

### FUR SKIN EXPERTS

**A Subtle Sense of Color Guides Them in Judging Pelts.**

#### HOW THE SKINS ARE DRESSED

An Alkali Bath Begins the Various Processes That Finally Produce the Soft and Pliable Finished Fur—Sealskins the Hardest to Handle.

The chief requirement for success in dressing fur skins is an accurate eye for color or, more valuable yet, an intuitive sense of color. The difference in value of the rarer varieties of fur skins, especially sables, natural black, silver and blue fox, sea otters, chin-chillas, mink and some others, is so subtle that more than a practiced eye is necessary to judge accurately of the merits of individual skins. It is necessary that the color sense be highly developed.

The expert furrier must have, in addition to this, a thorough knowledge of the condition in which a skin should be to gain admittance into the highest class. A furrier must know by the appearance of the pelt whether it will turn out soft and strong after it has been dressed and whether the fur is in the best condition as regards strength and beauty.

A fur skin must, of course, be treated more carefully and by a different process from that followed by the tanner of hides. Tannic acid would ruin the pliability of a fur skin, weaken and discolor the hair. The furrier's process is designed to retain the natural oil of the pelt, which in turn preserves the color of the fur and keeps it soft and pliable. The first step in the process is accomplished by placing the skin in an alkali bath. After it has been softened in the bath the moisture is worked out of the skin with a blunt wooden instrument. Then the flesh side is drawn carefully back and forth over a straight edged knife, which removes any flesh that may be clinging to the pelt and also evens it out.

Specially prepared grease is rubbed into the skin for softening purposes and the process is carried still further by placing the skin in a machine which is arranged to beat it softly until the grease has been entirely absorbed. A slowly revolving drum fitted with wooden paddles and containing fine hard sawdust, the kind of sawdust differing with the variety of fur, next takes charge of the pelt. A moderate degree of heat is supplied during this stage of the dressing. The skin is thoroughly cleaned of grease by tapping the skin with smooth canes of a flexibility adapted to the strength of the fur on a leather cushion stuffed with horsehair. Often a skin will be changed in shape and made smaller by the dressing process.

Seal and beaver skins require much more careful handling than other furs in the case of these skins the water hairs, which are the hard top hairs of the pelt, have to be removed by hand. This process is more difficult with seal than with beaver. A number of men each a specialist in his part of the work, are kept employed in the work after this part of the dressing process has been completed the fine under wool, which is wavy and pale drab in color, is dyed dark brown. Several coats of this dark brown dye are applied, and the final result is a fur which is lustrous black on top. The skin is then submitted to the cleaning process again, made of an even thickness by emery wheels and finally finished off in pale buff color.

The English dye for sealskin, which is considered the best, is a trade secret. Its principal ingredients are gall nuts, copper dust, camphor and nutmeg. It is supposed that the water used for the dye in London has a great deal to do with the fine results obtained by the use of this dye. The natives of different countries, using their own processes, obtain better results with some skins than with others, but the American furriers are rapidly coming to the front in handling the various kinds of pelts.—New York Sun.

#### Trapped.

"John, did you post that letter I gave you this morning?"

"Yes, dear," said John without looking up from his paper.

"Well, what is your answer?"

"What is your answer? That letter was directed to you."

"What do you say? Directed to me? I didn't notice it."

And as John in amazement took it out of his pocket to verify his wife's assertion he saw that he had been correct again. It was not addressed to him.—Buffalo Express.

#### The Silenced Pretender.

Blitz—Did you know that the oldest of Price's seven daughters had eloped? Blizz—Oh, how was the old man affected? Blitz—Oh, he took on dreadfully at first, then he found out that every one knew he had bought the girl's railroad ticket.—Judge.

#### Strong Cards.

Mace—Which of his letters did you use for your breath of promise suit? Mace—The ones he told me to burn.—Boston Transcript.

#### Cotton and Wool.

Cotton can only be grown in tropical or semitropical countries, but wool is mainly a product of temperate regions.

#### It's Only Another Reason Why Other

men should be patient.—George Blinn.

### PUNISHED THE SHREW.

Story of the Vixen's Head That Decorates a House in Berlin.

