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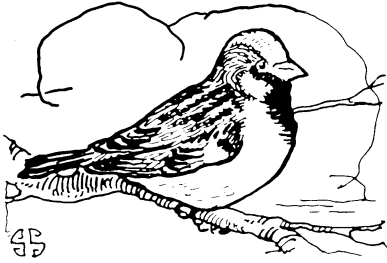
## NATURE RAMBLINGS

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By Frank Thone



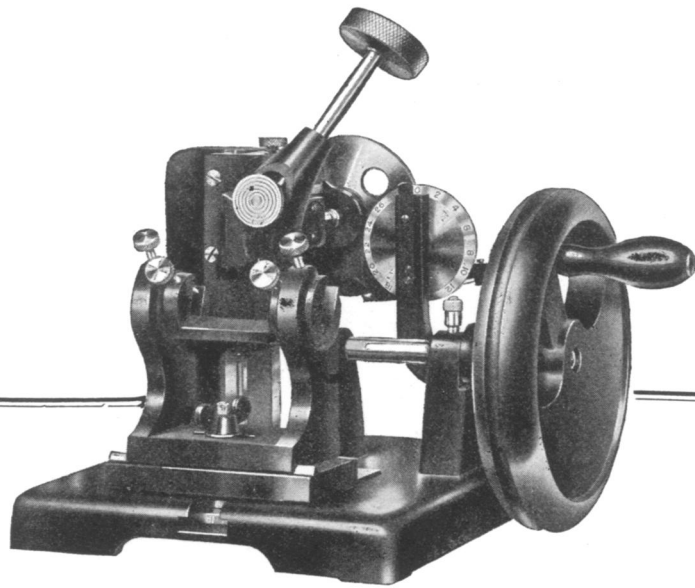
*English Sparrow*

To get acquainted with most winter birds, one has to go out into the country, or at least into a large city park with plenty of undisturbed natural thickets in it. But the English sparrow obtrudes himself among the haunts of men by choice, and is little seen in the country. He is a town bird, a slum Cockney, tough, quarrelsome, dirty, impudent, and amazingly efficient at picking up a living out of the trash heap. Whatever possessed that misguided bird-lover three generations or so ago who first brought over some of these graceless little fowl and turned them loose to increase and multiply in the new world, is still an abiding mystery. Certainly if they had any friends in this country then, they haven't any now.

The sparrow is charged with destructiveness to fruits and berries designed for human consumption, but that is the least of his sins, and one of which he is no more guilty than many another more welcome bird. His chief offenses are first that he is such a messy nuisance with his ramshackle nests, which he can not be discouraged from rebuilding no matter how often they are destroyed, and second that he is such a bad neighbor to other birds. He fights them, raids their nests and destroys the eggs, and in general makes himself such a bully that eventually they move out for the sake of peace, leaving him in undisputed possession.

A notable decrease in the numbers of English sparrows has taken place, however, within the past half-generation. With the increase of motor cars and the progressive disappearance of horses, our streets have become much cleaner. And the sparrows, who used to fatten on the litter, are finding pickings much leaner than they used to be, and hence are not so much in evidence on the streets.

*Science News-Letter, February 8, 1930*



## Minot Simplified Automatic Rotary Microtome

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Four of its outstanding features are:

1. The Universal Ball and Socket Specimen clamp, with one screw only for rigidity.
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3. A cog wheel of steel, which feeds two microns at a time.
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