

THE CHICAGO EVENING POST.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

Chicago, February 16th, 1898.

Robert Ridgway, Esq.,

Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:-

It may be very late in the day to thank you for your kind reply of August 17th to the letter which I wrote you asking for information regarding your trips into the Everglades of Florida in search of the ivory-billed woodpecker.

In your ^{letter} ~~notes~~ you very kindly said "if you will give me an idea as to what you want, I will try and find time to write you a few notes in the shape of memoranda." The one thing which I most desire to learn is something of the perils and adventures which a bird hunter would naturally and perhaps inevitably encounter in penetrating that region. Most particularly would I like to know if the great swamp now contains any remnants of the Seminole Indians, and if they are probably hostile enough to imperil the life of a white stranger. From some source or other I have formed the notion that in the very depths of the Everglades are straggling bands of Seminoles now living in as savage a state as ever; that they are very secretive as regards giving chance strangers a knowledge of their ^{Camps} ~~game~~ or villages, and that they do not hesitate to take the life of any white man who may chance to make his way among them.

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Another point on which I would be glad to have a word of information is this; would it be reasonable to assume in ^{an} ~~such a story~~ ornithological story ^{such} as I propose to write for the Youth's Companion, that a young hunter might reasonably secure a nest of young ivory-bills and carry them back to civilization? If so, what would be the probable value of each little ivory-bill; and at what time of the year would such a capture be made, if at all?

Any memoranda which you may give me which would suggest a good stirring adventure likely to fall in the path of a young bird hunter in the Everglades, would be of great service to me and would be much appreciated. The scope of the story which I have in hand is as follows:- A young ornithologist desiring to pursue his studies and at the same time provide himself with funds for a better academic training in his chosen work of research adopts the plan of going to the Everglades and hunting for the ivory-billed woodpecker, the Florida paroquette and other rare birds which bring a good market price from scientific institutions. In the prosecution of this plan he must be made to encounter several good, lively adventures which furnish strong but reasonable crises in the development of the story. These ^{may} ~~made~~ be adventures with the

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panthers, alligators, Seminole Indiana or the meeting of whatever perils would naturally be encountered in such an expedition. In a word, I wish to make the story entirely reasonable and interesting and at the same time give the reader as much incidental and correct ornithological information as possible. Please allow me to say how much I appreciate your kind offer to assist me by a few notes. I realize that it is entirely disinterested service and that the only inspiration which you can have in the matter is ^{that} of granting a favor to a stranger and of ~~perhaps~~ assisting to disseminate a little ornithological information, ^{or} perhaps I would better say, of preventing the publication of misinformation.

Hoping to hear from you at your convenience, I beg to remain,

Truly and gratefully yours,

Forrest Crissey
Room 314 Herald Bldg.