In Berlin, as a tourist turns into the Heiligengeist, not far from the Kaiser's palace, he will see, fixed in a niche in the second story of the house No. 88, a bust carved in stone. This is called the "Neidkopf." It represents a hideous, harpy faced woman, with snakelike curls of hair and tongs sticking out in mocking derision. This is the story of its origin and purpose.

One day almost 200 years ago Frederick William of Prussia, "Old Fritz," was walking about the streets of his city in the shabby, free and easy way he loved, looking about for some grievance to redress or some load to lighten, which was an agreeable habit of this plain living king. Looking in at a window, he was struck by the intent industry of a humpbacked goldsmith, and so the king entered the little shop for a chat. The result of this interview was an order for a gold table service for the royal household, which made the fortune of the hunchback. Later the king made other visits to see how the work was progressing and on one of these occasions noticed a woman in the window of the opposite house, making the most hideous grimaces and pointing a derisive finger at the little cripple.

"What is the matter with the shrew over there?" asked Frederick William.

"It is envy, your majesty," exclaimed the goldsmith. "She is the wife of a rival goldsmith, and ever since your majesty gave me this order she and her daughter have not ceased to mock and deride me."

Frederick William, paternal in punishment as well as in reward, at once made inquiries as to the ownership of the house wherein this shrew lived. He found that it belonged to her husband, and therefore reasoned that there was little likelihood of the family moving. This seemed to please him. He next enlisted the services of a sculptor and ordered him to make the bust of a woman with the most shrewish, Xantippe like face he could imagine. The king then bought and renovated the house in which the hunchback had his workshop, presented it to him and caused the bust to be placed conspicuously above the workroom window. Thus whenever the envious woman across the street looked forth from her casement the first thing on which her eyes fell was this intended portrait of her amiable self.

For more than 100 years the "Neidkopf," "spiteful vixen head," as one would say in English, stood in proud prominence, a reproach to the envious Frau Goldschmidt and her descendant. It afterward mysteriously disappeared, but in 1840 or thereabouts it was found again in a forgotten collection of bric-a-brac. Frederick William IV. bought the bust for a very large price and had it replaced in its original niche, where it stands today.—New York Press.

#### Chateaubriand's Tragedy.

Writing on M. Chateaubriand for the Paris Temps, Jules Claretie recalls the story of the first performance of the great author's tragedy "Moise." Unable to secure its production in Paris, he had it staged at Versailles. Too nervous to be present in the house on the occasion, he sent his valet with orders to return and report as to the reception of the piece. The servant duly arrived.

"Well?" asked Chateaubriand.

"Ah, M. le Vicomte, I amused myself I spent a most delightful evening."

"It was a success, then?"

"A success, M. le Vicomte? Of course it was a success. It was an immense success. The audience never stopped laughing from the beginning to the end of it."

#### Enigma of Gravitation.

Gravitation is one of nature's enigmas. The great Newton himself did not pretend to know what gravitation is. He only knew that it existed, and he was able to prove how it acted, but what it was in and of itself he never knew. Gravitation is a law of nature or a force acting in accordance with a law of nature, and that is all that the wisest man is able to say about it—unless he is prepared to talk nonsense. It is like electricity we know perfectly well what electricity does, but what electricity itself is baffles the profoundest of scientists and philosophers.—New York American.

#### Merely a Suggestion.

The second hand dealer looked the car over carefully and then made his offer.

"I'll take the machinery of the motor," he said, "but I don't want the rest of it."

"But," said Wiggins, "what'll I do with my body?"

"Your body?" said the dealer, "why, I don't know. You ought to consult an undertaker about that."—Harper's Weekly.

#### Up to Date.

"They're very up to date."

"That so?"

"Yes. Her daughter is to be married soon, and she has sent out invitations that read this way: 'Mr and Mrs. Henry Watersby Brown request your presence at the first wedding of their daughter Jane.'"—Detroit Free Press.

#### Good Advice.

Never suffer your courage to expend itself in fierceness, your resolution in obstinacy, your wisdom in cunning nor your patience in sullenness and despair.

#### Our bravest lessons are not learned

through success, but misadventure.—Alecott.

### WARM SALT WATER BATH.

First Aid For a Child That Has Been Badly Burned.

All children will play with fire unless they have been taught, either by precept or experience, not to do so, and accidents will happen even when every precaution has been taken. It is therefore most desirable in the case of burns that parents should know what—and above all what not—to do while waiting for the doctor to come.

