

**NOVEL DEVICE FOR PREVENTING RUNAWAY HORSES.**

The annexed engraving, for the description of which we are indebted to the Pesth *Wochenblatt für Land und Forst-wirtschaft*, represents an ingeniously simple device for checking runaway horses. A A are stout rings, of sufficiently large diameter to slip over the fore legs of the animal and close up to the body. They are held in the last mentioned position by lines, B, which lead up through leaders on the saddle, and are joined to a single ring which slips over a hook, C, on the dashboard. Thus arranged the device forms no impediment to the horses' motion, as the rings, though connected together between the legs, are joined by a sufficiently long bond. In case of the animals' running away, however, the driver has merely to lift the ring for the hook, C, and allow the large rings, A, to descend lower down on the legs. This of course interferes at once with the horse's stride. If it be necessary to bring them to a sudden halt, to avoid immediate danger, the supporting lines are let go altogether. The rings then fall to the horses' feet, restricting their further progress, and perhaps throwing the animals. This would probably result in injury to the latter, but it would not be employed except to prevent instant accident to the occupants of the vehicle; and it is possible their lives would be more imperiled by the sudden stoppage than if the appliance were not used. But the idea is novel, and some one, no doubt, considers it practicable, and perhaps it is.

**The Tallest Chimney in the World.**

The tallest chimney in the world is the Townsend chimney, Glasgow, Scotland. It was built by Robert Corbett, of Glasgow, for Joseph Townsend, of Crawford Street Chemical Works. The total height from foundation to top of coping is 468 feet, and from ground line to summit, 454 feet; the outside diameter at foundation being 50 feet, at ground surface 32 feet, and at top of coping 12 feet 8 inches. The number of bricks used in the erection were as follows: Common bricks in chimney, 1,142,532; composition and fire bricks for inside cone, 157,468; common bricks for flues, etc., 100,000; total, 1,400,000. The weight of bricks at 5 tons per 1,000 is equal to 7,000 tons. When within 5 feet of completion, the chimney was struck by a gale from the northeast, which caused it to sway 7 feet 9 inches off the perpendicular, and it stood several feet less in height than before it swayed. To bring back the shaft to its true vertical position, "sawing back" had to be resorted to, which was performed by Mr. Townsend's own men, ten working in relays, four at a time sawing, and two pouring water on the saws. The work was done from the inside on the original scaffolding, which had not been removed. Holes were first punched through the sides to admit the saws, which were wrought alternately in each direction at the same joint on the side opposite the inclination, so that the chimney was brought back in a slightly oscillating manner. This was done at twelve different heights, and the men discovered when they were gaining by the saws getting tightened by the superincumbent weight.

**THE LITTLE DODO OR DODLET.**

A great many very interesting additions have recently been made to the collection belonging to the Zoological Society of London, and are now to be seen in their renowned gardens in the Regent's Park. Among them is a bird variously styled the didunculus, dodlet, little dodo, and toothed billed pigeon, the scientific name for which is the *didunculus strigirostris*, which was brought from the Samoan Islands. The bird was not unknown in Europe, a specimen having been sent thither in 1864; and from its size, dark plumage, and terrestrial habits, it might be mistaken, at a little distance, for some species of moorhen, but a closer inspection of its structure convinces one of its relationship to the pigeons.

The head and upper portion of the neck and breast, says the London *Field*, to which we are indebted for the annexed engraving, are of dark slaty green color, the primaries the same, but somewhat paler; the rest of the plumage chocolate brown; the face and throat bare, and of a dark flesh color in the young bird, approaching to orange in the adult. The bill, which is remarkably deep, and with the upper mandible dentated, is orange yellow in the young bird, and red in the adult. The legs and feet are

also red. In the contour of the bill, the form and position of the nostrils, and several other characters, the didunculus differs from any other living species at present known; and, although a smaller bird in size, it approximates most nearly, in all its characters, to the extinct dodo, and, like it, combines the character of a rapacious bird with that of the harmless pigeon.

