

BUILD NESTS OF MUD

SOUTH AMERICAN BIRDS CONSTRUCT STRONG STRUCTURES.

As Small as the Robin, the "Caseras" Demand a Luxurious Home and Have the Ability to Put It Together.

Visitors to Argentina or Uruguay are surprised to see big wads of sun baked mud perched upon trees, rocks, the cross arms of telegraph poles, or fence posts, and still more amazed to learn that these curious masses are the nests or birds not unlike our robins. The people call the little architects caseras (housekeepers), or horneros (oven birds), for their buildings resemble the dome shaped ovens of clay that stand in every farmer's dooryard, says the Youth's Companion.

When the autumn rains soften the parched earth, pairs of these forehanded birds gather beakfuls of the sticky adobe soil, and mold it into a roughly globular form. They mix in, very cleverly, a little horsehair, or some fine grass and rootlets, which prevent the walls from cracking as they bake into sundried brick. When they have finished the outside, they build a partition of mud inside, near the rounded entrance. The inner chamber thus formed is accessible only by a small aperture at the top, and in it they prepare a comfortable bed of grass, or sometimes of feathers. The finished affair is as big as a peck measure, and may weigh eight or nine pounds. It does not crumble away for two or three years, but the birds build a new home each season. The mother bird lays five white eggs in the early spring.

The country people like to have the oven birds about their houses, and the birds usually turn the doorway of their nest toward a neighboring house or road. One observer says that a pair lived on the end of the protruding roof beam of a ranchhouse, where all the family enjoyed their lively ways and shrill song. One day one of the birds was caught in a rattrap, and when released, it flew with crushed and dangling legs into the inner room of its house, where it soon died. Its mate stayed about, calling incessantly for two or three days, and then disappeared. Soon it returned with a new partner. Together they plastered up the entrance of the old nest with fresh mud, and built a new home upon its roof.

The advantages of the oven like nest, especially when it has two rooms, are many. It completely conceals the brooding mother and young, it shades both parents from the hot sun and the heavy showers, and the outer chamber furnishes a sheltered lodging at midday or during the night for the father of the family.

The caseras suffer, however, from one bold and persistent enemy—the martins. These big swallows refuse to breed anywhere except in an oven bird's nest. If they cannot find an untenanted one they will oust the first pair of caseras they find from their snug quarters. Strangely enough the poor owners seem unable to prevent the outrage, although they angrily drive away all other birds that come near their castle.

Not Fairly Handicapped.

Two farmers happened along a road, where an automobilist had had a breakdown and was busy making repairs on his car. They stopped to see what was doing, when Farmer No. 1 remarked to Farmer No. 2: "Them fellers that make such a noise goin' up my hill—they ought to be shot." Whereupon Farmer No. 2 replied: "Well—a little. 'Course, you livin' on a hill 'at goes up—you got the disadvantage. Them 'at lives on a hill 'at goes down got the advantage. Automobiles don't smoke and snort a-goin' down hill."

Do You Know This?

The middle verse of the Bible is the eighth verse of the 118th psalm. The twenty-first verse of the seventh chapter of Ezra contains all the letters of the alphabet except the letter "J." The longest verse is the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Esther. The shortest verse is the ninth verse of the eleventh chapter of St. John.

He Did.

"Can you help me out?" said the hobo who had sneaked into the office building. "Well," replied the tired business man. "I sprained my foot on that last book agent, but I'll do the best I can." And he chuckled the mendicant down one flight of stairs.

Tragic Cook.

Guest (who has been invited to supper by an actress)—Our hostess prepared this little feast with her own hands, she tells me. What do you say to that?

The Other Guest (shrugging his shoulders)—That she is a tragedienne in the art of cookery, also.

LONDON'S "PEA SOUP" FOG

Visitors to World's Metropolis Made Fun of It in Seventeenth Century.

London and Londoners have been the butt of many a good joke, but perhaps the oldest subject of the humorist is the London fog. The mist, which is commonly called "pea soup," dates back to the seventeenth century. There are records as far back as that which indicate that the city suffered even in those days from mists as intense as any of those of today.

In November, 1699, Lord Evelyn made a note in his diary to the effect that there was "so thick a mist and fog that people lost their way in the streets, it being so intense that no light of candle or torches yielded any direction. Robberies are committed between the very lights which are fixed between London and Kensington on both sides and while coaches and passengers were passing. It began about four in the afternoon and was gone by night. At the Thames they beat drums to direct the watermen to make the shore."

Visitors to London in those days were in the habit of making fun of the fog just as the visitors of today. Condemara, Spanish ambassador in Queen Elizabeth's time, said to a friend who was returning to Spain: "My compliments to the sun, whom I have not seen since I came to England."

