

ODD FACTS ABOUT BIRDS.

Some Without Wings—Others Without Song—The Biggest Birds.

Birds without wings are found in New Zealand and Australia. Kiwi is the name of one species. Beautiful mats are made of the feathers of the white variety, but it takes ten years and more to collect enough feathers to make even a small mat, which would sell for about \$150.

Birds without song belong to Hawaii. In Honolulu one sees a bird about the size of the robin, an independent sort of fellow, that walks about like a chicken, instead of hopping like a well trained bird of the United States, and it has no song.

A bird that walks and swims, but does not fly, is a penguin. No nests are made by penguins, but the one egg laid at a time by the mother is carried about under her absurd little wing or under her leg.

The largest of flight birds is the California vulture or condor, measuring from tip to tip nine and a half to ten feet, and exceeding considerably in size the true condor of South America. The bird lays but one egg each season—large, oval, ashy green in color, and deeply pitted, so distinctive in appearance that it cannot be confounded with any other.

The California condor is rapidly approaching extinction, and museums all over the world are eager to secure living specimens. It is believed that there is only one in captivity.

Another large bird is the rhinoceros bird, which is about the size of a turkey. One recently shot on the island of Java had in its crop a rim from a small telescope and three brass buttons, evidently belonging to a British soldier's uniform.

A bird which is swifter than a horse is the road runner of the southwest. Its aliases are the ground cuckoo, the lizard bird and the snake killer, snakes being a favorite diet. In northern Mexico, western Texas and southern Colorado and California it is found. The bird measures about two feet from tip to tip and is a dull brown in color. Its two legs are only about ten inches long, but neither horses with their four legs, nor hounds, nor electric racing machines, are in it for swiftness when it comes to running.

Most curious are the sewing of tailor birds of India—little yellow things not much larger than one's thumb. To escape falling a prey to snakes and monkeys the tailor bird picks up a dead leaf and flies up into a high tree, and with a fibre for a thread and its bill for a needle sews the leaf unto a green one hanging from the tree, the sides are sewed up, an opening being left at the top. That a nest is swinging in the tree no snake or monkey or even man would suspect.

Many a regiment cannot compare in perfection of movement with the flight of the curlews of Florida, winging their way to their feeding grounds miles away, all in uniform lines, in unbroken perfection. The curlews are dainty and charming birds to see, some pink, some white.

Birds in flight often lose their bearings, being blown aside from their course by the wind. In this case they are as badly off as a mariner without a compass in a strange sea on a starless night.

All very young birds, by a wise provision of nature, are entirely without fear, until they are able to fly. The reason of the delayed development of fear is that being unable to fly, the birds would struggle and fall from their nests at every noise and be killed. Suddenly, almost in a day, the birds develop the sense of fear, when their feathers are enough grown so that they can fly.

It is always a source of wonder to Arctic explorers to find such quantities of singing birds within the Arctic circle. They are abundant beyond belief. But the immense crop of cranberries, crowberries and cloudberries that ripen in the northern swamps account for the presence of the birds.

A stick of wood seven inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter, was once taken from a wren's nest. It is very singular that so small and delicate a bird should use such rough material with which to construct its nest. If an eagle should use material proportioned to its size its nest would be made up of fence rails and small saw logs.

The extraordinary situations in which nests are found occasionally almost give one the impression that birds must be endowed with a sense of humor. For instance, a wren built its nest upon a scarecrow, a dead sparrow hawk, which a farmer had hung up to frighten away winged ravagers of his crop. In the pocket of an old jacket hanging in a barn a bird also a wren, made its nest, which when discovered, it contained five eggs. It was a robin that raised a young family in a church pew, and a robin also that built its nest in the organ pipes of a church. Places of worship have always been favorite building places for birds.

An Unfinished Poster.

An artist relates that one day he was standing in front of a huge poster which

represented a well known actor in the character of Henry V. Two men strolled by and stopped to look at it. Finally one of the men turned to his companion with a look of disgust and asked impatiently: 'Henry V.—what?' 'The Drait That Saved a Town.'

The Drait That Saved a Town.

Whitsuntide of each year witnesses in the historic town of Rothenburg on the Tauber the acting of a drama which recalls a deliverance. In the Thirty Years' War, when the victories of Gustavus Adolphus had endangered the Catholic League, Tilly came to besiege Rothenburg, which was in league with the Swedes. The English Illustrated Magazine describes the town as being at that time wealthy and well fortified, standing upon steep cliffs above the Tauber, and having massive, tower-crowned walls. Its citizens were proud, capable, trained in arms, and well provided with cannon and ammunition.

Against this town came Tilly, with massive guns that soon put fortune on his side. The defenders of the place, however, contested every inch of ground. Not until the powder tower exploded through a grenade of the enemy did the Swedish garrison and citizens reluctantly hang out the white flag, after a fight of thirty hours.

Tilly would hear nothing of terms of capitulation. The Swedes might withdraw but unconditional surrender was demanded of the town. When he had taken possession of the beautiful Rathaus, he sent for the senate with Bürgermeister Bezold at their head, and announced their condemnation to death for their obstinate resistance and their disobedience to the imperial commander.

In vain did the women and children crowd into the market place, throwing themselves at the feet of the victors and begging for mercy. Tilly had already summoned the executioner when some of the wives succeeded in penetrating into the council hall. The conqueror at last allowed himself to be softened, but he coupled his clemency with a clause that apparently made it of no avail. The senators should be spared if one of their number could empty at a draught the great loving cup of Tauber wine presented to the victor.

Hopeless as the case seemed, the condition was fulfilled by ex-Bürgermeister Nusch, who thus saved his own life and the lives of his colleagues.