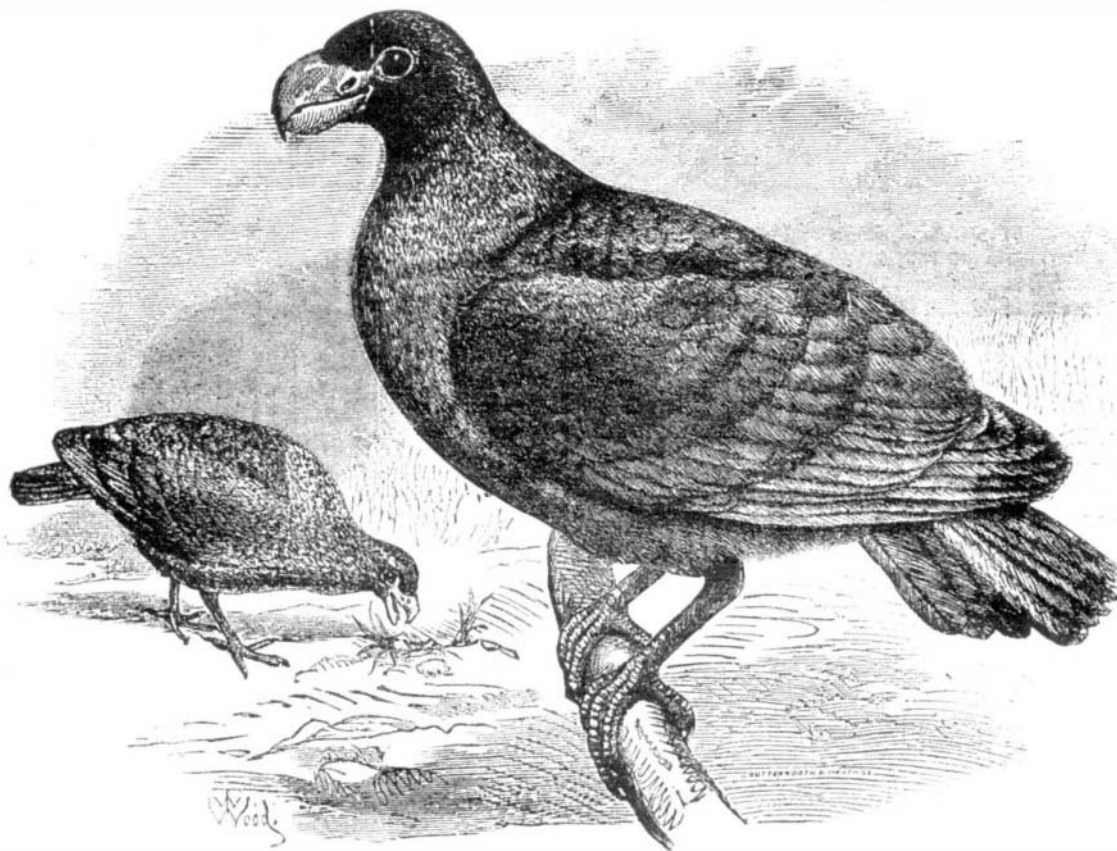
It will be seen that the mandibles of the didunculus are powerful in structure, yet, according to Dr. Bennett, the beak is never used as an offensive weapon; for when the hand is



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placed in the cage, or the bird is seized for removal from one cage to another, it never attempts to bite its captor, but, on the contrary, is so timid that, after fluttering about or running into a dark corner of the cage in its efforts to escape, it soon becomes subdued, and is easily taken. This statement, however, requires some modification; for, according to the Rev. S. J. Whitmee, a resident at Samoa, who has kept the bird in confinement there, it is sometimes "exceedingly savage. When any one approaches the cage," he says, "it ruffles its feathers, trembles, apparently with rage, and tries to bite. If it gets hold of one's finger," he adds, "I know from experience that it gives a severe gripe."

