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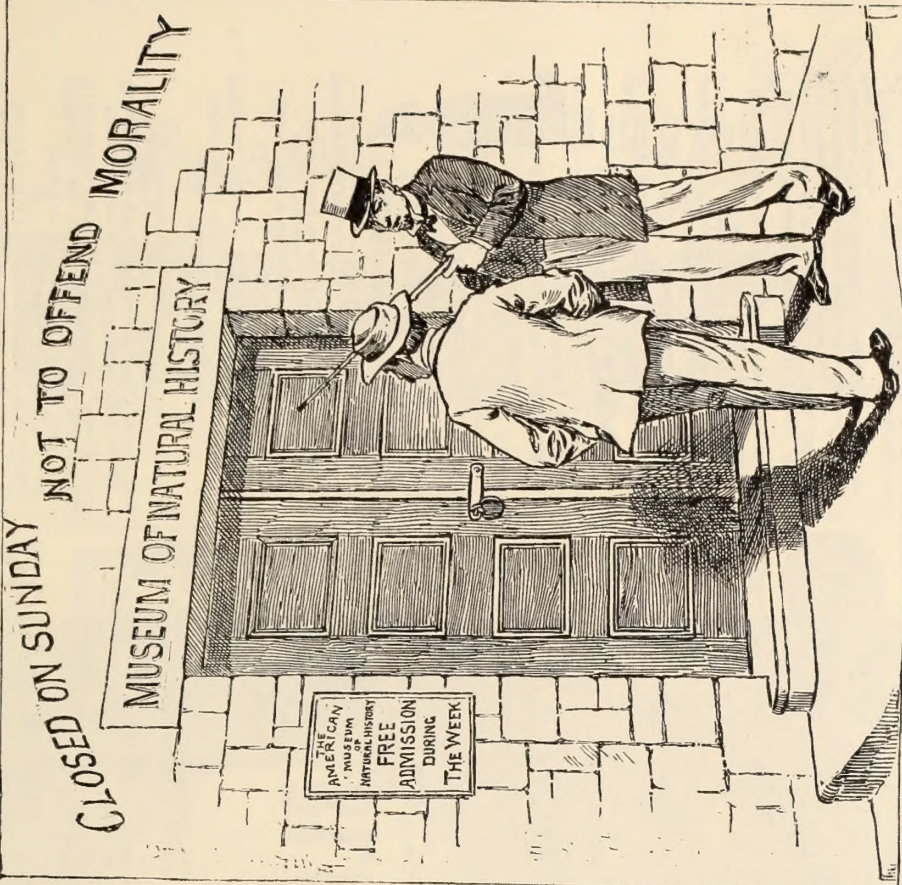












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# FRANK LESLIE'S POPULAR MONTHLY

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THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.—AN ILLUSTRATED LECTURE.



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# THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

BY MARY TITCOMB.

THE recent completion of an additional building for the American Museum of Natural History, on Manhattan Square, at the Central Park, New York city, awakens fresh interest in an institution designed no less for popular instruction and recreation than for scientific investigation.

Comparatively few, even of the thousands who have examined the collections there exhibited, know definitely about the origin of this museum, or realize how much thought, labor and money have been expended in bringing it to its present condition.

Long before its establishment it had been a matter of keen regret to many citizens of New York that in this great and wealthy city there were no adequate means for the study of natural history, and no public collection for the benefit of the people. The majority of European capitals, and even the more important cities of our own country, possessed valuable museums, while the metropolis of America had none. But the number of those who recognized the necessity of such a museum was manifestly increasing, and their interest was brought to a focus toward the close of 1868 by an unexpected opportunity for securing the nucleus of the desired institution. By the death of Edward Verreaux, of Paris, an extensive collection of natural-history specimens was offered for sale; and also the entire museum of Prince Maximilian of Neuwied, Germany, was by his death thrown into the European market. A united and earnest effort was made to secure these collections.

On December 30th, 1868, a letter was addressed to the Commissioners of the Central Park, signed by about twenty gentlemen, expressing their desire that a great museum should be established in the park, and asking if the commissioners were disposed to provide for its reception and development. A favorable reply was returned, with assurances of sympathy and hearty co-operation in the great work proposed.

In April, 1869, a special charter was obtained from the State Legislature, and the American Museum of Natural History was speedily organized—a corporation of active, earnest men, its first president being John David Wolfe. The names of the first Board of Trustees, in 1869, were John David Wolfe, Robert L. Stuart, Robert Colgate, Benjamin H. Field,\* Richard M. Blatchford, Adrian Iselin,\* Benjamin B. Sherman, William A. Haines, Theodore Roosevelt,\* Henry G. Stebbins, Howard Potter, William T.

Blodgett, Andrew H. Green,\* Morris K. Jesup,\* D. Jackson Steward,\* J. Pierpont Morgan,\* Moses H. Grinnell, A. G. Phelps Dodge, Charles A. Dana, Joseph H. Choate,\* Henry Parish. By the efforts of the trustees, the sum of \$44,550 was raised within a few weeks, which warranted the purchase of the Elliot collection of North American birds, the entire collection of Prince Maximilian, and valuable selections from the Verreaux and Vedray collections, in Paris. Many donations were also received, showing the interest and sympathy of scientific men in the movement.

By an arrangement with the Park Commissioners, temporary accommodations were provided for the exhibition of these collections in the old Arsenal Building, near the park entrance at Fifth Avenue and Sixty-fourth Street. Thus, the long-desired establishment of a museum for the definite purpose of "encouraging and developing the study of natural science, of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects, and of furnishing popular instruction and recreation," began to assume a tangible form.