In Elizabeth's time the burning of coal was prohibited while parliament was in session. So dense were the fogs during the years 1813 and 1814 that when the Prince Regent tried to make his way to Hatfield, the home of Lord Salisbury, he could not find his way and was compelled to forego the trip and return to Carlton House, which he reached after a succession of accidents.

Purity and Health.

The board of trade has given the Pure Food society the same official status already enjoyed by the societies for the prevention of cruelty to children and animals, and in future the purveyor of bad milk and the faker of jam may expect the same summary prosecution as the child beater and the brutal tormentor of a donkey. As a matter of fact, none of the enemies of the people is more dangerous than the man who sells poison cunningly disguised as food. To ask for bread and to be given a stone is to be grievously disappointed. But no man endeavors to masticate a cobble stone in the belief that it is a penny roll. To ask for bread and to be given an ingenious substitute is far worse. The consequences are far more serious. Stunted growth, disease, and death are the toll of the adulterator. Herod as a baby killer was an amateur compared to the milk adulterator, and in many a poor street Rachel is weeping for her murdered children.—London Daily Express.

Government-Owned Smoke.

Citizens of these United States who yelp for government ownership of every industry that displeases them ought to live in France a while in order to get acquainted with a horrible example of what political paternalism really means. In the French republic the government controls the sale of tobacco, which is famous for its infamous quality. Instead of improving the cigarettes and cigars sold, the authorities occasionally soothe consumers by inclosing various presents in the packages of smokables. This is sometimes adding insult to injury, however, for the tobacco is sold according to weight. Recently, when a certain brand of cigarettes was accompanied by a heavy shoe buckle the worm turned and kicked. At the Direction des Tabacs, however, the officials have all the hauteur of the American political appointee, and the kicker was asked coldly if he expected a pair of shoes for ten cents.—Wall Street Journal.

Not Used to Telling Truth.

A Baltimore lawyer tells of the plight of an Irishman summoned as a witness in a burglary trial in the city mentioned.

It was apparent from the start that the witness was much alarmed and rattled by his unsought and undesired prominence in this trial.

"Remember, Casey," said the judge presiding, "that you have sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

"Yis, your honor-r," stammered Casey, his eyes wavering from the judge to the jury and back again; "an' I'll do the best I can. But I hope ye gintlemin will be a trifle aisy on me at the shtart, for I'm little used to that sort of thing, your honor-r."

Humor From London Opinion.

Matrimonial Agent—The lady is ugly, I admit, but take the photo with you, you might get used to her face in a little while.

For Fingermarks on Wallpaper.

Finger marks on wall paper will quickly disappear when rubbed with a stiff dough of flour and water.

OYSTER SEASON HERE

SOME METHODS OF PREPARING THIS GENERAL FAVORITE.

Better Than Serving Raw, Stewed or Fried—Kabobs May Be Recommended—Scrambled With Oysters—Excellent Pan Roast.

By LIDA AMES WILLIS.

No true oyster lover fails in appreciation of the merits of the raw oyster, served without the accompaniment of coarse vinegar and peppery sauces. If one must resort to such condiments to enable one to eat the delicate monster uncooked, then one's palate lacks discrimination and delicacy. Here are four of the best recipes known:

Kabobs.—Remove the gills and muscular part from large oysters. Dip each in melted butter, then in seasoned dry bread crumbs. String six oysters, alternating with them strips of sliced bacon cut same size, on a small silver or aluminum skewer. Lay these in a frying basket and immerse in deep, hot fat, frying a nice brown. Serve with little lemon and tender, crisp celery.

Scrambled Eggs, With Oysters.—Put a piece of butter in your omelet pan, and when melted, add as many eggs as required and a tablespoonful of cream to each egg; scramble, and before the eggs are cooked add the oysters, well drained and small sized; a seasoning of salt and pepper and a little minced parsley, or instead of the parsley add a little celery salt. Cook until the edges of the oysters curl, then remove at once from the fire and turn onto a heated platter.

Southern Pan Roast.—The largest and finest oysters should be used for this purpose. Drain them well and heat in a deep frying pan, with a generous lump of butter melted. Cover the pan and shake constantly over a hot fire. Have ready a dish well buttered and garnished with parsley and lemon. When the oysters are brown, turn out on the dish, add salt and dust of pepper and pour over the oysters a little melted hot butter, mixed with a teaspoonful of minced parsley.

Oyster Salad.—Cook the oysters in their own liquor until they are plump and gills ruffle. Drain and season with salt and pepper and set in ice chest to cool. For 100 large oysters take two heads of lettuce, chill and arrange the leaves in your salad bowl and turn the oysters into the center of the lettuce heads, having cut out the coarse stems. Mince a few olives or capers and sprinkle over the oysters and serve mayonnaise dressing with the salad. If you have some good home-made celery vinegar, use it in making the mayonnaise for your oyster salad.

