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The young man's book of amusement

Halifax, 1848

Method of making Muffs and Tippetts from the Plumage and Skins of Birds

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defence against *sleet* in particular. They constantly boast that 'the animals have been all killed by their own hands;' and this is indeed necessary to the preservation of the dress, as the feathers which come away in moulting, or through disease, would decay. A coarse linen *shape* is stretched out, and the feathers having the quill part thrust through its meshes, are attached on the wrong side by needle and thread, and then lined with baize. Some sort of pattern, or, patch-work, is generally attempted by arranging the feathers, which may be improved upon by our fair countrywomen, especially with the deeply coloured and variegated tinted plumage of South American, or Brazilian birds.

Method of making Muffs and Tippetts from the Plumage and Skins of Birds.

We are indebted to a Frenchman for having brought to perfection this useful and ornamental art. Domestic animals of all the feathered kinds, afford the material of which these articles may be made; but those with rich, variegated colours for gay wear, as they are less liable to decay than the sable coverings of birds of prey, would no doubt be preferred. Above all, those animals should be selected whose plumage lies close and smooth upon their backs—for obvious reasons. Diseased birds, or those killed in moulting time, are to be rejected, as the feathers would drop off at no distant period; but the birds must therefore be killed in full health, and the skin carefully stript

off soon after their death, especially when the weather is hot, otherwise the same effects would be produced from corruption as from disease. When the skin has been freed from its impurities, it is spread upon a small table, the plumage downwards,—the feathers having been previously arranged over each other, according to the natural order. To keep it well stretched, tacks or pins may be driven in, or threads passed round underneath the table.

Next clear away the grease or fleshy parts that remain, and close up the rents, if any; the skin is then covered with a size made of glue, in which a small quantity of common salt and a glass of white wine has been mixed up to bring it to the proper consistency. The skin, thus covered, being exposed to the direct action of the wind, the glue will begin to scale off, and the whole must be scraped away. Should any dampness still remain on the skin, apply the glue again, dry and scrape it as before. When well dried, the skin is to be placed away in a box, in which dried wormwood, (absinthe), aloes, or some other bitter vegetable, is placed. The skins of large, or rank-feeding birds, require vinegar and salt to be dissolved in the glue; and the whole to be passed over with a solution of alum.

A Picture that Changes with the Weather.

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