These earliest acquisitions of the museum are invested with peculiar interest, not merely because they were of great intrinsic value, and formed the nucleus about which so much has since gathered, but also because of the history of some of them. Maximilian, Prince of Neuwied—a town in the district of Coblenz, Prussia—was born in 1782, and died in 1867. He was an enthusiastic naturalist, and traveled extensively for the purpose of studying the natural history of different countries and gathering specimens. He spent two or three years in exploring Brazil, about 1816, subsequently publishing the results of his researches in several volumes. About 1834 he made a tour through North America, going far into the then unexplored West. Two years before his death he completed a manuscript catalogue of his ornithological collection—an elaborate work of great value, although imperfect in some respects.

It was in the Fall of 1869 that the trustees of the American Museum purchased for £1,500 sterling Maximilian's entire collection, consisting of 4,000 mounted birds, 600 mounted mammals, and about 2,000 fishes and reptiles, mounted, or in alcohol. Among these were rare and valuable specimens, both American and European. The birds were mounted on stands of rude construction, for which turned mahogany perches were substituted after being brought here. Although collected so long ago, the specimens were well preserved; and as Maximilian had a good knowl-

\* In the present Board.



edge of natural history for the time in which he lived, his descriptions are excellent, though the classification was somewhat crude. Selections embracing the rarest specimens were made from the Verreaux collection—2,800 mounted birds, 220 mounted mammals, and 400 mounted skeletons of mammals, birds, fishes and reptiles—costing about \$16,000 in gold; and about 250 mounted mammals and Siberian birds from the Vedray collection. These were all carefully packed and shipped; and in 1870 and 1871—some detention resulting from the Franco-Prussian War—they reached New York, and were deposited in the Arsenal, where thousands daily visited them. The Elliot collection of North American birds—2,500 specimens—and many donations, were also placed on exhibition about the same time.

Meanwhile, the growing interest of the public, evinced by crowds of visitors at the Arsenal, by generous contributions of money, and by gifts which filled the exhibition cases to overflowing, made it evident that the temporary accommodations were altogether inadequate. And soon a petition, signed by a large number of influential citizens, was presented to the Legislature of New York, in response to which an Act was passed authorizing the Department of Public Parks to erect a suitable building for the museum upon Manhattan Square—a liberal appropriation being made for the purpose. By the same Act a similar provision was made for a building, on the opposite side of the park, for the use of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Manhattan Square, set aside permanently for the American Museum, is a plot of ground containing over eighteen acres, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues and Seventy-seventh and Eighty-first Streets—a little outside the Central Park proper, but now incorporated with it. Here, on June 2d, 1874, the corner-stone of the new edifice was laid by General Grant, then President of the United States; and on December 22d, 1877, the completed building was formally opened, President Hayes, and a large assemblage of prominent citizens and scientific men from all parts of the country, being present.

This building—although but a single section of the vast structure designed to be ultimately erected for the requirements of the museum—seemed delightfully commodious as compared with the old Arsenal. It was 200 feet long by 66 wide, and 100 in height, beautifully fitted up with cases, and the large windows sending the light into every nook and corner. It had been supposed these accommodations would be ample for some time. Yet even on the opening day the space was fully occupied by classified specimens, while many objects still remained in the Arsenal for lack of room.

As the collections increased from year to year—chiefly by donations, but also by purchase, to secure rare specimens—great embarrassment was felt from want of space for exhibition and for storage. Moreover, a larger lecture-room was greatly needed.

In 1886 an Act was passed authorizing the erection of an addition to the museum; and after the delays which always seem inevitable in great undertakings work was begun in September, 1888, and now the two united buildings form a symmetrical and imposing structure of which New York may well be proud. It is built of brick, with stone trimmings and frontage, in Romanesque style, the principal entrance facing Seventy-seventh Street. The new addition is 110 feet by 65, with a wing at each end 115 feet by 27, thus giving to the various departments extended room whereby the collections are exhibited much more fully and effectively. The new lecture-hall will seat about 1,000; and the enlarged accommodations are highly appreciated by teachers and students who had on many occasions been unable even to gain entrance to the old lecture-room. There are also increased facilities for advancing the researches of scientific men, in the laboratories and workrooms.

The general arrangements in regard to the museum are such as commend themselves to the good sense of citizens. The Park Department, having furnished grounds and buildings, equip them and keep them in repair. The trustees receive and furnish collections of specimens, and keep them open to the public four days in the week, and on all legal and public holidays excepting Sunday; and, by recent arrangement, on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, and on the evenings of public holidays. Monday and Tuesday are days reserved for teachers and students who desire opportunity for special investigation.

The contribution of \$1,000 at one time to the funds of the museum constitutes the donor a patron of the institution; \$500 entitles one to be a fellow in perpetuity; \$100, a life member; and \$10 is the annual membership fee—special privileges being given in each of these cases.

John David Wolfe was the first president of the board of trustees—a lover of science, and a man of wealth and culture, whose generous aid and wise counsels were invaluable in the foundation of the museum. On his death, in 1872, Robert L. Stuart, well remembered for his cultured tastes and liberal heart, was elected to the vacant office, which he ably filled for many years, until his death. In 1881 Morris K. Jesup, identified with the museum as one of its first trustees, and a most generous patron, was chosen president, which responsible position he still occupies, freely devoting time and money to the interests of the

institution. The present vice-presidents are: James M. Constable and D. Jackson Steward; the secretary, Albert S. Bickmore; the treasurer, J. Pierpont Morgan. The position of chairman of the executive committee is also filled most efficiently by Mr. Constable—a wise adviser and liberal patron.

Indeed, from the beginning of this grand enterprise, trustees and officers have all proved themselves indefatigable in their labors, as well as generous in their gifts. A mere glance at the list of names shows that the interests of the museum are in the hands of prominent, responsible men of New York, whose trustworthy character and ability are universally recognized.

Few persons realize that the success which has attended this institution from the first has been due, not merely to generous donations, but to the careful planning, the wise counsels and the executive ability of those in charge.

