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AMBER A FOSSILIZED RESIN. Takes About a Thousand Years for the Material to Become of Commercial Value.

It is said by the orientals that when a tiger dies its soul penetrates into the earth and becomes a stone. This stone is the yellowish-brown bead which we see so often today in the long and short strings of Chinese amber. Amber is a fossilized vegetable resin found in geological deposits. The heavy drops of resin are brought out on trees by the hot sun. The red fir tree is one instance. These balls of resin drop from the tree and sink into the earth. Each year the resin goes deeper below the surface. After a thousand years have elapsed the resin has become fossilized and is mined in large pieces. The beads for combs, necklaces and bracelets are cut and polished from the mined amber. There are many varieties of amber, such as stone amber, water amber, flower amber, black jet amber and wax amber. The latter is yellow in color and transparent. The Chinese identify genuine amber by rubbing the stone between the hands. If it is the genuine stone it becomes warm from friction and will attract the mustard seed, or will attract dried leaves, just as a magnet attracts iron.

UNDERSTAND TALK OF BIRDS. Arabians Boast That They Can Hold Conversations With the Creatures of the Air.

To understand the languages of birds is peculiarly one of the boasted sciences of the Arabians, who pretend that many of their countrymen have been skilled in the knowledge of the language of birds ever since the time of King Solomon. It is related that Balkis, queen of Sheba, had a bird called Hud-hud—that is, lapwing—which was her trusty messenger to King Solomon. Another story tells that when Athelaj, a famous Arabian commander, and a camel driver were talking together, a bird flew over their heads, making at the same time an unusual sort of noise. The camel driver, hearing it, looked steadfastly on Athelaj, and demanded who he was. Athelaj, not choosing to answer, desired to know the reason of that question. "Because," replied the camel driver, "this bird assured me that a company of people is coming this way, and that you are the chief of them." While he was speaking, Athelaj's attendants arrived. Fishons are the favorite bird of the Mohammedans, as, according to their legends, a pigeon built its nest in front of a cave where their prophet was hid, and thus favored his escape from his enemies.

Madstone Treatment a Fallacy. The belief that a madstone cures hydrophobia is an old tradition with no foundation. The Pasteur treatment administered by a competent physician is the only effective treatment known. For centuries the fallacy of the madstone treatment has existed among men. But, according to physicians, no person treated with a madstone ever recovered if the poison of rabies actually found its way into the blood. Many persons, after having been attacked by a supposedly rabid animal, have recovered upon the application of a madstone to the wound. The madstone's effect, however, was wholly imaginary. The history of the madstone is as mythical as the efficacy of the stone in the treatment of rabies. It generally is conceded, however, that the "stone" was a part of the practice of medicine in India in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Later expeditions carried it to Europe and thence to America. -Kansas City Star.

Cockfighting Old Sport. Cockfighting has flourished at one time or another in most countries of the world. The gambling attendant on such encounters led, in 1399, to the first prohibition of cockfighting in England. This prohibition was, of course, rescinded, and Henry VIII built the cockpit in Whitehall, destined to so many vicissitudes. In Peru even church dignitaries have figured among the lovers of "feather." When Sir Clements Markham was investigating Peruvian antiquities in 1853, he enjoyed the hospitality of a bishop who, after dinner, produced a gamecock and fought a match with the Cura Parroco's bird on the dinner table.

On the Night Shift. Nighthawks and whippoorwills work chiefly at night, when most of the other birds are off duty, and at daybreak their good work is taken up by the swifts and swallows, says Nature Magazine of Washington. These birds are provided with big scapnet mouths, and as they swing through the air over wide areas of country they scoop up almost unbelievable numbers of insects. Six hundred were taken from the stomach of a single Arkansas nighthawk.

Unsafe to Wed in Afternoon. "Married at high noon." In the old days in England, couples were always married at noon because the bridegroom could not be relied on to stay sober after the hour of one o'clock in the day. That was the origin of the expression. And in those days it was the custom for the newly wedded man to wait on his bride on their wedding day. As she sat at the table, he acted as servant to her. That was the origin of the word "bridegroom."

HORSE DISCLOSED RICH MINE. Uncovered Treasure at Rammelsberg, Where the Devil is Said to Have Really Worked.

In the Tenth century, so legend has it, Otto I, arriving at his castle in the Harz and finding the royal jester short of venison, sent his hunter Ramm out to the forest to kill a deer. The winter snows were on the ground, and the hunter soon found a fresh track which he followed far up into the mountains. As the way became steeper he was forced to dismount from his horse, which he left tied to a tree, and to follow his quarry on foot. The chase was a long one; and the high-spirited steed, left alone in the cold, impatiently pawed the ground, scraping away the snow and earth and laying bare the rock beneath. When Ramm returned from his pursuit of the deer he was astonished at the glint of metal beneath the hoofs of his horse, and he hastened to collect pieces of the ore—the first specimens to be taken from the Rammelsberg. The delight of King Otto at the discovery was great; and he rewarded his hunter by giving him a golden chain, worth 1,000 denars, and by naming the mountain "Rammelsberg," to perpetuate his retainer's name. Miners say that the devil once really worked in the Rammelsberg, and the "Devil's Pit," as it is known, may be seen there today.

