cleaning the seed for \$40 an acre. ties than grow on the Pacific water- and preparing it for market. shed from Mexico to Alaska. And The secret of the red-top industry failer, rather bitterly. F. R. Landen-For fifty-nine years the boy who here are more species of oak than is this; while red-top flourishes al- berger, an experienced peach grower, saw that bird that day has been study- grow in all New England. He plans most everywhere planted it does not said: ing birds and the out-of-doors, writ- to have growing here every variety of need anywhere on earth in sufficient ing, writing, writing, about birds. And tree or woody vine natice to Illinois; quantity to make it profitable as a in his work among birds, and flowers, already has 95 per cent of them. Eight he sensed that something was lacking. varieties of magnolia grow in the It was the absence of a color-chart United States and seven of them are the-way place in far Russia. So Illi-

here, in Illinois, trees or shrubs or lions of dollars yearly. He worked, whenever he could plants which bloom every month in

Ridgway's Message

Mrs. Ridgway gives me a message to people-about birds. She says the greatest winter feed for all birds is the little Spanish peanut, ground. She feeds hundreds of pounds every year and much sunflower seed. Dr. and

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Finally, along in the 1870's, someone began to wonder if the seed of interest in the pictures of the won- this remarkable grass might not be sold. Out of that thought has grown I found her the other day, his wife, an unusual industry. Under the name among his birds at their home, of red-top it is merchandised all over "Larchmound," in the edge of Olney. the world. Red-top seeds liberally in And she it is who gave name to the fourteen counties in southern Illinois. eighteen acres near Olney which is The industry centers in Clay, Wayne called "Bird Haven." This spit of and Richland counties. The main land, according to Dr. Ridgway's markets are Olney, Fairfield, Flora

What it means to these counties can shipped out 80,000 sacks of red-top seed valued at \$500,000. Arthur "Bird Haven" was under plow 35 Shultz, of the Shultz Seed Co., sec-

seed crop, except here, in one small on feather and petal. He set out to This may surprise you. He has monopoly" which brings the state mil-

Center Peach Industry Olney has recently become the cen-

tain-top, jungle and swamp. He can found that 43 species nest around Ol- industry. That story goes back to two sisters, the brothers physicians probably call more birds and trees, ney and 63 winter here. Bird habits L. O. Day and to 1915. Mr. Day, and surgeons and the sisters nurses, more shrubs and woody vines by their change so all are not here every year. renter, leased 40 acres near West Weber the family name, opened a lit-Latin names than any other man. About 200 varieties pass through on Liberty, not far from Olney. He made the hospital in Olney. Today there For he is something of a Burbank, an migrations. Some stop only a week: a deal with the owner,—used his head, are ten doctors on the staff. About Audubon and an Agassiz rolled in Robins winter here. But we must Land hereabouts was cheap, \$30 to 2,000 hospital patients and 20,000 of-\$50 an acre. It still is, for that mat- fice patients are handled yearly. ter. Mr. Day told the owner that if Olney's white squirrels? Oh, yes. When the first white man saw this he would buy the trees he, Day, would Some years ago a farmer found a Route 49, sections 135 and 136, apwhere in a story like this. There is, region, about 1702, here was a vast set out a peach orchard. He'd pay litter of Albina squirrels. He brought proximately 16 miles, near Crescent Half a century ago an engraver in plain covered with a strange grass, the owner \$6 a year rental and take them to town. That was 'way back, New York was employed by the gov- As the district was settled it became an option to buy the land at \$100 an pre-Volstead. The squirrels were

> year. It paid for the work on the today has white squirrels scattered orchard that far. Then came the all over the town. fifth year! That fifth year Mr. Day got a big crop and his 40 acres gave him a gross income of \$39,000! That was in 1920. Since then the orchard has yielded 23,000 bushels of peaches with prospects of another big crop this year.

That was the first peach orchard in the district. As a result farmers have gone peach-wild. At West Liberty a fruit growers association has been formed. Fourteen members control 800 acres or about 65,000 peach trees. The Richland county peaches come in between the southern and the Michigan peach crop. That means

"It's about 75 per cent man and 25 per cent orchard."

Olney was pretty much down-inthe-dumps up to five or six years ago. That was before peaches were discovered and before the shoe factory came. The shoe factory employs 600 people. The payroll is \$11,000 a week. Dozens of empty houses were filled and many more built.

Some years ago four brothers and STATE GETS BIDS FOR

a saloon window for a time. Then There was a partial yield the fourth they were turned loose. And Olney

AND HARD TO REMEMBER

How easy it is to forget other people's troubles,-Woman's Home Com-

The hookworm is nearly exterminated, which is very fine, but the boy element say they should not also destroy the fishworm.

MUCH HARD ROAD WORK

Bids for the construction of thirtyfive miles of hard roads and thirtythree miles of grading were received at the state department of public works and buildings August 31. The City; Route 72, section 114, 9.84 miles, near Shannon, in Carroll-Ogle counties; Route 110, sections 115 and 119, in Macoupin county, five miles, near Bunker Hill and Benhld; Route 2, Section 73V-1, Lee county, one-half mile near Sublette! Route 13, section 17, Perry county, 2.18 miles, near Pinckneyville.



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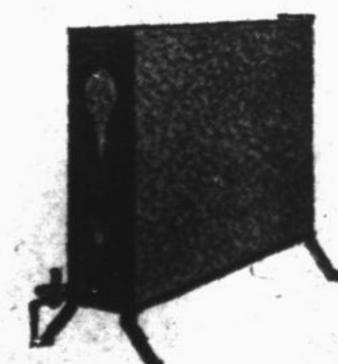
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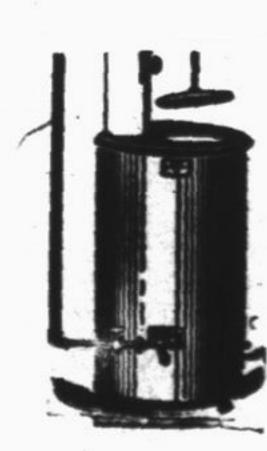
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