The names of the present board of trustees will be of interest to many of our readers: Morris K. Jesup, Benjamin H. Field, Adrian Iselin, J. Pierpont Morgan, D. Jackson Steward, Joseph H. Choate, Percy R. Pyne, James M. Constable, William E. Dodge, Andrew H. Green, Abram S. Hewitt, Charles Lanier, Hugh Auchincloss, Oliver Harriman, C. Vanderbilt, D. O. Mills, Chas. G. Landon, H. R. Bishop, Albert S. Bickmore, Theodore Roosevelt, Oswald Ottendorfer, J. Hampden Robb, D. Willis James, Levi P. Morton.

It would be impossible to give by mere description any adequate idea of the vast and varied collection in this treasure-house. Only by personal examination—not once, but again and again—can one obtain even a superficial knowledge of the mere contents; and a lifetime of study would only reveal something more to be learned in each department. Some special mention, however, of a few specimens, with no attempt at scientific classification or technical description, may be of interest, at least to such of our readers as have not visited the museum.

On entering the exhibition halls the eye is gratified by the admirable arrangements for admitting light, which bring every object into clear view. There are no dim, shadowy corners, whose contents can be but half discerned; but every specimen, carefully classified, bears the test of a flood of light. We may walk leisurely through the halls, and obtain a general view of the whole; but the details are bewildering to the uninitiated visitor who attempts, perhaps, to look at *everything*, and finds himself confused because he has attempted the impossible.

The Jesup collection of woods—a magnificent display of the forest wealth of North America, filling a large hall—first attracts attention on entering the main building.

Believing that the comparative examination of different kinds of woods would be of practical utility to the industrial community, as well as of great scientific value, Morris K. Jesup began this collection many years ago, and has expended upon it not far short of \$100,000.

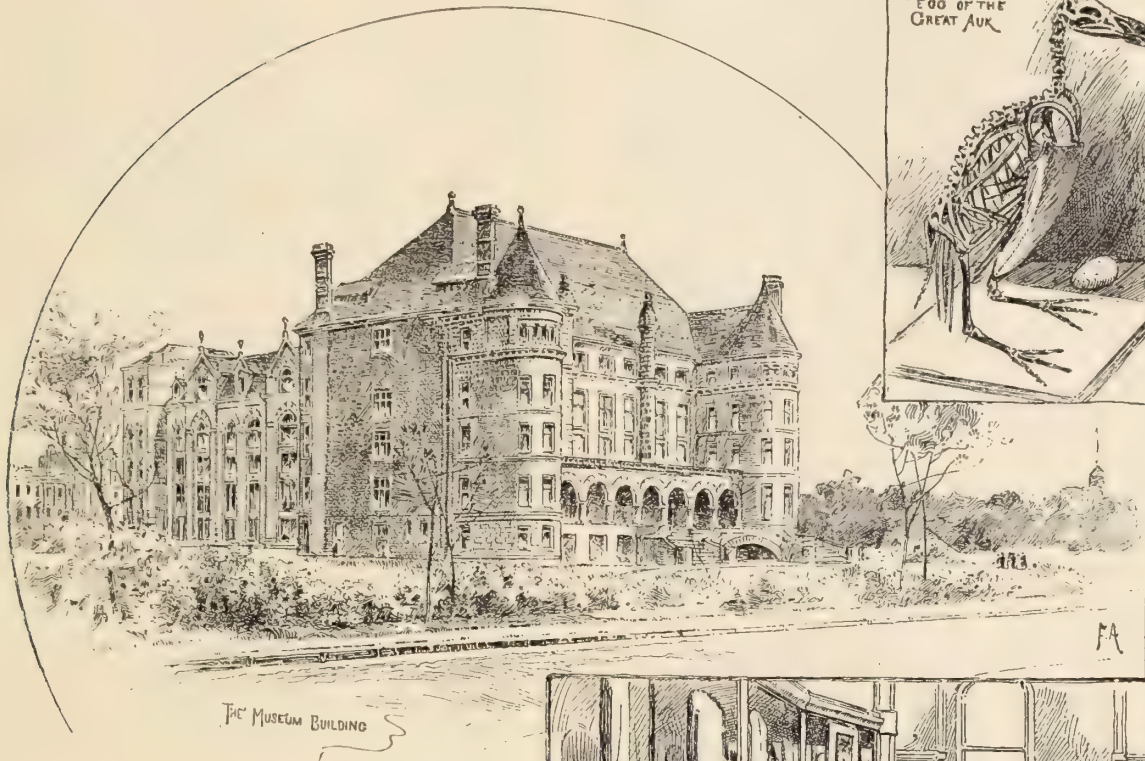
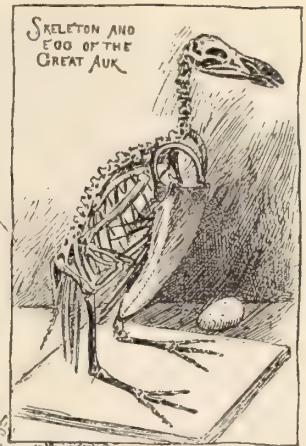
The plan for collecting specimens and the general arrangements were made by Charles S. Sargent, Professor of Arboriculture at Harvard University, under whose supervision the investigation of the nature and condition of the forests of the United States was made for the tenth census.

The trees are represented by large trunk-sections, so cut as to display the longitudinal and transverse grain of the wood, both in its natural and in a polished state. The specimens are arranged in botanical sequence, in glass cases, where abundant light falls upon them. To each specimen a card is attached, giving the common and botanical name, and information on certain points of practical value—such as the specific gravity, the elasticity, the amount of ash contained, etc. Also, on each specimen is a small map of North America, so colored as to show at a glance the geographical distribution of that particular species. Hanging above the cases is a series of water-colors, painted from nature by Mrs. Sargent, showing the foliage, flower and



MORRIS K. JESUP, PRESIDENT.





fruit of the various trees. The numbers attached to the paintings correspond to those on the trunks, so that comparative study is made easy.

There are over four hundred specimens of wood in this collection; in fact, with the exception of about half a dozen rare kinds, difficult to obtain, every variety of tree known in North America is here represented.