How to Cook Endives.

The following is an excellent French way of cooking the endives: Boil the leaves in lots of salt and water; when tender, pour the whole thing into a large sieve, and, as soon as the hot water has drained away, put the sieve under a tap and let cold water run on it for a few minutes. After the cold water, put the endives on a chopping board or rub it through a fine sieve; in both cases return it to the fire after putting it into a china saucepan, with a pat of butter and one teaspoonful of fine flour. Melt and mix the butter and flour, stir in the vegetable, and let it simmer 15 minutes. Add a little cream or milk quite at the last moment, to make it look soft and pretty.

Grape Sherbet.

Put one cup of sugar with two cups of water, cook three minutes and then cool. Add two cups of grape juice and the mixture is ready to serve. When frozen to a mush stir in the white of one egg beaten stiff with a rounding tablespoon of powdered sugar. Prepare the grape juice as if to be used for jelly.

Washing Flannel.

To keep flannels from shrinking wash them in the following way: Shred a piece of the best white soap, boil it in a quart of water, have ready a tubful of warm water, pour in the boiled soap and make a good lather. Then place the flannels to be washed into this, wash them thoroughly in it, but do not rub soap on them. Rinse in warm water, wring out and dry as quickly as possible in the open air out in the sun. When this is finished, iron when sufficiently dry with a warm iron.

English Hot Pot.

On a cold night nothing is finer for supper. One pound pork chops, four or five onions, eight or nine potatoes, salt and pepper. Slice potatoes. First a layer of potatoes, then a layer of onions, then a layer of pork, cut up, and so on until all the things are used. Have the top layer of potatoes. Salt and pepper and fill with hot water. Bake in a moderate oven two or three hours. Cover with a plate until the last half hour. This is delicious. Enough for three or four people.

NEW IDEA OF MOTHER-IN-LAW

Possibly This Is One of the Arrangements That Would Do Away With Old Problem.

"John Blank has just been telling me of his trouble at home," said the lean man, as he settled back in the car seat beside an acquaintance. "I guess he tells pretty near everybody, so I'm not letting the cat out of the bag by speaking of it."

"Oh, yes," murmured the friend, "his mother and his wife don't get along together, and Blank is between the devil and the deep sea. Say—when do you think this weather will let up?"

"Dunno," replied the lean man. "But say—I don't see why there's got to be so much mother-in-law trouble. Now you take my family. Mother is dependent on me and she lives with us. According to most people, that would spell sure trouble. But in our case it hasn't worked out that way."

"Your mother and your wife are both fine women," commented the friend.

"I guess that's it," agreed the lean man. "You see, I didn't marry till middle age, and mother and I lived together alone up to that time."

"Then I met Florence. She was a successful business woman. It takes a lot of good hard sense to be that, and she had it. Well, we married, and she came right into my home, with mother welcoming her as a daughter."

"Now, what did my mother do? Did she sit back and sulk, or did she get up and assert her supremacy?"

"She did not. She held a business session with my wife, made a statement of assets and liabilities, as you might say, turned the business over to my wife, declared she was willing to be a consulting partner if necessary, but that it was her intention and earnest desire to be relieved of responsibilities and take a rest."

"It's working out beautifully. My wife is the manager of the household. I believe that she and mother have a sort of directors' meeting once in awhile, but mother has refrained from giving any advice that wasn't asked, and has never insisted upon the carrying out of the advice she has given. She is a pleasant and honored member of our family. In times of need she has thrown herself into the work without saving herself, and we owe at least one of our children's lives to her care."—Edna K. Wooley in the Chicago News.

Family Pride in Germany.

The suicide of Princess Sofia of Saxe-Weimar represents a tragedy which is very old both in life and literature. The opposition to her engagement with the son of a banker seems to have been the subject of gossip in Germany for some time, and it is to this cause that her act of self-destruction is generally ascribed. Distinctions of rank play a part in German consciousness which we can scarcely realize in this country, and they have a basis in history and national character which is not to be disposed of by a contemptuous astonishment. None the less, "family pride" seems to cut a poor figure by the bier of a young girl self-destroyed.

Poor Shackleton Returns.

Sir Ernest Shackleton, the antarctic explorer, told some amusing stories of his lecturing experiences a few days ago at the Browning settlement, Walworth. On one occasion at Leith the audience was so small that he went to the cabman outside and said: "I will pay for someone to hold the horse, and you can come in and hear the lecture." "Oh, no, thank you," said the cabman; "I'm all right where I am." Afterwards, with his wife, Sir Ernest counted his losses and said: "Twenty-five people at a shilling a head—that makes the total receipts 25 shillings." "But," said his wife, "you must deduct two shillings from that. I sent the cook and one of the maids."

