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## OBSERVATIONS.

### WHAT DOES IT COST?

What does it cost, this garniture of death? It costs the life which God alone can give; it costs dull silence, where was music's breath; it costs dead joy, that foolish pride may live. Ah, life, and joy, and song, depend upon it. Are costly trimmings for a woman's bonnet.

—May Riley Smith.

The slaughter of birds for trimmings has begun to perceptibly decrease the number of songsters in America. Unless the women, for whose ornamentation the birds are killed, refuse to accept the sacrifice any longer the time will come, is coming fast when they will not wear birds because the supply has been exhausted. Field, forest and brookside will be silent save for the rustle of leaves and grasses, the purl and patter of the water. The soloists of the orchestra, the leaders of the symphony that has made summer time the vacation and medicine of the year since we were first turned out in the door yard to play, are being killed for their feathers. How many times, battered by defeat and treason into despair and infidelity has faith been revived and courage renewed by the song of birds with the exquisitely modulated accompaniment of winds, waters and insects. What would summer be without the matins and vespers, without the midday chirping of the birds? Here are a few statements from reliable authorities concerning their destruction.

In London, at one auction sale alone, last autumn, the catalogue included in its descriptive list of stock for millinery purposes 6,000 birds of paradise, 5,000 imperial pheasants, 350,000 assorted bird skins from India, and 400,000 humming birds. An article in Forest and Stream, speaking of the destruction of birds on Long Island, states that during a short period of four months 20,000 were supplied to the New York dealers from a single village.

It is said that in one great New York importing house there are stored the skins and plumage of more birds than are in all the museums and collections of the world put together.

Four hundred thousand humming birds! Such tiny creatures—a single high note of color, quivering with conscious beauty and joy. Even these the monster will not spare. Just now while the birds are nesting their plumage is brightest and they are being killed by

millions. Game birds, domestic birds, and ostriches are protected by law and the young are cared for. There is no objection to the wearing of their plumage.

The egret, a kind of heron, from whose tail plumage the ornament called an aigrette is made, in full beauty at the nesting season, has become almost extinct because of the aigrettes.

"It is a piratical, merciless flag, the dainty aigrette, rising among buds and blossoms on the spring hats and bonnets. The beautiful and graceful terns which not long ago animated the seashore have been almost annihilated by the use of their plumage on women's hats. The snowy heron, from which the most beautiful aigrettes are obtained, is becoming very rare, and it is predicted it will soon be extinct unless extraordinary measures are taken for its protection.

In Chicago the women have become deeply interested in the crusade for the birds led by the women's clubs. From that centre it is expected that the movement will be carried throughout the country, under the auspices of the federated women's clubs.

A strong, growing Audubon society is already organized in Illinois and Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York and other states have such associations, or are forming them. The Audubon societies require a pledge from each member that she will not wear the plumage of any wild bird and that he or she (for there are men in the Audubon societies) will discourage bird slaughter in all ways. These, with kindred associations and with the co-operation of students and lovers of nature everywhere, are arousing such interest in the cause of the birds that it is in a fair way to be won.

The school children are greatly interested in the protection of birds, but a Chicago teacher said the other day that it was hard to teach a boy not to kill birds when his mother wears their dead bodies or wings on her bonnet. The work in the schools must be encouraged at home.

Although the death of the birds to lovers of nature is a loss which can not be exaggerated by any material vengeance, the value of trees and grain which the birds save from destruction by eating the worms and bugs which live on them is not to be estimated. Ornithologists say that there is a larger variety of birds in Nebraska than in any other state in the union. They are sent by Providence to devour the swarms of insects which are here in correspondingly large numbers. If the race fails to appreciate the reason for this nice adjustment, it must take the consequences of interfering with the plan. It is trite to speak of women as the gentler sex. If by her merciless vanity the most beautiful part of the natural world is destroyed, the other sex can laugh admonition to scorn, get other mentors, and put and keep women in the state of subjection which their wanton cruelty deserves. The only superiority worth having is that of the heart and the head. When women show that they have neither by refusing an appeal to both, at the same time they resign, consciously or unconsciously, any claims to superior moral instincts. However women have never yet refused to aid a righteous cause. The following pledge of the Lincoln branch of the Audubon society, which has been started in Lincoln, has been prepared by the charter members.