Even the superficial examination a casual visitor of necessity gives is full of interest. There are nearly fifty varieties of oak—who would have thought so many existed?—and nearly as many of pine. Some of these specimens are magnificent. An elegant trunk of the sugar pine, about 3 feet in diameter, and fragrant with balsam, comes from California; and from other sections, fine varieties of the useful white, red, yellow and black pine.

The yew is common along the California coast, but there is one species found only in a little spot in Florida.

A plank, 8½ feet in diameter, of the redwood, one of the California sequoia, enables one to get a little idea of a tree that sometimes grows to the height of 300 or 400 feet, and from 30 to 40 feet in diameter; and a section of the *bark* of the California big tree, 13 inches thick, is wonderfully suggestive.

One specimen of hemlock or fir presents a most singular appearance, the rough bark being thickly perforated by woodpeckers. This tree is 336 years old.

An unpretentious-looking larch, found on the eastern slope of the Cascade Mountains, in Washington, measuring only 17½ inches in diameter, is remarkable for its age of 562 years. It was the only specimen found in a long time, and was brought to the museum at great expense.

The black ironwood is the hardest in the collection. From the black locust, which possesses a peculiar ringing quality, policemen's clubs are made. The curious-knobbed "toothache-tree," or prickly ash, the peculiar giant cactus, rich ebony, cherry and mahogany woods, and hundreds to which we cannot even allude, afford a fruitful field for investigation.

Not only is the study of such a collection of practical utility to builders, cabinetmakers, etc., but to growers of fruit, and those interested in the culture of ornamental trees. To assist stu-





ICHTHYOSAURUS (FISH-REPTILE) CONTAINING IN ITS BODY A SMALLER SPECIMEN OF THE SAME SPECIES.

dents, a novel feature has been recently added to the Jesup collection—a series of groups illustrating economic entomology, showing the various phases of insect life, and its destructive effect upon vegetation. The tree-branch exhibited in each group is natural, the leaves are modeled in wax exactly from nature, and the insect destroyer in its various stages of existence—moth, eggs, larvæ, chrysalis—the genuine article, except in some cases where the caterpillar cannot be preserved.

Parasites have been found whose special mission seems to be to kill certain insects which are destructive to vegetation—a most important discovery. For example, it is well known that the orange-tree has many enemies. A while ago, some California orange-growers traced a certain ravaging insect to its home, in Australia, and sent thither entomologists to study its habits. In the course of their investigations they discovered a parasite which proved itself to be an antidote to this preyer on orange-trees. Now the orange-growers are raising broods of this useful little parasite, and when they are let loose in an orange grove the work is done. Thus the study of entomology in connection with trees becomes commercially valuable.

The Ornithological Department, in charge of Professor J. A. Allen, with its thousands of mounted specimens, is peculiarly attractive. If we intended to make a *scientific* study of birds we should begin by remembering that ornithologists tell us that birds are undoubtedly descended from reptilian ancestors; and we should wish to trace the connecting links between birds and reptiles, as furnished, not by the existing forms, but by extinct types of both. These links are found in fossiliferous rocks, and some curious restorations of these early bird-reptiles have been made by skillful paleontologists. Skeletons of toothed birds have also been discovered in geological formations—not always entire, but bones enough to enable naturalists to reconstruct them for the benefit of science; as, for example, one of the genus *Hesperornis*, whose bones were discovered by Professor Marsh, of New Haven. Casts of the principal bones of this creature may be seen in one of the cases.

A peculiarly noticeable specimen in the museum is the skeleton of the moa, a large, extinct bird formerly inhabiting New Zealand. It was allied in form and character to the ostrich, but with rudimentary wings. Great quantities of bones of moas have been found in superficial deposits, leading to the belief that they have become extinct recently. In one of the cases is a series of skeletons of moas.

Another bird, undoubtedly extinct, as no living one has been seen for nearly half a century.



is the great auk. The fine specimen seen here was the gift of Robert L. Stuart, second president of the museum. It was purchased in London for \$625 in gold, but its exact history is not known. The great auk was formerly common in North America, and in the British Isles, northward to the Arctic Circle. It probably existed in New England until the close of the seventeenth century. In 1844 two were killed in Iceland. None have since been found. Only three other stuffed specimens exist in the United States—one in the National Museum at Washington, one in the Philadelphia Academy of Science, and one at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie. So far as known, there are in the world only seventy-eight skins, sixty-six eggs and ten natural skeletons of this ancient fowl. One of its latest resorts was the Funk Islands, about thirty miles from Newfoundland, and from bones found there "made-up" skeletons are constructed. The skeleton shown by the side of the great auk was thus obtained by Frederick A. Lucas, who visited the islands in 1887 for the purpose of obtaining the bones.

Some beautifully crested cranes attract the eye, and other birds of the same order: the South American trumpeter, so called from the curious noise it makes; the Florida crying bird; and the almost flightless wood hen. The extinct géant belonged to this order—a gigantic bird, standing about six feet high. It was an inhabitant of the Island of Rodriguez, but disappeared about two hundred years ago—only a few bones being in existence.

The general order of gallinaceous birds is noteworthy as including not only our domestic fowls, and such as are called "game," but also many remarkable for the beauty of their plumage. Some of the more striking forms are the jungle fowls—the tragopan, the peacock and the argus pheasant, elegantly clothed in soft plumage of lovely mottled browns.

The mound builders, allied to this same family, build enormous mounds of earth mixed with dead leaves, or some other vegetable matter, in which they lay their eggs, leaving them to be hatched by the heat developed by the decomposition of the mass. The crowned pigeon, found in New Guinea and neighboring islands, attracts admiring notice because of its open, feathered crest and plumage of beautiful dove color.

