

FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

ANIMAL ABSTAINERS.

That coral dot on the Pacific known as Elizabeth Island harbours a colony of birds and beasts which seem able to exist without fresh water. The island, which is six miles long, has not even a swamp, yet even a rat, a lizard, and no fewer than four kinds of birds flourish and increase contentedly upon it.

Stranger still,—two of the birds—a little rail or crane, and a reed warbler—are particularly associated with the water. The other birds are a fruit pigeon and a honey-eating paroquet. All of them must do without drinking water, unless dew is sufficient to slake their thirst, or unless they have acquired a taste for salt water.

BRAZILIAN DIAMONDS.

A revival of interest in the diamond fields of Brazil has been shown by American buyers recently. The business is done entirely by purchase from the native diamond miner, or from native brokers from the interior, who are numerous. A packet of stone often passes through many hands before reaching the actual exporter. One of the curious features of the trade is the confidence shown by the native miner to certain business men, to whom he will sometimes entrust enormous packets of uncut stone for delivery to some distant point without exacting a receipt, and without fear of substitution or loss. As a result, many Brazilian diamonds reach the sea coast in small paper packages carried in the pocket of chance messengers.

It was stated before the Brighton Tribunal, England, recently, that a hairdresser who worked voluntarily at the local military hospital had given 56,000 free shaves and hair-cuts to wounded soldiers.

CRACK BOY AVIATOR.

"Give me the aeroplane I want, and I will go over to Berlin any day or night, and come back, too—with my luck."

These are the words of that intrepid young Canadian aviator, Major W. A. Bishop, who was recently appointed Chief Instructor at the School of Aerial Gunnery.

who was recently appointed Chief Instructor at the School of Aerial Gunnery. Thus, at the age of nineteen, he is in entire control of the most technical branches of England's air defence.

Major Bishop, who is known among his compatriots as "Canadian Captain Ball," comes from Owen Sound, Ontario, and his average out of 112 times "up" is forty-seven safe hits,—forty-seven Huns down.

The feat which gained the gallant aviator his V.C. was the bringing down of four enemy planes after the solo tour of an aerodrome. He had the distinction, perhaps without precedent, at a recent investiture of being decorated with the V.C., D.S.O., and D.C.M.

The portraits of the generals who are fighting our battles on the Western Front are to be preserved for posterity. They are being painted by Mr. William Orpen, who is recognised as one of the leading British artists. He has been made a temporary major for his services.

THE POPE'S TRIPLE CROWN.

Originally the tiara, or tripple crown of the Pope was a plain high cap, much like those in doges of Venice so often represented in old pictures. It was first introduced by Pope Nicholas I in 860.

Just when the first coronet was added is a matter of uncertainty, but the second was placed by Pope Boniface VIII in 1295, and the third by Pope Urban about 1398.

It has been held that the three crowns refer to the Holy Trinity, although that could not originally have been the idea, for they would certainly not have been added one after the other with an intervening period in each case of many years.

Some authorities contend that they denote the three-fold royalty of the Bishop of Rome, one being the symbol of the temporal power over the Roman states, another the spiritual exercised over the souls of men, and the third the authority over all the kings and potentates of Christendom.

READ THEIR OWN OBITUARIES.

Certain German newspapers, by confusing Earl Gray with Viscount Gray, have given the latter an opportunity of reading his own obituary. There

have given the subject an opportunity of reading his own obituary. There have been many similar instances. Among the distinguished people who have been "buried" by the newspapers before they were dead, may be mentioned the late Count Tolstol, the Rev. S. Baring-Gould, and Dr. Kenyon, the present Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Obituary notices of the late C. H. Brookfield, playwright, and afterward play censor—appeared in two newspapers years before he died. They afforded their subject much amusement. "Both the newspapers in question," wrote Mr. Brookfield, referring to the incident, "spoke of me far more kindly than I had any right to expect, and one finished up by saying: 'Never a great actor, he was invaluable in small parts,' while the other remarked in conclusion, 'But, after all, it is at his club that he will be most missed.'"

Since the outset the Premier of France showed Michaelis to be a liar, and a Russian minister showed he is a falsifier, it becomes evident that Michaelis is the sort of Chancellor the Kaiser and the Crown Prince have been looking for all these years.—'Kansas City Star.'

The Italian Boys' Brigades, which, before the war numbered 60,000, now number 120,000, divided into 400 sections. They are doing excellent work at the Front.