*I will not wear upon my hat or dress the plumage of any bird except that of the ostrich and domestic or game birds, and I will do my best to influence others to take this pledge.*

Mrs. G. M. LAMBERTSON,  
" W. B. OGDEN,  
" G. E. MACLEAN,  
" GUILFOYLE,

" SARAH F. HARRIS,  
" S. H. BURNHAM,  
" W. J. BRYAN,  
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" J. R. RICHARDS.  
Miss OLIVE LATTA,  
" SARAH B. HARRIS,  
" DORA BACHELLER,  
" JOSIE READ,  
" SADIE BURNHAM.  
• • •

Mr Marshall Field has gone to Washington to confer with the members of the senate committee on finance about the tariff bill, and he has found that the hotels are full of people on the same business. This country is too big, its interests are too diverse and varied for any one of them to be protected at the expense of all the others. When revenue is accomplished protection should not begin. Protection protects the rich against the poor, the manufacturers from the farmers, the tiger from the lamb. So long as most of the manufacturers and accumulated capital were in the east the monied interest secured a high protection tariff without much trouble, a few million dollars did not count when the population of the United States could be forced to pay it back. But the centre of capital has been moving westward steadily, with occasional spurts of speed, ever since the war. It is harder to agree upon a tariff now than it was a year ago and easier now than it will be in 1898.

A western dry goods merchant who has built up a business the size of Marshall Field's is, and has been in close relations with the markets of the world. His business is so large that no selfish or narrow policy can control it, a narrow policy would destroy it. A business whose employes number five and six thousand people is a microcosm. The principles by which it is ordered must be based on generalizations broad enough to administer a people's affairs successfully. Marshall Field said when he was asked if he had anything to say on the Dingley tariff bill that he had nothing to say "except the one general remark that it is the worst tariff bill I ever saw, not only as regards the rates of duties imposed, but in the complicated and ambiguous methods of imposing them. There is scarcely a line in the bill that will not have to be interpreted by the supreme court."

The Germans are especially incensed at the discrimination against German sugar. The retaliatory duties which Germany has placed on American pro-

ducts is justifiable and has injured our trade much more than American discrimination has injured theirs. The Record's Washington Correspondent says: "The only persons who are entirely satisfied with the Dingley bill are the eastern manufacturers and the Ohio wool growers and they are fighting to prevent a change. Very little is known of what the members of the committee are doing. They keep the details to themselves, and refuse to give information concerning particular items but it is generally understood that they are reducing the Dingley rate all around, and that there will be but a slight increase over those imposed by the present law. It is understood also that the duty on wool will be reduced from 11, 12, and 13 cents to 5, 6 and 8 cents per pound, and that the rate on coarse wool, which is not grown in this country, may be as low as 3 cents a pound. The committee is very much impressed by the protests that have come from foreign nations, and has sent to several of the ambassadors, informal assurances that there will be nothing to complain of when the bill is completed.

In revising the bill the senate committee is trying to do something to stimulate and encourage the foreign trade as well as to protect domestic industry, and it is studying the protests from other governments with serious concern. Whatever retaliation may come from the advanced duties upon manufactured goods it will fall upon the farmer and not upon the manufacturer of this country, and there is no use for Secretary Wilson and other agents of the government to try to increase exports in agricultural products as long as the markets are disturbed, and embargoes are raised against us in retaliation for excessive duties and discriminations on this side of the water. By a single vote in 1894 the results of twelve years of diplomatic negotiation with Germany were destroyed, and until we adopt a permanent foreign commercial policy it is waste of time for either the government or private enterprise to try to build up any export trade.

I believe the democratic victories in Canton, McKinley's own home, in Cleveland, Mark Hanna's home, and in Chicago are directly due to the tariff threat. The people do not want a protective tariff, but argument is idle. The monopolists who paid for McKinley's election must be repaid at the expense of the convalescing business interests of this country. Speaker Reed "jammed" the bill through the house because he knew that it would effectually prevent a second term for McKinley. In the senate, Mark Hanna will reply to all remonstrances "Gentlemen, as Chairman of the Republican National Committee, I promised that these duties should be raised to this figure." There is nothing to be said in answer to this though the bill which doubles the manufacturer's pro-

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