That long-winged bird, the wandering albatross, has a stretch of wing measuring fourteen feet from tip to tip, and is generally seen on the wing in the Southern seas. The graceful stormy petrel, of many varieties, is also always at home in mid-ocean. Another remarkable aquatic bird is the frigate bird, with plumage of iridescent tints, and of which only two species are known. Very curious creatures are the tropical horned

screamers, the wings, and in some species the head, being armed with long, spiny horns. They swim well, fly high, and scream so loud that they can be heard miles away. The beautiful salmon-tinted flamingoes are natives of tropical and semitropical countries. So also are the quaint white and rose-colored spoonbills and the brilliant-plumaged ibises. Especially interesting is the sacred ibis, the venerated bird of the ancient Egyptians.

We notice admiringly the large family of gay-colored orioles; the pert little cardinal bird, with brilliant feathers and queer little cap; the long, slender-billed curlews, and the scissors-tailed flycatcher; and a California woodpecker is shown, with a specimen of the mischief he does, in the shape of several feet of a telegraph-pole from Oregon riddled with holes made by this bird for the purpose of storing acorns for its Winter use. Many of the acorns are still to be seen in the holes.

We might linger long over the collection of owls, whose comically serious faces always provoke a smile; or the parrot group, including numerous species varying in size from the little lovebird to the great, noisy macaw; or the curious-crested hoopoes; or the brilliant-colored toucans, with beak nearly as large as body; or the trogons, gorgeous in color, of which the most striking is



THE FIRST BIRD—THE ARCHEOPTERYX, FOUND IN LITHOGRAPH STONE IN BAVARIA.



the paradise trogon, whose wing and tail feathers are enormously lengthened into gracefully drooping green plumes; but we pause to admire the lovely little humming birds, with their crests, ruffs, sharp, slender bills and luminous plumage. Some are tiny morsels, others nearly as large as

birds of paradise, whose beautiful and abundant plumes are sometimes over two feet long.

The museum has in all about 50,000 specimens of birds, of which over 13,000 are mounted and on exhibition. An unmounted "study collection," selected with reference to scientific value,



THE ARGUS PHEASANT.

a sparrow. Then there is the lyrebird, a native of Australia, so called from its lyre-shaped tail and its remarkable vocal powers; the curious umbrella and bell birds; and a host of ingenious little architects, like the oven bird, the weaver, the bower bird, and an array of argus pheasants and

is reserved for the purposes of study and investigation.

An interesting feature of this department, to which Mrs. Robert L. Stuart has generously contributed, is the collection of bird groups—the only other similar one being in the South Ken-





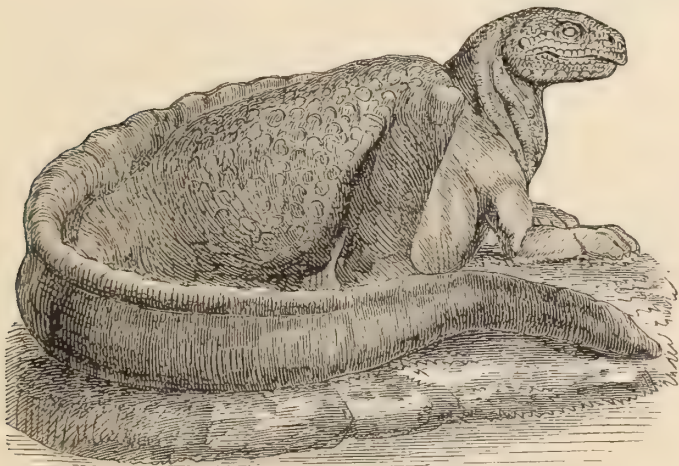
BIRD HALL, WITH THE SKELETON OF THE ELEPHANT "JUMBO" IN THE FOREGROUND.

sington Museum, London. In these groups the nesting habits of various species are illustrated by transferring the identical branch, or bit of ground on which the nest was built, and reproducing artificially surrounding details of vegetation to substitute for the perishable natural ones. The birds are in most cases the very pair that built the nest, and the nest exactly as they placed it. Each group has a descriptive label—a system for giving information used throughout the museum.

The materials for these groups were for the most part gathered by Mr. Jenness Richardson, in charge of the Taxidermic Department.

The exhibition of shells consists mainly of the Jay collection, presented to the museum by Miss Catharine L. Wolfe, as a memorial gift in honor of her father, John David Wolfe, first president of the museum. This collection comprises over 50,000 specimens, whose varied forms and lovely tints are fascinating to the most casual observer; and, as with everything in nature, study unfolds wonders concerning unseen life.

The Department of Geology, in charge of Professor R. P. Whitfield, includes the great Hall collection, the richest and most extensive collection of American invertebrate fossils in the world. Here are seen the remains of plants and animals that once lived in the ocean, or were washed into it from the land and buried in the mud at the bottom, and have been found preserved in the rocks formed from that mud. These fossils are often fragmentary; but many of them are wonderfully perfect, and viewed under a magnifying glass their delicate beauty is revealed. A very attractive form of organic remains has



THE HADRASAURUS FOULKII, RESTORED.





CROWLEY, THE CHIMPANZEE.

received the name of "stone lily," from its flowerlike appearance. This curious animal was rooted to the bottom of the ocean, or to some other spot, like a plant, and was abundant in certain ancient epochs. A fine series of fossil fishes, whose structure is very perfectly preserved, may be seen; and a great variety of fossil plants, among which are beautiful specimens of ferns and seaweeds. Many of the fossil shells, also, are of great beauty.

Prominent in the Geological Hall is a skeleton of the mastodon, a creature resembling the elephant, which was once common in this country, but became extinct long ago. This was found in 1879, in a peaty deposit near Newburgh, N. Y. A few bones had decayed, and bones from other skeletons, or artificial models, have been substituted. This mastodon was  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet high and 18 feet in length to the end of the tusks, the tusks themselves being nearly  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet long.

