

ultra. Bamboo is so light, strong, and straight-grained that it is difficult to imagine anything better for the above purposes.

Naphthalin.—If you are going to the tropics to collect anything except rocks, take a big supply of flake naphthalin. In the Philippines, as in other tropical countries, there are many species of ants. A good part of these make it their business to eat every kind of animal substance they can find, and they do not neglect birds, from freshly killed specimens to dry skins. In a closed box naphthalin is sudden death to all species of ants and it prevents ants and other insects from entering. It also helps to prevent the growth of mould. Naphthalin is a necessary adjunct to the botanist. A pinch scattered over each specimen when the first change of dryers is made kills the many "grubs" or insect larvæ which if undisturbed often ruin the flowers before the specimens are dry. There are also certain ants, mostly small black species so far as I have observed, which spend their time on shrubs and trees and decline to leave even when specimens are put in press. These also are driven off by naphthalin.

Gun Varnish.—During sea or shore shooting, or for rainy weather, a mixture of equal parts linseed oil and turpentine, applied daily to arms, will harden and form a coat which is impervious to moisture and is as superior to vaseline or "gun oil" as your own hair is to a wig. It seems needless to add that this mixture should not be put into the works of a gun. If the arm is to be put away for a month or more a coat of the mixture on the inside of the barrels is an excellent protection.

Fish-basket.—I suppose every bird collector has used a fish creel in the field and has wished that they were made without the hole in the cover. To get rid of the hole and to protect specimens from heat and rain get a piece of light colored oil-cloth a little larger than top of creel and sew it on letting it hang over the edge.

Abdominal Opening.—In dealing with doves, ducks, grebes and any birds with short or scale-like feathers a much better looking skin can be made if a transverse cut is made instead of the ordinary breast-to-vent opening. The cut should extend backward from the base of each leg and connect thru the vent. The skinning proceeds much as usual. In the make-up there will be no unsightly break in the central abdominal feathers and the cut, being closed by a few stitches, will present very little evidence of its whereabouts. This method may be known to American collectors but I first saw it used by my Filipino assistant, Andres Celestino.

Wad-marker.—Anyone having many shells to load will find a wad-marker made as follows an efficient and useful article. Take a square rubber eraser and cut the ends off smooth and square; on each end mark with a lead-pencil a number corresponding with the sized shot you most frequently use. Now cut away the rubber from around the pencil mark and the result is a rubber stamp.

Formalin.—If the feet of large birds be opened in the sole and a liberal amount of full strength formalin injected, the drying will be greatly hastened and all danger of sloughing scales will be avoided. There is considerable danger of the latter trouble in a damp and hot climate. In the case of long-legged birds such as herons, it is well to dose the leg at the tarso-metatarsal joint also. The liquid may be introduced by means of a large hypodermic syringe; but if that instrument is wanting bits of cotton soaked in the preservative and pushed inside the foot give good results.—RICHARD C. MCGREGOR, *Manila, P. I.*

Destruction of Herons by a Hail-storm.—The following brief item is from the Lyons, Colorado, *Recorder* of July 18, 1907:

"The cranes' resort, three miles east of Lyons, was broken up by the recent hail-storm. The ground under the trees is covered with dead birds."

The item refers to the Great Blue Heron, the mistake in nomenclature having been since corrected by the paper at my suggestion. The St. Vrain colony, near Lyons, where the disaster occurred, is a well-known and interesting heronry. These birds, in the northern Colorado colonies, on account of their habit of nesting in the tops of the trees above protecting branches, and the severity of occasional hail-storms, are very liable to destruction. In perusing the note-books of Denis Gale I noticed that, in 1890, he found many nests in this same colony destroyed by heavy winds, and that he found buzzards nesting in the same trees with the herons.—JUNIUS HENDERSON, *Boulder, Colorado*.

Siphia erithacus Sharpe; a Correction.—I regret that thru oversight I have burdened this little flycatcher with another name and therefore wish to make this correction. *Cyornis erithaca* of Sharpe's Hand-list should stand as *Cyornis platenæ* (Blasius), *Ornis*, 1888, p. 308, with *Siphia erithacus* Sharpe and *Cyornis paraguayæ* McGregor, *Condor*, VIII, p. 29, as synonyms.—RICHARD C. MCGREGOR, *Manila, P. I.*