RECORDED FROST IN JUNE. Remarkable Occurrences in the Year 1816 Are Recalled by a New York Newspaper.

The year 1816 has gone down into history as the year of "eighteen hundred and froze to death." Not much authentic information exists concerning it, but the popular name suggests a great deal. A paragraph in Thompson's "History of Vermont," declares that frosts occurred every month of the summer and that snow fell every month of the year. June 8 snow fell to a depth of five or six inches and lay nearly half an inch thick formed on shallow ponds. Another report declares that a great many head of stock perished. In middle and northern New England crops of all sorts were severely injured or destroyed. In the middle Atlantic states there was great damage, but statistical information concerning the extent of damage is not at hand. The cause of the cold spell is thought to have been the great amount of volcanic dust that filled the air, intercepting the heat of the sun, and inasmuch as the years 1812-1813 were years of great volcanic activity this explanation is plausible. A dust haze intercepts a great deal of the sun's heat. -New York Herald.

Charles Dickens' Dogs. In a recent article on "A Dickens Zoo," Mr. L. R. Brightwell points out that in a vast array of books about Dickens it is rather surprising to find so few references to animal characters. The great novelist was, of course, an ardent dog lover. His letters are full of references to his canine friends, and his home at Gadshill was never without at least two of them—usually dogs of imposing stature and deportment. We find several references to Turk and Linda, and some amusing passages about the little terrier whose troubles parasite will be a source of sympathetic merit to every dog lover. Scarcely a volume of the novels and essays is without its "doggy" hero—type in "David Copperfield," Lion in "Little Dorrit," Doggerel in "Dombey and Son," Sikes' nameless cur in "Oliver Twist," Borer in "The Old Curiosity Shop" and "Cricket on the Hearth," Merrybells in "Hard Times," Jerry's dogs in "The Old Curiosity Shop," and "The Uncommercial Traveller" is rich in dogs of all sorts.

Testament Ignores Hen. Poultry and hen's eggs were late additions to the human cuisine, in spite of the large part they now play in our dietary, says H. G. Wells, in a footnote in his "The Outline of History." The hen is not mentioned in the Old Testament, although there is allusion to the egg in Job, nor by Homer. Up to about 1500 B. C., the only fowls in the world were jungle fowls in India and Burma. The crowing of jungle cocks is noted by Chastard in his accounts of tiger shooting as the invariable preliminary of dawn in the African jungle.

Breathing Exercises for Adenoids. An Italian, Doctor Ricetto, contends that the value of breathing exercises both before and after operation for adenoids is not sufficiently recognized. He gives data showing, as tested by the spirometer, the great improvement in respiration which follows a course of special breathing gymnastics. Before the exercises he instills a few drops of methylolated oil into the nostrils. His aim is to draw attention to the necessity of carrying out appropriate exercises if the best results are to be got from the removal of adenoids, especially between the ages of six and twelve years.

HOW PHOTOGRAPHERS IN WILDS GET THEIR "SUBJECTS." The clever achievements of African photography in "Hunting Big Game in Africa" are appreciated by everybody. But only those versed in the subject are aware of the extraordinary difficulties that were successfully overcome. Sidney Snow, the cinematographer, states: "The fact that most animals are not natural in their habits makes it a tough job to get the daytime pictures. Lions, leopards and other junglers of prey must be cracked to their midday resting places, routed out by the native safari's cries and brush beating; then the cameraman must take his chance of keeping up with the pursuit and of filming the animal often almost indistinguishable in the tawny grass. Our picture of the live lioness and her cubs shows it can be done, but it's tough, dangerous work."

"We also located and rounded up with the flivver the plains creatures that graze in large herds for protection like the gazelles. I carried a camera equipped with a variety of lenses and mounted with a revolving turret. This I took with me in the car, and chased the herds hour after hour. Eventually they would tire and let us get near. But the gazelles, with their long periscope necks enabling them to sight us over the tops of trees, eluded the camera for three months! Eventually, as no shot was fired, they lost their wariness—and their thin legs refused to carry them farther. "With the animals that appear only infrequently at evening to drink at the water-holes, another procedure was necessary. We would be hidden in a well-made blind, motionless for hours and days, suffering much from heat and insects, whilst waiting a chance to get some of those realistic closeups. Often the oncoming darkness would foil our efforts. Sometimes we would have to keep the animals from approaching the water for several nights running, in order to make them so thirsty that they would come in the early morning when pictures could be made. "Another thing: successful hunting requires keeping to the leeward of the quarry. A shifting wind gives the animal your scent, and he is down upon you! On several critical occasions I escaped by quick side jump whilst Dad plugged the charging brute. Both in the rhino and the elephant hunts, the native boys had long since taken to the tops of the trees. Without any egoism I think I may say that only a person fully conversant with wild nature is fitted to go into the jungle after pictures. We had a number of professional cinema men with us at the start, but they couldn't stand the gaff."