Luminous Fire Boxes.

To enable New Yorkers to find fire alarm boxes at night, the superintendent of the fire alarm department is painting them with luminous paint. It is of white zinc, and in some parts of the city, where there is a little light, one of these boxes can be distinguished for a long distance.

German Emigration.

Emigration through the German ports of Hamburg and Bremen in the first seven months this year was almost 100,000 more than in the corresponding months of last year and 14,000 more than in the record year, 1907.

The Big Item.

"Does it take much money to send a boy to college?" asked the Boob. "No," replied the Cheerful Idiot. "It's keeping him there that takes the coin."

Then and Now.

Knicker—"We used to watch the game through a knothole in the fence." Bocker—"Now we see it through a hole in a \$20 bill."

REALLY OLD FASHION

TODAY'S MODE COPIED FROM THAT OF THE PAST.

Nothing New About the Much-Discussed Designs Which Have Found Favor With the Present Generation of Good Dressers.

Women that, in obedience to fashion, sport a high standing feather on coiffure or bonnet, and thus are a nuisance in public places where spectators behind them would like to see the stage, are merely imitating their English sisters of the eighteenth century. Some one wrote in the Times of 1795: "At all elegant assemblies there is a room set apart for the ladies to don their feathers, as it is impossible to wear them in any carriage with a top. The lusters are also removed on this account, and the doors are carried up to the ceiling. A well dressed lady who nods with dexterity can give a friend a little tap upon the shoulder across the room without incommoding the dancers. The ladies' feathers are now generally carried in the sword case at the back of the carriage."

In Berlin the number of men between seventy and eighty is 12,898, while the number of women is 25,204. In Greater Berlin the figures are 20,049 and 37,520, respectively. The number of men between eighty and ninety in Berlin is 2,036, and the number of women is 5,371. Three out of every four nonagenarians in this city are women.

"Lady Jockeys" promise to be a regular feature of races in France, but the woman cab driver, the "femme cochon," is disappearing from the streets of Paris. Six years ago there were at least 100; now there are only six or seven, and of these all but one will soon disappear. The survivor says that at first men rushed for cabs driven by women, and gave generous tips, but that was when the woman cab driver was celebrated in song and in the revue. Then came neglect. This reminds us that about half a century ago Mrs. Cuyler of London was known as the "Cabman's Terror," for she knew the distance between any two points and handed the exact fare. And now there is a woman in London who is accused of this hobby: She takes taxicabs and compels the drivers to sue her for their fares.

The hobby of certain swell women in Paris is a more amiable one. They make shoes. The Daily Chronicle says that this a reversion to a London mania of over a century ago. Mrs. Charles Calvert wrote in her diary on May 4, 1808: "I begin a new science today—shoemaking. It is all the fashion. I had a master with me for about two hours, and I think I shall be able to make very nice shoes." And in the same month Lady Sarah Spencer wrote to her brother: "I am today in a state of great vanity. I have, to my eternal glory be it spoken, made a pair of shoes. There is for you! So if all other trades fail I shall certainly establish myself cross-legged at the corner of an alley and earn a livelihood in the midst of leather, awls, and hammers. In the evening Harriet and I divide our time between musick and shoemaking, which is now the staple trade of the family."—Phillip Hale in Boston Herald.

When Juries Meet.

"Up in Alaska there used to be a district attorney who was long on native oratory, but short on education. Once, while prosecuting a big case, he came to the finish of his argument, and, according to Wilson Mizner, who was up there at the time, he leaned across the rail and made this plea:

"All I asts of you, gentlemen of the jury, is that you now retire and mete out justice as she deserves to be met!"

Diagnosed.

"I've cared for several persons," she explained, "but I never have loved anyone so that I would have been willing to give up my home and work for him, if necessary. That is real love, isn't it?" "No, that isn't real love. That is softening of the brain."

Boom!

"That new maid at Mrs. Van Winkle's threw some gunpowder in the stove by mistake and was blown through the roof. Poor girl!"

"No, poor Mrs. Van Winkle. That's the fifth maid this year who has left her without giving notice."

Look to Workingmen's Health.

Because the vitiated air is bad for the workingman, the German government has forbidden the drying of plaster in new buildings by the use of open stoves. The stoves must now be connected by pipes with the outside.

Truth and Life.

Where the seeking of truth begins, always the life commences, too; so soon as the seeking of truth is abandoned life ceases.—John Ruskin.