The first thing is to fight shock with all the resources at command, because shock is usually the immediate cause of death. Too often shock is aggravated rather than helped by the treatment it receives.

Valuable time is wasted and unnecessary agony caused in trying to remove the clothing; then various applications of oil or of whatever else the distracted bystanders may have heard was good for burns are made until by the time the doctor arrives irreparable mischief is done.

Do not waste time in any such way, but immediately prepare a warm salt water bath and gently place the child in it, clothes and all. If the clothes are much burned the warm water will make them easier to remove, and the child can be kept in the bath until the pulse and the temperature show that a reaction from the shock has taken place. It will often be necessary for some strong and careful person to kneel and hold the patient in the best position.

Even after the child has been placed in bed with the proper dressings the bath should be given again if there are indications that shock is returning. Always remember that speed is essential. Even the slightest delay is dangerous.

Almost every one believes that in the case of burns water is always harmful and oil always helpful. You will be wise to reverse the rule and learn it by heart. In case of burns fill the bath with warm water, adding salt in the proportion of a teaspoonful to a pint of water, and hold the child in it, clothes and all, until the doctor arrives.—Youth's Companion.

### PRICE OF A PICTURE.

Terms Corot is Said to Have Exactod From His Friend Perier.

A French paper gives the following anecdote of Corot. M. Perier, brother of the former French president, M. Casimir Perier, was a close friend of the great Barbizon painter. One day it was a Sunday—when he was visiting the artist's studio he grew enthusiastic over a figure painting that Corot was at work on, for on Sundays Corot devoted himself to figure subjects.

"That is my distraction," he used to say.

M. Perier determined to acquire this picture and Corot was equally determined not to let him, as his modesty would only allow him to rank as a landscape painter.

"All right," said Corot at last, "you may have the canvas, but on one condition—you must pay in exchange for it the butcher's and baker's bills of my friend Millet." M. Perier agreed to this unusual price and with the painter went to find the two shopkeepers. The baker's bill came to \$4,400 and the other to \$4,800, for the bills had been running for twelve years. So M. Perier's Corot cost him \$9,200.

"What a stroke of business," commented the artist. "My picture was hardly worth \$300!"

Good stories should not be dissected, but analysis of this one seems to show that the Millet household spent at least \$1 a day at the baker's and over \$1 a day at the butcher's, which seems excessive at the French prices of those days.—New York Sun.

#### Blind Workers First.

It was the recruit a first fire. A piano factory was burning. Said the battalion chief to the recruit:

"Find out where the tuning room is and make for that."

The recruit obeyed. Afterward he asked why.

"Because during working hours you are likely to find several blind men there," said the chief. "Many piano tuners are blind, and in case of fire they need first help in getting out. When fighting fire in a piano factory always bear that in mind."—New York Press.

#### Giving Man Credit.

"I don't believe any man is really good," she said. "When you find one who doesn't go wrong it is because he is afraid."

"Oh, it isn't always because they are afraid," replied her friend, who was married. "Very often it is because they haven't the price."—Chicago Record-Herald.

#### A Difficult Task.

Some men were discussing the sudden death of a neighbor who had left a rather helpless family.

"And the worst of it," said Uncle Jared, "that there isn't one of those boys that has the head to fill his father's shoes."—Youth's Companion.

#### Improvement.

Optimistic Wife—I think cook is improving, don't you? Husband—Why, at dinner tonight everything but the black coffee was horrible. Optimistic Wife—I know that. But usually that's bad too.—Life.

#### Found Her Unmailed Letters.

Gibbs—My wife explored my pockets last night. Dibbs—How did she come out? Gibbs—As all explorers should, she acquired enough material for a lecture.—Boston Transcript.

### A BRIEF ENGAGEMENT

A Civil War Story

By MARTIN D. BOYLE

General B., commanding a brigade of Federal troops, with an aid, reined up one morning before a house in Georgia. A woman was standing in the doorway, peering anxiously down the road as if expecting some one.

"Madam," said the general, "could you accommodate me in your house for a few hours?"

"Yo' didn't see anything of a young man comin' this way with a bran' new suit of clothes on, did you?"

"I did not, madam."

"Well, I declar'. I don't believe he's comin' at all."

"Perhaps you didn't hear my question?" said the general, and he repeated it.