In the Place Of Her Birth.

The little lady who has the honor to have been born farthest north of any white child in America has gone to join the small brown skinned companions of her earliest days up in the region of her birth. Marie Annighito Peary was born in 1893 at An-nighito lodge, then Lieutenant Peary's headquarters in northern Greenland.

She was born at the close of the Arctic summer day, and the first six months of her life were spent in continuous lamp light. When the earliest ray of the returning sun pierced through the window of the tiny room, she reached for the golden bar as other children reach for a beautiful toy.

Throughout the winter she was the source of the liveliest interest to the natives. Entire families travelled long distances to satisfy themselves by actual touch that this blue eyed, white-faced little stranger was really a creature of warm flesh and blood, and not of snow, as they at first believed. She stayed among them until she was eleven months old.

In July, 1900, Mrs Peary and her little daughter set sail again for the frozen north. This is Marie Annighito's second visit to Greenland since she left that country in her infancy. She was four years old when she first went back, and although she could not be expected to remember her friends of the north, they had not forgotten her.

While the steamer neared Cape York Marie's nurse carried her on deck. It was snowing hard, and her nurse put on her a parka, a cape with a hood, and fur boots such as the Eskimos wear. The steamer pushed its way in as near to the rocks as possible, and as the ice was heavy, the Eskimos came out to meet it by stepping from one ice floe to another.

An Eskimo named Kesbu was the first to reach the ship, and his oily face shone with delight as he shouted, 'Welcome!' His delight was unbounded when the nurse put little Marie into his arms. He recognized the child at once, notwithstanding the change that a few years had made in her, and he danced about her so vigorously and kept up such a succession of shouts that Marie was at first alarmed.

Kesbu was quickly followed by all the inhabitants of Cape York who were able to jump along the ice, and they gathered in a ring around Marie, their faces shivering with pleasure, and all in a chorus shouting a welcome.

When the steamer neared the shore it was made fast to an iceberg. Lieutenant Peary broke open a number of boxes and gave presents to the Eskimos, and an im-

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Hood's Sarsaparilla
Never Disappoints

promptly sent was set out for them on board the ship. Men, women and children partook of the good things with great gusto.

Afterward the Hope put in at several Eskimo settlements, and everywhere they little people were rejoiced to see again the white child who had been born among them. They brought her strings of walrus teeth, little dogs and bears carved from walrus tusks, Eskimo dolls made from skins, and the beautiful skins of the white Arctic fox and the lemming.

Illustrious Farmer Marr.

The centre of population in the United States has been established. It is not merely four miles east and two miles south of Columbus, Indiana; to be accurate, it is in the far southeastern corner of Farmer Henry Marr's clover field, and the Chicago Tribune tells us how to get there.

Go down to Columbus, Indiana, and ask the man at the livery stable to drive you out to Hen. Marr's place. After you get to Hen. Marr's you go round the corner and past the barn. Then you keep straight on until you come to a white mule and a black mule eating straw out of a stack.

Take a turn to windward and bear off sharply on a long track, as the mule has a reputation for kicking. Pass the black dog to starboard and the pigsty to larboard. After getting out of the long lane come about and stand across the 'east forty' south by southeast.

Away over in the far corner there is a single melancholy fence rail sticking up in ground. Approach this rail with uncovered head and in respectful silence, because it marks the centre of population of the United States.

A picture shows Farmer Marr standing grim and solitary in the clover field, the 'center man' in the centre of population. It requires a long stretch of the imagination to believe that this agricultural desert is the centre of anything except clever tops, and that Farmer Marr has almost nineteen million persons respectively east, west, north and south of him. But for all these doubts, Farmer Marr is the centre man. It has been so officially declared.

A New Club.

Chamber's journal notes the birth of a new and somewhat interesting club. The Automobile club of Paris has thrown out an offshoot in the shape of the Aero club, whose business it will be to solve the problem of flying through the air.

At first sight there seems to be little in common between road traction and aeronautics, but the French auto-cars do their best to fly along the roads, as many unfortunate pedestrians know to their cost, and this is apparently the connecting link.

We may also note that both groups of

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COLDS

experimenters are endeavoring to find the most efficient motor which shall at the same time be of very little weight.

The new club starts with money to back its labors, for an anonymous donor has presented it with one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, which is to be awarded to the inventor of the flying machine that will start from a given point, go round the Eiffel Tower, and return to its starting place.

The distance about eleven kilometers, must be covered in half an hour, and the prize must be awarded within the next five years.

Meanwhile, the interest on the capital sum is to be given each year to the person who makes the greatest advance toward solving the problem of aerial flight.

Counting the Cost.

In a certain North Dakota town there are two physicians, one elderly, with a long record of cures, the other young, with his record still to make. The older doctor was inclined to surrender some of his night work to the younger man. An exchange cites an instance in which this 'turning over' was attempted.

One winter's night Doctor B. was roused by two farmers from a hamlet ten miles away, the wife of one of whom was seriously ill. He told them to go to the other doctor but they refused, saying that they preferred his services.

'Very well,' replied Doctor B., thinking to put a convincing argument before them, 'in that case my fee is ten dollars, the money to be paid now.'

The men remonstrated, but the doctor was obdurate and shut down his window. He waited, however, to hear what they would say.

'Well, what shall we do now?' asked the farmer whose wife was ill.

The reply must have been as gratifying as it was amusing to the listening doctor. It was:

'I think you had better give it. The funeral would cost you more.'

'Say, mamma, how much am I worth?' 'You are worth a million of dollars to me my son.' 'Say mamma, couldn't you advance me 25 cents.'

W. J. Bryan may be compelled to go to smashing mirrors; his paper is attracting no more attention than a last year's bonnet.

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