

Mrs. Skinner liked to be in good time. She was already dressed, in black silk as befitted her age and the mourning she wore for her son-in-law, and now she put on her toque. She was a little uncertain about it, since the egrets' feathers which adorned it might well arouse acid expostulations in some of the friends she would certainly meet at the party; and of course it was shocking to kill those beautiful birds for the sake of their feathers; but there they were, so pretty and stylish, and it would have been silly to refuse them, and it would have hurt her son-in-law's feelings. He had brought them all the way from Borneo and he expected her to be so pleased with them...

Mrs. Skinner, standing at her dressing-table, placed the toque on her head: after all, it was the only nice hat she had... If anybody spoke to her about the ospreys, she had her answer.

W. Somerset Maugham