"Well, I reckon we can let yo' stay here awhile, and if that young fellow don't turn up we can give yo' a right smart snack."

The general and his aid dismounted and entered the house, where they found a young girl dressed in bridal costume.

The general asked for a room where he could do some writing and was shown into an apartment.

"It looks as if you were going to have a wedding here," he said to the girl, with a very pleasant smile on his handsome face.

"It looks, rather, as if we are not to have a wedding," she replied.

"Why so? You seem ready for the ceremony."

"The groom hasn't come, and I don't believe he's coming."

"What's the matter?"

"I don't know, and I don't care."

"You appear indifferent."

"Oh, it's ma's match. I haven't had much to do with it. I wouldn't mind his staying away if it wasn't that we've had all the trouble making the preparations."

"A woman don't like to have the man she is to marry go back on her at the last moment."

"I don't care so much about that as having all my clothes ready and a table loaded down with good things ma's been making for two or three weeks."

"I should think they'd get stale by that time."

"Not the wedding cake. That'll keep a long while."

"Perhaps it will come handy for some other young man more worthy of you and to whom you will be less indifferent than this one who isn't coming."

"But the other things the cakes, the hot biscuit, the pies and jellies they won't keep."

"Pity, isn't it? I'd like to give him a thrashing."

Young Burge had been campaigning for two years and during that time had met very few young girls. He was at an age when the most natural thing in the world is to mate. He kept edging closer and closer to the girl sitting in a white muslin dress and a long white veil streaming down over her shoulders. He was ready to sympathize with her, and she seemed disposed to be sympathized with.

"What time was he to be here?" he asked.

"Ten o'clock."

"It's now about 11."

"Reckon it is about that."

"When were you to be married?"

"At 12."

Burge sidreted about in his chair, arose every now and then and looked out of the window in the direction the groom would come, if he came at all.

"I reckon he won't come," said the girl.

"I hope he won't."

"That's real mean of you," she remarked, looking out of the corner of her eye at him.

"You're too pretty and nice a girl to marry a man who hasn't the spunk to show up when he's pledged himself to marry. If he doesn't come by 12, the time fixed for the wedding, I've half a mind to—"

He caught his breath at what he had said. But if he was fearful of being considered bold he soon lost that fear, for the girl didn't reproach him.

"I don't suppose now," he continued, "if any fellow should come along you hadn't known before and offer to help you out you'd be satisfied to—"

"The things wouldn't spoil."

"But how would you feel about it?"

"Do you mean if a nothern man should come along?"

"Well, yes."

"And a soldier?"

"A soldier."

"I don't think I'd mind."

There was silence for awhile, when Burge broke it thus:

"If you can get the general to give me a few days' leave for a honeymoon I won't mind helping you out—that is, if you don't mind."

"I can try."

When the general came out of his section the proposition was made to him with the inducement that the wedding outfit of breadstuf, etc., he saw on the table should be eaten up immediately after the ceremony. He needed his aid's services all the while, but he was hungry. A chaplain was sent for, the couple tied and the good things consumed.

Burge received four days' leave of absence, at the end of which time he returned to duty. He recently celebrated his golden wedding and a swarm of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

### JOHNNY PUTS ONE OVER

Mother—"Johnny, dear, go get me a hod of coal."

Johnny—"Aw! Get a gas range and cut out the drugery."

Johnny wasn't obedient and his motive was selfish, but his answer pointed a moral so effectively that a GAS RANGE now occupies the space where the coal stove stood.

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It may be interesting to owners of chicken farms to know that a genuine enthusiast in the pastime of poultry raising lived and flourished as far back as the year 410 A. D., when Alaric the Goth was busying himself about the sack of Rome. The Rev. Dr. George Hodges' "Saints and Heroes" is the authority for the story.

Only the Roman emperor seemed unmoved by this tremendous calamity. He was in a safe retreat at Ravenna when the news came. It is remembered of Honorius that there were only two matters in which he was ever known to show interest. One was the safety of his own imperial person; the other was the raising of hens, in which he was very successful. His favorite hen was named Rome.

"Your majesty, Rome has perished!" they came crying.

"Why," he said, "only an hour ago she was feeding out of my hand!" And when they told him that it was the capital of the world which had been destroyed he was much relieved.

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