In size, the bird may be compared to a large pigeon, which it resembles in some of its habits, and in the nature of its food. Like some of the Australian pigeons, it flies with a loud noise, which is especially noticeable as the bird rises on the wing. Like the ground pigeon, it nests or roosts on bushes or stumps of trees, and feeds on the ground. Its food consists of plantains and the fruit of the *toi*, a kind of yam, not unlike a small potato.



**THE LITTLE DODO (*didunculus strigirostris*).**

**Preventable Diseases.**

It being conceded by every sensible person that good health is paramount to all other human blessings, we take frequent occasion to transfer to our columns (from reliable sources) practical information tending to promote and preserve the blessing so essential to all. To *The Herald of Health*, for April, we are indebted for the following:

"The range of what are called preventable diseases is now known to be very wide, and all such diseases it should be the first duty of man to prevent. Much of this—that for which I especially wish to ask attention—is not only preventable disease, but is disease that is called into existence only by the act or by the neglect of man; and it is not too much to say (after the thorough investigations of the subject that have been made by sanitary authorities) that there has never been a case of typhoid fever that was not almost directly caused by the ignorance or by the criminal neglect of some person whose duty it should have been to prevent it. Such disease never comes without cause; and its cause is never anything else than organic poisoning, arising from organic decaying matter or from the spread of the infection directly from a patient suffering from the disease.

Typhoid fever has many names, all of which are suggestive of its origin. It is called "drain fever," "sewer fever," "cesspool fever," "foul well fever," "nightsoil fever," etc.; and it is never caused except by the introduction into the system of the germ of the disease—which can originate only through the operation of neglected organic wastes, or by communication through the lungs or stomach by means of foul air or foul water, or from germs arising from the persons or from the excreta of typhoid patients. So far as its contagion is concerned, ample ventilation of the sick room and the immediate removal or disinfection of the feces are ample preventives. It is not contagious, as smallpox is, but is spread by the action of germs which infect the locality of the patient, and extend more or less widely according to the precautions used to confine it. There is not necessarily the least danger that the disease will attack even the constant attendant of the patient, if proper care is taken. With the householder himself rests the entire responsibility of the origin of every first case

breaking out in his household. This is a certain and thoroughly well established fact, and there attaches to him the full measure of guilt for every such case. This is a responsibility for which the community should hold him strictly accountable. It would really be as correct to ascribe a red-handed murder to Providence as to attempt in this way to console ourselves for a fatal attack of typhoid fever. We are taught that we shall not cleave our child's skull with an ax, and that if we do, death will surely result; but we are no less absolutely taught that we shall not poison our child's blood with the foul emanations of our house drains and with the contamination of our drinking water wells, lest the same fatal result follow. We may ignorantly load the water with which our families are supplied with lead poison, and so be without the guilt of intention; or we may ignorantly poison our wells by the infiltration of infected organic matter, and in this case, as in the other, be acquitted of charge of criminal intent. But in these days, when so much has been published concerning the origin of diseases of this class, however free we may be of all criminal intent, the serious charge of criminal neglect must surely lie at our door.

It may be assumed, without hesitation, that, whenever a pronounced case of typhoid breaks out in an isolated country house, or when any form of low fever occurs, though it may fail to assume a distinct typhoid character, there is in that house, or about it, or in connection with its supply of drinking water, some accumulation of neglected filth, some pile of rotten vegetables in the cellar, some overflow from a barnyard, some spot of earth saturated with the slops of the kitchen or some other form of impurity, to which the origin of the disease may be distinctly traced. The spread of typhoid is very generally occasioned by germs contained in the bowel discharge of fever patients; but the disease is constantly originating itself where no such cause exists, and every first attack is a plain indication that either at home or in some house at which the patient has visited, one or two things has occurred: (1) there has been an exhalation of poi-