ADDS TO COUNTRY'S BEAUTY. How Extension of Work of Horticultural Specialist Has Had Good Results in Many States.

Improvements in the appearance of the grounds and surroundings of farms in the southern states is receiving increased attention as a result of extension work in those states by a horticultural specialist of the United States Department of Agriculture, according to reports received by the department. For example, as a result of such work 6,925 fences were repaired in 1921 and 4,430 in 1922; 3,484 unsightly buildings were repaired or removed in 1921 and 3,523 in 1922. The number planting trees and shrubs rose from 8,308 in 1921 to 42,396 in 1922; of those planting flowers and vines from 45,487 in 1922; of lawns seeded, from about 1,000 to 2,000. More than 45,000 planted shade trees and shrubs last year. In some of the states, particularly in North Carolina and Mississippi, the improvements in farmsteads are very marked. Girls' and women's clubs have been active in stimulating interest in making the home surroundings more pleasing, and the beneficial effect upon communities generally has been very marked.

How Japan is Progressing. The government of Japan has framed a scheme for the construction of new railway lines with a view to improving the transportation system throughout the country. The plan includes the construction of 28 new lines with a total length of 842 miles, the lines traversing 31 prefectures. The cost of construction is estimated at 170,000,000 yen. The program is spread over 11 years, the work being expected to commence by the next fiscal year. This scheme will be submitted to the railway council, which will be convinced shortly, and afterward will be introduced in the imperial diet. If the plan is approved, the construction of 12 lines will be started in the course of the next fiscal year, to be followed by 16 other lines the following year.

How Mocking Bird Flights. It is not only a singer that the mocking bird of the South wins the admiration of his human friends. He's plucky, and just as ready for a fight in defense of his nest as for a song. He and his mate will attack a chicken hawk in flight, a dangerous procedure for any bird. On one occasion a great buzzard was seen sitting on a large limb within a few feet of a mocking bird nest. He was attacked first by the hen bird, which left her nest to scold and shout imprecations at the unwelcome guest. Her mate soon heard the rumpus and joined the fray. They never paused a moment in their efforts until even the sluggish vulture was forced to flap slowly away through the trees, defeated.

No Great Chinese Journalist. China has nowhere in its history produced an outstanding journalist, a man who has dominated the field and left there the imprint of his personality as have Greeley, Dana, Bennett, Pulitzer, Nelson and Watterson in the United States. The profession, as a natural consequence of the recency of its activities, has no traditions, and has only a weakness for politics and for political intrigue.

WHY Game Birds Should Be Planted in Suitable Covers.

Planting game birds means liberating them in suitable covers where they may remain and increase their kind. In states having state game farms thousands of pheasants are sent out each year to sportsmen for liberation. Many sportsmen's organizations purchase these birds to improve shooting conditions in their vicinity. Bob white quail are imported by the thousands from Mexico, while the Hungarian partridges are brought from Europe, all with the intent of furnishing more game for the sportsmen. Few realize the necessity of liberating such birds properly, remarks a New York Evening Post writer. We were greatly surprised only recently to hear a man who had been liberating a great number of birds remark that he enjoyed doing this kind of work because he liked to see the birds fly. What sportsman does not like to see a game bird fly? We all do, but when liberating birds with the view of restocking depleted covers we would feel that our efforts had almost been wasted should we see any of the liberated birds fly immediately after they were released. When birds are received in a crate and it is the intent to liberate them all at one place, the problem of keeping them from flying is a very simple one. The crate should be placed at the edge of a suitable cover for the birds and a quantity of grain scattered nearby. Darken your crate by covering it with canvas or burlap excepting one corner, where, by opening the sliding door, sufficient space should be left for the birds to walk out. Having done this, go away and leave them and do not return to get the crate until there is no chance of frightening the birds. This method permits the birds to walk out cautiously and look over their new home at leisure. They stay banded together for the time being and return for several days to the place where liberated to secure the food that has been placed there for them.

WERE NAMED FOR STATESMAN. Why the Sandwich Islands Were So Called Explained in Narrative of Captain Cook.

Capt. James Cook, who christened the Hawaiian group of islands the "Sandwich Islands," in 1778, gave them that name as a compliment to John Montagu, fourth earl of Sandwich, an English statesman, traveler and author, who at the time of Cook's most celebrated voyage was first lord of the admiralty, the "United States" equivalent for secretary of the navy. The reason for this compliment is doubtless to be found in the following extract from Cook's narrative: "While we lay in Long Reach . . . the earl of Sandwich, Sir Hugh Pallister and others of the board of admiralty, as the last mark of the very great attention they had all along shown to this equipment, paid us a visit on the 8th of June, to examine whether everything had been completed conformably to their intentions and orders, and to the satisfaction of all who were to embark on the voyage. They, and several other noblemen and gentlemen, their friends, honored me with their company at dinner on that day; and on their coming on board, and also on their going ashore, we saluted them with seventeen guns, and three cheers."