The admirable classification in the Geological Hall not only aids the student in his researches, but is thoroughly helpful to the casual visitor who has little or no technical knowledge. A single morning spent in examining the fine collection of minerals cannot fail to give one an enlarged conception of the wonderful beauty Nature has hidden within the earth.

The Ethnological and Archæological Department, in charge of Professor Albert S. Bickmore, opens a vast field for research. Here may be found almost every imaginable article—arms, armor, ornaments, dresses, masks, domestic utensils, pipes, money, musical instruments—gathered from various countries to illustrate the life and habits of different races. The recently acquired Emmons-Bishop collections, from Alaska, alone contain 1,300 specimens, illustrating the workmanship and customs of the aborigines of that country. No better opportunity could be desired

than is here afforded for the study of the early history of various races; and withal, the collections are exceedingly curious as a mere show.

We must hasten by an immense array of bugs and beetles, reserving them for future examination, while we glance at some objects larger and more striking, though perhaps not more important.

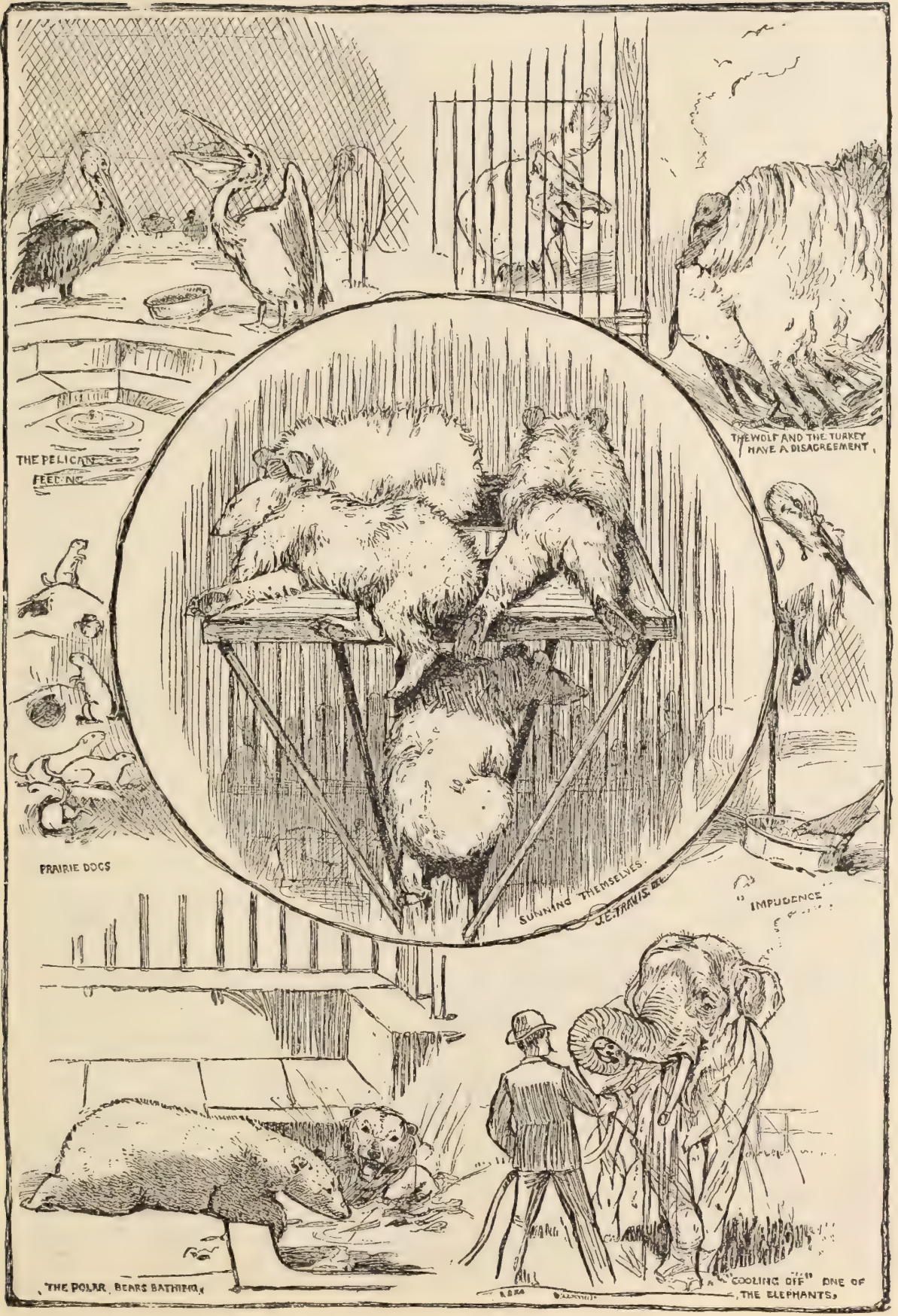
The museum possesses somewhat over 3,500 mammals, of which about 1,000 are mounted. As needed specimens are added, it is designed to deviate from the traditional method of arranging animals in stiff, monotonous rows, and group them artistically. An example of this mode is seen in a beautifully arranged group, consisting of a family of five orang-outangs. The scene represented is in the tree-tops of Borneo, at a height of thirty feet, where the creatures are perfectly at home, and are plucking and eating the durian—a fruit inclosed in a prickly husk.

The monkey exhibit is large, including numerous varieties—the gorilla, chimpanzee, ape, baboon, lemur, and down to the little pygmy marmoset.

Of course, the visitor will not pass by the famous chimpanzee, "Mr. Crowley," and will read his brief biography with interest. He was brought from Liberia when about eight months old, and placed in the Central Park Menagerie in June, 1884, where he became a great favorite. He died of consumption, August 31st, 1888, aged five years.

It would be useless to attempt even the briefest description of the numerous animals; but prominent among them is the skeleton of the celebrated Jumbo, which demands at least a moment's examination. Jumbo was captured in Abyssinia in 1861, when about two years old, and taken to the Jardin des Plantes, Paris, where





THE PELICAN FEEDING

THE WOLF AND THE TURKEY HAVE A DISAGREEMENT

SUNNING THEMSELVES.  
DE TRAVIS BE

PRAIRIE DOGS

IMPUDENCE

THE POLAR BEARS BATHING

COOLING OFF ONE OF THE ELEPHANTS

SKETCHES IN THE CENTRAL PARK MENAGERIE.



he remained three years. In 1865, he was transferred to the Zoological Gardens, London; but after many years he developed some vicious traits; and as it was thought unsafe to keep him there, he was sold to Mr. P. T. Barnum for \$10,000. In 1882 he was brought to America, and formed an attractive feature in Barnum's shows. Jumbo met his death at St. Thomas, Ontario, September 15th, 1885, in a railway collision, while being led across the track. His skin and skeleton were separately mounted; and after being exhibited some time, the skeleton was loaned by Messrs. Barnum and Bailey to the American Museum. Jumbo was twenty-five years old, and was 12 feet high at the shoulder and 18 feet in girth—the largest elephant known in confinement.

The library of the museum, in charge of Mr. A. Woodward, contains about 13,000 volumes and 6,000 pamphlets: not large, as compared with

many other libraries, but composed strictly of valuable works pertaining to natural science.

In connection with the Department of Public Instruction, an annual series of lectures has been given by Professor A. L. Bickmore to the teachers of New York and vicinity, on topics of natural history. The lectures are illustrated by photographic views and by the museum collections and the large attendance has proved their popularity. Recently arrangements have been made for monthly lectures to be given to members of the museum; and also, on legal holidays, free illustrated lectures respecting the natural resources and characteristic scenery of this country, and kindred subjects; these latter being for the benefit of the people who throng the building on holidays.

The subjects of some of the lectures delivered during the past two years show what interesting topics are brought before the teachers and others who are privileged to attend them. The Palisades and Highlands, The Catskills and the Adirondacks, The Lakes and Glens of New York, The St. Lawrence and the Saguenay, The Stem and the Leaf, The Forests of America; Holland—Amsterdam; Denmark—Sweden and Southern Norway; The National Yellowstone Park; Colorado—Pike's Peak and Monument Park; The Cañons of the Rocky Mountains; California—the Yosemite Valley; Alaska.

The success of the American Museum is established. Manhattan Square gives ample room for new buildings as they are required; and only a liberal endowment fund seems needed to secure the rapid growth and permanent high rank of this institution. At this time of writing about \$300,000 have been contributed to this fund. Much more is requisite, and generous donations are confidently expected.

No more praiseworthy or effective avenue of usefulness is open to persons of wealth than the fostering of an institution devoted, as this is, to scientific progress and the education of the public.



THE GREAT AUK.





NATURE IN THE WILDS.



## AN APRIL FOOL.

BY DOUGLAS SLADEN.

PROUD the earl's daughter—but oh, so sweet,  
 From her clear, brave eyes to her slim, arched feet!  
 Proud—of good Pennsylvanian birth  
 The singer, but poor as he entered earth.  
 The singer was lost in my Lady May;  
 Her face and her grace were his dream all day;  
 She shrank as a wooing maiden will,  
 Like a swimmer who fears that the sea is chill.

“Will you walk in our woods, sir?” asked Lady  
 May.

“The primrose and windflower are out to-day.”

He was shy with the secret his pride withheld,  
 While through the fresh dingles fresh laughter  
 belled.

“I’ve a note from a lover. I’ll show it to you;  
 And your counsel I crave. Will you give it, and true?”  
 He vowed he was fain, with the gleam of a tear  
 On his eye for the death of the dream of a year.  
 But to tear-misted eyes seemed the writing to be  
 In the hand of a lady, though dashing and free:  
 And as they read through it, the mist cleared away.  
 ’Twas, “Why haven’t you asked me? I love you,”  
 signed “May.”

“Like you walks in the woods, sir? These violets  
 blue

And these lilies of Lent I am plucking for you.  
 With the sweets of the Spring will you let me repay  
 What I owe?—you have kissed me so often to-day.”

## NANSEN ON THE NORWEGIAN SKI.

DR. NANSEN’S idea of crossing the great tract of inland ice lying between the east and the west coasts of Greenland was originated in 1883, by the account of Nordenskiöld’s expedition to the interior, and the feats of his Lapps, performed on their “ski” (pronounced “she”), or Northern snowshoes.

Dr. Nansen had made it a crucial point that all his coadjutors should be expert “skilöbners” (snowshoers), but even in this elementary qualification the Lapps were much inferior to the Norwegians. The whole party, however, once embarked in the undertaking, worked loyally and harmoniously, and the leader gracefully expresses his gratitude by dedicating his book, “The First Crossing of Greenland,” to them.

The “ski” plays such a prominent part in the expedition that the author devotes a chapter to its history and practice. He goes the length of saying that his journey across Greenland owes its origin entirely to the sport of “skilöbning.” He himself knew how to manage the “ski” when four years old: “‘Ski,’ then, as will have been already gathered, are long narrow strips of wood, those used in Norway being from three to four inches in breadth, eight feet more or less in length, one inch in thickness at the centre under the foot, and beveling off to about a quarter of an inch at either end. In front they are curved upward and pointed, and they are sometimes a little turned up at the back end too. The sides are more or less parallel, though the best forms have their greatest width in front, just where the upward curve begins, but otherwise they are quite straight and flat, and the under surface is made as smooth as possible. The attachment consists of a loop for the toe, made of leather or some other substance, and fixed at about the centre of the ‘ski,’ and a band which passes from

this round behind the heel of the shoe. The principle of this fastening is to make the ‘ski’ and foot as rigid as possible for steering purposes, while the heel is allowed to rise freely from the ‘ski’ at all times.

“On flat ground the ‘ski’ are driven forward by a peculiar stride, which in its elementary form is not difficult of acquirement, though it is capable of immense development. They are not lifted, and the tendency which the beginner feels to tramp away with them as if he were on mudboards in the middle of a marsh must be strenuously resisted. Lifting causes the snow to stick to them, so they must be pushed forward over its surface by alternate strokes from the hips and thighs, the way being maintained between the strokes by a proper management of the body. The ‘ski’ are kept strictly parallel meanwhile, and as close together as possible, there being no resemblance whatever, as is sometimes supposed, to the motion employed in skating. In the hand most ‘skilöbners’ carry a short staff, which is used partly to correct deficiencies of balance, but by the more skillful chiefly to increase the length of the stride by propulsion. In many country districts this pole often reaches a preposterous length, and in some parts, too, a couple of short staffs are used, one in each hand, by the help of which, on comparatively flat ground, great speed can be obtained. When the snow is in thoroughly good condition the rate of progress is quite surprising, considering the small amount of effort expended, and as much as eight or nine miles can be done within the hour.

It is possible to go uphill on the “ski,” and downhill at an astonishing rate. A still more wonderful performance is that of jumping on the “ski”: “The jumping is done on a steep hillside which has a gradient of perhaps from 30° to 40°.



In the middle of the hill a bank of snow is built, or there may be some natural break in the ground or projecting rock which serves the same purpose. The jumper slides down from the top of the hill on to this bank, which, owing to the great pace which he has already attained, throws him far out into the air, whereupon, after a longer or shorter journey through space, he alights on

the slope below and continues his headlong course at an even greater speed than before. The jumper may, and as a rule does, very much increase the length of his leap by gathering himself together and taking a spring just as he leaves the projecting bank. In this way sixty, seventy, or even ninety, feet may be cleared when the snow is in good order."

## A ROMANCE OF THE DAY.

WHO will say that this practical age has killed all romance? The following narrative, related in the *New York Tribune*, is a true one, and is vouched for by very high authority. The charming grace and dramatic expression with which it was told is, of course, lost in this second edition; but as a sad, yet true, tale, of which an American girl is the heroine, it is given herewith as nearly as possible as related: "One of our rich oil kings (or if it was not oil, he was king of something rich) went to Paris a little over a year ago, taking with him his wife and his beautiful daughter, a lovely and childlike maiden, who showed not the slightest trace of resemblance to the worthy people, her parents. All that money could do to develop this charming creature had been lavished upon her. She could sing most sweetly, play with charming interpretation, dance like an houri, draw and paint with uncommon talent—in short, she was perfection, and her parents simply idolized her. She had not been long in Paris when she attracted the attention of young Prince Z—, heir to one of the oldest families of Italy. Through an eminent American, whom the prince numbered among his acquaintances, he obtained an introduction to the young lady, and became her devoted cavalier, surrounding her with attentions and showering upon her flowers, bonbons, and everything that the world deems it permissible for a young man to bestow upon a maiden. The father, however, viewed his attentions with cold dislike, and finally took his daughter away from Paris.

"Our American family found pleasant quarters in Naples, and thither the prince followed them, renewed his attentions, and finally waited upon the father to request permission to win the girl for his wife. He met with a prompt and decided refusal. Disappointed and astonished, the prince, who was young, handsome and rich, and whose title was of the oldest, requested an explanation. 'I have three reasons,' said the sturdy American, 'each one of which would be sufficient to settle the question. In the first place, I would never give my daughter to a Roman Catholic; secondly, she shall never marry a foreigner; and last, and by no means least, she is all we have,

and her mother and I could never consent to be separated from her.'

"In vain the prince pleaded; the father was obdurate; and again the girl, who seems to have been wonderfully passive in the affair, was taken away—this time back to Paris. Prince Z— remained at home, disconsolate. And now comes the part of the story which is equally disappointing and romantic. The girl died after a few days of sudden illness. Of course she ought to have lived and married the prince, but this is a true story, and it cannot change the facts. A mutual friend wired the prince, who arrived, however, too late to see the face of her whom he had loved so passionately and suddenly. Meeting on the common ground of grief for the loved and lost, the prince and the father were reconciled. A large ship was chartered, and its largest cabin beautifully fitted up as a chapel, in which, upon a bier, was placed the coffin containing the embalmed body of the dead girl. Then the ship, with father and lover on board, set sail for home.

"All through the long voyage the candles are kept burning, and daily service is held in the mortuary chapel, which the two mourners invariably attend. The millionaire owns his own docks, and the stately ship sails up into the harbor, coming to anchor at the very portals of the maiden's own dearly loved home. On the dock are 2,000 workmen of her father's, with crape on hat and sleeve, waiting for their dead. Slowly the coffin is lowered to the boat; reverently it is carried on the land, where stand the many men with bared heads to receive it. And very carefully and tenderly it is lifted by six chosen bearers, and slowly and solemnly it is borne up the long avenue to the house.

"The father and the prince become intimate through their weird journey, and in their mutual sympathy walk together in the procession, the men forming two by two and falling into rank. The last rites are paid, the body committed to its native earth, and without one look at the New World, the prince takes a steamer the day after for Europe. That this man should have been fated to love this woman with love as strong as death seems passing strange."



## SHASTA.

(PARAPHRASED FROM JOAQUIN MILLER'S DESCRIPTION, BY WILLIAM F. BURBANK.)

AS LONE as God, and white as Winter moon,  
Mount Shasta's peak looks down on forest gloom.

The storm-tossed pine and warlike-looking firs  
Have rallied here upon its silver spurs.

Eternal tower, majestic, great and strong,  
So silent all, except for Heaven's song—

For Heaven's voice calls out through silver bars,  
To Shasta's height: calls out below the stars,

And speaks the way, as though but quarter rod  
From Shasta's top unto its maker, God.

In fabled days, when Indian left the earth,  
From here he passed—from land that gave him birth.

*Oakland, Cal.*

Unto his heaven, 'mid lines of light and song;  
He reached the stars from Shasta, great and strong.





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